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COMMENTARY

CLARKE'S COMMENTARY
OT, VOLUME 4
ISAIAH - MALACHI

by Adam Clarke

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The

HOLY BIBLE

CONTAINING THE

OLD TESTAMENT

THE TEXT

CAREFULLY PRINTED FROM THE MOST CORRECT COPIES OF THE PRESENT

AUTHORIZED TRANSLATION,

WITH

A COMMENTARY AND CRITICAL NOTES;

***DESIGNED AS A HELP TO A BETTER
UNDERSTANDING OF THE SACRED WRITINGS***

BY ADAM CLARKE,

LL.D., F.S.A., etc

FOR WHATSOEVER THINGS WERE WRITTEN AFORETIME FOR OUR
LEARNIONG; THAT WE, THROUGH PATIENCE AND COMFORT OF THE
SCRIPTURES, MIGHT HAVE HOPE. — ROMANS 15:4

VOLUME 4 — ISAIAH Through MALACHI.

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EDITOR'S NOTES

Preparing Clarke's Commentary on the Old and New Testaments for an electronic format has been a task of considerable dimensions. The Digital Library edition is the labor of love of Sulu Kelley of Concord, NC, USA. "Mr. Sulu" converted the original text from the six volume edition (originally published in 8 volumes) authored by Adam Clarke between 1810 and 1826. We thank Mr. Kelley for giving us permission to include this the first electronic edition of a most helpful and inspiring work.

The reader is advised to note the following characteristics of this version:

1. There are no Hebrew vowel pointings nor are there any Greek accents. These were not a part of the published editions of Clarke's Commentary.
2. Most capitalizations and many breathing marks were omitted from the Greek text.
3. Adam Clarke had an exceptional knowledge of Biblical languages and the languages of the earliest (known) Biblical texts. The author provides numerous references to versions in various languages which contain nuances and/or insight into the meaning of a given text. These references frequently contained phrases printed in Arabic and Anglo-Saxon among others. We anticipated few of the Library readers would have an appreciation for these references, particularly since the script and dialects of many of them were outside the scope of almost anyone's experience or education. Since these references are usually transliterated and/or explained by Mr. Clarke, we have omitted these scripts. We have observed the following abbreviation conventions when the associated language/script has been removed from the text: [AS] Anglo-Saxon; [A] Arabic, Arabian; [P], Persic, Persian; [S] Syriac, Syrian; [H] Hindu.
4. The printed version contains material not included in this electronic version: The King James text, from which the author worked, and associated cross references are omitted as each phrase discussed is quoted in the analysis itself. Several tables with obscure material are

omitted as it was felt that archaic data on, for example, the motion of the planets, information long since revised and corrected, would not enhance and may even obscure the timeless portions of the commentary.

5. The printed version contains a number of archaic forms of punctuation and capitalization. These were retained if they did not seem to obscure the meaning of the text.

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK

OF THE

PROPHET ISAIAH

ON the term prophet, and on the nature and several kinds of prophecy, I have already discoursed in different parts of this work. See the notes on Genesis 15:1; 20:7, and the preface to the four Gospels, and Acts of the Apostles. A few things only require to be recapitulated. נָבִיא naba signifies not only to foretell future events, but also to pray and supplicate; and נָבִיא nabi, the prophet, was by office not only a declarer of events still future, but the general preacher of the day; and as he frequently foresaw the approach of disastrous times, such was the wickedness of the people, he employed his time in counseling sinners to turn from the error of their ways, and in making strong prayer and supplication to God to avert the threatened judgments: for such predictions, however apparently positive in their terms, were generally conditional; strange as this may appear to some who, through their general ignorance of every thing but the peculiarities of their own creed, suppose that every occurrence is impelled by an irresistible necessity.

To his own conduct, in reference to such matters, God has been pleased to give us a key (see Jeremiah 18.) which opens all difficulties, and furnishes us with a general comment on his own providence. God is absolute master of his own ways; and as he has made man a free agent, whatever concerns him in reference to futurity, on which God is pleased to express his mind in the way of prophecy, there is a condition generally implied or expressed. As this is but seldom attended to by partial interpreters, who wish by their doctrine of fatalism to bind even God himself, many contradictory sentiments are put in the mouths of his prophets.

In ancient times those who were afterwards called PROPHETS were termed

SEERS; 1 Samuel 9:9. **הַרְאֵה** haroeh, the seeing person; he who perceives mentally what the design of God is. Sometimes called also **חֹזֶה** chozeh, the man who has visions, or supernatural revelations; 1 Kings 22:17; 2 Kings 17:13. Both these terms are translated seer in our common Version. They were sometimes called men of God, and messengers or angels of God. In their case it was ever understood that all God's prophets had an extraordinary commission and had their message given them by immediate inspiration.

In this the heathen copied after the people of God. They also had their prophets and seers; and hence their augurs and auguries, their haruspices, and priestesses, and their oracles; all pretending to be divinely inspired, and to declare nothing but the truth; for what was truth and fact among the former, was affected and pretended among the latter.

Many prophets and seers are mentioned in the sacred writings; but, fragments and insulated prophecies excepted, we have the works of only SIXTEEN; four of whom are termed the former or larger prophets, and twelve, the latter or minor prophets. They have these epithets, not from priority of time, or from minor importance, but merely from the places they occupy in the present arrangement of the books in the Bible, and from the relative size of their productions.

The Jews reckon forty-eight prophets, and seven prophetesses; and Epiphanius, in a fragment preserved by Cotelerius, reckons not fewer than seventy-three prophets, and ten prophetesses; but in both collections there are many which have no Scriptural pretensions to such a distinguished rank.

The succession of prophets in the Jewish Church is well worthy of note, because it not only manifests the merciful regards of God towards that people, but also the uninterrupted succession of the prophetic influence, at least from Moses to Malachi, if not before; for this gift was not withheld under the patriarchal dispensation; indeed we might boldly ask any man to show when the time was in which God left himself without a witness of this kind.

To show this succession, I shall endeavor to give the different prophets in order of time.

1. The first man, ADAM, has an undoubted right to stand at the head of the prophets, as he does at the head of the human race. His declaration concerning marriage, "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife," is so truly prophetic, that no doubt can be formed on the subject. There was then nothing in nature or experience to justify such an assertion; and he could have it only by Divine inspiration. The millions of instances which have since occurred, and the numerous laws which have been founded on this principle among all the nations of the earth, show with what precision the declaration was conceived, and with what truth it was published to the world. Add to this, his correct knowledge of the nature of the different animals, so that he could impose on them names expressive of their respective natures or propensities; which proves that he must have acted under a Divine inspiration; for known only to God are all his works from the beginning.

2. ENOCH, the seventh from Adam, is expressly called a prophet; and St. Jude, ver. 14, 15, has preserved a fragment of one of his prophecies, relative to the corruption of the ante-diluvian world, and the approaching judgments of God.

3. NOAH was a prophet and preacher of righteousness, and predicted the general deluge, and the time of respite which God in his mercy had granted to the offenders of that age.

4. ABRAHAM is expressly called a prophet also, Genesis 20:7; and it appears from Psalm 105:15, that he partook of the Divine anointing.

5. ISAAC, Genesis 27:27, predicted the future greatness of his son Jacob, and of the race that was to spring from him.

6. JACOB was so especially favored with the prophetic gift, that he distinctly foretold what should happen to each of his sons. See Genesis 49.

7. JOSEPH was favored with several prophetic visions, and had the gift of interpreting dreams which portended future occurrences; (see Genesis 27., 40., 41.); and foretold the redemption of the Israelites from Egypt; Genesis 50:25. Thus far the prophetic influence extended through the patriarchal dispensation for about two thousand three hundred and seventy years from the creation.

With the Jewish dispensation the prophetic gift revived; and,

8. MOSES became one of the most eminent prophets that had ever appeared. He not only enjoyed the continual prophetic afflatus, but had such visions of and intercourse with God as no other person either before or since was favored with; and by which he was highly qualified to perform the arduous work which God had given him to do, and to frame that Code of Laws which had no equal before the promulgation of the Gospel. See Deuteronomy 24:10. He predicted expressly the coming of the Messiah. See Deuteronomy 18:18.

9. AARON, the brother of Moses, his prime minister and God's high priest, was also a partaker of his Divine influence, and declared the will of God to Pharaoh and the Israelites, not merely from information received from Moses, but also by immediate communication from God. See Exodus 4:15.

10. MIRIAM, the sister of Moses and Aaron, is expressly called a prophetess, Exodus 15:20; Numbers 12:2.

11. JOSHUA, who succeeded Moses, was a partaker of the same grace. He was appointed by Moses under the especial direction of God; Numbers 27:18-23; Deuteronomy 34:9; and has always been reckoned among the Jews as one of the prophets. See Ecclus. 46:1-6. Though I cannot place them in the same rank, yet it is necessary to state that, by the Jews, several of the judges are classed among the prophets; such as Othniel, Ehud, Samson, and Barak.

12. DEBORAH, the coadjutor of Barak, is called a prophetess, Judges 4:4. During her time, and down to the days of Eli the high priest, prophecy had been very scarce, there having been very few on whom the Spirit of the

Lord had rested; for “the word of the Lord was scarce in those days, and there was no open vision;” 1 Samuel 3:1.

13. HANNAH, the wife of Elkanah, is supposed to have partaken of the spirit of prophecy; and to have foretold, at least indirectly, the advent of the Messiah, and the glory that should be revealed under the Gospel. See her Song, 1 Samuel 2:1-10. And what renders this more likely is, that it is on the model, and with many of the expressions, of this song, that the blessed Virgin composed her Magnificat, Luke 1:46-55.

14. SAMUEL, her son, was one of the most eminent of the Jewish prophets, and was the last, and indeed the greatest, of the judges of Israel. In his time the prophetic influence seems to have rested upon many; so that we find even whole schools or colleges of prophets which were under his direction. See 1 Samuel 10:5, 10; 19:20, and elsewhere.

15. DAVID united in himself the character of prophet and king, in the most eminent manner; and from his reign down to the captivity the succession was not only not interrupted, but these extraordinary messengers of God became very numerous.

16. GAD flourished under his reign, and was emphatically called David’s Seer, 2 Samuel 24:11; 1 Chronicles 21:9, 19, 20; and it appears that he had written a Book of Prophecies, which is now lost, 1 Chronicles 29:29.

17. NATHAN lived also under the same reign, 2 Samuel 7:2; and, in conjunction with Gad, composed a book of the acts of David, 1 Chronicles 29:29.

18. TO SOLOMON also, son of David, the prophetic gift has been attributed. This might be implied in the extraordinary wisdom with which God had endowed him, 1 Kings 3:5-9; 2 Chronicles 1:7; 7:12; and in his writings several prophetic declarations may be found, even independently of the supposed reference to Christ and his Church in the Canticles.

19. IDDO is termed a Seer, 2 Chronicles 12:15; 13:22; and was one of Solomon’s biographers.

20. SHEMAIAH lived under Rehoboam; he is called a man of God, and to him the word of prophecy came relative to Judah and Benjamin, 1 Kings 12:22-24. Some think this was the same person who was sent to Jeroboam relative to his idolatry; see 1 Kings 13:1, etc.
21. AHIJAH, the Shilonite, prophesied to Jeroboam, 1 Kings 11:29-39.
22. HANANI the Seer prophesied under Azariah and Asa, 2 Chronicles 16:7.
23. JEHU, son of Hanani, prophesied under JEHOSEPHAT, 1 Kings 16:1, 7; 2 Chronicles 16:7; 19:2; and 20:34.
24. AZARIAH, the son of Oded, prophesied under Asa, 2 Chronicles 15:1.
25. ELIJAH prophesied under the reign of Ahab and Jezebel.
26. ELISHA succeeded Elijah under the same reigns. And these eminent men had many disciples on whom the spirit of prophecy rested. They, and their masters, Elijah and Elisha, prophesied in the kingdoms both of Israel and Judah. Their histories make a prominent part of the first and second Books of Kings; and are well known.
27. MICAIAH, the son of Imlah, prophesied under the same reign, 1 Kings 21:9.
28. HOSEA prophesied under Jeroboam the second, king of Israel, and under the reign of Uzziah, king of Judah.
29. ISAIAH was contemporary with Hosea, but probably began to prophesy a little later than he did.
30. AMOS prophesied about the same time.
31. JONAH, son of Amittai, is supposed to have been contemporary with the above.

32. ELIEZER, the son of Dodavah, prophesied against Jehoshaphat and Ahaziah, 2 Chronicles 20:37.
33. JAHAZIEL, son of Zechariah, prophesied against Judah and Israel under the same reign, 2 Chronicles 20:14.
34. MICAH prophesied against Samaria and Jerusalem, in the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah.
35. ODED, father of Azariah, prophesied against Asa, 2 Chronicles 15:8.
36. NAHUM prophesied under Hezekiah.
37. JOEL, under Josiah.
38. JEREMIAH, about the same time.
39. ZEPHANIAH, under the same reign. See their prophecies.
40. HULDAH, the prophetess, was contemporary with the above.
41. IGDALIAH, called a man of God, and probably a prophet, was contemporary with Jeremiah, Jeremiah 35:4.
42. HABAKKUK lived about the end of the reign of Josiah, or the beginning of that of Jehoiakim.
43. EZEKIEL lived under the captivity; and prophesied in Mesopotamia, about the time that Jeremiah prophesied in Jerusalem.
44. OBADIAH lived in Judea, after the capture of Jerusalem and before the desolation of Idumea by Nebuchadnezzar.
45. DANIEL prophesied in Babylon during the captivity.
46. HAGGAI prophesied during and after the captivity.

47. **URIAH**, the son of Shemaiah, prophesied under Jehozakim. See Jeremiah 26:20, 21.

48. **ZECHARIAH**, son of Barachiah, flourished in the second year of Darius, after the captivity.

49. **MALACHI** lived under Nehemiah, and some time after Haggai and Zechariah.

Here is a succession of divinely inspired men, by whom God at sundry times and in divers manners spake unto the fathers, from the beginning of the world down to the restoration from the Babylonish captivity, a period of three thousand six hundred years. From the time of Malachi, who was the last of the prophets, till the advent of Christ, a period of nearly four hundred years elapsed without vision or prophecy: but during the whole of that interval the Jews had the law and the prophetic writings, to which, till the time of Christ, there was no necessity to add any thing; for God had with the writings of the last mentioned prophet completed the canon of the Old Testament, nothing being farther necessary, till he should, in the fullness of time, superadd the GOSPEL; and this having taken place, vision and prophecy are now for ever sealed up, and the temple of God is established among all genuine believers in Christ Jesus.

It is not easy to ascertain the order in which the sixteen prophets, whose writings are preserved, have succeeded to each other. There are chronological notes prefixed to several of their prophecies, which assist to settle generally the times of the whole. Several were contemporary, as the reader has already seen in the preceding list. The major and minor prophets may be thus arranged:—

1. **JONAH**, under the reign of Jeroboam the second. 2. **HOSEA**, under Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, etc. 3. **JOEL**, contemporary with Hosea. 4. **AMOS**, under Uzziah and Jeroboam the second. 5. **ISAIAH**, under Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. 6. **MICAH**, contemporary with Isaiah. 7. **NAHUM**, under the reign of Hezekiah. 8. **HABAKKUK**, under the reign of Manasseh or Josiah. 9. **ZEPHANIAH**, under Josiah. 10. **JEREMIAH**, from Josiah to

Zedekiah. 11. DANIEL, under the captivity, after Zedekiah. 12. EZEKIEL, at the same time. 13. OBADIAH, during the captivity. 14. HAGGAI began to prophecy in the second year of Darius. 15. ZECHARIAH, about the same time. See Zechariah 1:1; 7:1. 16. MALACHI, under Nehemiah. The last of all the prophets.

The works of these prophets constitute the principal and most important part of what is called THE BIBLE or Old Testament.

ON the style of the prophets much has been said by several learned men; particularly Calmet, Lowth, Bishop Newton, Vitringa, Michaelis, and Houbigant. Their chief observations, and especially those most within the reach of the common people, have been selected and abridged with great care and industry by the Revelation Dr. John Smith, of Cambleton, in his little Tract entitled "A Summary View and Explanation of the Writings of the Prophets," to which it forms preliminary observations, drawn up at the desire of the Scottish Society for propagating Christian Knowledge, in a small 8vo. 1804. From this work I thankfully borrow what concerns the present subject; taking occasion at the same time to recommend the whole to all Christian ministers, to private persons, and to all families who wish to read the prophets to their edification.

"The writings of the prophets, the most sublime and beautiful in the world, lose much of that usefulness and effect which they are so well calculated to produce on the souls of men, from their not being more generally understood. Many prophecies are somewhat dark, till events explain them. They are, besides, delivered in such lofty and figurative terms, and with such frequent allusions to the customs and manners of times and places the most remote, that ordinary readers cannot, without some help, be supposed capable of understanding them. It must therefore be of use to make the language of prophecy as intelligible as may be, by explaining those images and figures of speech in which it most frequently abounds; and this may be done generally, even when the prophecies themselves are obscure.

"Some prophecies seem as if it were not intended that they should be clearly understood before they are fulfilled. As they relate to different

periods, they may have been intended for exciting the attention of mankind from time to time both to providence and to Scripture and to furnish every age with new evidence of Divine revelation; by which means they serve the same purpose to the last ages of the world that miracles did to the first. Whereas, if they had been in every respect clear and obvious from the beginning, this wise purpose had been in a great measure defeated. Curiosity, industry, and attention would at once be at an end, or, by being too easily gratified, would be little exercised.

“Besides, a great degree of obscurity is necessary to some prophecies before they can be fulfilled; and if not fulfilled, the consequence would not be so beneficial to mankind. Thus many of the ancient prophecies concerning the destruction of Jerusalem had a manifest relation to the remoter destruction by the Romans, as well as to the nearer one by the Chaldeans. Had the Jews perceived this, which was not indeed clear enough till the event explained it, they would probably have wished to have remained for ever in their captivity at Babylon, rather than expose themselves or their offspring a second time to a destruction so dreadful as that which they had already experienced.

“With respect to our times, by far the greatest number of prophecies relate to events which are now past; and therefore a sufficient acquaintance with history, and with the language and style of prophecy, is all that is requisite to understand them. Some prophecies, however, relate to events still future; and these too may be understood in general although some particular circumstances connected with them may remain obscure till they are fulfilled. If prophecies were not capable of being understood in general, we should not find the seers so often blamed in this respect for their ignorance and want of discernment. That they did actually understand many of them when they chose to search the Scriptures we know. Daniel understood, from the prophecies of Jeremiah, the time at which the captivity in Babylon was to be at an end; and the scribes knew from Micah, and told Herod, where the Messiah was to be born. A very little attention might have enabled them in the same manner to understand others, as they probably did; such as the seventy weeks of Daniel; the destruction of the Babylonian empire, and of the other three that were to succeed; and also of the ruin of the people and places around them, Moab,

Ammon, Tyre, Sidon, Philistia, Egypt, and Idumea. Perhaps, indeed, a few enigmatical circumstances might have been annexed, which could not be understood till they were accomplished; but the general tenor of the prophecies they could be at no loss to understand. With regard to prophecies still future, we are in a similar situation. It is understood in general, that the Jews will be gathered from their dispersions, restored to their own land, and converted to Christianity; that the fullness of the Gentiles will likewise come in; that Antichrist, Gog and Magog, and all the enemies of the Church will be destroyed; after which the Gospel will remarkably flourish, and be more than ever glorified. But several circumstances connected with those general events must probably remain in the dark till their accomplishment shall clearly explain them.

“But this degree of obscurity which sometimes attends prophecy does not always proceed from the circumstances or subject; it frequently proceeds from the highly poetical and figurative style, in which prophecy is for the most part conveyed, and of which it will be proper to give some account. To speak of all the rhetorical figures with which the prophets adorn their style would lead us into a field too wide, and would be more the province of the rhetorician than of the commentator. It will be sufficient for our purpose at present to attend to the most common of them, consisting of allegory, parable, and metaphor, and then to consider the sources from which the prophets most frequently borrow their images in those figures, and the sense which they wish to convey by them.

“By allegory, the first of the figures mentioned, is meant that mode of speech in which the writer or speaker means to convey a different idea from what the words in their obvious and primary signification bear. Thus, ‘Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns,’ (Jeremiah 4:3,) is to be understood, not of tillage, but of repentance. And these words, ‘Thy rowers have brought thee into great waters, the east wind hath broken thee in the midst of the seas,’ Ezekiel 27:26, allude not to the fate of a ship, but of a city.

“To this figure the parable, in which the prophets frequently speak, is nearly allied. It consists in the application of some feigned narrative to some real truth, which might have been less striking or more disagreeable if

expressed in plain terms. Such is the following one of Isaiah, 5:1, 2: ‘My well-beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill. And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a wine-press therein; and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes.’ The seventh verse tells us that this vineyard was the house of Israel, which had so ill requited the favor which God had shown it. On this subject see the dissertation at the end of the notes on Matthew 13.

“There is, besides, another kind of allegory not uncommon with the prophets, called mystical allegory or double prophecy. Thus it is said of Eliakim, Isaiah 22:22: ‘And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; and he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open.’ In the first and obvious sense, the words relate to Eliakim; but in the secondary or mystical sense, to the Messiah. Instances of the same kind are frequent in those prophecies that relate to David, Zerubbabel, Cyrus, and other types of Christ. In the first sense the words relate to the type; in the second, to the antitype. The use of this allegory, however, is not so frequent as that of the former. It is generally confined to things most nearly connected with the Jewish religion; with Israel, Sion, Jerusalem, and its kings and rulers; or such as were most opposite to these, Assyria, Babylon, Egypt, Idumea, and the like. In the former kind of allegory the primitive meaning is dropped, and the figurative only is retained; in this, both the one and the other are preserved, and this is what constitutes the difference.

“But of all the figures used by the prophets the most frequent is the metaphor, by which words are transferred from their primitive and plain to a secondary meaning. This figure, common in all poetry and in all languages, is of indispensable necessity in Scripture, which, having occasion to speak of Divine and spiritual matters, could do it only by terms borrowed from sensible and material objects. Hence it is that the sentiments, actions, and corporeal parts, not only of man, but also of inferior creatures, are ascribed to God himself; it being otherwise impossible for us to form any conceptions of his pure essence and incommunicable attributes. But though the prophets, partly from necessity and partly from choice, are thus profuse in the use of

metaphors, they do not appear, like other writers, to have the liberty of using them as fancy directed. The same set of images, however diversified in the manner of applying them, is always used, both in allegory and metaphor, to denote the same subjects, to which they are in a manner appropriated. This peculiar characteristic of the Hebrew poetry might perhaps be owing to some rules taught in the prophetic schools, which did not allow the same latitude in this respect as other poetry. Whatever it may be owing to, the uniform manner in which the prophets apply these images tends greatly to illustrate the prophetic style; and therefore it will be proper now to consider the sources from which those images are most frequently derived, and the subjects and ideas which they severally denote. These sources may be classed under four heads; natural, artificial, religious, and historical.

“I. The first and most copious, as well as the most pleasing source of images in the prophetic writings, as in all other poetry, is nature; and the principal images drawn from nature, together with their application, are the following:—

“The sun, moon, and stars, the highest objects in the natural world, figuratively represent kings, queens, and princes or rulers; the highest in the world politic. ‘The moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed;’ Isaiah 24:23. ‘I will cover the heavens, and make the stars thereof dark: I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give her light;’ Ezekiel 32:7.

“Light and darkness are used figuratively for joy and sorrow, prosperity and adversity. ‘We wait for light, but behold obscurity; for brightness, but we walk in darkness;’ chap. 59:9. An uncommon degree of light denotes an uncommon degree of joy and prosperity, and vice versa. ‘The light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold;’ chap. 30:26. The same metaphors are likewise used to denote knowledge and ignorance. ‘If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them;’ chap. 8:20. ‘The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light;’ chap. 9:2.

“Dew, moderate rains, gentle streams, and running waters denote the

blessings of the Gospel. ‘Thy dew is as the dew of herbs;’ chap. 26:19. ‘He shall come unto us as the rain;’ Hosea 6:3. ‘I will water it every moment;’ chap. 27:3. ‘I will pour water on him that is thirsty;’ chap. 44:3.

“Immoderate rains on the other hand, hail, floods, deep waters, torrents, and inundations, denote judgments and destruction. ‘I will rain upon him an overflowing rain, and great hailstones,’ Ezekiel 38:22. ‘Waters rise up out of the north, and shall overflow the land,’ Jeremiah 47:2.

“Fire also, and the east wind, parching and hurtful, frequently denote the same. ‘They shall cast thy choice cedars into the fire,’ Jeremiah 22:7. ‘He stayeth his rough wind in the day of the east wind,’ Isaiah 27:8.

“Wind in general is often taken in the same sense. ‘The wind shall eat up all thy pastures,’ Jeremiah 22:22. Sometimes it is put for any thing empty or fallacious, as well as hurtful. ‘The prophets shall become wind,’ Jeremiah 5:13. ‘They have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind,’ Hosea 8:7.

“Lebanon and Carmel; the one remarkable for its height and stately cedars, was the image of majesty, strength, or anything very great or noble. ‘He shall cut down the thickets of the forest with iron, and Lebanon shall fall by a mighty one,’ Isaiah 10:34. ‘The Assyrian was a cedar in Lebanon,’ Ezekiel 31:3. The other mountain (Carmel) being fruitful, and abounding in vines and olives, denoted beauty and fertility. ‘The glory of Lebanon shall be given it, the excellency of Carmel,’ Isaiah 35:2. The vine alone is a frequent image of the Jewish Church. ‘I had planted thee a noble vine,’ Jeremiah 2:21.

“Rams and bullocks of Bashan, lions, eagles, sea-monsters, or any animals of prey, are figures frequently used for cruel and oppressive tyrants and conquerors. ‘Hear this word ye kine of Bashan, which oppress the poor,’ Amos 4:1. ‘The lion is come up from his thicket,’ Jeremiah 4:7. ‘A great eagle came unto Lebanon, and took the highest branch of the cedar,’ Ezekiel 17:3. ‘Thou art as a whale in the seas,’ Ezekiel 32:2. ‘The unicorns shall come down, and their land shall be soaked with blood,’ Isaiah 34:7.

“II. The ordinary occupations and customs of life, with the few arts practiced at the time, were another source from which the prophets derived many of their figures, particularly,

“From husbandry in all its parts, and from its implements. ‘Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy: break up your fallow ground,’ Hosea 10:12. ‘Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe,’ Joel 3:13. ‘I am pressed under you, as a wain under a load of sheaves,’ Amos 2:13. Threshing was performed in various ways, (mentioned Isaiah 28:24, etc.,) which furnish a variety of images denoting punishment. ‘Arise and thresh,

[See Fleury's Manners of the Israelites.]

“It was customary in deep mournings to shave the head and beard, to retire to the housetops, which in those countries were flat, and furnished with little chambers adapted to the purposes of devotion or of sequestered grief; also to sing dirges at funerals, and to accompany them with a mournful sort of music; and from these and the like circumstances images are frequently borrowed by the prophets to denote the greatest danger, and the deepest distress. ‘Mine heart shall sound for Moab like pipes.’ ‘Every head shall be bald, and every beard clipt-there shall be lamentation on all the house-tops of Moab,’ Jeremiah 48:36-38; Isaiah 15:2, 3.

“The mode of burying in the Jewish sepulchers, or ‘sides of the pit,’ and their Hades, or state of the dead, supplied many images of the same kind. See observations on Isaiah xiv., and Ezekiel 26:20.

“According to the barbarous custom of those times, conquerors drove their captives before them almost naked, and exposed to the intolerable heat of the sun, and the inclemencies of the weather. They afterwards employed them frequently in grinding at the handmill, (watermills not being then invented;) hence nakedness, and grinding at the mill, and sitting on the ground (the posture in which they wrought) express captivity. ‘Descend and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon; take the millstones-thy nakedness shall be uncovered,’ Isaiah 47:1-3.

“The marriage relation supplied metaphors to express the relation or covenant between God and his people. On the other hand adultery, infidelity to the marriage bed, etc., denoted any breach of covenant with God, particularly the love and worship of idols. ‘Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord, for I am married unto you,’ Jeremiah 3:14. ‘There were two women, the daughters of one mother, and they committed whoredoms-with their idols have they committed adultery,’ etc., Ezekiel 23:2-37.

“The debility and stupefaction caused by intoxicating liquors suggested very apt images to express the terrible effects of the Divine judgments on those who are the unhappy objects of them. ‘Thou shalt be filled with

drunkenness, with the cup of thy sister Samaria,' Ezekiel 23:33.

“From the method of refining metals in the furnace images are often borrowed to denote the judgments inflicted by God on his people, with a view to cleanse them from their sins, as metal from its dross. ‘Israel is dross in the midst of the furnace,’ Ezekiel 22:18. ‘He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver,’ Malachi 3:3.

“Among the other few arts from which the Hebrew poets derive some of their images, are those of the fuller and potter, Malachi 3:2, etc.; Jeremiah 18:1, etc.; of which the application is obvious. No less so is that of images derived from fishing, fowling, and the implements belonging to them; the hook, net, pit, snare, etc., which generally denote captivity or destruction. ‘I will send for many fishers, and they shall fish them; and for many hunters, and they shall hunt them; for their iniquity is not hid from mine eyes,’ Jeremiah 16:16, 17. ‘I will put hooks to thy jaws,’ Ezekiel 29:4. ‘Fear, and the pit, and the snare, are upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth,’ Isaiah 24:17.

“A few images are derived from building, as when the Messiah is denoted by a foundation and corner-stone, Isaiah 28:16. The next verse describes the rectitude of judgment by metaphors borrowed from the line and plummet; and by building with precious stones is denoted a very high degree of prosperity, whether applied to church or state, Isaiah 54:11, 12.

“III. Religion, and things connected with it, furnished many images to the sacred poets.

“From the temple and its pompous service, from the tabernacle, shechinah, mercy-seat, etc., are derived a variety of images, chiefly serving to denote the glory of the Christian Church, the excellency of its worship, God’s favor towards it, and his constant presence with it; the prophets speaking to the Jews in terms accommodated to their own ideas. ‘And the Lord will create upon every dwelling-place of Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for upon all the glory shall be a covering,’ Isaiah 4:5. ‘Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean,’ Ezekiel 36:25.

“The ceremonial law, and especially its distinctions between things clean and unclean, furnished a number of images, all obvious in their application. ‘Wash ye, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings,’ Isaiah 1:16. ‘Their way was before me as the uncleanness of a removed woman,’ Ezekiel 36:17.

“The killing of sacrifices and feasting upon them, serve as metaphors for slaughter. ‘The Lord hath a sacrifice in Bozrah,’ Isaiah 34:6; Ezekiel 39:17.

“The pontifical robes, which were very splendid, suggested several images expressive of the glory of both the Jewish and Christian Church. ‘I clothed thee with brodered work,’ etc., Ezekiel 16:10. ‘He clothed me with the garments of salvation,’ Isaiah 61:10. The prophets wore a rough upper garment; false prophets wore the like, in imitation of true ones; and to this there are frequent allusions. ‘Neither shall they wear a rough garment to deceive,’ Zechariah 13:4.

“From the pots, and other vessels and utensils of the temple, are likewise borrowed a few metaphors obvious enough without explanation: ‘Every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness,’ Zechariah 14:21.

“The prophets have likewise many images that allude to the idolatrous rites of the neighboring nations, to their groves and high places, Isaiah 27:9, and to the worship paid to their idols, Baal, Molech, Chemosh, Gad, Meni, Ashtaroth, Tammuz, etc., Ezekiel 8:10-14.

“IV. Many of the metaphors and images used by the prophets are likewise borrowed from history, especially sacred.

“From the fall of angels: ‘How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning;’ Isaiah 14:12. ‘Thou art the anointed cherub, — thou wast upon the holy mountain of God;’ Ezekiel 28:14. And from the fall of man: ‘Thou hast been in Eden, the garden of God;’ ver. 13.

“From chaos: ‘I beheld the earth, and, lo! it was without form, and void; and the heavens, and they had no light;’ Jeremiah 4:23. ‘He shall stretch

over it the line of devastation, and the plummet of emptiness;’ Isaiah 34:11.

from the primitive and original sense of language; and such a necessity there is, when the plain and original sense is less proper, less suitable to the subject and context, or contrary to other scriptures.

“2. By images borrowed from the world natural the prophets frequently understand something analogous in the world politic. Thus, the sun, moon, stars, and heavenly bodies denote kings, queens, rulers, and persons in great power; their increase of splendor denotes increase of prosperity; their darkening, setting, or falling denotes a reverse of fortune, or the entire ceasing of that power or kingdom to which they refer. Great earthquakes, and the shaking of heaven and earth, denote the commotion and overthrow of kingdoms; and the beginning or end of the world, their rise or ruin.

“3. The cedars of Lebanon, oaks of Bashan, fir-trees, and other stately trees of the forest, denote kings, princes, potentates, and persons of the highest rank; briars and thorns, the common people, or those of the meanest order.

“4. High mountains and lofty hills, in like manner, denote kingdoms, republics, states, and cities; towers and fortresses signify defenders and protectors; ships of Tarshish, merchants or commercial people; and the daughter of any capital or mother city, the lesser cities or suburbs around it. Cities never conquered are farther styled virgins.

“5. The prophets likewise describe kings and kingdoms by their ensigns; as Cyrus and the Romans by an eagle, the king of Macedon by a goat, and the king of Persia by a ram; these being the figures on their respective standards, or in the ornaments of their architecture.

“6. The prophets in like manner borrow some of their images from ancient hieroglyphics, which they take in their usual acceptance: thus, a star was the emblem of a god or hero; a horn, the emblem of great power or strength; and a rod, the emblem of royalty; and they signify the same in the prophets.

other spiritual, or perhaps eternal. The prophets having thus several events in their eye, their expressions may be partly applicable to one, and partly to another; and it is not always easy to mark the transitions. Thus, the prophecies relating to the first and second restoration of the Jews, and first and second coming of our Lord, are often interwoven together; like our Savior's own prediction (Matthew 24.) concerning the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the world. What has not been fulfilled in the first, we must apply to the second; and what has been already fulfilled may often be considered as typical of what still remains to be accomplished.

“8. Almost all the prophecies of the Old Testament, whatever view they may have to nearer events, are ultimately to be referred to the New, where only we are to look for their full completion. Thus Babylon, under the Old Testament, was a type of mystical Babylon under the New; and the king of Syria, (Antiochus Epiphanes,) a type of Antichrist; the temporal enemies of the Jews, types and figures of the spiritual enemies of Christians. We must not, however, expect to find always a mystical meaning in prophecy; and when the near and most obvious meaning is plain, and gives a good sense, we need not depart from it, nor be over-curious to look beyond it.

“9. In prophecies, as in parables, we are chiefly to consider the scope and design, without attempting too minute an explication of all the poetical images and figures which the sacred writers use to adorn their style.

“10. Prophecies of a general nature are applicable by accommodation to individuals; most of the things that are spoken of the Church in general being no less applicable to its individual members.

“11. Prophecies of a particular nature, on the other hand, admit, and often require, to be extended. Thus, Edom, Moab, or any of the enemies of God's people, is often put for the whole; what is said of one being generally applicable to the rest.

“12. In like manner, what is said to or of any of God's people, on any particular occasion, is of general application and use; all that stand in the same relation to God having an interest in the same promises.

“13. A cup of intoxicating liquor is frequently used to denote the indignation of God; and the effects of such a cup, the effects of his displeasure.

“14. As the covenant of God with his people is represented under the figure of marriage; so their breach of that covenant, especially their idolatry, is represented by whoredom, adultery, and infidelity to the marriage bed; on which the prophets sometimes enlarge, to excite detestation of the crime. The epithet strange does likewise, almost always, relate to something connected with idolatry.

“15. Persons or nations are frequently said in Scripture to be related to those whom they resemble in their life and conduct. In the same manner, men are denoted by animals whose qualities they resemble. A definite number, such as three, four, seven, ten, etc., is sometimes used by the prophets for an indefinite, and commonly denotes a great many.

“16. In the reckoning of time, a day is used by the prophets to denote a year; and things still future, to denote their certainty, are spoken of as already past.

“17. When the prophets speak of the last or latter days, they always mean the days of the Messiah, or the time of the Gospel dispensation. That day means often the same, and always some period at a distance.

“18. When places are mentioned as lying north, south, east, or west, it is generally to be understood of their situation with respect to Judea or Jerusalem, when the context does not plainly restrict the scene to some other place.

“19. By the earth, or the word so translated, the prophets frequently mean the land of Judea; and sometimes, says Sir Isaac Newton, the great continent of all Asia and Africa, to which they had access by land. By the isles of the sea, on the other hand, they understood the places to which they sailed, particularly all Europe, and probably the islands and seacoasts of the Mediterranean.

“20. The greatest part of the prophetic writings was first composed in verse, and still retains, notwithstanding all the disadvantages of a literal prose translation, much of the air and cast of the original, particularly in the division of the lines, and in that peculiarity of Hebrew poetry by which the sense of one line or couplet so frequently corresponds with that of the other. Thus:—

*I will greatly rejoice in the Lord,
My soul shall be joyful in my God;
For he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation,
He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness
As a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments,
And as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.*

Isaiah 61:10.

“Attention to this peculiarity in sacred poetry will frequently lead to the meaning of many passages in the poetical parts of Scripture, in which it perpetually occurs, as the one line of a couplet, or member of a sentence, is generally a commentary on the other. Thus:—

*The Lord hath a sacrifice in Bozrah,
And a great slaughter in the land of Idumea.*

Isaiah 34:6.

“Here the metaphor in the first line is expressed in plain terms in the next: the sacrifice in Bozrah means the great slaughter in Idumea, of which Bozrah was the capital. “It must be observed that the parallelism is frequently more extended. Thus:—

*For I will pour out waters on the thirsty,
And flowing streams upon the dry ground;
I will pour out my Spirit on thy seed,
And my blessing on thine offspring.*

Isaiah 44:3.

“Here the two last lines explain the metaphor in the two preceding.”

As the gift of prophecy was the greatest which God gave to men upon earth, so the prophet, as being the immediate instrument of revealing the will of God to the people, was the greatest, the most important, the most august, venerable, and useful person in the land of Israel. *Ipsi eis exeant, says St. Augustine, philosophi ipsi sapientes, ipsi theologi, ipsi prophetae, ipsi doctores probitatis ac pietatis;* “They were to the people the philosophers, the wise men, the divines, the prophets, and the teachers of truth and godliness.” By their intercourse with God, they were his mediators with the people; and their persons, as well as their office, were considered as peculiarly sacred. They did not mix with the people, and only appeared in public when they came to announce the will of God. They were also a kind of typical persons-whatever occurred to them was instructive, so that they were for signs, metaphors, and portents.

Most of the ancient prophets were extraordinary messengers. They were not bred up to the prophetic function; as the office was immediately from God, as well as the message they were to deliver to the people, so they had no previous education, in reference to such an office, for no man knew whom the God of Israel might please to call to announce his righteousness to the people. Several of them were taken out of the walks of common life. Jonah appears to have been a private person at Gath-heper, in Galilee, before God called him to prophesy against Nineveh. Elisha was a ploughman at Abel-meholah (1 Kings 19:16) when called to the prophetic function. Zechariah appears to have been a husbandman, and a keeper of cattle, Zechariah 13:5. Amos was a herdsman of Tekoa, and a gatherer of sycamore fruit; (Amos 1:1; 7:14, 15;) and no doubt several others of the ancient prophets had an equally mean origin; but the office and the calling dignified the man. We know that our blessed Lord called not his disciples

from the higher walks or offices of life; but out of fishermen, tax-gatherers, and tent-makers, he formed evangelists and apostles.

The prophets appear to have gone in mean clothing; either sack-cloth, hair-cloth, or coats of skin appear to have been their ordinary clothing. They spoke against the pride and vain-glory of man; and their very garb and manner gave additional weight to the solemn words they delivered. They lived in a retired manner; and, when not sent on special errands, they employed their vacant time in the instruction of youth; as this is probably what we are to understand by the schools of the prophets, such as those over which Elijah, Elisha, and Samuel presided; though no doubt there were some of their disciples that were made partakers of the prophetic gift.

The prophets do not appear to have been called to a life of celibacy. Isaiah was a married man, chap. 8:3; and so was Hosea, chap. 1:2; unless we are to understand the latter case enigmatically. And that the sons of the prophets had wives, we learn from 2 Kings 4:1, etc.; and from this, as well as from the case of the apostles, we learn that the matrimonial state was never considered, either by Moses or the prophets, Christ or his apostles, as disqualifying men from officiating in the most holy offices; as we find Moses, Aaron, Isaiah, Zechariah, and Peter, all married men, and yet the most eminent of their order.

OF ISAIAH, the writer of this book, very little is known. He is supposed to have been of the tribe of Judah, and of the royal family of David. Himself says that he was son of Amoz; and others tell us that this Amoz was the son of Joash, and brother of Amaziah, king of Judah. "Of his family and tribe we know nothing," says R. D. Kimchi, "only our rabbins, of blessed memory, have received the tradition that Amoz and Amaziah were brothers;" and it is on this ground that he has been called the royal prophet. It has been also said that Isaiah gave his daughter in marriage to Manasseh, son of Hezekiah, king of Judah; and that himself was put to death by Manasseh, being sawn asunder with a wooden saw. But all these traditions stand on very slender authority, and are worthy of very little regard. Several commentators have thought that his prophecies afford presumptive evidence of his high descent and elegant education: 1. Because

his style is more correct and majestic than any of the other prophets. 2. That his frequent use of images taken from royalty is a proof that this state was familiar to him, being much at court, as he must have been, had he been the brother of the king. These things are spoken by many with much confidence; for my own part, I had rather look to his inspiration for the correctness of his language and the dignity of his sentiments, than to those very inferior helps. On the other hypothesis nothing is left to the Divine Spirit, except the mere matter of his prophecies. Suppositions of this kind are not creditable to Divine revelation.

Isaiah appears to have had two sons, who were typical in their names; one, Shear-jashub, “a remnant shall return,” chap. 7:3; and the other Maher-shalal-hash-baz, “haste to the spoil; quick to the prey;” chap. 8:3; and it is remarkable, that his wife is called a prophetess. Other matters relative to his character will appear in the notes on his prophecies.

In the notes on this book I have consulted throughout the commentary of Rabbi David Kimchi, and have made much use of Bishop Lowth, as the reader will perceive. His various readings I have re-collated with Dr. Kennicott, and B. De Rossi; in consequence of which I have been enabled in many cases to add double weight to the authorities by which the learned bishop was supported in the readings which he has either mentioned, or received into the text. Bishop Lowth could avail himself only of the collections of Dr. Kennicott—the sheets of Isaiah in the doctor’s edition of the Hebrew Bible, as they passed through the press, were sent by him to the Bishop; but the Collections of De Rossi, more numerous and more accurate than those of Dr. Kennicott, were not published till six years after the doctor had published his Bible, and about one year before this most learned and pious prelate went to his reward. I have also consulted some excellent Hebrew MSS. in my own library from six to eight hundred years old, which have afforded me additional help in estimating the worth and importance of the various readings in the above Collections of Kenicott and De Rossi, as far as they are employed in the illustration of this prophet. From the ancient English MS. Version of this prophet I have extracted several curious translations of select parts, which I have no doubt will meet with every reader’s approbation. Though I have followed Bishop Lowth chiefly, yet I have consulted the best commentators within

my reach, in order to remove doubts and clear up difficult passages, but have studied to be as brief as possible, that the sacred text might not be encumbered either with the multitude or length of the notes, nor the reader's time occupied with any thing not essentially necessary; besides, I wish to bring my work to as speedy a close as possible.

This book, according to Vitringa, is twofold in its matter: 1. Prophetical; 2. Historical.

1. The prophetical is divided into five parts: Part 1: From chap. 1: to chap. 13: is directed to the Jews and Ephraimites, and contains five prophetic discourses. Part 2: From chap. 13: to chap. 24: declares the fate of the Babylonians, Philistines, Moabites, Syrians, Egyptians, Tyrians, and others; and contains eight prophetic discourses. Part 3: From chap. 24: to chap. 36: denounces judgments on the disobedient Jews, and consoles the true followers of God. This contains three discourses. Part 4: From chap. 40: to chap. 49: refers to the Messiah and the deliverance of the Jews from the Babylonians; and contains four discourses. Part 5: From chap. 49: to the end, points out the passion, crucifixion, and glory of the Messiah, and contains five discourses.

2. The historical part begins with chap. 36., and ends with chap. 39., and relates some of the transactions of the prophet's own times. On this analysis Vitringa explains the whole prophecy. For my own part I have little or no confidence in such technical arrangements.

Calmet takes a different view of it. He divides it into eight parts, viz.: Part 1: he supposes to relate to Jotham, son of Uzziah, king of Judah: this is included in the first six chapters. The prophet inveighs against the crimes of the Jews; declares the judgments of God against them; predicts a more auspicious time, which took place under Hezekiah, who was a type of Christ. Part 2: concerns the reign of Ahaz, and comprehends the six following chapters, in which he speaks of the siege of Jerusalem by Pekah and Resin; of the birth of Immanuel, as a proof of the approaching deliverance of Judah; predicts the calamities that were to fall on the kingdoms of Syria and Israel, etc. Part 3: contains many prophecies against Babylon, the Philistines, Moabites, etc. Part 4: contains prophecies

against Egypt, Babylon, Kedar, Arabia, etc. Part 5: concerns the reign of Hezekiah, and especially the war of Sennacherib against the Jews, etc. The four historical chapters inserted here contain the account of the fulfillment of the preceding prophecy. Part 6., included in chap. 40: to 45: inclusive, contains the prophet's discourses on the existence of God, the truth and perfection of the Jewish religion, the vanity of idolatry, the return of the people from captivity, and the coming of Christ. Part 7: from chap. 49: to chap. 51., the prophet, personifying the Messiah, speaks of his sufferings, death, and burial; predicts the return from the Babylonish captivity, and the glory of the latter days. Part 8: speaks of the coming of the Messiah, and the vocation of the Gentiles; the disgrace and confusion of all false prophets and teachers; and the establishment of a pure and holy Church, etc.

I might give other analyses of this book, but it is needless; from what is before the reader he will at once see how vain all attempts of this kind are, and how foolish to make divisions and subdivisions, partitions and classifications, where the Spirit of God has given no intimations of the kind, and where even the most learned men differ in their arrangement.

“God never left his work for man to mend.” The prophecies were given as they were necessary, and no classification was ever intended. We should take them up as we find them; and humbly endeavor to find out their objects and meaning, and how far ourselves are interested in these denunciations of Divine wrath; and in those glorious promises of mercy and salvation through Him who was once the hope of Israel, and now is salvation to the ends of the earth.

Bishop Lowth's translation is by far the best that has ever been made of this sublime prophet: as he thoroughly understood his language, so he entered deeply into his spirit. Were it allowable, I should be glad to supersede what is called the authorized version, and put that of the learned bishop, with a few genuine alterations, in its place, as being abundantly more correct and nervous, rendering the sacred text more clearly, and consequently more intelligibly, so that the common reader can understand this text better without a comment, than he can the authorized version even with one. His notes, which are a treasure of learning and sound

criticism, I have almost universally preserved, intermingling them with my own; but large quotations from his notes I have distinguished by the letter L.; and I have often adopted his text, as being vastly superior to that in common use; the catch words from which follow those from the authorized version. Should a new translation of the Bible be ever published by authority, I have no doubt but, with a few alterations, that of Bishop Lowth would be adopted as the standard.

A. C. Millbrook, Sept. 24, 1823.

THE BOOK

OF THE

PROPHET ISAIAH

Chronological Notes relative to the commencement of Isaiah's prophecy

- Year from the Creation of the World, according to the computation of Archbishop Usher, 3244.
- Year from the Deluge, according to the generally received Hebrew text, 1588.
- Year from the vocation of Abram, 1161.
- Year from the foundation of Solomon's Temple, 251.
- First year of the fifth Olympiad.
- Year before the building of Rome, according to the Varronian computation, 7.
- Fifteenth year of the reign of Thurimas, king of Macedon.
- Eleventh year of the reign of Theopompus, king of Lacedaemon.
- Second year of the reign of Alyattes, king of Lydia.
- Eighteenth year of AEschylus, perpetual archon of the Athenians.
- Second year of the reign of Pekahiah, king of Israel.
- Fifty-first year of the reign of Azariah, or Uzziah, king of Judah.
- Epoch of the establishment of the Ephori at Lacedaemon by Theopompus.

CHAPTER 1

The prophet, with a boldness and majesty becoming the herald of the

Most High, begins with calling on the whole creation to attend while Jehovah speaks, 2. A charge of gross insensibility and ingratitude is then brought against the Jews, by contrasting their conduct with that of the ox and ass, the most stupid of animals, 3. This leads to an amplification of their guilt, 4; highly aggravated by their slighting the chastisements and judgments of God, though repeated till they had been left almost like Sodom and Gomorrah, 5-9. The incidental mention of those places leads to an address to the rulers and people of the Jews, under the character of princes of Sodom, and people of Gomorrah, which is no less spirited and severe than elegant and unexpected, 10. The vanity of trusting to the performance of the outward rites and ceremonies of religion is then exposed, 11-15; and the necessity of repentance and reformation is strongly enjoined, 16, 17, and urged by the most encouraging promises as well as by the most awful threatenings, 18-20. But neither of these producing the proper effect on that people who were the prophet's charge, he bitterly laments their degeneracy, 21-23; and concludes with introducing God, declaring his purpose of inflicting such heavy judgments as would entirely cut off the wicked, and excite in the righteous, who should also pass through the furnace, an everlasting shame and abhorrence of every thing connected with idolatry, the source of their misery, 24-31.

ISAIAH exercised the prophetic office during a long period of time, if he lived to the reign of Manasseh; for the lowest computation, beginning from the year in which Uzziah died, when some suppose him to have received his first appointment to that office, brings it to sixty-one years. But the tradition of the Jews, that he was put to death by Manasseh, is very uncertain; and one of their principal rabbins, Aben Ezra, Com. in Isaiah 1:1, seems rather to think that he died before Hezekiah, which is indeed more probable. It is however certain that he lived at least to the fifteenth or sixteenth year of Hezekiah; this makes the least possible term of the duration of his prophetic office about forty-eight years. The time of the delivery of some of his prophecies is either expressly marked, or sufficiently clear from the history to which they relate; that of a few others may with some probability be deduced from internal marks; from expressions, descriptions, and circumstances interwoven. It may therefore be of some use in this respect, and for the better understanding of his

prophecies in general, to give here a summary view of the history of his time.

The kingdom of Judah seems to have been in a more flourishing condition during the reigns of Uzziah and Jotham, than at any other time after the revolt of the ten tribes. The former recovered the port of Elath on the Red Sea, which the Edomites had taken in the reign of Joram. He was successful in his wars with the Philistines, and took from them several cities, Gath, Jabneh, Ashdod; as likewise against some people of Arabia Deserta, and against the Ammonites, whom he compelled to pay him tribute. He repaired and improved the fortifications of Jerusalem; and had a great army, well appointed and disciplined. He was no less attentive to the arts of peace; and very much encouraged agriculture, and the breeding of cattle. Jotham maintained the establishments and improvements made by his father; added to what Uzziah had done in strengthening the frontier places; conquered the Ammonites, who had revolted, and exacted from them a more stated and probably a larger tribute. However, at the latter end of his time, the league between Pekah, king of Israel, and Retsin, king of Syria, was formed against Judah; and they began to carry their designs into execution.

But in the reign of Ahaz his son not only all these advantages were lost, but the kingdom of Judah was brought to the brink of destruction. Pekah king of Israel overthrew the army of Ahaz, who lost in battle one hundred and twenty thousand men; and the Israelites carried away captives two hundred thousand women and children, who however were released and sent home again upon the remonstrance of the prophet Oded. After this, as it should seem, (see Vitrinpa on chap. 7:2,) the two kings of Israel and Syria, joining their forces, laid siege to Jerusalem; but in this attempt they failed of success. In this distress Ahaz called in the assistance of Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria, who invaded the kingdoms of Israel and Syria, and slew Rezin; but he was more in danger than ever from his too powerful ally; to purchase whose forbearance, as he had before bought his assistance, he was forced to strip himself and his people of all the wealth he could possibly raise from his own treasury, from the temple, and from the country. About the time of the siege of Jerusalem the Syrians took Elath, which was never after recovered. The Edomites likewise, taking

advantage of the distress of Ahaz, ravaged Judea, and carried away many captives. The Philistines recovered what they had before lost; and took many places in Judea, and maintained themselves there. Idolatry was established by the command of the king in Jerusalem, and throughout Judea; and the service of the temple was either intermitted, or converted into an idolatrous worship.

Hezekiah, his son, on his accession to the throne, immediately set about the restoration of the legal worship of God, both in Jerusalem and through Judea. He cleansed and repaired the temple, and held a solemn passover. He improved the city, repaired the fortification, erected magazines of all sorts, and built a new aqueduct. In the fourth year of his reign Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, invaded the kingdom of Israel, took Samaria, and carried away the Israelites into captivity, and replaced them by different people sent from his own country; and this was the final destruction of that kingdom, in the sixth year of the reign of Hezekiah.

Hezekiah was not deterred by this alarming example from refusing to pay the tribute to the king of Assyria, which had been imposed on Ahaz: this brought on the invasion of Sennacherib in the fourteenth year of his reign, an account of which is inserted among the prophecies of Isaiah. After a great and miraculous deliverance from so powerful an enemy, Hezekiah continued his reign in peace. He prospered in all his works, and left his kingdom in a flourishing state to his son Manasseh—a son in every respect unworthy of such a father. See Lowth.

NOTES ON CHAP. 1

Verse 1. *The vision of Isaiah*— It seems doubtful whether this title belongs to the whole book, or only to the prophecy contained in this chapter. The former part of the title seems properly to belong to this particular prophecy; the latter part, which enumerates the kings of Judah under whom Isaiah exercised his prophetic office, seems to extend it to the whole collection of prophecies delivered in the course of his ministry. Vitringa—to whom the world is greatly indebted for his learned labors on this prophet and to whom we should have owed much more if he had not

so totally devoted himself to Masoretic authority—has, I think, very judiciously resolved this doubt. He supposes that the former part of the title was originally prefixed to this single prophecy; and that, when the collection of all Isaiah’s prophecies was made, the enumeration of the kings of Judah was added, to make it at the same time a proper title to the whole book. As such it is plainly taken in 2 Chronicles 32:32, where the book of Isaiah is cited by this title: “The vision of Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz.”

The prophecy contained in this first chapter stands single and unconnected, making an entire piece of itself. It contains a severe remonstrance against the corruptions prevailing among the Jews of that time, powerful exhortations to repentance, grievous threatenings to the impenitent, and gracious promises of better times, when the nation shall have been reformed by the just judgments of God. The expression, upon the whole, is clear; the connection of the several parts easy; and in regard to the images, sentiments, and style, it gives a beautiful example of the prophet’s elegant manner of writing; though perhaps it may not be equal in these respects to many of the following prophecies.

Verse 2. *Hear, O heavens* “*Hear, O ye heavens*”— God is introduced as entering into a public action, or pleading, before the whole world, against his disobedient people. The prophet, as herald or officer to proclaim the summons to the court, calls upon all created beings, celestial and terrestrial, to attend and bear witness to the truth of his plea and the justice of his cause. The same scene is more fully displayed in the noble exordium of Psalm 1., where God summons all mankind, from east to west, to be present to hear his appeal; and the solemnity is held on Sion, where he is attended with the same terrible pomp that accompanied him on Mount Sinai:—

*“A consuming fire goes before him
And round him rages a violent tempest:
He calleth the heavens from above.
And the earth, that he may contend in judgment with his
people.”*

Psalm 50:3, 4.

By the same bold figure, Micah calls upon the mountains, that is, the whole country of Judea, to attend to him, chap. 6:1, 2:—

*“Arise, plead thou before the mountains,
And let the hills hear thy voice.
Hear, O ye mountains, the controversy of JEHOVAH;
And ye, O ye strong foundations of the earth:
For JEHOVAH hath a controversy with his people,
And he will plead his cause against Israel.”*

With the like invocation, Moses introduces his sublime song, the design of which was the same as that of this prophecy, “to testify as a witness, against the Israelites,” for their disobedience, Deuteronomy 31:21:—

*“Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak;
And let the earth hear the words of my mouth.”*

Deuteronomy 32:1.

This, in the simple yet strong oratorical style of Moses, is, “I call heaven and earth to witness against thee this day; life and death have I set before thee; the blessing and the curse: choose now life, that thou mayest live, thou and thy seed.” Deuteronomy 30:19. The poetical style, by an apostrophe, sets the personification in a much stronger light.

Hath spoken “That speaketh”— I render it in the present time, pointing it דובר dober. There seems to be an impropriety in demanding attention to a speech already delivered. But the present reading may stand, as the prophet may be here understood to declare to the people what the Lord had first spoken to him.

I have nourished— The Septuagint have *εγενησα*, “I have begotten.” Instead of גִּדְּלַתִּי giddalti, they read יָלַדְתִּי yaladti; the word little differing from the other, and perhaps more proper; which the Chaldee likewise seems to favor; “vocavi eos filios.” See Exodus 4:22; Jeremiah 31:9.

Verse 3. *The ox knoweth*— An amplification of the gross insensibility of the disobedient Jews, by comparing them with the most heavy and stupid of all animals, yet not so insensible as they. Bochart has well illustrated the comparison, and shown the peculiar force of it. “He sets them lower than the beasts, and even than the most stupid of all beasts, for there is scarcely any more so than the ox and the ass. Yet these acknowledge their master; they know the manger of their lord; by whom they are fed, not for their own, but for his good; neither are they looked upon as children, but as beasts of burden; neither are they advanced to honors, but oppressed with great and daily labors. While the Israelites, chosen by the mere favor of God, adopted as sons, promoted to the highest dignity, yet acknowledged not their Lord and their God; but despised his commandments, though in the highest degree equitable and just.” Hieroz. i., Colossians 409.

Jeremiah’s comparison to the same purpose is equally elegant, but has not so much spirit and severity as this of Isaiah.

*“Even the stork in the heavens knoweth her season;
And the turtle, and the swallow, and the crane, observe the
time of their coming:
But my people doth not know the judgment of JEHOVAH.*

Jeremiah 8:7.

Hosea has given a very elegant turn to the same image, in the way of metaphor or allegory:—

*“I drew them with human cords, with the bands of love:
And I was to them as he that lifteth up the yoke upon their
cheek;
And I laid down their fodder before them.”*

Hosea 11:4.

Salomo ben Melech thus explains the middle part of the verse, which is

somewhat obscure: “I was to them at their desire as they that have compassion on a heifer, lest she be overworked in ploughing; and that lift up the yoke from off her neck, and rest it upon her cheek that she may not still draw, but rest from her labor an hour or two in the day.”

But Israel— The Septuagint, Syriac, Aquila, Theodotion, and Vulgate, read **וְיִשְׂרָאֵל** veyisrael, BUT Israel, adding the conjunction, which being rendered as an adversative, sets the opposition in a stronger light.

Doth not know— The same ancient versions agree in adding ME, which very properly answers, and indeed is almost necessarily required to answer, the words possessor and lord preceding. **ἰσραηλ δε ME ουκ εγνων**; Sept. “Israel autem ME non cognovit,” Vulg. **ἰσραηλ δε MOY ουκ εγνων**; Aquil., Theod. The testimony of so scrupulous an interpreter as Aquila is of great weight in this case. And both his and Theodotion’s rendering is such as shows plainly that they did not add the word **MOY** to help out the sense, for it only embarrasses it. It also clearly determines what was the original reading in the old copies from which they translated. It could not be **θνεδθ** yedani, which most obviously answers to the version of the Septuagint and Vulgate, for it does not accord with that of Aquila and Theodotion. The version of these latter interpreters, however injudicious, clearly ascertains both the phrase, and the order of the words of the original Hebrew; it was **יִשְׂרָאֵל אוֹתִי לֹא יָדַע** veyisrael othi lo yada. The word **אוֹתִי** othi has been lost out of the text. The very same phrase is used by Jeremiah, chap. 4:22, **עַמִּי אוֹתִי לֹא יָדְעוּ** ammi othi lo yadau. And the order of the words must have been as above represented; for they have joined **יִשְׂרָאֵל** yisrael, with **אוֹתִי** othi, as in regimine; they could not have taken it in this sense, Israel MEUS non cognovit, had either this phrase or the order of the words been different. I have endeavored to set this matter in a clear light, as it is the first example of a whole word lost out of the text, of which the reader will find many other plain examples in the course of these notes. But Rosenmuller contends that this is unnecessary, as the passage may be translated, “Israel knows nothing: my people have no understanding.”

The Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate, read **וְעַמִּי** veammi, “and my people;”

and so likewise sixteen MSS. of Kennicott, and fourteen of De Rossi.

Verse 4. *Ah sinful nation "Degenerate"*— Five MSS., one of them ancient, read מִשְׁחָתִים *moschathim*, without the first ך yod, in hophal corrupted, not corrupters. See the same word in the same form, and in the same sense, Proverbs 25:26.

Are corrupters "Are estranged"— Thirty-two MSS., five ancient, and two editions, read נָזַר *nazoru*; which reading determines the word to be from the root זָר *zur*, to alienate, not from נָזַר *nazar*, to separate; so Kimchi understands it. See also Annotat. in Noldium, 68.

They are gone away backward "They have turned their backs upon him."— So Kimchi explains it: "they have turned unto him the back and not the face." See Jeremiah 2:27; 7:24. I have been forced to render this line paraphrastically; as the verbal translation, "they are estranged backward," would have been unintelligible.

Verse 5. *Why should ye be stricken any more "On what part,"* etc.?— The Vulgate renders על מה *al meh*, super quo, (see Job 38:6; 2 Chronicles 32:10,) upon what part. And so Abendana on Sal. Den Melech: "There are some who explain it thus: Upon what limb shall you be smitten, if you add defection? for already for your sins have you been smitten upon all of them; so that there is not to be found in you a whole limb on which you can be smitten." Which agrees with what follows: "From the sole of the foot even unto the head, there is no soundness in it:" and the sentiment and image is exactly the same with that of Ovid, Pont. 2:7, 42:—

Vix habet in nobis jam nova plaga locum.

There is no place on you for a new stripe. Or that still more expressive line of Euripides; the great force and effect of which Longinus ascribes to its close and compressed structure, analogous to the sense which it expresses:—

γῆμω κακῶν δὴ κ' οὐκετ' ἐσθ' ὀπη τιθη.

I am full of miseries: there's no room for more.

Herc. Fur. 1245, Long. sec. 40.

“On what part will ye strike again? will ye add correction?” This is addressed to the instruments of God’s vengeance; those that inflicted the punishment, who or whatsoever they were. Ad verbum certae personae intelligendae sunt, quibus ista actio quae per verbum exprimitur competit; “The words are addressed to the persons who were the agents employed in the work expressed by the original word,” as Glassius says in a similar case, Philippians Sac. 1:3, 22. See chap. 7:4.

As from ידע yada, דעה deah, knowledge; from יעץ yaats, עצה etsah, counsel; from יש yeshan, שנה shenah, sleep, etc.; so from יסר yasar is regularly derived סרה sarah, correction.

Verse 5. *The whole head is sick*— The king and the priests are equally gone away from truth and righteousness. Or, The state is oppressed by its enemies, and the Church corrupted in its rulers and in its members.

Verse 6. *They have not been closed*, etc. “*It hath not been pressed*,” etc.— The pharmaceutical art in the East consists chiefly in external applications: accordingly the prophet’s images in this place are all taken from surgery. Sir John Chardin, in his note on Proverbs 3:8, “It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones,” observes that “the comparison is taken from the plasters, ointments, oils, and frictions, which are made use of in the East upon the belly and stomach in most maladies. Being ignorant in the villages of the art of making decoctions and potions, and of the proper doses of such things, they generally make use of external medicines.”—Harmer’s Observations on Scripture, vol. 2:p. 488. And in surgery their materia medica is extremely simple, oil making the principal part of it. “In India,” says Tavernier, “they have a certain preparation of oil and melted grease, which they commonly use for the healing of wounds.” Voyage Ind. So the good Samaritan poured oil and wine on the wounds of the distressed Jew: wine, cleansing and somewhat astringent,

proper for a fresh wound; oil, mollifying and healing, Luke 10:34. Kimchi has a judicious remark here: “When various medicines are applied, and no healing takes place, that disorder is considered as coming immediately from God.”

Of the three verbs in this sentence, one is in the singular number in the text; another is singular in two MSS., (one of them ancient,) חבשה chubbeshah; and the Syriac and Vulgate render all of them in the singular number.

Verses 7-9. *Your country is desolate*— The description of the ruined and desolate state of the country in these verses does not suit with any part of the prosperous times of Uzziah and Jotham. It very well agrees with the time of Ahaz, when Judea was ravaged by the joint invasion of the Israelites and Syrians, and by the incursions of the Philistines and Edomites. The date of this prophecy is therefore generally fixed to the time of Ahaz. But on the other hand it may be considered whether those instances of idolatry which are urged in ver. 29—the worshipping in groves and gardens—having been at all times too commonly practiced, can be supposed to be the only ones which the prophet would insist upon in the time of Ahaz; who spread the grossest idolatry through the whole country, and introduced it even into the temple; and, to complete his abominations, made his son pass through the fire to Molech. It is said, 2 Kings 15:37, that in Jotham’s time “the Lord began to send against Judah Rezin—and Pekah.” If we may suppose any invasion from that quarter to have been actually made at the latter end of Jotham’s reign, I should choose to refer this prophecy to that time.

AND your cities are burned. — Nineteen of Dr. Kennicott’s MSS. and twenty-two of De Rossi’s, some of my own, with the Syriac and Arabic, add the conjunction which makes the hemistich more complete.

Verse 7. זרִים zarim at the end of the verse. This reading, though confirmed by all the ancient versions, gives us no good sense; for “your land is devoured by strangers; and is desolate, as if overthrown by strangers,” is a mere tautology, or, what is as bad, an identical comparison. Aben Ezra thought that the word in its present form might be taken for the

same with זֶרֶם **zerem**, an inundation: Schultens is of the same opinion; (see Taylor's Concord.;) and Schindler in his Lexicon explains it in the same manner: and so, says Zimchi, some explain it. Abendana endeavors to reconcile it to grammatical analogy in the following manner: "זֶרֶם **zarim** is the same with זֶרֶם **zerem**; that is, as overthrown by an inundation of waters: and these two words have the same analogy as קֶדֶם **kedem** and קָדִים **kadim**. Or it may be a concrete of the same form with שִׁכִּיר **shechir**; and the meaning will be: as overthrown by rain pouring down violently, and causing a flood." On Sal. ben Melech, in loo. But I rather suppose the true reading to be זֶרֶם **zerem**, and have translated it accordingly: the word זֶרֶם **zerim**, in the line above, seems to have caught the transcriber's eye, and to have led him into this mistake. But this conjecture of the learned prelate is not confirmed by any MS. yet discovered.

Verse 8. As a cottage in a vineyard "*As a shed in a vineyard*"— A little temporary hut covered with boughs, straw, turf, or the like materials, for a shelter from the heat by day, and the cold and dews by night, for the watchman that kept the garden or vineyard during the short season the fruit was ripening, (see Job 27:18,) and presently removed when it had served that purpose. See Harmer's Observ. 1:454. They were probably obliged to have such a constant watch to defend the fruit from the jackals. "The jackal," (chical of the Turks,) says Hasselquist, (Travels, p. 227,) "is a species of mustela which is very common in Palestine, especially during the vintage; and often destroys whole vineyards, and gardens of cucumbers." "There is also plenty of the canis vulpes, the fox, near the convent of St. John in the desert, about vintage time; for they destroy all the vines unless they are strictly watched." Ibid. p. 184. See Cant. 2:15.

Fruits of the gourd kind, melons, watermelons, cucumbers, etc., are much used and in great request in the Levant, on account of their cooling quality. The Israelites in the wilderness regretted the loss of the cucumbers and melons among the other good things of Egypt, Numbers 11:5. In Egypt the season of watermelons, which are most in request, and which the common people then chiefly live upon, lasts but three weeks. See Hasselquist, p. 256. Tavernier makes it of longer continuance: L'on y void de grands

carreaux de melons et de concombres, mais beaucoup plus de derniers, dont les Levantins font leur delices. Le plus souvent, ils les mangent sans les peler, apres quoi ils vont boire une verre d'eau. Dans toute l'Asie c'est la nourriture ordinaire du petit peuple pendant trois ou quatre mois; toute la famine en vit, et quand un enfant demand a manger, au lieu qu'en France ou ailleurs nous luy donnerions du pain, dans le Levant on luy presente un concombre, qu'il mange cru comme on le vient de cueillir. Les concombres dans le Levant ont une bonte particuliere; et quoiqu' on les mange crus, ils ne font jamais de mal; "There are to be seen great beds of melons and cucumbers, but a greater number of the latter, of which the Levantines are particularly fond. In general they eat them without taking off the rind, after which they drink a glass of water. In every part of Asia this is the aliment of the common people for three or four months; the whole family live on them; and when a child asks something to eat, instead of giving it a piece of bread, as is done in France and other countries, they present it with a cucumber, which it eats raw, as gathered. Cucumbers in the Levant are peculiarly excellent; and although eaten raw, they are seldom injurious." Tavernier, Relat. du Serrail, cap. xix.

As a lodge, etc.— That is, after the fruit was gathered; the lodge being then permitted to fall into decay. Such was the desolate, ruined state of the city.

So the *ως πολις πολιορκουμενη*; Septuagint: see also the Vulgate.

Verse 9. The Lord of hosts "*JEHOVAH God of hosts*"— As this title of God, *יהוה צבאות* Yehovah tsebaoth, "JEHOVAH of hosts, occurs here for the first time, I think it proper to note, that I translate it always, as in this place, "JEHOVAH God of hosts;" taking it as an elliptical expression for *יהוה אלהי צבאות* Yehovah Elohey tsebaoth. This title imports that JEHOVAH is the God or Lord of hosts or armies; as he is the Creator and Supreme Governor of all beings in heaven and earth, and disposeth and ruleth them all in their several orders and stations; the almighty, universal Lord.

We should have been as Sodom— As completely and finally ruined as that and the cities of the plain were, no vestige of which remains at this

day.

Verse 10. *Ye rulers of Sodom “Ye princes of Sodom”*— The incidental mention of Sodom and Gomorrah in the preceding verse suggested to the prophet this spirited address to the rulers and inhabitants of Jerusalem, under the character of princes of Sodom and people of Gomorrah. Two examples of a sort of elegant turn of the like kind may be observed in St. Paul’s Epistle to the Romans, chap. 15:4, 5, 12, 13. See Locke on the place; and see ver. 29, 30, of this chapter, which gives another example of the same.

AND-like unto Gomorrah. — The ך̄ vau is added by thirty-one of Kennicott’s MSS., twenty-nine of De Rossi’s and one, very ancient, of my own. See on ver. 6.

Verse 11. *To what purpose*, etc. “*What have I to do.*”— The prophet Amos has expressed the same sentiments with great elegance:—

*I hate, I despise your feasts;
And I will not delight in the odour of your solemnities:
Though ye offer unto me burnt-offerings
And your meat-offerings, I will not accept:
Neither will I regard the peace-offerings of your fatlings.
Take away from me the noise of your songs;
And the melody of your viols I will not hear.
But let judgment roll down like waters;
And righteousness like a mighty stream.*

Amos 5:21-24.

So has Persius; see Sat. 2:v. 71-75:—

“Quin damus id Superis, de magna quod dare lanae,” etc.

The two or three last pages of Plato’s Euthyphro contain the same idea. Sacrifices and prayers are not profitable to the offerer, nor acceptable to the gods, unless accompanied with an upright life.

Verse 11. *The fat of fed beasts*, etc.— The fat and the blood are particularly mentioned, because these were in all sacrifices set apart to God. The fat was always burnt upon the altar, and the blood was partly sprinkled, differently on different occasions, and partly poured out at the bottom of the altar. See Leviticus 4.

Verse 12. *When ye come to appear*— Instead of לראות leraoth, to appear, one MS. has לראות liroth, to see. See De Rossi. The appearing before God here refers chiefly to the three solemn annual festivals. See Exodus 23:14.

Tread any courts (no more)— So the Septuagint divide the sentence, joining the end of this verse to the beginning of the next: **πατειν την αυλην μου, ου προσθησεσθε**; “To tread my court ye shall not add-ye shall not be again accepted in worship.”

Verse 13. *The new moons and Sabbaths “The fast and the day of restraint”*— **או ועצרה** aven vaatsarah. These words are rendered in many different manners by different interpreters, to a good and probable sense by all; but I think by none in such a sense as can arise from the phrase itself, agreeably to the idiom of the Hebrew language. Instead of **או** aven, the Septuagint manifestly read **צום** tsom, **νηστειαν**, “the fast.” This Houbigant has adopted. The prophet could not well have omitted the fast in the enumeration of their solemnities, nor the abuse of it among the instances of their hypocrisy, which he has treated at large with such force and elegance in his fifty-eighth chapter. Observe, also, that the prophet Joel, (chap.i. 14, and 2:15,) twice joins together the fast and the day of restraint:—

קדשו צום קראו עצרה
atsarah kiru tsom kaddeshu

“sanctify a fast; proclaim a day of restraint:”

which shows how properly they are here joined together. **עצרה** atsarah,

“the restraint,” is rendered, both here and in other places of our English translation, “the solemn assembly.” Certain holy days ordained by the law were distinguished by a particular charge that “no servile work should be done therein;” Leviticus 28:36; Numbers 29:35; Deuteronomy 16:8. This circumstance clearly explains the reason of the name, the restraint, or the day of restraint, given to those days.

If I could approve of any translation of these two words which I have met with, it should be that of the Spanish version of the Old Testament, made for the use of the Spanish Jews: Tortura y detenimento, “it is a pain and a constraint unto me.” But I still think that the reading of the Septuagint is more probably the truth.

Verse 15. *When ye spread*— The Syriac, Septuagint, and a MS., read **בפרשכם** beparshechem, without the conjunction ו vau.

Your hands “For your hands”— **αι γαρ χειρες**-Sept. Manus enim vestrae-Vulg. They seem to have read **כי ידיכם** ki yedeychem.

Verse 16. *Wash you*— Referring to the preceding verse, “your hands are full of blood;” and alluding to the legal washing commanded on several occasions. See Leviticus 14:8, 9, 47.

Verse 17. *Relieve the oppressed “Amend that which is corrupted”*— **אשרו חמוץ** asheru chamots. In rendering this obscure phrase I follow Bochart, (Hieroz. Part i., lib. ii., cap. 7.,) though I am not perfectly satisfied with this explication of it.

Verse 18. *Though your sins be as scarlet*— **שני** shani, “scarlet or crimson,” dibaphum, twice dipped, or double dyed; from **שנה** shanah, iterare, to double, or to do a thing twice. This derivation seems much more probable than that which Salmasius prefers from **שנ** shanan, acuere, to whet, from the sharpness and strength of the color, **οξυφοινικον**; **תלע** tela, the same; properly the worm, vermiculus, (from whence vermeil,) for this color was produced from a worm or insect which grew in a coccus or excrescence of a shrub of the ilex kind, (see Plin. Nat. Hist. 16:8,) like the

cochineal worm in the opuntia of America. See Ulloa's Voyage book v., chap. ii., note to page 342. There is a shrub of this kind that grows in Provence and Languedoc, and produces the like insect, called the kermes oak, (see Miller, Dict. Quercus,) from kermez, the Arabic word for this color, whence our word crimson is derived.

*“Neque amissos colores
Lana refert medicata fuco,”*

says the poet, applying the same image to a different purpose. To discharge these strong colors is impossible to human art or power; but to the grace and power of God all things, even much more difficult are possible and easy. Some copies have כֶּשָׁנִים keshanim, “like crimson garments.”

Though they be red, etc.— But the conjunction וּ vau is added by twenty-one of Kennicott's, and by forty-two of De Rossi's MSS., by some early editions, with the Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate, and Arabic. It makes a fuller and more emphatic sense. “AND though they be red as crimson,” etc.

Verse 19. *Ye shall eat the good of the land*— Referring to ver. 7: it shall not be “devoured by strangers.”

Verse 20. *Ye shall be devoured with the sword* “*Ye shall be food for the sword*”— The Septuagint and Vulgate read תֹּחַלְכֶם tochalchem, “the sword shall devour you;” which is of much more easy construction than the present reading of the text.

The Chaldee seems to read בְּחֶרֶב אוֹיֵב תֹּאכְלוּ bechereb oyeb teachelu, “ye shall be consumed by the sword of the enemy.” The Syriac also reads בְּחֶרֶב beehereb and renders the verb passively. And the rhythmus seems to require this addition. — Dr. JUBB.

Verse 21. *Become a harlot*— See before, the Discourse on the Prophetic Style; and see Lowth's Comment on the place, and De Sacr. Poes. Hebr.

Prael. xxxi.

Verse 22. Wine mixed with water— An image used for the adulteration of wines, with more propriety than may at first appear, if what Thevenot says of the people of the Levant of late times were true of them formerly. He says, “They never mingle water with their wine to drink; but drink by itself what water they think proper for abating the strength of the wine.” “Lorsque les Persans boivent du vin, ils le prennent tout pur, a la facon des Levantins, qui ne le melent jamais avec de l’eua; mais en beuvant du vin, de temps en temps ils prennent un pot d’eau, et en boivent de grand traits.” Voyage, part ii., 54:ii., chap. 10. “Ils (les Turcs) n’y meslent jamais d’eau, et se moquent des Chretiens qui en mettent, ce qui leur semble tout a fait ridicule.” Ibid. part i., chap. 24. “The Turks never mingle water with their wine, and laugh at the Christians for doing it, which they consider altogether ridiculous.”

It is remarkable that whereas the Greeks and Latins by mixed wine always understood wine diluted and lowered with water, the Hebrews on the contrary generally mean by it wine made stronger and more inebriating by the addition of higher and more powerful ingredients, such as honey, spices, defrutum, (or wine inspissated by boiling it down to two-thirds or one-half of the quantity,) myrrh, mandragora, opiates, and other strong drugs. Such were the exhilarating, or rather stupifying, ingredients which Helen mixed in the bowl together with the wine for her guests oppressed with grief to raise their spirits, the composition of which she had learned in Egypt:—

αυτικ' αρ' εις βαλε φαρμακον, ενθεν επινον,
νηπενθες τ' αχολον τε, κακων επιληθον απαντων.

HOMER. Odyss. lib. iv., ver. 220.

*“Meanwhile, with genial joy to warm the soul,
Bright Helen mix’d a mirth-inspiring bowl;
Temper’d with drugs of sovereign use, to assuage
The boiling bosom of tumultuous rage:
Charm’d with that virtuous draught, the exalted mind*

*All sense of wo delivers to the wind.”**POPE*

Such was the “spiced wine and the juice of pomegranates,” mentioned Cant. 8:2. And how much the Eastern people to this day deal in artificial liquors of prodigious strength, the use of wine being forbidden, may be seen in a curious chapter of Kempfer upon that subject. Amoen. Exot. Fasc. iii., Obs. 15.

Thus the drunkard is properly described, Proverbs 23:30, as one “that seeketh mixed wine,” and “is mighty to mingle strong drink,” Isaiah 5:22. And hence the poet took that highly poetical and sublime image of the cup of God’s wrath, called by Isaiah 51:17, the “cup of trembling,” causing intoxication and stupefaction, (see Chappelow’s note on Hariri, p. 33,) containing, as St. John expresses in Greek the Hebrew idea with the utmost precision, though with a seeming contradiction in terms, **κεκερασμενον ακρατον**, merum mixtum, pure wine made yet stronger by a mixture of powerful ingredients; Revelation 14:10. “In the hand of JEHOVAH,” saith the psalmist, Psalm 75:8, “there is a cup, and the wine is turbid: it is full of a mixed liquor, and he poureth out of it,” or rather, “he poureth it out of one vessel into another,” to mix it perfectly, according to the reading expressed by the ancient versions, **וַיַּגֵּר מִזֶּה אֶל זֶה** vaiyagger mizzeh al zeh, and he pours it from this to that, “verily the dregs thereof,” the thickest sediment of the strong ingredients mingled with it, “all the ungodly of the earth shall wring them out, and drink them.”

R. D. Kimchi says, “The current coin was adulterated with brass, tin, and other metals, and yet was circulated as good money. The wine also was adulterated with water in the taverns, and sold notwithstanding for pure wine.”

Verse 23. Companions of thieves “Associates”— The Septuagint, Vulgate, and four MSS., read **חבר** chabrey without the conjunction **ו** vau.

Verse 24. Ah, I will ease me “Aha! I will be eased”— Anger, arising from a sense of injury and affront, especially from those who, from every

consideration of duty and gratitude, ought to have behaved far otherwise, is an uneasy and painful sensation: and revenge, executed to the full on the offenders, removes that uneasiness, and consequently is pleasing and quieting, at least for the present. Ezekiel, chap. 5:13, introduces God expressing himself in the same manner:—

*“And mine anger shall be fully accomplished;
And I will make my fury rest upon them;
And I will give myself ease.”*

This is a strong instance of the metaphor called anthropopathia, by which, throughout the Scriptures, as well the historical as the poetical parts, the sentiments sensations, and affections, the bodily faculties qualities, and members, of men, and even of brute animals, are attributed to God, and that with the utmost liberty and latitude of application. The foundation of this is obvious; it arises from necessity; we have no idea of the natural attributes of God, of his pure essence, of his manner of existence, of his manner of acting: when therefore we would treat on these subjects, we find ourselves forced to express them by sensible images. But necessity leads to beauty; this is true of metaphor in general, and in particular of this kind of metaphor, which is used with great elegance and sublimity in the sacred poetry; and what is very remarkable, in the grossest instances of the application of it, it is generally the most striking and the most sublime. The reason seems to be this: when the images are taken from the superior faculties of the human nature, from the purer and more generous affections, and applied to God, we are apt to acquiesce in the notion; we overlook the metaphor, and take it as a proper attribute; but when the idea is gross and offensive as in this passage of Isaiah, where the impatience of anger and the pleasure of revenge is attributed to God, we are immediately shocked at the application; the impropriety strikes us at once, and the mind, casting about for something in the Divine nature analogous to the image, lays hold on some great, obscure, vague idea, which she endeavors to comprehend, and is lost in immensity and astonishment. See De Sacr. Poesi. Hebr. Prael. 16:sub. fin., where this matter is treated and illustrated by examples.

Verse 25. *I will turn my hand upon thee*— So the common version; and

this seems to be a metaphor taken from the custom of those who, when the metal is melted, strike off the scoriae with their hand previously to its being poured out into the mould. I have seen this done with the naked hand, and no injury whatever sustained.

Purge away thy dross “In the furnace”— The text has כַּבֹּר cabor, which some render “as with soap;” as if it were the same with כְּבֹרִית keborith; so Kimchi; but soap can have nothing to do with the purifying of metals. Others, “according to purity,” or “purely,” as our version. Le Clerc conjectured that the true reading is כְּכֹר kechur, “as in the furnace;” see Ezekiel 22:18, 20. Dr. Durell proposes only a transposition of letters כַּכֹּר to the same sense; and so likewise Archbishop Secker. That this is the true reading is highly probable.

Verse 26. I will restore— “This,” says Kimchi, “shall be in the days of the Messiah, in which all the wicked shall cease, and the remnant of Israel shall neither do iniquity, nor speak lies.” What a change must this be among Jews!

Afterward “And after this”— The Septuagint, Syriac, Chaldee, and eighteen MSS., and one of my own, very ancient, add the conjunction וַ vau, AND.

Verse 27. With judgment “In judgment”— By the exercise of God’s strict justice in destroying the obdurate, (see ver. 28,) and delivering the penitent in righteousness; by the truth and faithfulness of God in performing his promises.”

Verse 29. For they shall be ashamed of the oaks “For ye shall be ashamed of the ilxes”— Sacred groves were a very ancient and favorite appendage of idolatry. They were furnished with the temple of the god to whom they were dedicated, with altars, images, and every thing necessary for performing the various rites of worship offered there; and were the scenes of many impure ceremonies, and of much abominable superstition. They made a principal part of the religion of the old inhabitants of Canaan; and the Israelites were commanded to destroy their groves, among other

monuments of their false worship. The Israelites themselves became afterwards very much addicted to this species of idolatry.

*“When I had brought them into the land,
Which I swore that I would give unto them;
Then they saw every high hill and every thick tree;
And there they slew their victims;
And there they presented the provocation of their
offerings;*

*And there they placed their sweet savor;
And there they poured out their libations.”*

EZEKIEL 20:28.

*“On the tops of the mountains they sacrifice;
And on the hills they burn incense;
Under the oak and the poplar;
And the ilex, because her shade is pleasant.”*

HOSEA 4:13.

Of what particular kinds the trees here mentioned are, cannot be determined with certainty. In regard to **הָאֵלֶךְ** ellah, in this place of Isaiah, as well as in Hosea, Celsius (Hierobot.) understands it of the terebinth, because the most ancient interpreters render it so; in the first place the Septuagint. He quotes eight places; but in three of these eight places the copies vary, some having **δρυς**, the oak, instead of **τερεβινθος**, the terebinth or turpentine tree. And he should have told us, that these same seventy render it in sixteen other places by **δρυς**, the oak; so that their authority is really against him; and the Septuagint, “stant pro quercu,” contrary to what he says at first setting out. Add to this that Symmachus, Theodotion, and Aquila, generally render it by **δρυς**, the oak; the latter only once rendering it by **τερεβινθος**, the terebinth. His other arguments seem to me not very conclusive; he says, that all the qualities of **הָאֵלֶךְ** ellah agree to the terebinth, that it grows in mountainous countries, that it is a strong tree, long-lived, large and high, and deciduous. All these qualities

agree just as well to the oak, against which he contends; and he actually attributes them to the oak in the very next section. But I think neither the oak nor the terebinth will do in this place of Isaiah, from the last circumstance which he mentions, their being deciduous, where the prophet's design seems to me to require an evergreen, otherwise the casting of its leaves would be nothing out of the common established course of nature, and no proper image of extreme distress and total desolation, parallel to that of a garden without water, that is, wholly burnt up and destroyed. An ancient, who was an inhabitant and a native of this country, understands it in like manner of a tree blasted with uncommon and immoderate heat; *velut arbores, cum frondes aestu torrente decusserunt*. Ephrem Syr. in loc., edit. Assemani. Compare Psalm 1:4; Jeremiah 17:8. Upon the whole I have chosen to make it the ilex, which word Vossius, *Etymolog.*, derives from the Hebrew אֵלֶּה *allah*, that whether the word itself be rightly rendered or not, I might at least preserve the propriety of the poetic image. — L.

By the ilex the learned prelate means the holly, which, though it generally appears as a sort of shrub, grows, in a good soil, where it is unmolested, to a considerable height. I have one in my own garden, rising three stems from the root, and between twenty and thirty feet in height. It is an evergreen.

Verse 29. *For they shall be ashamed* “*For ye shall be ashamed*”— תבושו *teboshu*, in the second person, Vulgate, Chaldee, three MSS., one of my own, ancient, and one edition; and in agreement with the rest of the sentence.

Verse 30. *Whose leaf* “*Whose leaves*”— Twenty-six of Kennicott's, twenty-four of De Rossi's, one ancient, of my own, and seven editions, read אֵלֶּיהָ *aleyha*, in its full and regular form. This is worth remarking, as it accounts for a great number of anomalies of the like kind, which want only the same authority to rectify them.

As a garden that hath no water “*A garden wherein is no water.*”— In the hotter parts of the Eastern countries, a constant supply of water is so absolutely necessary for the cultivation and even for the preservation and

existence of a garden, that should it want water but for a few days, every thing in it would be burnt up with the heat, and totally destroyed. There is therefore no garden whatever in those countries but what has such a certain supply, either from some neighboring river, or from a reservoir of water collected from springs, or filled with rain water in the proper season, in sufficient quantity to afford ample provision for the rest of the year.

Moses, having described the habitation of man newly created as a garden planted with every tree pleasant to the sight and good for food, adds, as a circumstance necessary to complete the idea of a garden, that it was well supplied with water, "And a river went out of Eden to water the garden;" Genesis 2:10: see also 13:10.

That the reader may have a clear notion of this matter, it will be necessary to give some account of the management of their gardens in this respect.

"Damascus," says Maundrell, p. 122, "is encompassed with gardens, extending no less, according to common estimation, than thirty miles round; which makes it look like a city in a vast wood. The gardens are thick set with fruit trees of all kinds, kept fresh and verdant by the waters of the Barrady, (the Chrysorrhoeas of the ancients,) which supply both the gardens and city in great abundance. This river, as soon as it issues out from between the cleft of the mountain before mentioned into the plain, is immediately divided into three streams; of which the middlemost and biggest runs directly to Damascus, and is distributed to all the cisterns and fountains of the city. The other two (which I take to be the work of art) are drawn round, one to the right hand, and the other to the left, on the borders of the gardens, into which they are let as they pass, by little currents, and so dispersed all over the vast wood, insomuch that there is not a garden but has a fine quick stream running through it. The Barrady is almost wholly drunk up by the city and gardens. What small part of it escapes is united, as I was informed, in one channel again on the southeast side of the city; and, after about three or four hours' course finally loses itself in a bog there, without ever arriving at the sea." This was likewise the case in former times, as Strabo, lib. xvi., Pliny, lib. 5:18, testify; who say, "that this river was expended in canals, and drunk up by watering the place."

“The best sight,” says the same Maundrell, p. 39, “that the palace of the emir of Beroot, anciently Berytus, affords, and the worthiest to be remembered, is the orange garden. It contains a large quadrangular plat of ground, divided into sixteen lesser squares, four in a row, with walks between them. The walks are shaded with orange trees of a large spreading size. Every one of these sixteen lesser squares in the garden was bordered with stone; and in the stone work were troughs, very artificially contrived, for conveying the water all over the garden; there being little outlets cut at every tree for the stream as it passed by to flow out and water it.” The royal gardens at Ispahan are watered just in the same manner, according to Kempfer’s description, Amoen. Exot., p. 193.

This gives us a clear idea of the פלגי מים palgey mayim, mentioned in the first Psalm, and other places of Scripture, “the divisions of waiters,” the waters distributed in artificial canals; for so the phrase properly signifies. The prophet Jeremith, chap. 17:8, has imitated, and elegantly amplified, the passage of the psalmist above referred to:—

*“He shall be like a tree planted by the water side,
And which sendeth forth her roots to the aqueduct.
She shall not fear, when the heat cometh;
But her leaf shall be green;
And in the year of drought she shall not be anxious,
Neither shall she cease from bearing fruit.”*

From this image the son of Sirach, Eccles. 24:30, 31, has most beautifully illustrated the influence and the increase of religious wisdom in a well prepared heart.

*“I also come forth as a canal from a river,
And as a conduit flowing into a paradise.
I said, I will water my garden,
And I will abundantly moisten my border:
And, lo! my canal became a river,
And my river became a sea.”*

This gives us the true meaning of the following elegant proverb, Proverbs 21:1:—

“The heart of the king is like the canals of waters in the hand of JEHOVAH; Whithersoever it pleaseth him, he inclineth it.”

The direction of it is in the hand of JEHOVAH, as the distribution of the water of the reservoir through the garden by different canals is at the will of the gardener.

*“Et, cum exustus ager morientibus aestuat herbis,
Ecce supercilio clivosi tramitis undam
Elicit: illa cadens raucum per levia murmur
Saxa ciet, scatebrisque arentia temperat arva.”*

Virg., Georg. 1:107.

*“Then, when the fiery suns too fiercely play,
And shrivelled herbs on withering stems decay,
The wary ploughman on the mountain’s brow
Undams his watery stores; huge torrents flow;
And, rattling down the rocks, large moisture yield,
Tempering the thirsty fever of the field.”*

DRYDEN.

Solomon, Ecclesiastes 2:1, 6, mentions his own works of this kind:—

*“I made me gardens, and paradises;
And I planted in them all kinds of fruit trees.
I made me pools of water,
To water with them the grove flourishing with trees.”*

Maundrell, p. 88, has given a description of the remains, as they are said to be, of these very pools made by Solomon, for the reception and preservation of the waters of a spring, rising at a little distance from them; which will give us a perfect notion of the contrivance and design of such

reservoirs. “As for the pools, they are three in number, lying in a row above each other; being so disposed that the waters of the uppermost may descend into the second, and those of the second into the third. Their figure is quadrangular, the breadth is the same in all, amounting to about ninety paces. In their length there is some difference between them; the first being about one hundred and sixty paces long, the second, two hundred, and the third, two hundred and twenty. They are all lined with wall and plastered; and contain a great depth of water.”

The immense works which were made by the ancient kings of Egypt for recovering the waters of the Nile, when it overflowed, for such uses, are well known. But there never was a more stupendous work of this kind than the reservoir of Saba, or Merab, in Arabia Felix. According to the tradition of the country, it was the work of Balkis, that queen of Sheba who visited Solomon. It was a vast lake formed by the collection of the waters of a torrent in a valley, where, at a narrow pass between two mountains, a very high mole or dam was built. The water of the lake so formed had near twenty fathoms depth; and there were three sluices at different heights, by which, at whatever height the lake stood, the plain below might be watered. By conduits and canals from these sluices the water was constantly distributed in due proportion to the several lands; so that the whole country for many miles became a perfect paradise. The city of Saba, or Merab, was situated immediately below the great dam; a great flood came, and raised the lake above its usual height; the dam gave way in the middle of the night; the waters burst forth at once, and overwhelmed the whole city, with the neighboring towns and people. The remains of eight tribes were forced to abandon their dwellings, and the beautiful valley became a morass and a desert. This fatal catastrophe happened long before the time of Mohammed, who mentions it in the Koran, chap. 34: ver. 15. See also Sale, Prelim. s. 1:p. 10, and Michaelis, *Quest. aux Voyag.* Daniel No. 94. Niebuhr, *Descrip. de l’Arabie.* p. 240. — L.

CHAPTER 2

Prophecy concerning the kingdom of the Messiah, and the conversion of the Gentile world, 1-5. Great wickedness and idolatry of the unbelieving Jews, 6-9. Terrible consternation that will seize the wicked, who shall in vain seek for rocks and mountains to hide them from the face of God in the day of his judgments, 10-17. Total destruction of idolatry in consequence of the establishment of Messiah's kingdom, 18-21. An exhortation to put no confidence in man, 22.

The prophecy contained in the second, third, and fourth chapters, makes one continued discourse. The first five verses of chap. 2:foretell the kingdom of Messiah, the conversion of the Gentiles, and their admission into it. From the sixth verse to the end of the second chapter is foretold the punishment of the unbelieving Jews for their idolatrous practices, their confidence in their own strength, and distrust of God's protection; and moreover the destruction of idolatry, in consequence of the establishment of Messiah's kingdom. The whole of the third chapter, with the first verse of the fourth, is a prophecy of the calamities of the Babylonian invasion and captivity; with a particular amplification of the distress of the proud and luxurious daughters of Sion; chap. 4:2-6 promises to the remnant, which shall have escaped this severe purgation, a future restoration to the favor and protection of God.

This prophecy was probably delivered in the time of Jotham, or perhaps in that of Uzziah, as Isaiah is said to have prophesied in his reign; to which time not any of his prophecies is so applicable as that of these chapters. The seventh verse of the second, and the latter part of the third chapter, plainly point out times in which riches abounded, and luxury and delicacy prevailed. Plenty of silver and gold could only arise from their commerce; particularly from that part of it which was carried on by the Red Sea. This circumstance seems to confine the prophecy within the limits above mentioned, while the port of Elath was in their hands; it was lost under Ahaz, and never recovered.

NOTES ON CHAP. 2

Verse 2. In the last days “In the latter days”— “Wherever the latter times are mentioned in Scripture, the days of the Messiah are always meant,” says Kimchi on this place: and, in regard to this place, nothing can be more clear and certain. And the mountain of the Lord’s house, says the same author, is Mount Moriah, on which the temple was built. The prophet Micah, chap. 4:1-4, has repeated this prophecy of the establishment of the kingdom of Christ, and of its progress to universality and perfection, in the same words, with little and hardly any material variation: for as he did not begin to prophesy till Jotham’s time, and this seems to be one of the first of Isaiah’s prophecies, I suppose Micah to have taken it from hence. The variations, as I said, are of no great importance. Ver. 2. **הוא hu**, after **ונשא venissa**, a word of some emphasis, may be supplied from Micah, if dropped in Isaiah. An ancient MS. has it here in the margin. It has in like manner been lost in chap. 53:4, (see note on the place,) and in Psalm 22:29, where it is supplied by the Syriac, and Septuagint. Instead of **כל הגוים col haggoyim**, all the nations, Micah has only **עמים ammim**, peoples; where the Syriac has **כל עמים col ammim**, all peoples, as probably it ought to be. Ver. 3. For the second **אל el**, read **ואל veal**, seventeen MSS., one of my own, ancient, two editions, the Septuagint, Vulgate, Syriac, Chaldee, and so Micah, 4:2. Ver. 4. Micah adds **עד רחוק ad rachok**, afar off, which the Syriac also reads in this parallel place of Isaiah. It is also to be observed that Micah has improved the passage by adding a verse, or sentence, for imagery and expression worthy even of the elegance of Isaiah:—

*“And they shall sit every man under his vine,
And under his fig tree, and none shall affright them:
For the mouth of JEHOVAH, God of hosts, hath spoken it.”*

The description of well established peace, by the image of “beating their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks,” is very poetical. The Roman poets have employed the same image, Martial, 14:34. “Falx ex ense.”

*“Pax me certa ducis placidos curvavit in usus:
Agricolae nunc sum; militis ante fui.”*

“Sweet peace has transformed me. I was once the property of the soldier, and am now the property of the husbandman.”

The prophet Joel, chap. 3:10, hath reversed it, and applied it to war prevailing over peace:—

*“Beat your ploughshares into swords,
And your pruning-hooks into spears.”*

And so likewise the Roman poets:—

— *Non ullus aratro
Dignus honos: squalent abductis arva colonis,
Et curvae rigidum falces conflantur in ensem.*

Virg., Georg. 1:506.

“Agriculture has now no honor: the husbandmen being taken away to the wars, the fields are overgrown with weeds, and the crooked sickles are straightened into swords.”

*Bella diu tenuere viros: erat aptior ensis
Vomere: cedebat taurus arator equo
Sarcula cessabant; versique in pila ligones;
Factaque de rastri pondere cassis erat.*

Ovid, Fast. 1:697.

“War has lasted long, and the sword is preferred to the plough. The bull has given place to the war-horse; the weeding-hooks to pikes; and the harrow-pins have been manufactured into helmets.”

The prophet Ezekiel, chap. 17:22-24, has presigned the same great event

with equal clearness, though in a more abstruse form, in an allegory; from an image, suggested by the former part of the prophecy, happily introduced, and well pursued:—

***“Thus saith the Lord JEHOVAH:
I myself will take from the shoot of the lofty cedar,
Even a tender scion from the top of his scions will I pluck
off:***

***And I myself will plant it on a mountain high and
eminent.***

***On the lofty mountain of Israel will I plant it;
And it shall exalt its branch, and bring forth fruit,
And it shall become a majestic cedar:
And under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing;
In the shadow of its branches shall they dwell:
And all the trees of the field shall know,
That I JEHOVAH have brought low the high tree;
Have exalted the low tree;
Have dried up the green tree;
And have made the dry tree to flourish:
I JEHOVAH have spoken it, and will do it.”***

The word **וַנְתַּתִּי** venathatti, in this passage, ver. 22, as the sentence now stands, appears incapable of being reduced to any proper construction or sense. None of the ancient versions acknowledge it, except Theodotion, and the Vulgate; and all but the latter vary very much from the present reading of this clause. Houbigant’s correction of the passage, by reading instead of **וַנְתַּתִּי** venathatti, **וַיִּנְקֶת** veyoneketh, and a tender scion which is not very unlike it, perhaps better **וַיִּנְקֶ** veyonek, with which the adjective **רַךְ** rach will agree without alteration—is ingenious and probable; and I have adopted it in the above translation. — L.

Verse 3. To the house— The conjunction **וַ** vau is added by nineteen of Kennicott’s, thirteen of De Rossi’s MSS., one of my own, and two

editions, the Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate, Arabic, and some copies of the Targum; AND to the house. It makes the sentence more emphatic.

He will teach us of his ways— Unless God grant a revelation of his will, what can we know?

We will walk in his paths— Unless we purpose to walk in the light, of what use can that light be to us?

For out of Zion shall go forth the law— In the house of God, and in his ordinances only can we expect to hear the pure doctrines of revelation preached. 1. God alone can give a revelation of his own will. 2. We must use the proper means in order to know this will. 3. We should know it in order to do it. 4. We should do it in order to profit by it. 5. He who will not walk in the light when God vouchsafes it, shall be shut up in everlasting darkness. 6. Every man should help his neighbor to attain that light, life, and felicity: “Come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord.”

Verse 4. *Neither shall they learn war any more.*— If wars are necessary, how deep must that fall be that renders them so! But what a reproach to humanity is the trade of war! Men are regularly instructed in it, as in any of the necessary arts.

***“How to dislodge most souls from their frail shrines
By bomb, sword, ball, and bayonet, is the art
Which some call great and glorious!”***

And is this a necessary part of a finished education in civilized society? O Earth! Earth! Earth!

Verse 6. *They be replenished “And they multiply”*— Seven MSS. and one edition, for **שפיקו** yaspiku, read **שפיהו** yaspichu, “and have joined themselves to the children of strangers; “ that is, in marriage or worship. — Dr. JUBB. So Vulg., adhaeserunt. Compare chap. 14:1. But the very learned professor Chevalier Michaelis has explained the word **יספחו** yesupachu, Job 30:7, (German translation, note on the place,) in another manner; which perfectly well agrees with that place, and perhaps will be

found to give as good a sense here. ספִּיחַ saphiach, the noun, means corn springing up, not from the seed regularly sown on cultivated land, but in the untilled field, from the scattered grains of the former harvest. This, by an easy metaphor, is applied to a spurious brood of children irregularly and casually begotten. The Septuagint seem to have understood the verb here in this sense, reading it as the Vulgate seems to have done. This justifies their version, which it is hard to account for in any other manner: **καὶ τέκνα πολλὰ ἀλλοφυλὰ ἐγενήθη αὐτοῖς**. Compare Hosea 5:7, and the Septuagint there. But instead of **וּבִלְדֵי** ubeyaldey, “and in the children,” two of Kennicott’s and eight of De Rossi’s MSS. have **וּכִילְדֵי** ucheyaldey, “and as the children.” And they sin impudently as the children of strangers. See De Rossi.

And are soothsayers “*They are filled with diviners*”— Hebrews “They are filled from the east;” or “more than the east.” The sentence is manifestly imperfect. The Septuagint, Vulgate, and Chaldee, seem to have read **כַּמְקַדֵּם** kemikkedem; and the latter, with another word before it, signifying idols; “they are filled with idols as from of old.” Houbigant, for **מִקְדָּם** mikkedem, reads **מִקְסָם** mikkesem, as Brentius had proposed long ago. I rather think that both words together give us the true reading: **מִקְדָּם** mikkedem, **מִקְסָם** mikkesem, “with divination from the east;” and that the first word has been by mistake omitted, from its similitude to the second.

Verse 7. Their land is also full of horses “*And his land is filled with horses*”— This was in direct contradiction to God’s command in the law: “But he (the king) shall not multiply horses to himself; nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses; neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold,” Deuteronomy 17:16, 17. Uzziah seems to have followed the example of Solomon, see 1 Kings 10:26-29, who first transgressed in these particulars; he recovered the port of Elath on the Red Sea, and with it that commerce which in Solomon’s days had “made silver and gold as plenteous at Jerusalem as stones,” 2 Chronicles 1:15. He had an army of 307, 500 men, in which, as we may infer from the testimony of Isaiah, the chariots and horse made a considerable part. “The law above mentioned was to be a standing trial of prince and people, whether they had trust and confidence in God their

deliverer.” See Bp. Sherlock’s Discourses on Prophecy. Dissert. iv., where he has excellently explained the reason and effect of the law, and the influence which the observance or neglect of it had on the affairs of the Israelites.

Verse 8. *Their land also is full of idols* “*And his land is filled with idols*”— Uzziah and Fotham are both said, 2 Kings 15:3, 4, 34, 35, “to have done that which was right in the sight of the Lord;” that is, to have adhered to and maintained the legal worship of God, in opposition to idolatry and all irregular worship; for to this sense the meaning of that phrase is commonly to be restrained; “save that the high places were not removed where the people still sacrificed and burned incense.” There was hardly any time when they were quite free from this irregular and unlawful practice, which they seem to have looked upon as very consistent with the true worship of God; and which seems in some measure to have been tolerated, while the tabernacle was removed from place to place, and before the temple was built. Even after the conversion of Manasseh, when he had removed the strange gods, commanded Judah to serve JEHOVAH the God of Israel, it is added, “Nevertheless the people did sacrifice still on the high places, yet unto JEHOVAH their God only,” 2 Chronicles 33:17. The worshipping on the high places therefore does not necessarily imply idolatry; and from what is said of these two kings, Uzziah and Jotham, we may presume that the public exercise of idolatrous worship was not permitted in their time. The idols therefore here spoken of must have been such as were designed for a private and secret use. Such probably were the teraphim so often mentioned in Scripture; a kind of household gods, of human form, as it should seem, (see 1 Samuel 19:13, and compare Genesis 31:34,) of different magnitude, used for idolatrous and superstitious purposes, particularly for divination, and as oracles, which they consulted for direction in their affairs.

Verse 9. *Boweth down* “*Shall be bowed down*”— This has reference to the preceding verse. They bowed themselves down to their idols, therefore shall they be bowed down and brought low under the avenging hand of God.

Therefore forgive them not.— “And thou wilt not forgive them.”-L.

Verse 10. “*When he ariseth to strike the earth with terror.*”— On the authority of the Septuagint, confirmed by the Arabic and an ancient MS., I have added here to the text a line, which in the 19th and 21st verses is repeated together with the preceding line, and has, I think, evidently been omitted by mistake in this place. The MS. here varies only in one letter from the reading of the other two verses; it has בארץ baarets, instead of הארץ haarets. None of De Rossi’s MSS. confirm this addition. The line added is, When he ariseth to strike the earth with terror.

Verse 11. *Be humbled*— “שפלו ושאח שפלה ושאח” shaphel veshach, read שפלו ושאח shaphelu shach.”—Dr. Durell. Which rectifies the grammatical construction. No MS. or version confirms this reading.

Verses 13-16. *And upon all the cedars “Even against all the cedars”*— Princes, potentates, rulers, captains, rich men, etc. — So Kimchi. These verses afford us a striking example of that peculiar way of writing, which makes a principal characteristic of the parabolical or poetical style of the Hebrews, and in which the prophets deal so largely, namely, their manner of exhibiting things Divine, spiritual, moral, and political, by a set of images taken from things natural, artificial, religious, historical, in the way of metaphor or allegory. Of these nature furnishes much the largest and the most pleasing share; and all poetry has chiefly recourse to natural images, as the richest and most powerful source of illustration. But it may be observed of the Hebrew poetry in particular, that in the use of such images, and in the application of them in the way of illustration and ornament, it is more regular and constant than any other poetry whatever; that it has for the most part a set of images appropriated in a manner to the explication of certain subjects. Thus you will find, in many other places besides this before us, that cedars of Lebanon and oaks of Bashan, are used in the way of metaphor and allegory for kings, princes, potentates of the highest rank; high mountains and lofty hills, for kingdoms, republics, states, cities; towers and fortresses, for defenders and protectors, whether by counsel or strength, in peace or war; ships of Tarshish and works of art, and invention employed in adorning them, for merchants, men enriched by commerce, and abounding in all the luxuries

and elegances of life, such as those of Tyre and Sidon; for it appears from the course of the whole passage, and from the train of ideas, that the fortresses and the ships are to be taken metaphorically, as well as the high trees and the lofty mountains.

Ships of Tarshish— Are in Scripture frequently used by a metonymy for ships in general, especially such as are employed in carrying on traffic between distant countries, as Tarshish was the most celebrated mart of those times, frequented of old by the Phoenicians, and the principal source of wealth to Judea and the neighboring countries. The learned seem now to be perfectly well agreed that Tarshish is Tartessus, a city of Spain, at the mouth of the river Baetis, whence the Phoenicians, who first opened this trade, brought silver and gold, (Jeremiah 10:9; Ezekiel 27:12,) in which that country then abounded; and, pursuing their voyage still farther to the Cassiterides, (Bogart, Canaan, 1:c. 39; Huet, Hist. de Commerce, p. 194,) the islands of Scilly and Cornwall, they brought from thence lead and tin.

Tarshish is celebrated in Scripture, 2 Chronicles 8:17, 18; 9:21, for the trade which Solomon carried on thither, in conjunction with the Tyrians. Jehoshaphat, 1 Kings 22:48; 2 Chronicles 20:36, attempted afterwards to renew their trade. And from the account given of his attempt it appears that his fleet was to sail to Ezion-geber on the Red Sea; they must therefore have designed to sail round Africa, as Solomon's fleet had done before, (see Huet, Histoire de Commerce, p. 32,) for it was a three years' voyage, (2 Chronicles 9:21,) and they brought gold from Ophir, probably on the coast of Arabia; silver from Tartessus; and ivory, apes, and peacocks, from Africa. “אופר” Afri, Africa, the Roman termination, Africa terra. תרשיש Tarshish, some city or country in Africa. So the Chaldee on 1 Kings 22:49, where it renders תרשיש Tarshish by אפריקה Aphrichah; and compare 2 Chronicles 20:36, from whence it appears, to go to Ophir and to Tarshish is one and the same thing.”-Dr. Jubb. It is certain that under Pharaoh Necho, about two hundred years afterwards, this voyage was made by the Egyptians; Herodot. 4:42. They sailed from the Red Sea, and returned by the Mediterranean, and they performed it in three years, just the same time that the voyage under Solomon had taken up. It appears likewise from Pliny, Nat. Hist., 2:67, that the passage

round the Cape of Good Hope was known and frequently practiced before his time, by Hanno, the Carthaginian, when Carthage was in its glory; by one Eudoxus, in the time of Ptolemy Lathyrus, king of Egypt; and Coelus Antipater, a historian of good credit, somewhat earlier than Pliny, testifies that he had seen a merchant who had made the voyage from Gades to Ethiopia. The Portuguese under Vasco de Gama, near three hundred years ago, recovered this navigation, after it had been intermitted and lost for many centuries. — L.

Verse 18. *Shall utterly abolish* “*Shall disappear*”— The ancient versions and an ancient MS. read יַחַלְפוּ *yachalpu*, plural. One of my MSS. reads יַחַלּוֹפּ *yachaloph*, probably a mistake for יַחַלְפוּ *yachalpu*.

Verses 19-21. *Into the holes of the rocks* “*Into caverns of rocks*”— The country of Judea being mountainous and rocky, is full of caverns, as appears from the history of David’s persecution under Saul. At En-gedi, in particular, there was a cave so large that David with six hundred men hid themselves in the sides of it; and Saul entered the mouth of the cave without perceiving that any one was there, 1 Samuel 24: Josephus, *Antiq.*, lib. xiv., c. 15, and Bell. *Jud.*, lib. 1, c. 16, tells us of a numerous gang of banditti, who, having infested the country, and being pursued by Herod with his army retired into certain caverns almost inaccessible, near Arbela in Galilee, where they were with great difficulty subdued. Some of these were natural, others artificial. “Beyond Damascus,” says Strabo, lib. xvi., “are two mountains called Trachones, from which the country has the name of Trachonitis; and from hence towards Arabia and Iturea, are certain rugged mountains, in which there are deep caverns, one of which will hold four thousand men.” Tavernier, *Voyage de Perse*, part ii., chap. 4, speaks of a grot, between Aleppo and Bir, that would hold near three thousand horse. “Three hours distant from Sidon, about a mile from the sea, there runs along a high rocky mountain, in the sides of which are hewn a multitude of grots, all very little differing from each other. They have entrances about two feet square: on the inside you find in most or all of them a room of about four yards square. There are of these subterraneous caverns two hundred in number. It may, with probability at least, be concluded that these places were contrived for the use of the living, and not of the dead. Strabo describes the habitations of the Troglodytae to

have been somewhat of this kind.”-Maundrell, p. 118. The Horites, who dwelt in Mount Seir, were Troglodytae, as their name **הֲרִים** horim, imports. But those mentioned by Strabo were on each side of the Arabian gulf. Mohammed (Koran, chap. 15:xxvi.) speaks of a tribe of Arabians, the tribe of Thamud, “who hewed houses out of the mountains, to secure themselves.” Thus, “because of the Midianites, the children of Israel made them the dens which are in the mountains, and caves and strong holds,” Judges 6:2. To these they betook themselves for refuge in times of distress and hostile invasion: “When the men of Israel saw that they were in a strait, for the people were distressed, then the people did hide themselves in caves, and in thickets, and in rocks, and in high places, and in pits,” 1 Samuel 13:6, and see Jeremiah 41:9. Therefore “to enter into the rock, to go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth,” was to them a very proper and familiar image to express terror and consternation. The prophet Hosea, chap. 10:8, hath carried the same image farther, and added great strength and spirit to it:

*“They shall say to the mountains, Cover us;
And to the hills, Fall on us;”*

which image, together with these of Isaiah, is adopted by the sublime author of the Revelation, chap. 6:15, 16, who frequently borrows his imagery from our prophet. — L.

Verse 20. Which they made each one for himself to worship “Which they have made to worship”— The word **לו** lo, for himself, is omitted by two ancient MSS., and is unnecessary. It does not appear that any copy of the Septuagint has it, except MS. Pachom, and MS. 1:D. II., and they have **αυτοις, להם** lahem, to themselves.

To the moles— They shall carry their idols with them into the dark caverns, old ruins, or desolate places, to which they shall flee for refuge; and so shall give them up, and relinquish them to the filthy animals that frequent such places, and have taken possession of them as their proper habitation. Bellonias, Greaves, P. Lucas, and many other travelers, speak of bats of an enormous size, as inhabiting the Great Pyramid. See Harmer,

Obs., vol. ii., 455. Three MSS. express **חפרפרות** chapharperoth, the moles as one word.

Verse 22. *Cease ye from man*— Trust neither in him, nor in the gods that he has invented. Neither he, nor they, can either save or destroy.

CHAPTER 3

The whole of this chapter, with the first verse of the next, is a prophecy of those calamities that should be occasioned by the Babylonish invasion and captivity. These calamities are represented as so great and so general, that even royal honors, in such a state, are so far from being desirable, that hardly any can be got to accept them, 1-7. This visitation is declared to be the consequence of their profanity and guilt; for which the prophet farther reproveth and threatens them, 8-15. Particular amplification of the distress of the delicate and luxurious daughters of Zion; whose deplorable situation is finely contrasted with their former prosperity and ease, 16-26.

NOTES ON CHAP. 3

Verse 1. *The stay and the staff* “Every stay and support” — Hebrew, “the support masculine, and the support feminine:” that is, every kind of support, whether great or small, strong or weak. “Al Kanitz, wal-kanitzah; the wild beasts, male and female. Proverbially applied both to fishing and hunting: i.e., I seized the prey, great or little, good or bad. From hence, as Schultens observes, is explained Isaiah 3:1, literally, the male and female stay: i.e., the strong and weak, the great and small.”-Chappelow, note on Hariri, Assembly 1:Compare Ecclesiastes 2:8.

The Hebrew words **משע ומשענה** mashen umashenah come from the same root **שע** shaan, to lean against, to incline, to support; and here, being masculine and feminine, they may signify all things necessary for the support both of man and woman. My old MS. understands the staff and stay as meaning particular persons, and translates the verse thus: Lo forsoth, the Lordschip Lord of Hoostis schal don away fro Jerusalem and fro Juda the stalworth and the stronge.

The two following verses, 2, 3, are very clearly explained by the sacred

historian's account of the event, the captivity of Jehoiachin by Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon: "And he carried away all Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valor, even ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths; none remained save the poorest sort of the people of the land," 2 Kings 24:14. Which is supplied by our version.

Verse 4. *I will give children to be their princes*"*I will make boys their princes*"— This also was fully accomplished in the succession of weak and wicked princes, from the death of Josiah to the destruction of the city and temple, and the taking of Zedekiah, the last of them, by Nebuchadnezzar.

Babes shall rule over them.— Dymennysche men schul lordschopen to hem. — Old MS. Bible.

Verse 6. *Of the house of his father* "*Of his father's house*"— For בֵּית beith, the house, the ancient interpreters seem to have read מִבֵּית mibbeith, from the house; **του οικου του πατρος αυτου**, Septuagint; domesticum patris sui, Vulgate; which gives no good sense. But the Septuagint MS. 1:D. 2:for **οικου** has **οικου**. And, his brother, of his father's house, is little better than a tautology. The case seems to require that the man should apply to a person of some sort of rank and eminence; one that was the head of his father's house, (see Joshua 12:14,) whether of the house of him who applies to him, or of any other; **ראש בית אביו** rosh beith abaiu, the chief, or head of his father's house. I cannot help suspecting, therefore, that the word **ראש** rosh, head, chief, has been lost out of the text.

Saying— Before **שמלה** simlah, garment, two MSS., one ancient, and the Babylonish Talmud have the word **לאמר** lemor, saying; and so the Steptuagint, Vulgate, Syriac, and Chaldee. I place it with Houbigant, after **שמלה** simlah.

Thou hast clothing "*Take by the garment*"— That is, shall entreat him in an humble and supplicating manner. "Ten men shall take hold of the skirt

of him that is a Jew, saying, Let us go with you; for we have heard that God is with you,” Zechariah 8:23. And so in Isaiah 4:1, the same gesture is used to express earnest and humble entreaty. The behavior of Saul towards Samuel was of the same kind, when he laid hold on the skirt of his raiment, 1 Samuel 15:27. The preceding and following verses show, that his whole deportment, in regard to the prophet, was full of submission and humility.

And let this ruin be under thy hand “*And let thy hand support*”— Before תחת ידך tachath yadecha, a MS. adds תהיה tiyeh, “let it be;” another MS. adds in the same place, תקח בידך takach beyadecha, which latter seems to be a various reading of the two preceding words, making a very good sense: “Take into thy hand our ruinous state.” Twenty-one MSS. of Kennicott’s, thirteen of De Rossi’s, one of my own, ancient, and three editions of the Babylonish Talmud have ידיך yadeycha, plural, “thy hands.”

Verse 7. *In that day shall he swear* “*Then shall he openly declare*”— The Septuagint, Syriac, and Jerome, read וישא veyissa, adding the conjunction, which seems necessary in this place.

I will not be a healer— I am noy a leche. — Old MS. Bible. Leech was the ancient English word for a physician.

For in my house is neither bread nor clothing “*For in my house is neither bread nor raiment*”— “It is customary through all the East,” says Sir J. Chardin, “to gather together an immense quantity of furniture and clothes; for their fashions never alter.” Princes and great men are obliged to have a great stock of such things in readiness for presents upon all occasions. “The kings of Persia,” says the same author, “have great wardrobes, where there are always many hundreds of habits ready, designed for presents, and sorted,” Harmer, Observ., 2:11 and 88. A great quantity of provision for the table was equally necessary. The daily provision for Solomon’s household, whose attendants were exceedingly numerous, was proportionately great, 1 Kings 4:22, 23. Even Nehemiah, in his strait circumstances, had a large supply daily for his table; at which he received a hundred and fifty of the Jews and rulers, besides those that

came from among the neighboring heathen, Nehemiah 5:17, 18.

This explains the meaning of the excuse made by him that is desired to undertake the government. He alleges that he has not wherewithal to support the dignity of the station, by such acts of liberality and hospitality as the law of custom required of persons of superior rank. See Harmer's Observations, 1:340, 2:88.

Verse 8. *The eyes "The cloud"*— This word appears to be of very doubtful form, from the printed editions, the MSS., and the ancient versions. The first yod in ם׳׳׳׳ eyney, which is necessary according to the common interpretation, is in many of them omitted; the two last letters are upon a rasure in two MSS. I think it should be ם׳׳׳׳ anan, "a cloud," as the Syriac reads; and the allusion is to the cloud in which the glory of the Lord appeared above the tabernacle; see Exodus 16:9, 10; 40:34-38; Numbers 16:41, 42.

Either of the readings gives a very good sense. The allusion may be to the cloud of the Divine presence in the wilderness: or the eyes of the Lord may be meant, as they are in every place beholding the evil and the good. And he cannot look upon iniquity but with abhorrence; therefore, the eyes of his glory might be well provoked by their crimes.

Verse 9. *The show of their countenance*— Bishop Lowth has it the steadfastness of their countenance—they appear to be bent on iniquity, their eyes tell the wickedness of their hearts. The eye is the index of the mind. Envy, hatred, malice, malevolence, concupiscence, and murder, when in the heart, look most intelligently out at the eye. They tell the innocent to be on their guard; and serve the same purpose as the sonorous rings in the tail of the rattlesnake—they announce the presence of the destroyer.

They declare their sin as Sodom— Impure propensities are particularly legible in the eyes: whoever has beheld the face of a debauchee or a prostitute knows this; of these it may be said, they wish to appear what they really are. They glory in their iniquity. This is the highest pitch of ungodliness.

They have rewarded evil unto themselves.— Every man's sin is against his own soul. Evil awaiteth sinners-and he that offends his God injures himself.

Verse 10. Say ye to the righteous— לצדיק letsaddik, the ל lamed is added here by one MS. and the Chaldee. The righteous is the person, 1. Who fears God. 2. Departs from evil. 3. Walks according to the testimony of God. 4. And expects and prepares for a glorious immortality.

“Pronounce ye.”-The reading of this verse is very dubious. The Septuagint for אמרו imru read נאסר neasor, or both, אמרו נאסר imru neasor, and לנו לא טוב לנו. δεσωμεν τον δικαιον, οτι δυσχερηστος ημιν εσσι. Perhaps, for אמרו imru, the true reading may be אשרו ashsheru, “bless you;” or אמרו אשרי imru ashrey, “say ye, blessed is.” The Vulgate and an ancient MS. read in the singular number, יאכל yochel, comedat, “he shall eat.”

“It shall be well with him:”-כי טוב ki tob, “that good.” Say nothing to such but good. He is a good man, he does nothing but good, and has a good God to deal with, from whom he expects nothing but goodness. It shall be well with such in all circumstances of life. 1. In prosperity. 2. In adversity. 3. In sickness. 4. In health. 5. In death. 6. In judgment. And, 7. Through eternity. In every case, occurrence, and circumstance, he shall eat the fruit of his doings-he shall derive benefit from being a righteous man, and walking in a righteous way.

Verse 11. Wo unto the wicked— לרשע lerasha, the man who is, 1. Evil in his heart. 2. Evil in his purposes. 3. Evil in his life. As he is wicked, he does that which is wicked; and is influenced by the wicked one, of whom he is the servant and the son. It shall be ill with him, רע ra; in a single word say to him-evil! Of him you can speak no good; and to him you can speak no good-all is evil, in him-before him-after him-round about him-above him-below him. Evil in time-evil through eternity!

The reward of his hands.— What he has deserved he shall get. He shall be paid that for which he has labored, and his reward shall be in proportion to

his work. O, what a lot is that of the wicked! Cursed in time, and accursed through eternity!

Verse 12. Err “Perverf”— בלעו billeu, “swallow.” Among many unsatisfactory methods of accounting for the unusual meaning of this word in this place, I choose Jarchi’s explication, as making the best sense. “Read בללו billalu, ‘confound.’ Syriac.”-Dr. Judd. “Read בהלו beholu, ‘disturb or trouble.’”-Secker. So Septuagint.

This verse might be read, “The collectors of grapes shall be their oppressors; and usurers (noshim, instead of nashim, women) shall rule over them.”

Verse 13. The people “His people”— עמו ammo, Septuagint.

Verse 14. The vineyard. “My vineyard”— כרמי carmi, Septuagint, Chaldee, Jerome.

Verse 15. And grind the faces— The expression and the image is strong, to denote grievous oppression but is exceeded by the prophet Micah, chap. 3:1-3:—

*“Hear, I pray you, ye chiefs of Jacob,
And ye princes of the house of Israel:
Is it not yours to know what is right?
Ye that hate good and love evil:
Who tear their skins from off them,
And their flesh from off their bones;
Who devour the flesh of my people;
And flay from off them their skin;
And their bones they dash in pieces;
And chop them asunder, as morsels for the pot:
And as flesh thrown into the midst of the caldron.”*

In the last line but one, for כאשר keasher, read, by the transposition of a letter, כשאר kisher, with the Septuagint and Chaldee.

Verse 16. And wanton eyes “*And falsely setting off their eyes with paint*”— Hebrew, falsifying their eyes. I take this to be the true meaning and literal rendering of the word; from שִׁקַּר shakar. The Masoretes have pointed it, as if it were from שָׁקַר sakar, a different word. This arose, as I imagine, from their supposing that the word was the same with סָקַר sakar, Chaldee, “intueri, innuere oculis; “ or that it had an affinity with the noun סִיקְרָא sikra, which the Chaldeans, or the rabbins at least, use for stibium, the mineral which was commonly used in colouring the eyes. See Jarchi’s comment on the place. Though the colouring of the eyes with stibium be not particularly here expressed, yet I suppose it to be implied; and so the Chaldee paraphrase explains it; stibio linitis oculis, “with eyes dressed with stibium.” This fashion seems to have prevailed very generally among the Eastern people in ancient times; and they retain the very same to this day.

Pietro delta Valle, giving a description of his wife, an Assyrian lady born in Mesopotamia, and educated at Bagdad, whom he married in that country, (Viaggi, Tom. I., Lettera 17,) says, “Her eyelashes, which are long, and, according to the custom of the East, dressed with stibium, (as we often read in the Holy Scriptures of the Hebrew women of old, Jeremiah 4:30; Ezekiel 23:40; and in Xenophon, of Astyages the grandfather of Cyrus, and of the Medes of that time, Cyropaed. lib. i.,) give a dark, and at the same time a majestic, shade to the eyes.” “Great eyes,” says Sandys, Travels, p. 67, speaking of the Turkish women, “they have in principal repute; and of those the blacker they be the more amiable; insomuch that they put between the eyelids and the eye a certain black powder with a fine long pencil, made of a mineral, brought from the kingdom of Fez, and called Alcohole; which by the not disagreeable staining of the lids doth better set forth the whiteness of the eye; and though it be troublesome for a time, yet it comforteth the sight, and repelleth ill humours.” Vis ejus (stibii) astringe ac refrigerare, principalis autem circa oculos; namque ideo etiam plerique Platyophthalmon id appellavere, quoniam in calliblepharis mulierum dilatat oculos; et fluxiones inhibet oculorum exulcerationesque. “It is astringent in its virtue, and refrigerant, and to be chiefly employed about the eyes, and it is called

Platyophthalmon, for being put into those ointments with which women beautify their eyes, it dilates them, removes defluxions, and heals any ulcerations that may be about the eyelids.”-Pliny, Nat. Hist. 33:6.

*Ille supercilium madida fuligine tactum
Obliqua producit acu, pingitque trementes
Attollens oculos*

Juv. Sat. 2:93.

*One his eyebrows, tinged with black soot,
Lengthens with an oblique bodkin, and paints,
Lifting up his winking eyes.*

“But none of those [Moorish] ladies,” says Dr. Shaw, Travels, p. 294, fol., “take themselves to be completely dressed, till they have tinged the hair and edges of their eyelids with alcahol, the powder of lead ore. This operation is performed by dipping first into the powder a small wooden bodkin of the thickness of a quill; and then drawing it afterwards through the eyelids, over the ball of the eye.” Ezekiel, chap. 23:40, uses the same word in the form of a verb, כחלת עניך cachalt eynayik, “thou didst dress thine eyes with alcahol;” which the Septuagint render εστιβιζου τους, οφθαλμους σου, “thou didst dress thine eyes with stibium;” just as they do when the word פוך phuch is employed: compare 2 Kings 9:30; Jeremiah 4:30. They supposed, therefore, that פוך phuch and כחל cachal, or in the Arabic form, alcahol, meant the same thing; and probably the mineral used of old for this purpose was the same that is used now; which Dr. Shaw (ibid. note) says is “a rich lead ore, pounded into an impalpable powder.” Alcoholados; the word משקריות meshakkeroth in this place is thus rendered in an old Spanish translation. — Sanctius. See also Russell’s Nat. Hist. of Aleppo, p. 102.

The following inventory, as one may call it, of the wardrobe of a Hebrew lady, must, from its antiquity, and the nature of the subject, have been very obscure even to the most ancient interpreters which we have of it; and from its obscurity must have been also peculiarly liable to the

mistakes of transcribers. However, it is rather matter of curiosity than of importance; and is indeed, upon the whole, more intelligible and less corrupted than one might have reasonably expected. Clemens Alexandrinus, *Paedag.* lib. ii., c. 12, and Julius Pollux, lib. vii., c. 22, have each of them preserved from a comedy of Aristophanes, now lost, a similar catalogue of the several parts of the dress and ornaments of a Grecian lady; which, though much more capable of illustration from other writers, though of later date, and quoted and transmitted down to us by two different authors, yet seems to be much less intelligible, and considerably more corrupted, than this passage of Isaiah. Salmasius has endeavored, by comparing the two quotations, and by much critical conjecture and learned disquisition, to restore the true reading, and to explain the particulars; with what success, I leave to the determination of the learned reader, whose curiosity shall lead him to compare the passage of the comedian with this of the prophet, and to examine the critic's learned labors upon it. *Exercit. Plinian*, p. 1148; or see *Clem. Ales.* as cited above, edit. Potter, where the passage, as corrected by Salmasius, is given.

Nich. Guel. Schroederus, professor of oriental languages in the University of Marpurg, has published a very learned and judicious treatise upon this passage of Isaiah. The title of it is, "*Commentarius Philologico-Criticus de*

21. The rings, and the jewels of the nostrils;

22. The embroidered robes, and the tunics,
And the cloaks, and the little purses,

23. The transparent garments, and the fine linen vests,
And the turbans, and the mantles.

24. And there shall be instead of perfume, a putrid ulcer;
And instead of well-girt raiment, rags;
And instead of high-dressed hair, baldness;
And instead of a zone, a girdle of sackcloth;
And sun-burnt skin, instead of beauty.

The daughters of Zion-walk— What is meant by these several kinds of action and articles of dress cannot be well conjectured. How our ancestors understood them will appear from the following, which is the translation of these verses in my old MS. Bible:—

16. The doughteris of Syon wenteh with strught out necks, and ib beckes (winking) of eegen, geeden and flappeden with hondis for joye, and geeden: and with their feet in curyous goying geeden;-17. the Lord schall fully make ballid the top of the boughtris of Syon: and the Lord the her of hem schal naken. And for ournemente schal be schenschip.

18. In that day, the Lord schal don away the ournement of Schoon and hoosis: 19. and beegis, and brochis, and armeerclis, and mytris; 20. and coombis, and rybanys and reversis at the hemmys, and oynment boris and ereringis; 21. and ryngis and jemmys in the frount hongyng; 22. and chaunginge clothis, and litil pallis, and scheetis, and prynys; 23. and scheweris, and neche hercheuys, and flyetis, and roketis; 24. and ther schal be for swot smel, stynke, and for gyrdil, a litl coord; and for crisp her, ballidnesse; and for brest boond and heyr.

Some of these things are hard to be understood, though I think this version as good as that of the very learned bishop: but there is little doubt that

articles of clothing and dress bore these names in the fourteenth century.

Verse 17. *The Lord will smite* “*Will the Lord humble*” — **ταπεινωσει, Septuagint; and so Syriac and Chaldee. For **שפח** sippach they read **שפל** shaphal. Instead of **יהוה** Yehovah, many MSS. have **אדני** Adonai.**

***Will discover their secret parts* “*Expose their nakedness*”**— It was the barbarous custom of the conquerors of those times to strip their captives naked, and to make them travel in that condition, exposed to the inclemency of the weather; and the worst of all, to the intolerable heat of the sun. But this to the women was the height of cruelty and indignity; and especially to such as those here described, who had indulged themselves in all manner of delicacies of living, and all the superfluities of ornamental dress; and even whose faces had hardly ever been exposed to the sight of man. This is always mentioned as the hardest part of the lot of captives. Nahum, chap. 3:5, 6, denouncing the fate of Nineveh, paints it in very strong colors:—

*“Behold, I am against thee, saith JEHOVAH, God of hosts:
And I will discover thy skirts upon thy face;
And I will expose thy nakedness to the nations;
And to the kingdoms thy shame.
And I will throw ordures upon thee;
And I will make thee vile, and set thee as a gazing-stock.”*

Verse 18. *Ornaments about their feet* “*The ornaments of the feet rings*”— The late learned Dr. Hunt, professor of Hebrew and Arabic in the University of Oxford, has very well explained the word **עכס** both verb and noun, in his very ingenious Dissertation on Prov, 7:22, 23. The verb means to skip, to bound, to dance along, and the noun, those ornaments of the feet which the Eastern ladies wore; chains or rings, which made a tinkling sound as they moved nimbly in walking. Eugene Roger, Description de la Terre Sainte, 54:2:ch. 2, speaking of the Arabian women, of the first rank in Palestine, says, “Au lieu de brasselets elles ont de menottes d’argent, qu’elles portent aux poignets et aux pieds; ou sont attachez quantite de petits annelets d’argent, qui font un cliquetis comme

d'une cymbale, lorsqu'elles cheminent ou se mouvent quelque peu." See Dr. Hunt's Dissertation; where he produces other testimonies to the same purpose from authors of travels. Hindoo women of ill fame wear loose ornaments one above another on their ankles, which at every motion make a tinkling noise. See WARD.

And their cauls "the net-works"— I am obliged to differ from the learned Schroederus almost at first setting out. He renders the word שביסים shebisim by solicoli, little ornaments, bullae, or studs, in shape representing the sun, and so answering to the following word שהרנים saharanim, lunulae, crescents. He supposes the word to be the same with שמשים shemishim, the ם yod in the second syllable making the word diminutive, and the letter מ mem being changed for ב beth, a letter of the same organ. How just and well founded his authorities for the transmutation of these letters in the Arabic language are, I cannot pretend to judge; but as I know of no such instance in Hebrew, it seems to me a very forced etymology. Being dissatisfied with this account of the matter, I applied to my good friend above mentioned, the late Dr. Hunt, who very kindly returned the following answer to my inquiries:—

"I have consulted the Arabic Lexicons, as well MS. as printed, but cannot find שביסים shebisim in any of them, nor any thing belonging to it; so that no help is to be had from that language towards clearing up the meaning of this difficult word. But what the Arabic denies, the Syriac perhaps may afford; in which I find the verb שבש shabas, to entangle or interweave, an etymology which is equally favorable to our marginal wtranslation, net-works, with שבץ shabats, to make chequer work, or embroider, (the word by which Kimchi and others have explained שביס shabis;) and has moreover this advantage over it, that the letters ש sin and ס samech are very frequently put for each other, but צ tsaddi and ס samech scarcely ever. Aben Ezra joins שביסים shebisim and עכסים achasim, which immediately precedes it, together; and says that שביס shabis was the ornament of the leps, as עכס eches was of the feet. His words are, ל-שבס תכשית של שוקים כמו עכס של רגלים."

Verse 20. *The tablets*— The words **בתי הנפש** bottey hannepshesh, which we translate tablets, and Bishop Lowth, perfume boxes, literally signify houses of the soul; and may refer to strong scented bottles used for pleasure and against fainting; similar to bottles with otto of roses, worn by the ladies of the East to the present time.

Verse 21. *Nose-jewels* “*The jewels of the nostril.*”— **נזמי האפ** nizmey haaph. Schroederus explains this, as many others do, of jewels, or strings of pearl hanging from the forehead, and reaching to the upper part of the nose; than which nothing can be more ridiculous, as such are seldom seen on an Asiatic face. But it appears from many passages of Holy Scripture that the phrase is to be literally and properly understood of nose-jewels, rings set with jewels hanging from the nostrils, as ear-rings from the ears, by holes bored to receive them.

Ezekiel, enumerating the common ornaments of women of the first rank, has not omitted this particular, and is to be understood in the same manner, chap. 16:11, 12. See also Genesis 24:47:—

*“And I decked thee with ornaments;
And I put bracelets upon thine hands,
And a chain on thy neck:
And I put a jewel on thy nose,
And ear-rings on thine ears,
And a splendid crown upon thine head.”*

And in an elegant proverb of Solomon, Proverbs 11:22, there is a manifest allusion to this kind of ornament, which shows it to have been used in his time:—

*“As a jewel of gold in the snout of a swine;
So is a woman beautiful, but wanting discretion.”*

This fashion, however strange it may appear to us, was formerly and is still common in many parts of the East, among women of all ranks. Paul Lucas, speaking of a village or clan of wandering people, a little on this side of the Euphrates, says, (2d Voyage du Levant, tom. i., art. 24,) “The

women, almost all of them, travel on foot; I saw none handsome among them. They have almost all of them the nose bored; and wear in it a great ring, which makes them still more deformed.” But in regard to this custom, better authority cannot be produced than that of Pietro della Valle, in the account which he gives of the lady before mentioned, Signora Maani Gioerida, his own wife. The description of her dress, as to the ornamental parts of it, with which he introduces the mention of this particular, will give us some notion of the taste of the Eastern ladies for finery. “The ornaments of gold and of jewels for the head, for the neck, for the arms, for the legs, and for the feet (for they wear rings even on their toes) are indeed, unlike those of the Turks, carried to great excess, but not of great value: for in Bagdad jewels of high price are either not to be had, or are not used; and they wear such only as are of little value, as turquoises, small rubies, emeralds, carbuncles, garnets, pearls, and the like. My spouse dresses herself with all of them according to their fashion; with exception, however, of certain ugly rings of very large size, set with jewels, which, in truth, very absurdly, it is the custom to wear fastened to one of their nostrils, like buffaloes: an ancient custom, however, in the East, which, as we find in the Holy Scriptures, prevailed among the Hebrew ladies even in the time of Solomon, Proverbs 11:22. These nose-rings, in complaisance to me, she has left off, but I have not yet been able to prevail with her cousin and her sisters to do the same; so fond are they of an old custom, be it ever so absurd, who have been long habituated to it.” Viaggi, Tom. i., Let. 17.

It is the left nostril that is bored and ornamented with rings and jewels. More than one hundred drawings from life of Eastern ladies lie now before me, and scarcely one is without the nose-jewel: both the arms and wrists are covered with bracelets, arm-circles, etc., as also their legs and feet; the soles of their feet and palms of their hands coloured beautifully red with henna, and their hair plaited and ornamented superbly. These beautiful drawings are a fine comment on this chapter.

Verse 23. *The glasses*— The conjunction ׀ vau, and-AND the glasses, is added here by forty-three of Kennicott’s and thirty-four of De Rossi’s MSS., and one of my own, ancient, as well as by many editions.

And the veils. “The transparent garments.”— τα διαφανη δακωνικα,

Sept. A kind of silken dress, transparent, like gauze; worn only by the most elegant women, and such as dressed themselves *elegantius quam necesse esset probis*, “more elegantly than modest women should.” Such garments are worn to the present day; garments that not only show the shape of every part of the body, but the very color of the skin. This is evidently the case in some scores of drawings of Asiatic females now before me. This sort of garments was afterwards in use among the Greeks. Prodicus, in his celebrated fable (Xenoph. Memorab. Socr. lib. ii.) exhibits the personage of Sloth in this dress: εσθητα δε, εξ ης αν μαλιστα ωρα διαλαμποι:—

*“Her robe betray’d
Through the clear texture every tender limb,
Height’ning the charms it only seem’d to shade;
And as it flow’d adown so loose and thin,
Her stature show’d more tall, more snowy white her skin.”*

They were called *multitia* and *coa* (scil, *vestimenta*) by the Romans, from their being invented, or rather introduced into Greece, by one Pamphila of the island of Cos. This, like other Grecian fashions, was received at Rome, when luxury began to prevail under the emperors. It was sometimes worn even by the men, but looked upon as a mark of extreme effeminacy. See Juvenal, Sat. ii., 65, etc. Publius Syrus, who lived when the fashion was first introduced, has given a humorous satirical description of it in two lines, which by chance have been preserved:—

*“AEquum est, induere nuptam ventum textilem?
Palam prostare nudam in nebula linea?”*

Verse 24. *Instead of sweet smell “perfume.”*— A principal part of the delicacy of the Asiatic ladies consists in the use of baths, and of the richest oils and perfumes; an attention to which is in some degree necessary in those hot countries. Frequent mention is made of the rich ointments of the spouse in the Song of Solomon, Cant. 4:10, 11:—

*“How beautiful are thy breasts, my sister, my spouse!
How much more excellent than wine;*

*And the odour of thine ointments than all perfumes!
Thy lips drop as the honey-comb, my spouse!
Honey and milk are under thy tongue:
And the odor of thy garments is as the odour of Lebanon.”*

The preparation for Esther’s being introduced to King Ahasuerus was a course of bathing and perfuming for a whole year; “six months with oil of myrrh, and six months with sweet odours;” Esther 2:12. See the notes on this place. A diseased and loathsome habit of body, instead of a beautiful skin, softened and made agreeable with all that art could devise, and all that nature, so prodigal in those countries of the richest perfumes, could supply, must have been a punishment the most severe and the most mortifying to the delicacy of these haughty daughters of Sion.

Burning instead of beauty “*A sunburnt skin.*”— Gaspar Sanctius thinks the words **כִּי תַחַת** *ki thachath* an interpolation, because the Vulgate has omitted them. The clause **כִּי תַחַת יָפִי** *ki thachath yophi* seems to me rather to be imperfect at the end. Not to mention that **כִּי** *ki*, taken as a noun for *adustio*, burning, is without example, and very improbable. The passage ends abruptly, and seems to want a fuller conclusion.

In agreement with which opinion, of the defect of the Hebrew text in this place, the Septuagint, according to MSS. Pachom. and 1 D. ii., and Marchal., which are of the best authority, express it with the same evident marks of imperfection at the end of the sentence; thus: **ταυτα σοι αντι καλλωπισμου** The two latter add **δου**. This chasm in the text, from the loss probably of three or four words, seems therefore to be of long standing.

Taking **כִּי** *ki* in its usual sense, as a particle, and supplying **לֶךְ** *lech* from the **σοι** of the Septuagint, it might possibly have been originally somewhat in this form:—

כִּי תַחַת יָפִי תִהְיֶה לֶךְ רַעַת מְרֵאָה *marah raath lech thihyeh yophi thachath ki* “Yea, instead of beauty thou shalt have an illfavoured countenance.”

כִּי תִחַת יָפִי ki thachath yophi (q. יָחַת yachath,) “for beauty shall be destroyed.” Syr. חַתַּת chathath or נַחַת nachath. — Dr. DURELL.

“May it not be כֹּהֵי cohey, ‘wrinkles instead of beauty?’ as from יָפָה yaphah is formed יָפִי yephi, yophi; from מָרָה marah, מְרִי meri, etc.; so from כֹּהֵה cahah, to be wrinkled, כֹּהֵי cohey.”—Dr. JUBB. The כִּי ki is wanting in one MS., and has been omitted by several of the ancients.

Verse 25. Thy mighty men.— For גְּבוּרַתֶּךָ geburathech an ancient MS. has גִּבּוֹרֶךָ gibborech. The true reading, from the Septuagint, Vulgate, Syriac, and Chaldee, seems to be גִּבּוֹרַיִךְ gibborayich.

Verse 26. Sit upon the ground.— Sitting on the ground was a posture that denoted mourning and deep distress. The prophet Jeremiah (Lamentations 2:8) has given it the first place among many indications of sorrow, in the following elegant description of the same state of distress of his country:—

“The elders of the daughter of Sion sit on the ground, they are silent: They have cast up dust on their heads; they have girded themselves with sackcloth; The virgins of Jerusalem have bowed down their heads to the ground.”

“We find Judea,” says Mr. Addison, (on Medals, Dial. ii,) “on several coins of Vespasian and Titus, in a posture that denotes sorrow and captivity. I need not mention her sitting on the ground, because we have already spoken of the aptness of such a posture to represent an extreme affliction. I fancy the Romans might have an eye on the customs of the Jewish nation, as well as those of their country, in the several marks of sorrow they have set on this figure. The psalmist describes the Jews lamenting their captivity in the same pensive posture: ‘By the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept, when we remembered thee, O Zion.’ But what is more remarkable, we find Judea represented as a woman in sorrow sitting on the ground, in a passage of the prophet, that foretells the very captivity recorded on this medal.” Mr. Addison, I presume, refers to this

place of Isaiah; and therefore must have understood it as foretelling the destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish nation by the Romans: whereas it seems plainly to relate, in its first and more immediate view at least, to the destruction of the city by Nebuchadnezzar, and the dissolution of the Jewish state under the captivity at Babylon. — L.

Several of the coins mentioned here by Mr. Addison are in my own collection: and to such I have already referred in this work. I shall describe one here. On the obverse a fine head of the emperor Vespasian with this legend, Imperator Julius Caesar Vespasianus Augustus, Pontifex Maximus, Tribunitia Potestate Pater Patriae, Consul VIII.

On the reverse a tall palm tree, emblem of the land of Palestine, the emperor standing on the left, close to the tree, with a trophy behind him; on the right, Judea under the figure of a female captive sitting on the ground, with her head resting on her hand, the elbow on her knee, weeping. Around is this legend, Judea Capta. Senates Consulto. However this prediction may refer proximately to the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, I am fully of opinion that it ultimately refers to the final ruin of the Jewish state by the Romans. And so it has been understood by the general run of the best and most learned interpreters and critics.

CHAPTER 4

The havoc occasioned by war, and those other calamities which the prophet had been describing in the preceding chapter, are represented as so terribly great that seven women should be left to one man, 1. Great blessedness of the remnant that shall be accounted worthy to escape these judgments, 2-4. The privileges of the Gospel set forth by allusions to the glory and pomp of the Mosaic dispensation, 5, 6.

NOTES ON CHAP. 4

Verse 1. *And seven women*— The division of the chapters has interrupted the prophet's discourse, and broken it off almost in the midst of the sentence. "The numbers slain in battle shall be so great, that seven women shall be left to one man." The prophet has described the greatness of this distress by images and adjuncts the most expressive and forcible. The young women, contrary to their natural modesty, shall become suitors to the men: they will take hold of them, and use the most pressing importunity to be married. In spite of the natural suggestions of jealousy, they will be content with a share only of the rights of marriage in common with several others; and that on hard conditions, renouncing the legal

Jeremiah 15:8.

In that day— These words are omitted in the Septuagint, and MSS.

Verse 2. *The branch of the Lord* “*the branch of JEHOVAH*”— The Messiah of JEHOVAH, says the Chaldee. And Kimchi says, The Messiah, the Son of David. The branch is an appropriate title of the Messiah; and the fruit of the land means the great Person to spring from the house of Judah, and is only a parallel expression signifying the same; or perhaps the blessings consequent upon the redemption procured by him. Compare chap. 45:8, where the same great event is set forth under similar images, and see the note there.

***Them that are escaped of Israel* “*the escaped of the house of Israel.*”**— A MS. has בית ישראל beith yisrael, the house of Israel.

Verse 3. *Written among the living*— That is, whose name stands in the enrolment or register of the people; or every man living, who is a citizen of Jerusalem. See Ezekiel 13:9, where, “they shall not be written in the writing of the house of Israel,” is the same with what immediately goes before, “they shall not be in the assembly of my people.” Compare Psalm 69:28; 87:6; Exodus 32:32. To number and register the people was agreeable to the law of Moses, and probably was always practiced; being, in sound policy, useful, and even necessary. David’s design of numbering the people was of another kind; it was to enrol them for his army. Michaelis Mosaisches Recht, Part iii., p. 227. See also his Dissert. de Censibus Hebraeorum.

Verse 4. *The spirit of burning*— Means the fire of God’s wrath, by which he will prove and purify his people; gathering them into his furnace, in order to separate the dross from the silver, the bad from the good. The severity of God’s judgments, the fiery trial of his servants, Ezekiel (chap. 22:18-22) has set forth at large, after his manner, with great boldness of imagery and force of expression. God threatens to gather them into the midst of Jerusalem, as into the furnace; to blow the fire upon them, and to melt them. Malachi, chap. 3:2, 3, treats the same subject, and represents the same event, under the like images:—

*“But who may abide the day of his coming?
 And who shall stand when he appeareth?
 For he is like the fire of the refiner,
 And like the soap of the fullers.
 And he shall sit refining and purifying the silver;
 And he shall purify the sons of Levi;
 And cleanse them like gold, and like silver;
 That they may be JEHOVAH’S ministers,
 Presenting unto him an offering in righteousness.”*

This is an allusion to a chemist purifying metals. He first judges of the state of the ore or adulterated metal. Secondly, he kindles the proper degree of fire, and applies the requisite test; and thus separates the precious from the vile.

Verse 5. And the Lord will create—One MS., the Septuagint, and the Arabic, have **בִּיאַ** yabi, He shall bring: the cloud already exists; the Lord will bring it over. This is a blessed promise of the presence of God in all the assemblies of his people.

Every dwelling place “the station”— The Hebrew text has, every station: but four MSS. (one ancient) omit **כָּל** col, all; very rightly, as it should seem: for the station was Mount Zion itself, and no other. See Exodus 15:17. And the Septuagint, Arabic, and MSS., add the same word **כָּל** col, before **מִקְרָאֵהָ** mikraeha, probably right: the word has only changed its place by mistake. **מִקְרָאֵיהָ** mikrayeh, “the place where they were gathered together in their holy assemblies,” says Sal ben Melech. But twenty-five of Kennicott’s MSS., and twenty-two of De Rossi’s fifty-three editions, besides the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic, have the word in the plural number.

A cloud and smoke by day— This is a manifest allusion to the pillar of a cloud and of fire which attended the Israelites in their passage out of Egypt, and to the glory that rested on the tabernacle, Exodus 13:21; 40:38. The prophet Zechariah, chap. 2:5, applies the same image to the same

purpose:—

*“And I will be unto her a wall of fire round about;
And a glory will I be in the midst of her.”*

That is, the visible presence of God shall protect her. Which explains the conclusion of this verse of Isaiah; where the makkaph between כּל col, and כבוד cabod, connecting the two words in construction, which ought not to be connected, has thrown an obscurity upon the sentence, and misled most of the translators.

For upon all the glory shall be a defense.— Whatever God creates, he must uphold, or it will fail, Every degree of grace brings with it a degree of power to maintain itself in the soul.

Verse 6. A tabernacle— In countries subject to violent tempests, as well as to intolerable heat, a portable tent is a necessary part of a traveller’s baggage, for defense and shelter. And to such tents the words of the text make evident allusion. They are to be met with in every part of Arabia and Egypt, and in various other places in the East.

CHAPTER 5

This chapter begins with representing, in a beautiful parable, the tender care of God for his people, and their unworthy returns for his goodness, 1-7. The parable or allegory is then dropped; and the prophet, in plain terms, reproves and threatens them for their wickedness; particularly for their covetousness, 8-10; intemperance, 11; and inattention to the warnings of Providence, 12. Then follows an enumeration of judgments as the necessary consequence. Captivity and famine appear with all their horrors, 13. Hades, or the grave, like a ravenous monster, opens wide its jaws, and swallows down its myriads, 14. Distress lays hold on all ranks, 15; and God is glorified in the execution of his judgments, 16; till the whole place is left desolate, a place for the flocks to range in, 17. The prophet then pauses; and again resumes his subject, reproving them for several other sins, and threatening them with woes and vengeance, 18-24; after which he sums up the whole of his awful denunciation in a very lofty and spirited epiphonema or conclusion. The God of armies, having hitherto corrected to no purpose, is represented with inimitable majesty, as only giving a hist, and a swarm of nations hasten to his standard, 25-27. Upon a guilty race, unpitied by heaven or by earth, they execute their commission; and leave the land desolate and dark, without one ray of comfort to cheer the horrid gloom, 28-30.

This chapter likewise stands single and alone, unconnected with the preceding or following. The subject of it is nearly the same with that of the first chapter. It is a general reproof of the Jews for their wickedness; but it exceeds that chapter in force, in severity, in variety, and elegance; and it adds a more express declaration of vengeance by the Babylonian invasion.

NOTES ON CHAP. 5

Verse 1. *Now will I sing to my well-beloved a song of my beloved* “*Let me sing now a song,*” etc.— A MS., respectable for its antiquity, adds the

word שִׁיר shir, a song, after נַּ na; which gives so elegant a turn to the sentence by the repetition of it in the next member, and by distinguishing the members so exactly in the style and manner in the Hebrew poetical composition, that I am much inclined to think it genuine.

A song of my beloved “*A song of loves*”— דֹּדַי dodey, for דֹּדִים dodim: status constructus pro absoluto, as the grammarians say, as Micah 6:16; Lamentations 3:14, 66, so Archbishop Secker. Or rather, in all these and the like cases, a mistake of the transcribers, by not observing a small stroke, which in many MSS., is made to supply the מֶ mem, of the plural, thus, דֹּדַי dodi. שִׁירַת דֹּדִים shirath dodim is the same with יְדִידוֹת שִׁיר shir yedidoth, Psalm 45:1. In this way of understanding it we avoid the great impropriety of making the author of the song, and the person to whom it is addressed, to be the same.

In a very fruitful hill “*On a high and fruitful hill.*”— Hebrews בִּשְׁמֵן בֶּקֶר bakeren ben shamen, “on a horn the son of oil.” The expression is highly descriptive and poetical. “He calls the land of Israel a horn, because it is higher than all lands; as the horn is higher than the whole body; and the son of oil, because it is said to be a land flowing with milk and honey.”—Kimchi on the place. The parts of animals are, by an easy metaphor, applied to parts of the earth, both in common and poetical language. A promontory is called a cape or head; the Turks call it a nose. “Dorsum immane mari summo;” Virgil, a back, or ridge of rocks:—

*“Hanc latus angustum jam se cogentis in arctum
Hesperiae tenuem producit in aequora linguam,
Adriacas flexis claudit quae cornibus undas.”*

Lucan, 2:612, of Brundusium, i.e., βρεντεσιον, which, in the ancient language of that country, signifies stag’s head, says Strabo. A horn is a proper and obvious image for a mountain or mountainous country. Solinus, cap. viii., says, “Italiam, ubi longius processerit, in cornua duo scindi; “ that is, the high ridge of the Alps, which runs through the whole length of it, divides at last into two ridges, one going through Calabria, the other through the country of the Brutii. “Cornwall is called by the

inhabitants in the British tongue Kernaw, as lessening by degrees like a horn, running out into promontories like so many horns. For the Britons call a horn corn, in the plural kern.”-Camden. “And Sammes is of opinion, that the country had this name originally from the Phoenicians, who traded hither for tin; keren, in their language, being a horn.”-Gibson.

Here the precise idea seems to be that of a high mountain standing by itself; “vertex montis, aut pars montis ad aliis divisa;” which signification, says 1:H. Michaelis, Bibl. Hallens., Not. in loc., the word has in Arabic.

Judea was in general a mountainous country, whence Moses sometimes calls it The Mountain, “Thou shalt plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance;” Exodus 15:17. “I pray thee, let me go over, and see the good land beyond Jordan; that goodly mountain, and Lebanon;” Deuteronomy 3:25. And in a political and religious view it was detached and separated from all the nations round it. Whoever has considered the descriptions given of Mount Tabor, (see Reland, Palaestin.; Eugene Roger, Terre Sainte, p. 64,) and the views of it which are to be seen in books of travels, (Maundrell, p. 114; Egmont and Heyman, vol. ii., p. 25; Thevenot, vol. i., p. 429,) its regular conic form rising singly in a plain to a great height, from a base small in proportion, and its beauty and fertility to the very top, will have a good idea of “a horn the son of oil;” and will perhaps be induced to think that the prophet took his image from that mountain.

Verse 2. *And gathered out the stones* “*And he cleared it from the stones*”— This was agreeable to the husbandry: “Saxa, summa parte terrae, et vites et arbores laeduct; ima parte refrigerant;” Columell. de arb. 3:”Saxosum facile est expedire lectione lapidum;” Id. 2:2. “Lapides, qui supersunt, [al. insuper sunt,] hieme rigent, aestate fervercunt; idcirco satis, arbustis, et vitibus nocent;” Pallad. 1:6. A piece of ground thus cleared of the stones Persius, in his hard way of metaphor, calls “exossatus ager,” an unboned field; Sat. 6:52.

The choicest vine “*Sorek*”— Many of the ancient interpreters, the Septuagint, Aquila, and Theod., have retained this word as a proper name; I think very rightly. Sorek was a valley lying between Ascalon and Gaza, and running far up eastward in the tribe of Judah. Both Ascalon and Gaza

were anciently famous for wine; the former is mentioned as such by Alexander Trallianus; the latter by several authors, quoted by Reland, Palaest., p. 589 and 986. And it seems that the upper part of the valley of Sorek, and that of Eshcol, where the spies gathered the single cluster of grapes, which they were obliged to bear between two upon a staff, being both near to Hebron were in the same neighborhood, and that all this part of the country abounded with rich vineyards. Compare Numbers 13:22, 23; Judges 16:3, 4. P. Nau supposes Eshcol and Sorek to be only different names for the same valley. Voyage Nouveau de la Terre Sainte, lib. iv., chap. 18. See likewise De Lisle's posthumous map of the Holy Land. Paris, 1763. See Bochart, Hieroz. ii., Colossians 725. Thevenot, i, p. 406. Michaelis (note on Judges 16:4, German translation) thinks it probable, from some circumstances of the history there given, that Sorek was in the tribe of Judah, not in the country of the Philistines.

The vine of Sorek was known to the Israelites, being mentioned by Moses, Genesis 49:11, before their coming out of Egypt. Egypt was not a wine country. "Throughout this country there are no wines;" Sandys, p. 101. At least in very ancient times they had none. Herodotus, 2:77, says it had no vines and therefore used an artificial wine made of barley. That is not strictly true, for the vines of Egypt are spoken of in Scripture, Psalm 78:47; cv. 33; and see Genesis 40:11, by which it should seem that they drank only the fresh juice pressed from the grape, which was called **οἶνος ἀμπέλινος**; Herodot., 2:37. But they had no large vineyards, nor was the country proper for them, being little more than one large plain, annually overflowed by the Nile. The Mareotic in later times is, I think, the only celebrated Egyptian wine which we meet with in history. The vine was formerly, as Hasselquist tells us it is now, "cultivated in Egypt for the sake of eating the grapes, not for wine, which is brought from Candia," etc. "They were supplied with wine from Greece, and likewise from Phoenicia," Herodot., 3:6. The vine and the wine of Sorek therefore, which lay near at hand for importation into Egypt, must in all probability have been well known to the Israelites, when they sojourned there. There is something remarkable in the manner in which Moses, Genesis 49:11, makes mention of it, which, for want of considering this matter, has not been attended to; it is in Jacob's prophecy of the future prosperity of the tribe of Judah:—

*“Binding his foal to the vine,
And his ass’s colt to his own sorek;
He washeth his raiment in wine,
And his cloak in the blood of grapes.”*

I take the liberty of rendering שֹרְקָה sorekah, for שֹרְקוֹ soreko, his sorek, as the Masoretes do by pointing עִירָה iroh, for עִירוֹ iro, his foal. עִיר ir, might naturally enough appear in the feminine form; but it is not at all probable that שֹרְקָה sorek ever should. By naming particularly the vine of Sorek, and as the vine belonging to Judah, the prophecy intimates the very part of the country which was to fall to the lot of that tribe. Sir John Chardin says, “that at Casbin, a city of Persia, they turn their cattle into the vineyards after the vintage, to browse on the vines.” He speaks also of vines in that country so large that he could hardly compass the trunks of them with his arms. Voyages, tom. iii., p. 12, 12mo. This shows that the ass might be securely bound to the vine, and without danger of damaging the tree by browsing on it.

And built a tower in the midst of it— Our Savior, who has taken the general idea of one of his parables, Matthew 21:33; Mark 12:1, from this of Isaiah, has likewise inserted this circumstance of building a tower; which is generally explained by commentators as designed for the keeper of the vineyard to watch and defend the fruits. But for this purpose it was usual to make a little temporary hut, (Isaiah 1:8,) which might serve for the short season while the fruit was ripening, and which was removed afterwards. The tower therefore should rather mean a building of a more permanent nature and use; the farm, as we may call it, of the vineyard, containing all the offices and implements, and the whole apparatus necessary for the culture of the vineyard, and the making of the wine. To which image in the allegory, the situation the manner of building, the use, and the whole service of the temple, exactly answered. And so the Chaldee paraphrast very rightly expounds it: Et statui eos (Israelitas) ut plantam vineae selectae et aedificavi Sanctuarium meum in medio illorum. “And I have appointed the Israelites as a plant of a chosen vine, and I have built my sanctuary in the midst of them.” So also Hieron. in loc. Aedificavit

quoque turrim in medio ejus; templum videlicet in media civitate. “He built also a tower in the midst of it, viz., his own temple in the midst of the city.” That they have still such towers or buildings for use or pleasure, in their gardens in the East, see Harmer’s Observations, 2:p. 241.

And also made a wine-press therein. “And hewed out a lake therein.”— This image also our Savior has preserved in his parable. **קֵבֶב** yekeb; the Septuagint render it here **προληνιον**, and in four other places **υποληνιον**, Isaiah 16:10; Joel 3:13; Haggai 2:17; Zechariah 14:10, I think more properly; and this latter word St. Mark uses. It means not the wine-press itself, or calcatorium, which is called **גַּת** gath, or **פּוּרָה** purah; but what the Romans called lacus, the lake; the large open place or vessel, which by a conduit or spout received the must from the wine-press. In very hot countries it was perhaps necessary, or at least very convenient, to have the lake under ground, or in a cave hewed out of the side of the rock, for coolness, that the heat might not cause too great a fermentation, and sour the must. Vini confectio instituitur in cella, vel intimae domus camera quadam a ventorum ingressu remota. Kempfer, of Shiras wine. Amaen. Exot. p. 376. For the wind, to which that country is subject, would injure the wine. “The wine-presses in Persia,” says Sir John Chardin, “are formed by making hollow places in the ground, lined with masons’ work.” Harmer’s Observations, i., p. 392. See a print of one in Kempfer, p. 377. Nonnus describes at large Bacchus hollowing the inside of a rock, and hewing out a place for the wine-press, or rather the lake:—

και σκοπελους ελαχηνε πεδοσκαφεος δε σιδηρου
θηγαλη γλωχινη μυχον κοιληνατο πετρης
λειηνας δε μετωπα βαθυνομενων κενεωνων
αφρον [f. ακρον] ευστραφυλοιο τυπον ποιησατο
λενου.

DIONYSIAC. lib. xii., 50:331.

*“He pierced the rock; and with the sharpen’d tool
Of steel well-temper’d scoop’d its inmost depth:
Then smooth’d the front, and form’d the dark recess
In just dimensions for the foaming lake.”*

And he looked “And he expected”—Jeremiah, chap. 2:21, uses the same image, and applies it to the same purpose, in an elegant paraphrase of this part of Isaiah’s parable, in his flowing and plaintive manner:—

“But I planted thee a sorek, a scion perfectly genuine:
How then art thou changed, and become to me the degenerate shoots of the
strange vine!”

Wild grapes” poisonous berries.”—בִּשְׂמִים beushim, not merely useless, unprofitable grapes, such as wild grapes; but grapes offensive to the smell, noxious, poisonous. By the force and intent of the allegory, to good grapes ought to be opposed fruit of a dangerous and pernicious quality; as, in the explication of it, to judgment is opposed tyranny, and to righteousness, oppression. גֶּפֶן gephen, the vine, is a common name or genus, including several species under it; and Moses, to distinguish the true vine, or that from which wine is made, from the rest. calls it, Numbers 6:4, גֶּפֶן הַיַּיִן gephen haiyayin, the wine-vine. Some of the other sorts were of a poisonous quality, as appears from the story related among the miraculous acts of Elisha, 2 Kings 4:39-41. “And one went out into the field to gather potherbs; and he found a Seld vine, and he gathered from it wild fruit, his lapful; and he went and shred them into the pot of pottage, for they knew them not. And they poured it out for the men to eat: and it came to pass, as they were eating of the pottage, that they cried out and said, There is death in the pot, O man of God; and they could not eat of it. And he said, Bring meal, (leg. קֶחֱךְ kechu, nine MSS., one edition,) and he threw it into the pot. And he said, Pour out for the people, that they may eat. And there was nothing hurtful in the pot.”

From some such sorts of poisonous fruits of the grape kind Moses has taken these strong and highly poetical images, with which he has set forth the future corruption and extreme degeneracy of the Israelites, in an allegory which has a near relation, both in its subject and imagery, to this of Isaiah: Deuteronomy 32:32, 33.

*“Their vine is from the vine of Sodom,
And from the fields of Gomorrah:
Their grapes are grapes of gall;
Their clusters are bitter:
Their wine is the poison of dragons,
And the cruel venom of aspics.”*

“I am inclined to believe,” says Hasselquist, “that the prophet here, Isaiah 5:2-4, means the hoary nightshade, *solanum incanum*; because it is common in Egypt, Palestine, and the East; and the Arabian name agrees well with it. The Arabs call it *anab el dib*, i.e., wolf grapes. The **בְּאוֹשִׁים** *beushim*, says Rab. Chai., is a well known species of the vine, and the worst of all sorts. The prophet could not have found a plant more opposite to the vine than this; for it grows much in the vineyards, and is very pernicious to them; wherefore they root it out: it likewise resembles a vine by its shrubby stalk;” *Travels*, p. 289. See also Michaelis *Questions aux Voyageurs Danois*, No. 64.

Verse 3. *Inhabitants*— **יְשֵׁבֵי** *yoshebey*, in the plural number; three MSS., (two ancient,) and so likewise the Septuagint and Vulgate.

Verse 6. *There shall come up briars and thorns “The thorn shall spring up in it”*— One MS. has **בִּשְׁמִיר** *beshamir*. The true reading seems to be **בּוֹ שְׁמִיר** *bo shamir*, which is confirmed by the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate.

Verse 7. *And he looked for judgment*— The paronomasia, or play on the words, in this place, is very remarkable; *mishpat*, *mishpach*, *tsedakah*, *tseakah*. There are many examples of it in the other prophets, but Isaiah seems peculiarly fond of it. See chap. 13:6, 24:17, 32:7, 28:1, 57:6, 61:3, 65:11, 12. Rabbi David Kimchi has noticed the paronomasia here: he expected **מִשְׁפָּט** *mishpat*, judgment, but behold **מִשְׁפַּח** *mishpach*, oppression; he expected **צְדָקָה** *tsedakah*, righteousness, but behold **צַעֲקָה** *tseakah*, a cry. The rabbins esteem it a great beauty; their term for it is **צְחוֹת הַלָּשׁוֹן** *tsachoth haltashon*, elegance of language.

Oppression “tyranny.”— **משפח** mishpach, from **שפח** shaphach, servum fecit, Arab. Houbigant: **שפחה** shiphchah is serva, a handmaid or female slave. **משפח** mispach, eighteen MSS.

Verse 8. *Wo unto them that lay field to field* “*You who lay field unto field*”— Read **תקריב** takribu, in the second person; to answer to the verb following. So Vulgate.

Verse 9. *In mine ears. “To mine ear”*— The sentence in the Hebrew text seems to be imperfect in this place; as likewise in chap. 22:14, where the very same sense seems to be required as here. See the note there; and compare 1 Samuel 9:15. In this place the Septuagint supply the word **ηκουσθη**, and the Syriac **אשתמע** eshtama, auditus est JEHOVAH in auribus meis, i.e., **נגלה** niglah, as in chap. 22:14.

Many houses— This has reference to what was said in the preceding verse: “In vain are ye so intent upon joining house to house, and field to field; your houses shall be left uninhabited, and your fields shall become desolate and barren; so that a vineyard of ten acres shall produce but one bath (not eight gallons) of wine, and the husbandman shall reap but a tenth part of the seed which he has sown.” Kimchi says this means such an extent of vineyard as would require ten yoke of oxen to plough in one day.

Verse 11. *Wo unto them that rise up early*— There is a likeness between this and the following passage of the prophet Amos, chap. 6:3-6, who probably wrote before Isaiah. If the latter be the copier, he seems hardly to have equalled the elegance of the original:—

*“Ye that put far away the evil day
And affect the seat of violence;
Who lie upon beds of ivory,
And stretch yourselves upon your couches;
And eat the lambs from the flock,
And calves from the midst of the stall;
Who chant to the sound of the viol,
And like David invent for yourselves instruments of*

*music;
 Who quaff wine in large bowls,
 And are anointed with the choicest ointments:
 But are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph.”*

Kimchi says, “they consider not the heavens nor their hosts: they pray not the morning nor the evening prayer unto the Lord.”

Follow strong drink— Theodoret and Chrysostom on this place, both Syrians, and unexceptionable witnesses in what belongs to their own country, inform us that שכר shechar (σικερα in the Greek of both Testaments, rendered by us by the general term strong drink) meant properly palm wine, or date wine, which was and is still much in use in the Eastern countries. Judea was famous for the abundance and excellence of its palm trees; and consequently had plenty of this wine. “Fiunt (vina) et e pomis; primumque e palmis, quo Parthi et Indi utuntur, et oriens totus: maturarum modio in aquae congiis tribus macerato expressoque.” Plin. lib. 14:19. “Ab his cariotae [palmae] maxime celebrantur; et cibo quidem, sed et succo, uberrimae. Ex quibus praecipua vina orienti; iniqua capiti, unde porno nomen.” Id. 13:9. καρως signifies stupefaction: and in Hebrew likewise the wine has its name from its remarkably inebriating quality.

Verse 13. And their honorable men “And the nobles”— These verses have likewise a reference to the two preceding. They that indulged in feasting and drinking shall perish with hunger and thirst; and Hades shall indulge his appetite as much as they had done, and devour them all. The image is strong and expressive in the highest degree. Habakkuk chap. 2:5, uses the same image with great force: — the ambitious and avaricious conqueror.

*“Enlargeth his appetite like Hades;
 And he is like Death, and will never be satisfied,”*

Shoel hath dilated her soul, she hath opened her mouth beyond limit.” Destruction expects more than a common meal, when God visits Jerusalem for her iniquities. This seems to refer to the ruin brought on the Jews by the Romans. Our blessed Lord repeats this parable, and applies it to this very transaction, Matthew 21:33.

Verse 17. *The lambs “And the kids”*—גֵרִים gerim, “strangers.” The Septuagint read, more agreeably to the design of the prophet, כְּרִים carim, ἀρνες, “the lambs.” גֵדַיִם gedayim, “the kids,” Dr. Durell; nearer to the present reading: and so Archbishop Secker. The meaning is, their luxurious habitations shall be so entirely destroyed as to become a pasture for flocks.

After their manner “Without restraint”—כְּדַבְרָם kedobram, secundum ductum eorum; i.e. suo ipsorum ductu; as their own will shall lead them.

Verse 18. *With a cart-rope “As a long cable”*—The Septuagint, Aquila, Sym., and Theod., for בַּחֲבֵלִי bechabley, read כַּחֲבֵלִי kechahley, ὡς σχοινίω, or σχοινίους; and the Septuagint, instead of שׂוֹאֵי shau, read some other word signifying long; ὡς σχοινίω μακρῶ; and so likewise the Syriac, אַרְיָכָא arecha. Houbigant conjectures that the word which the Septuagint had in their copies was שְׂרֹעֵה sarua, which is used Leviticus 21:18, 22:23, for something in an animal body superfluous, lengthened beyond its natural measure. And he explains it of sin added to sin, and one sin drawing on another, till the whole comes to an enormous length and magnitude; compared to the work of a rope-maker still increasing and lengthening his rope, with the continued addition of new materials. “Eos propheta similes facit homini restiario, qui funem torquet, cannabe addita et contorta, eadem iterans, donec funem in longum duxerit, neque eum liceat protrahi longius.” “An evil inclination,” says Kimchi on this place, from the ancient rabbins, “is at the beginning like a fine hair-string, but at the finishing like a thick cart-rope.” By a long progression in iniquity, and a continued accumulation of sin, men arrive at length to the highest degree of wickedness; bidding open defiance to God, and scoffing at his threatened judgments, as it is finely expressed in the next verse. The Chaldee paraphrast explains it in the same manner, of wickedness

increasing from small beginnings, till it arrives to a great magnitude. — L.

I believe neither the rabbins nor Bishop Lowth have hit on the true meaning of this place, the prophet seems to refer to idol sacrifices. The victims they offered were splendidly decked out for the sacrifice. Their horns and hoofs were often gilded, and their heads dressed out with fillets and garlands. The cords of vanity may refer to the silken strings by which they were led to the altar, some of which were unusually thick. The offering for iniquity was adorned with fillets and garlands; the sin-offering with silken cords, like unto cart-ropes. Pride, in their acts of humiliation, had the upper hand.

Verse 19. *Let the counsel of the Holy One*— Tryphiodorus has an expression something like this:—

— επει διος ηλυθε βουλη.

TRYPH. II Excid. 239.

Because the counsel of Jupiter was come.

“This expression, ηλυθε βουλη, is, I believe, something uncommon; but it is exactly paralleled and explained by a passage in Isaiah, chap. 5:19. The Septuagint has expressed it in the very same words with Tryphiodorus: και ελθοι η βουλ η του αγιου ισραηλ, ινα γνωμεν.”-Merrick’s note, ad loc.

Verse 22. *Mighty to drink wine*— “They show not,” says Kimchi, “their strength in combating their enemies, but in drunkenness and debauchery.”

Verse 23. *The righteous*— צַדִּיק tsaddik, singular, Sept. Vulg., and two editions.

Verse 24. *The flame*”*The tongue of fire*”— “The flame, because it is in the shape of a tongue; and so it is called metaphorically.” Sal. ben Melec. The metaphor is so exceedingly obvious, as well as beautiful, that one may wonder that it has not been more frequently used. Virgil very elegantly

intimates, rather than expresses, the image;—

*Ecce levis summo de vertice visus Iuli
Fundere lumen apex; tactuque innoxia molli
Lambere flamma comas, et circum tempora pasci.*

AEn. 2:682.

*“Strange to relate! from young Iulus’ head
A lambent flame arose, which gently spread
Around his brows, and on his temples fed.”*

And more boldly of AEtna darting out flames from its top:—

*Interdumque atram prorumpit ad aethera nubem,
Turbine fumantem piceo, et candente favilla:
Attollitque globos flammarum, et sidera lambit.*

AEn. 3:574.

*“By turns a pitchy cloud she rolls on high,
By turns hot embers from her entrails fly,
And flakes of mountain flames, that lick the sky.”*

The disparted tongues, as it were of fire, Acts 2:3, which appeared at the descent of the Holy Spirit, on the apostles, give the same idea; that is, of flames shooting diversely into pyramidal forms, or points, like tongues. It may be farther observed that the prophet in this place has given the metaphor its full force, in applying it to the action of fire in eating up and devouring whatever comes in its way, like a ravenous animal whose tongue is principally employed in taking in his food or prey; which image Moses has strongly exhibited in an expressive comparison: “And Moab said to the elders of Midian Now shall this collection of people lick up all that are around about us, as the ox licketh up the grass of the field,” Numbers 22:4. See also 1 Kings 18:38.

Their root shall be as rottenness— כמק *cammak, like mak; whence*

probably our word muck, dung, was derived.

Verse 25. *The hills did tremble “And the mountains trembled”*—

Probably referring to the great earthquakes in the days of Uzziah king of Judah, in or not long before the time of the prophet himself, recorded as a remarkable era in the title of the prophecies of Amos., chap. 1:1, and by Zechariah, chap. 14:5.

Verse 26. *He will-hiss “He will hist”*— “The metaphor is taken from the practice of those that keep bees, who draw them out of their hives into the fields, and lead them back again, **συρισμασι**, by a hiss or a whistle.”—Cyril, on this place; and to the same purpose Theodoret, ib. In chap. 7:18, the metaphor is more apparent, by being carried farther, where the hostile armies are expressed by the fly and the bee:—

“JEHOVAH shall hist the fly That is in the utmost parts of Egypt; And the bee, that is in the land of Assyria.”

On which place see Deuteronomy 1:44; Psalm 118:12; and God calls the locusts his great army, Joel 2:25; Exodus 23:28. See Huet, Quest. Alnet. 2:12. **שָׂרַק** sharak or shrak, he shall whistle for them, call loud and shrill; he shall shriek, and they (their enemies) shall come at his call.

With speed— This refers to the nineteenth verse. As the scoffers had challenged God to make speed, and to hasten his work of vengeance, so now God assures them that with speed and swiftly it shall come.

Verse 27. *None-among them*— Kimchi has well illustrated this continued exaggeration or hyperbole, as he rightly calls it, to the following effect:

“Through the greatness of their courage they shall not be fatigued with their march, nor shall they stumble though they march with the utmost speed: they shall not slumber by day, nor sleep by night; neither shall they ungird their armor, or put off their sandals to take their rest. Their arms shall be always in readiness, their arrows sharpened, and their bows bent. The hoofs of their horses are hard as a rock. They shall not fail, or need to be shod with iron: the wheels of their carriages shall move as rapidly as a whirlwind.”

Neither shall the girdle— The Eastern people, wearing long and loose garments, were unfit for action or business of any kind, without girding their clothes about them. When their business was finished they took off their girdles. A girdle therefore denotes strength and activity; and to unloose the girdle is to deprive of strength, to render unfit for action. God promises to unloose the loins of kings before Cyrus, chap. 45:1. The girdle is so essential a part of a soldier's accoutrement, being the last that he puts on to make himself ready for action, that to be girded, ζωννυσθαι, with the Greeks means to be completely armed and ready for battle:—

ατρειδης δ εβησεν, ιδε ζωννυσθαι ανωγεν
αργειους.

Iliad, 11:15.

το δε ενδυναι τα οπλα εκαλουν οι παλαιοι ζωννυσθαι. Pausan. Boeot. It is used in the same manner by the Hebrews: "Let not him that girdeth himself boast as he that unlooseth his girdle," 1 Kings 20:11; that is, triumph not before the war is finished.

Verse 28. *Their horses' hoofs shall be counted like flint* "*The hoofs of their horses shall be counted as adamant*" — The shoeing of horses with iron plates nailed to the hoof is quite a modern practice, and was unknown to the ancients, as appears from the silence of the Greek and Roman writers, especially those that treat of horse medicine, who could not have passed over a matter so obvious and of such importance that now the whole science takes its name from it, being called by us farriery. The horseshoes of leather and iron which are mentioned; the silver and gold shoes with which Nero and Poppaea shod their mules, used occasionally to preserve the hoofs of delicate cattle, or for vanity, were of a very different kind; they enclosed the whole hoof as in a case, or as a shoe does a man's foot, and were bound or tied on. For this reason the strength, firmness and solidity of a horse's hoof was of much greater importance with them than with us, and was esteemed one of the first praises of a fine horse. Xenophon says that a good horse's hoof is hard, hollow, and sounds upon the ground like a cymbal. Hence the χαλκοποδες ιπποι, of Homer, and Virgil's solido graviter sonat ungula cornu. And Xenophon

gives directions for hardening the horses' hoofs by making the pavement on which he stands in the stable with roundheaded stones. For want of this artificial defense to the foot which our horses have, Amos, chap. 6:12, speaks of it as a thing as much impracticable to make horses run upon a hard rock as to plough up the same rock with oxen:—

*“Shall horses run upon a rock?
Shall one plough it up with oxen?”*

These circumstances must be taken into consideration in order to give us a full notion of the propriety and force of the image by which the prophet sets forth the strength and excellence of the Babylonish cavalry, which made a great part of the strength of the Assyrian army. Xenop. Cyrop. lib. ii.

Like a whirlwind— כסופה cassuphah, like the stormy blast. Here sense and sound are well connected.

Verse 30. *If one look unto the land, etc. “And these shall look to the heaven upward, and down to the earth”*— ונבט לארץ venibbat laarets.

και εμβλεψονται εις την γην. So the Septuagint, according to the Vatican and Alexandrian copies; but the Complutensian and Aldine editions have it more fully, thus: — και εμβλεψονται εις τον ουρανον ανω, και κατω; and the Arabic from the Septuagint, as if it had stood thus: και εμβλεψονται εις ουρανον, και την γην κατω, both of which are plainly defective; the words εις την γην, unto the earth, being wanted in the former, and the word ανω, above, in the latter. But an ancient Coptic version from the Septuagint, supposed to be of the second century, some fragments of which are preserved in the library of St. Germain des Prez at Paris, completes the sentence; for, according to this version, it stood thus in the Septuagint. — και εμβλεψονται εις τον ουρανον ανω, και εις γην κατω; “And they shall look unto the heavens above and unto the earth beneath,” and so it stands in the Septuagint MSS., Pachom. and 1:D. II., according to which they must have read their Hebrew text in this manner: — ונבט לשמים למעלה ולארץ למטה. This is probably the true reading, with which I have made the translation

agree. Compare chap. 8:22; where the same sense is expressed in regard to both particulars, which are here equally and highly proper, the looking upwards, as well as down to the earth: but the form of expression is varied. I believe the Hebrew text in that place to be right, though not so full as I suppose it was originally here; and that of the Septuagint there to be redundant, being as full as the Coptic version and MSS. Pachom. and 1:D. 2:represent it in this place, from which I suppose it has been interpolated.

Darkness “*The gloomy vapor*”— The Syriac and Vulgate seem to have read בערפלה bearphalach; but Jarchi explains the present reading as signifying darkness; and possibly the Syriac and Vulgate may have understood it in the same manner.

CHAPTER 6

This chapter, by a particular designation of Isaiah to the prophetic office, 1-8, introduces, with great solemnity, a declaration of the whole tenor of the Divine conduct in reference to his people, who, on account of their unbelief and impenitence, should for a very long period be given up to a judicial blindness and hardness of heart, 9, 10; and visited with such calamities as would issue on the total desolation of their country, and their general dispersion, 11, 12. The prophet adds, however, that under their repeated dispersions, (by the Chaldeans, Romans, etc.,) a small remnant would be preserved as a seed from which will be raised a people, in whom will be fulfilled all the Divine promises, 13.

As this vision seems to contain a solemn designation of Isaiah to the prophetic office, it is by most interpreters thought to be the first in order of his prophecies. But this perhaps may not be so; for Isaiah is said, in the general title of his prophecies, to have prophesied in the time of Uzziah, whose acts, first and last, he wrote, 2 Chronicles 26:22; which is usually done by a contemporary prophet; and the phrase, in the year that Uzziah died, probably means after the death of Uzziah; as the same phrase (chap. 14:28) means after the death of Ahaz. Not that Isaiah's prophecies are placed in exact order of time. Chapters ii., iii., iv., v., seem by internal marks to be antecedent to chap. i.; they suit the time of Uzziah, or the former part of Jotham's reign; whereas chap. 1: can hardly be earlier than the last years of Jotham. See note on chap. 1:7, and 2:1. This might be a new designation, to introduce more solemnly a general dedication of the whole course of God's dispensations in regard to his people and the fates of the nation; which are even now still depending, and will not be fully accomplished till the final restoration of Israel.

In this vision the ideas are taken in general from royal majesty, as displayed by the monarchs of the East; for the prophet could not represent the ineffable presence of God by any other than sensible and earthly images. The particular scenery of it is taken from the temple. God is represented as seated on his throne above the ark, in the most holy

place, where the glory appeared above the cherubim, surrounded by his attendant ministers. This is called by God himself “the place of his throne, and the place of the soles of his feet,” Ezekiel 43:7. “A glorious throne exalted of old, is the place of our sanctuary,” saith the prophet Jeremiah, chap. 17:12. The very posture of sitting is a mark of state and solemnity: Sed et ipsum verbum sedere regni significat potestatem, saith Jerome, Comment. in Ephesians 1:20. See note on chap. 3:2. St. John, who has taken many sublime images from the prophets of the Old Testament, and in particular from Isaiah, hath exhibited the same scenery, drawn out into a greater number of particulars; Revelation iv.

The veil, separating the most holy place from the holy or outermost part of the temple, is here supposed to be taken away; for the prophet, to whom the whole is exhibited, is manifestly placed by the altar of burnt-offering, at the entrance of the temple, (compare Ezekiel 43:5, 6,) which was filled with the train of the robe, the spreading and overflowing of the Divine glory. The Lord upon the throne, according to St. John (chap. 12:41,) was Christ; and the vision related to his future kingdom when the veil of separation was to be removed, and the whole earth was to be filled with the glory of God, revealed to all mankind: which is likewise implied in the hymn of the seraphim, the design of which is, saith Jerome on the place, *Ut mysterium Trinitatis in una Divinitate demonstrent; et nequaquam templum Judaicum, sicut prius, sed omnem terram illius gloria plenam esse testentur*; “That they may point out the mystery of the Trinity in one Godhead; and that the Jewish temple alone should not be, as formerly, the place of the Divine glory, for the whole earth should be filled with it.” It relates, indeed, primarily to the prophet’s own time, and the obduration of the Jews of that age, and their punishment by the Babylonish captivity; but extends in its full attitude to the age of Messiah, and the blindness of the Jews to the Gospel, (see Matthew 13:14; John 12:40; Acts 28:26; Romans 11:8,) the desolation of their country by the Romans, and their being rejected by God. That nevertheless a holy seed—a remnant, should be preserved; and that the nation should spread out and flourish again from the old stock. — L.

NOTES ON CHAP. 6

Verse 1. *The Lord*— Fifty-one MSS. of Kennicott's, and fifty-four of De Rossi's, and one edition; in the 8th verse, forty-four MSS. of Kennicott's, and forty-six of De Rossi's, and one edition; and in the 11th verse thirty-three MSS. of Kennicott's, and many of De Rossi's, and one edition, for אֲדֹנָי Adonai, "the Lord" read יְהוָה "JEHOVAH," which is probably the true reading; (compare ver. 6;) as in many other places, in which the superstition of the Jews has substituted אֲדֹנָי Adonai for יְהוָה Yehovah. One of my own MSS., a very ancient and large folio, to which the points and the masora have been added by a later hand, has יְהוָה Yehovah in the 1st and 8th verses, in the teeth of the masora, which orders it in both places to be read אֲדֹנָי Adonai.

Verse 2. *Above it stood the seraphim*— שֵׁרָפִים seraphim, from שָׂרַף seraph, to burn. He saw says Kimchi, the angels as flames of fire, that the depravity of that generation might be exhibited, which was worthy of being totally burnt up.

He covered his feet "***He covereth his feet***"— By the feet the Hebrews mean all the lower parts of the body. But the people of the East generally wearing long robes, reaching to the ground, and covering the lower parts of the body down to the feet, it may hence have been thought want of respect and decency to appear in public and on solemn occasions with even the feet themselves uncovered. Kempfer, speaking of the king of Persia giving audience, says, Rex in medio supremi atrii cruribus more patrio inflexis sedebat: corpus tunica investiebat flava, ad suras cum staret protensa; discumbentis vero pedes discalceatos pro urbanitate patria operiens. — Amoen. Exot. p. 227. "The king sat on the floor cross-legged, as is the custom of the country. He was covered with a yellow garment, which reached down to the feet when standing, but covered the feet for decency when sitting with his slippers off." Sir John Chardin's MS. note on this place of Isaiah is as follows: Grande marque de respect en orient de se cacher les pieds, quand on est assis, et de baisser le visage. Quand le souverain se monstre en Chine et a Japon, chacun se jette le visage contre

terre, et il n'est pas permis de regarder le roi; "It is a great mark of respect in the East to cover the feet, and to bow down the head in the presence of the king."

Verse 3. *Holy, holy, holy*— This hymn performed by the seraphim, divided into two choirs, the one singing responsively to the other, which Gregory Nazian., Carm. 18, very elegantly calls **συμφωνον, αντιφωνον, αγγελων στασιν**, is formed upon the practice of alternate singing, which prevailed in the Jewish Church from the time of Moses, whose ode at the Red Sea was thus performed, (see Exodus 15:20, 21,) to that of Ezra, under whom the priests and Levites sung alternately,

*"O praise JEHOVAH, for he is gracious;
For his mercy endureth for ever;"*

Ezra 3:11. See De Sac. Poes. Hebr. Prael. xix., at the beginning.

Verse 5. *Wo is me! for I am undone*— **נִדְמֵיתִי** nidmeythi, I am become dumb. There is something exceedingly affecting in this complaint. I am a man of unclean lips; I cannot say, Holy, holy, holy! which the seraphs exclaim. They are holy; I am not so: they see God, and live; I have seen him, and must die, because I am unholy. Only the pure in heart shall see God; and they only can live in his presence for ever, Reader, lay this to heart; and instead of boasting of thy excellence, and trusting in thy might, or comforting thyself in thy comparative innocence, thou wilt also be dumb before him, because thou hast been a man of unclean lips, and because thou hast still an unclean heart.

I am undone "I am struck dumb"— **נִדְמֵיתִי** nidmeythi, twenty-eight MSS. (five ancient) and three editions. — I understand it as from **דום** dum or **דמם** damam, silere, "to be silent;" and so it is rendered by the Syriac, Vulgate, Symmachus, and by some of the Jewish interpreters, apud Sal. b. Melec. The rendering of the Syriac is **אני תוויר אַנִי** tavir ani, stupens, attonitus sum, "I am amazed." He immediately gives the reason why he was struck dumb: because he was a man of polluted lips, and dwelt among a people of polluted lips, and was unworthy, either to join the seraphim in

singing praises to God, or to be the messenger of God to his people. Compare Exodus 4:10; 6:12; Jeremiah 1:6.

Verse 6. A live coal— The word of prophecy, which was put into the mouth of the prophet.

From off the altar— That is, from the altar of burnt-offerings, before the door of the temple, on which the fire that came down at first from heaven (Lev. — ix. 24; 2 Chronicles 7:1) was perpetually burning. It was never to be extinguished, Leviticus 6:12, 13

Verse 9. And he said— לִי li, to me, two MSS. and the Syriac. Thirteen MSS. have רַחֵם raah, in the regular form.

Verse 10. Make the heart of this people fat”Gross” — The prophet speaks of the event, the fact as it would actually happen, not of God’s purpose and act by his ministry. The prophets are in other places said to perform the thing which they only foretell:—

*“Lo! I have given thee a charge this day
Over the nations, and over the kingdoms;
To pluck up, and to pull down;
To destroy, and to demolish;
To build, and to plant.”*

Jeremiah 1:10.

And Ezekiel says, “When I came to destroy the city,” that is, as it is rendered in the margin of our version, “when I came to prophesy that the city should be destroyed; “ chap. 43:3. To hear, and not understand; to see, and not perceive; is a common saying in many languages.

Demosthenes uses it, and expressly calls it a proverb: **ὥστε το τῆς παροιμίας ὀρώντας μὴ ὀραν, καὶ ἀκούοντας μὴ ἀκοῦειν**; Contra Aristogit. I., sub fin. The prophet, by the bold figure in the sentiment above mentioned, and the elegant form and construction of the sentence, has raised it from a common proverb into a beautiful mashaal, and given it the sublime air of poetry.

Or the words may be understood thus, according to the Hebrew idiom: “Ye certainly hear, but do not understand; ye certainly see, but do not acknowledge.” Seeing this is the case, make the heart of this people fat-declare it to be stupid and senseless; and remove from them the means of salvation, which they have so long abused.

There is a saying precisely like this in AEschylus:—

— βλεποντες εβλεπον ματην,
κλυοντες ουκ ηκουον.

AESCH. Prom. Vinct. 456.

“Seeing, they saw in vain; and hearing, they did not understand.”

And shut “Close up”— השע hasha. This word Sal. ben Melec explains to this sense, in which it is hardly used elsewhere, on the authority of Onkelos. He says it means closing up the eyes, so that one cannot see; that the root is שוע shava, by which word the Targum has rendered the word טח tach, Leviticus 14:42, וטח את בית, vetach eth beith, “and shall plaster the house.” And the word טח tach is used in the same sense, Isaiah 44:18. So that it signifies to close up the eyes by some matter spread upon the lids. Mr. Harmer very ingeniously applies to this passage a practice of sealing up the eyes as a ceremony, or as a kind of punishment used in the East, from which the image may possibly be taken. Observ. 2:278.

With their heart “With their hearts”— ובלבבו ubilebabo, fifteen MSS. of Kennicott’s and fourteen of De Rossi’s, and two editions, with the Septuagint, Syriac, Chaldee, and Vulgate.

And be healed “And I should heal”— ואר פא veer pa, Septuagint, Vulgate. So likewise Matthew 13:14; John 12:40; Acts 28:27.

Verse 11. Be utterly desolate “Be left”— For תשאה tishaeh, the Septuagint and Vulgate read תשאר tishshaer.

Verse 13. A tenth— This passage, though somewhat obscure, and variously explained by various interpreters, has, I think, been made so clear by the accomplishment of the prophecy, that there remains little room to doubt of the sense of it. When Nebuchadnezzar had carried away the greater and better part of the people into captivity, there was yet a tenth remaining in the land, the poorer sort left to be vinedressers and husbandmen, under Gedaliah, 2 Kings 25:12, 22, and the dispersed Jews gathered themselves together, and returned to him, Jeremiah 40:12; yet even these, fleeing into Egypt after the death of Gedaliah, contrary to the warning of God given by the prophet Jeremiah, miserably perished there. Again, in the subsequent and more remarkable completion of the prophecy in the destruction of Jerusalem, and the dissolution of the commonwealth by the Romans, when the Jews, after the loss of above a million of men, had increased from the scanty residue that was left of them, and had become very numerous again in their country; Hadrian, provoked by their rebellious behavior, slew above half a million more of them, and a second time almost extirpated the nation. Yet after these signal and almost universal destructions of that nation, and after so many other repeated exterminations and massacres of them in different times and on various occasions since, we yet see, with astonishment, that the stock still remains, from which God, according to his promise frequently given by his prophets, will cause his people to shoot forth again, and to flourish. — L.

A tenth, עשיריה asiriyah. The meaning, says Kimchi, of this word is, there shall yet be in the land ten kings from the time of declaring this prophecy. The names of the ten kings are Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, Manasseh, Amon, Jostah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiachin, Jehoiakim, and Zedekiah; then there shall be a general consumption, the people shall be carried into captivity, and Jerusalem shall be destroyed.

For בם bam, in them, above seventy MSS., eleven of Kennicott's, and thirty-four of De Rossi's, read בה bah, in it; and so the Septuagint.

CHAPTER 7

The king of Judah and the royal family being in the utmost consternation on receiving accounts of the invasion of the kings of Syria and Israel, the prophet is sent to assure them that God would make good his promises to David and his house; so that, although they might be corrected, they could not be destroyed, while these prophecies remained to be accomplished, 1-9. The Lord gives Ahaz a sign that the confederacy against Judah shall be broken, which sign strikingly points out the miraculous conception of the Messiah, who was to spring from the tribe of Judah, 10-16. Prediction of very heavy calamities which the Assyrians would inflict upon the land of Judea, 17-25.

The confederacy of Rezin, king of Syria, and Pekah, king of Israel, against the kingdom of Judah, was formed in the time of Jotham; and perhaps the effects of it were felt in the latter part of his reign; see 2 Kings 15:37, and note on chap. 1:7-9. However, in the very beginning of the reign of Ahaz, they jointly invaded Judah with a powerful army, and threatened to destroy or to dethrone the house of David. The king and royal family being in the utmost consternation on receiving advises of their designs, Isaiah is sent to them to support and comfort them in their present distress, by assuring them that God would make good his promises to David and his house. This makes the subject of this, and the following, and the beginning of the ninth chapters, in which there are many and great difficulties.

Chap. 7: begins with an historical account of the occasion of this prophecy; and then follows, ver. 4-16, a prediction of the ill success of the designs of the Israelites and Syrians against Judah; and from thence to the end of the chapter, a denunciation of the calamities to be brought upon the king and people of Judah by the Assyrians, whom they had now hired to assist them. Chap. 8: has a pretty close connection with the foregoing; it contains a confirmation of the prophecy before given of the approaching destruction of the kingdoms of Israel and Syria by the Assyrians, of the

denunciation of the invasion of Judah by the same Assyrians. Verses 9, 10, give a repeated general assurance, that all the designs of the enemies of God's people shall be in the end disappointed and brought to naught; ver. 11, etc., admonitions and threatenings, (I do not attempt a more particular explanation of this very difficult part,) concluding with an illustrious prophecy chap. 9:1-6, of the manifestation of Messiah, the transcendent dignity of his character, and the universality and eternal duration of his kingdom.

NOTES ON CHAP. 7

Verse 3. Now—נא na, is omitted by two MSS., the Septuagint, Syriac, Arabic, and Vulgate.

Verse 4. The Syriac omits וארם vearam, "and Syria;" the Vulgate reads מלך ארם melech aram, "king of Syria:" one or the other seems to be the true reading. I prefer the former: or, instead of וארם וב vearam uben, read ופקח בן vepekach ben, and pekah son, MS.

Verse 5. Because-Remaliah— All these words are omitted by one MS. and the Syriac; a part of them also by the Septuagint.

Verses 8, 9. For the head of Syria, etc.—

"Though the head of Syria be Damascus, And the head of Damascus Retin; Yet within threescore and five years Ephraim shall be broken, that he be no more a people: And the head of Ephraim be Samaria; And the head of Samaria Remaliah's son.

"Here are six lines, or three distichs, the order of which seems to have been disturbed by a transposition, occasioned by three of the lines beginning with the same word וראש verosh, "and the head," which three lines ought not to have been separated by any other line intervening; but a copyist, having written the first of them, and casting his eye on the third, might easily proceed to write after the first line beginning with וראש verosh,

that which ought to have followed the third line beginning with **וְשָׁרָה** verosh. Then finding his mistake, to preserve the beauty of his copy, added at the end the distich which should have been in the middle; making that the second distich, which ought to have been the third. For the order as it now stands is preposterous: the destruction of Ephraim is denounced, and then their grandeur is set forth; whereas naturally the representation of the grandeur of Ephraim should precede that of their destruction. And the destruction of Ephraim has no coherence with the grandeur of Syria, simply as such, which it now follows: but it naturally and properly follows the grandeur of Ephraim, joined to that of Syria their ally.

“The arrangement then of the whole sentence seems originally to have been thus:—

Though the head of Syria be Damascus, And the head of Damascus Retsin
And the head of Ephraim be Samaria; And the head of Samaria Remaliah’s
son: Yet within threescore and five years Ephraim shall be broken that he
be no more a people.”

DR. JUBB.

Threescore and five years— It was sixty-five years from the beginning of the reign of Ahaz, when this prophecy was delivered, to the total depopulation of the kingdom of Israel by Esarhaddon, who carried away the remains of the ten tribes which had been left by Tiglath-pileser, and Shalmaneser, and who planted the country with new inhabitants. That the country was not wholly stripped of its inhabitants by Shalmaneser appears from many passages of the history of Josiah, where Israelites are mentioned as still remaining there, 2 Chronicles 34:6, 7, 33; 35:18; 2 Kings 23:19, 20. This seems to be the best explanation of the chronological difficulty in this place, which has much embarrassed the commentators: see Usserii Annal. 5:T. ad an. 3327, and Sir 1:Newton, Chronol. p. 283.

“That the last deportation of Israel by Esarhaddon was in the sixty-fifth year after the second of Ahaz, is probable for the following reasons: The Jews, in Seder Olam Rabba, and the Talmudists, in D. Kimchi on Ezekiel iv., say that Manasseh king of Judah was carried to Babylon by the king of Assyria’s captains, 2 Chronicles 33:11, in the twenty-second year of his

reign; that is, before Christ 676, according to Dr. Blair's tables. And they are probably right in this. It could not be much earlier; as the king of Assyria was not king of Babylon till 680, *ibid.* As Esarhaddon was then in the neighborhood of Samaria, it is highly probable that he did then carry away the last remains of Israel, and brought those strangers thither who mention him as their founder, Ezra 4:2. But this year is just the sixty-fifth from the second of Ahaz, which was 740 before Christ. Now the carrying away the remains of Israel, who, till then, though their kingdom was destroyed forty-five years before, and though small in number, might yet keep up some form of being a people, by living according to their own laws, entirely put an end to the people of Israel, as a people separate from all others: for from this time they never returned to their own country in a body, but were confounded with the people of Judah in the captivity; and the whole people, the ten tribes included, were called Jews."-DR. JUBB. Two MSS. have twenty-five instead of sixty-five; and two others omit the word five, reading only sixty.

If ye will not believe "If ye believe not"— "This clause is very much illustrated by considering the captivity of Manasseh as happening at the same time with this predicted final ruin of Ephraim as a people. The near connection of the two facts makes the prediction of the one naturally to cohere with the prediction of the other. And the words are well suited to this event in the history of the people of Judah: 'If ye believe not, ye shall not be established;' that is, unless ye believe this prophecy of the destruction of Israel, ye Jews also, as well as the people of Israel, shall not remain established as a kingdom and people; ye also shall be visited with punishment at the same time: as our Savior told the Jews in his time, 'Unless ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish;' intimating their destruction by the Romans; to which also, as well as to the captivity of Manasseh, and to the Babylonish captivity, the views of the prophet might here extend. The close connection of this threat to the Jews with the prophecy of the destruction of Israel, is another strong proof that the order of the preceding lines above proposed is right."-DR. JUBB.

"If ye believe not in me."-The exhortation of Jehoshaphat, 2 Chronicles 20:20, to his people, when God had promised to them, by the prophet Jahaziel, victory over the Moabites and Ammonites, is very like this both

in sense and expression, and seems to be delivered in verse:

***“Hear me, O Judah; and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem;
Believe in JEHOVAH your God, and ye shall be
established:
Believe his prophets, and ye shall prosper.”***

ל le, in לדעתו ledato. This has been generally rendered, either ‘that he may know,’ or ‘till he know.’ It is capable of either version, without doubt; but either of these versions makes ver. 15 incoherent and inconsistent with ver. 16. For ver. 16 plainly means to give a reason for the assertion in ver. 16, because it is subjoined to it by the particle כִּי ki, for. But it is no reason why a child should eat butter and honey till he was at an age to distinguish, that before that time the land of his nativity should be free from its enemies. This latter supposition indeed implies, what is inconsistent with the preceding assertion. For it implies, that in part of that time of the infancy spoken of the land should not be free from enemies, and consequently these species of delicate food could not be attainable, as they are in times of peace. The other version, ‘that he may know,’ has no meaning at all; for what sense is there in asserting, that a child shall eat butter and honey that he may know to refuse evil and choose good? Is there any such effect in this food? Surely not. Besides, the child is thus represented to eat those things, which only a state of peace produces, during its whole infancy, inconsistently with ver. 16, which promises a relief from enemies only before the end of this infancy: implying plainly, that part of it would be passed in distressful times of war and siege, which was the state of things when the prophecy was delivered.

“But all these objections are cut off, and a clear, coherent sense is given to this passage, by giving another sense to the particle ל le. which never occurred to me till I saw it in Harmer’s *Observat.*, vol. i., p. 299. See how coherent the words of the prophet run, with how natural a connection one clause follows another, by properly rendering this one particle: ‘Behold this Virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and thou shalt call his name Immanuel; butter and honey, shall he eat, when he shall know to refuse evil, and choose good. For before this child shall know to refuse evil and choose good, the land shall be desolate, by whose two kings thou art distressed.’ Thus ver. 16 subjoins a plain reason why the child should eat butter and honey, the food of plentiful times, when he came to a distinguishing age; viz., because before that time the country of the two kings, who now distressed Judea, should be desolated; and so Judea should recover that plenty which attends peace. That this rendering, which gives

perspicuity and rational connection to the passage, is according to the use of the Hebrew particle, is certain. Thus **לפנות בקר** liphnoth boker, ‘at the appearing of morning, or when morning appeared,’ Exodus 14:27; **לעת האכל** leeth haochel, ‘at mealtime, or when it was time to eat,’ Ruth 2:14. In the same manner, **לדעתו** ledato, ‘at his knowing, that is, when he knows.’

“Harmer (ibid.) has clearly shown that these articles of food are delicacies in the East, and, as such, denote a state of plenty. See also Joshua 5:6. They therefore naturally express the plenty of the country, as a mark of peace restored to it. Indeed, in ver. 22 it expresses a plenty arising from the thinness of the people; but that it signifies, ver. 15, a plenty arising from deliverance from war then present, is evident; because otherwise there is no expression of this deliverance. And that a deliverance was intended to be here expressed is plain, from calling the child which should be born Immanuel, God with us. It is plain, also, because it is before given to the prophet in charge to make a declaration of the deliverance, ver. 3-7; and it is there made; and this prophecy must undoubtedly be conformable to that in this matter.”-Dr. Jubb.

The circumstance of the child’s eating butter and honey is explained by Jarchi, as denoting a state of plenty: “Butter and honey shall this child eat, because our land shall be full of all good.” Comment in locum. The infant Jupiter, says Callimachus, was tenderly nursed with goat’s milk and honey. Hymn, in Jov. 48. Homer, of the orphan daughters of Pandareus:—

κομισσε δε δι’ αφροδιτη
 τυρω και μελιτι γλυκερω, και ηδει οινω.

ODYSS. XX., 68.

*“Venus in tender delicacy rears
 With honey, milk, and wine, their infant years.”*

POPE

τρυφης εστιν ενδειξις; “This is a description of delicate food,” says

Eustathius on the place.

Agreeably to the observations communicated by the learned person above mentioned, which perfectly well explain the historical sense of this much disputed passage, not excluding a higher secondary sense, the obvious and literal meaning of the prophecy is this: “that within the time that a young woman, now a virgin, should conceive and bring forth a child, and that child should arrive at such an age as to distinguish between good and evil, that is, within a few years, (compare chap. 8:4,) the enemies of Judah should be destroyed.” But the prophecy is introduced in so solemn a manner; the sign is so marked, as a sign selected and given by God himself, after Ahaz had rejected the offer of any sign of his own choosing out of the whole compass of nature; the terms of the prophecy are so peculiar, and the name of the child so expressive, containing in them much more than the circumstances of the birth of a common child required, or even admitted; that we may easily suppose that, in minds prepared by the general expectation of a great Deliverer to spring from the house of David, they raised hopes far beyond what the present occasion suggested; especially when it was found, that in the subsequent prophecy, delivered immediately afterward, this child, called Immanuel, is treated as the Lord and Prince of the land of Judah. Who could this be, other than the heir of the throne of David; under which character a great and even a Divine person had been promised? No one of that age answered to this character except Hezekiah; but he was certainly born nine or ten years before the delivery of this prophecy. That this was so understood at that time is collected, I think, with great probability, from a passage of Micah, a prophet contemporary with Isaiah, but who began to prophesy after him; and who, as I have already observed, imitated him, and sometimes used his expressions. Micah, having delivered that remarkable prophecy which determines the place of the birth of Messiah, “the Ruler of God’s people, whose goings forth have been of old, from everlasting;” that it should be Bethlehem Ephratah; adds immediately, that nevertheless, in the mean time, God would deliver his people into the hands of their enemies: “He will give them up, till she, who is to bear a child, shall bring forth,” Micah 5:3. This obviously and plainly refers to some known prophecy concerning a woman to bring forth a child; and seems much more properly applicable to this passage of Isaiah than to any others of the same

prophet, to which some interpreters have applied it. St. Matthew, therefore, in applying this prophecy to the birth of Christ, does it, not merely in the way of accommodating the words of the prophet to a suitable case not in the prophet's view, but takes it in its strictest, clearest, and most important sense; and applies it according to the original design and principal intention of the prophet. — L.

After all this learned criticism, I think something is still wanting to diffuse the proper light over this important prophecy. On Matthew 1:23 I have given what I judge to be the true meaning and right application of the whole passage, as there quoted by the evangelist, the substance of which it will be necessary to repeat here:—

At the time referred to, the kingdom of Judah, under the government of Ahaz, was reduced very low. Pekah, king of Israel, had slain in Judea one hundred and twenty thousand persons in one day; and carried away captives two hundred thousand, including women and children, together with much spoil. To add to their distress, Rezin, king of Syria, being confederate with Pekah, had taken Elath, a fortified city of Judah, and carried the inhabitants away captive to Damascus. In this critical conjuncture, need we wonder that Ahaz was afraid that the enemies who were now united against him must prevail, destroy Jerusalem, end the kingdom of Judah, and annihilate the family of David? To meet and remove this fear, apparently well grounded, Isaiah is sent from the Lord to Ahaz, swallowed up now both by sorrow and by unbelief, in order to assure him that the counsels of his enemies should not stand; and that they should be utterly discomfited. To encourage Ahaz, he commands him to ask a sign or miracle, which should be a pledge in hand, that God should, in due time, fulfill the predictions of his servant, as related in the context. On Ahaz humbly refusing to ask any sign, it is immediately added, “Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son; and shall call his name Immanuel. Butter and honey shall he eat,” etc. Both the Divine and human nature of our Lord, as well as the miraculous conception, appear to be pointed out in the prophecy quoted here by the evangelist: He shall be called **עִמָּנוּאֵל** IMMANUEL; literally, The STRONG GOD WITH US: similar to those words in the New Testament: The word which was God-was made flesh, and dwelt among us, full of

grace and truth; John 1:1, 14. And God was manifested in the flesh, 1 Timothy 3:16. So that we are to understand God with us to imply, God incarnated-God in human nature. This seems farther evident from the words of the prophet, ver. 15: Butter and honey shall he eat-he shall be truly man-grow up and be nourished in a human natural way; which refers to his being WITH US, i.e., incarnated. To which the prophet adds, That he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good; or rather, According to his knowledge, **לדעתו** ledato, reprobating the evil, and choosing the good; this refers to him as GOD, and is the same idea given by this prophet, chap. 53:11: By (or in) his knowledge, **בדעתו** bedato, (the knowledge of Christ crucified,) shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their offenses. Now this union of the Divine and human nature is termed a sign or miracle, **אֹת** oth, i.e., something which exceeds the power of nature to produce. And this miraculous union was to be brought about in a miraculous way: Behold, a VIRGIN shall conceive: the word is very emphatic, **העלמה** haalmah, THE virgin; the only one that ever was, or ever shall be, a mother in this way. But the Jews, and some called Christians, who have espoused their desperate cause, assert that “the word **עלמה** almah does not signify a VIRGIN only; for it is applied Proverbs 30:19 to signify a young married woman.” I answer, that this latter text is no proof of the contrary doctrine: the words **גבר בעלמה** **דרך** derech geber bealmah, the way of a man with a maid, cannot be proved to mean that for which it is produced. Besides, one of De Rossi’s MSS. reads **בעלמיו** bealmaiv, the way of a strong or stout man (**גבר** geber) IN HIS YOUTH; and in this reading the Syriac, Septuagint, Vulgate, and Arabic agree; which are followed by the first version in the English language, as it stands in a MS. in my own possession: the weie of a man in his waxing youth: so that this place, the only one that can with any probability of success be produced, were the interpretation contended for correct, which I am by no means disposed to admit, proves nothing. Besides, the consent of so many versions in the opposite meaning deprives it of much of its influence in this question.

The word **עלמה** almah, comes from **עלם** alam, to lie hid, be concealed: and we are told, that “virgins were so called, because they were concealed or closely kept up in their father’s houses till the time of their marriage.”

This is not correct: see the case of Rebecca, Genesis 24:43, and my note there; that of Rachel, Genesis 29:6, 9, and the note there also; and see the case of Miriam, the sister of Moses, Exodus 2:8, and also the Chaldee paraphrase on Lamentations 1:4, where the virgins are represented as going out in the dance. And see also the whole history of Ruth. This being concealed or kept at home, on which so much stress is laid, is purely fanciful; for we find that young unmarried women drew water, kept sheep, gleaned publicly in the fields, etc., etc., and the same works they perform among the Turcomans to the present day. This reason, therefore, does not account for the radical meaning of the word; and we must seek it elsewhere. Another well-known and often-used root in the Hebrew tongue will cast light on this subject. This is גלה galah, which signifies to reveal, make manifest, or uncover; and is often applied to matrimonial connections in different parts of the Mosaic law: עלם alam, therefore, may be considered as implying the concealment of the virgin, as such, till lawful marriage had taken place. A virgin was not called עלמה almah, because she was concealed by being kept at home in her father's house, which is not true; but, literally and physically, because as a woman she had not been uncovered-she had not known man. This fully applies to the blessed virgin, see Luke 1:34. "How can this be, seeing I know no man?" And this text throws much light on the subject before us. This also is in perfect agreement with the ancient prophecy, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent," Genesis 3:15; for the person who was to destroy the work of the devil was to be the progeny of the woman, without any concurrence of the man. And hence the text in Genesis speaks as fully of the virgin state of the person from whom Christ, according to the flesh, should come, as that in the prophet, or this in the evangelist. According to the original promise there was to be a seed, a human being, who should destroy sin: but this seed or human being, must come from the woman ALONE; and no woman ALONE could produce such a human being without being a virgin. Hence, A virgin shall bear a son, is the very spirit and meaning of the original text, independently of the illustration given by the prophet; and the fact recorded by the evangelist is the proof of the whole. But how could that be a sign to Ahaz which was to take place so many hundreds of years after? I answer, the meaning of the prophet is plain: not only Rezin and Pekah should be unsuccessful against Jerusalem

at that time, which was the fact; but Jerusalem, Judea, and the house of David should be both preserved, notwithstanding their depressed state, and the multitude of their adversaries, till the time should come when a VIRGIN should bear a son. This is a most remarkable circumstance the house of David could never fail, till a virgin should conceive and bear a son—nor did it: but when that incredible and miraculous fact did take place, the kingdom and house of David became extinct! This is an irrefragable confutation of every argument a Jew can offer in vindication of his opposition to the Gospel of Christ. Either the prophecy in Isaiah has been fulfilled, or the kingdom and house of David are yet standing. But the kingdom of David, we know, is destroyed: and where is the man, Jew or Gentile, that can show us a single descendant of David on the face of the earth? The prophecy could not fail: the kingdom and house of David have failed; the virgin, therefore, must have brought forth her son, and this son is Jesus, the Christ. Thus Moses, Isaiah, and Matthew concur; and facts the most unequivocal have confirmed the whole! Behold the wisdom and providence of God!

Notwithstanding what has been said above, it may be asked, In what sense could this name, Immanuel, be applied to Jesus Christ, if he be not truly and properly GOD? Could the Spirit of truth ever design that Christians should receive him as an angel or a mere man; and yet, in the very beginning of the Gospel history, apply a character to him which belongs only to the most high God? Surely no. In what sense, then, is Christ GOD WITH US? Jesus is called Immanuel, or God with us, in his incarnation; God united to our nature; God with man, God in man; God with us, by his continual protection; God with us, by the influences of his Holy Spirit, in the holy sacrament, in the preaching of his word, in private prayer. And God with us, through every action of our life, that we begin, continue, and end in his name. He is God with us, to comfort, enlighten, protect, and defend us, in every time of temptation and trial, in the hour of death, in the day of judgment; and God with us and in us, and we with and in him, to all eternity.

Verse 17. *The Lord shall bring* “*But JEHOVAH will bring*”—Houbigant reads וַיָּבִי vairyabi, from the Septuagint, ἀλλὰ ἐπαξεί ο θεός, to mark the transition to a new subject.

Even the king of Assyria.— Houbigant supposes these words to have been a marginal gloss, brought into the text by mistake; and so likewise Archbishop Secker. Besides their having no force or effect here, they do not join well in construction with the words preceding, as may be seen by the strange manner in which the ancient interpreters have taken them; and they very inelegantly forestall the mention of the king of Assyria, which comes in with great propriety in the 20th verse. I have therefore taken the liberty of omitting them in the translation.

Verse 18. *Hiss for the fly* “*Hist the fly*”— See note on chap. 5:26.

Egypt, and-Assyria.— Sennacherib, Esarhaddon, Pharaoh-necho, and Nebuchadnezzar, who one after another desolated Judea.

Verse 19. *Holes of the rocks* “*Caverns*”— So the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate, whence Houbigant supposes the true reading to be הַנְּחָלִילִים hannachalolim. One of my oldest MSS. reads הַנְּחָלוּלִים hannochalolim.

Verse 20. *The river*— That is, the Euphrates: הַנְּהַר hanahar. So read the Septuagint and two MSS.

***Shall the Lord shave with a razor that is hired* “*JEHOVAH shall shave by the hired razor*”**— To shave with the hired razor the head, the feet, and the beard, is an expression highly parabolical, to denote the utter devastation of the country from one end to the other; and the plundering of the people, from the highest to the lowest, by the Assyrians, whom God employed as his instrument to punish the Jews. Ahaz himself, in the first place, hired the king of Assyria to come to help him against the Syrians, by a present made to him of all the treasures of the temple, as well as his own. And God himself considered the great nations, whom he thus employed as his mercenaries; and paid them their wages. Thus he paid Nebuchadnezzar for his services against Tyre, by the conquest of Egypt, Ezekiel 29:18-20. The hairs of the head are those of the highest order in the state; those of the feet, or the lower parts, are the common people; the beard is the king, the high priest, the very supreme in dignity

and majesty. The Eastern people have always held the beard in the highest veneration, and have been extremely jealous of its honor. To pluck a man's beard is an instance of the greatest indignity that can be offered. See Isaiah 50:6. The king of the Ammonites, to show the utmost contempt of David, "cut off half the beards of his servants, and the men were greatly ashamed; and David bade them tarry at Jericho till their beards were grown," 2 Samuel 10:4, 6. Niebuhr, *Arabie*, p. 275, gives a modern instance of the very same kind of insult. "The Turks," says Thevenot, "greatly esteem a man who has a fine beard; it is a very great affront to take a man by his beard, unless it be to kiss it; they swear by the beard." *Voyages*, i., p. 57. D'Arvieux gives a remarkable instance of an Arab, who, having received a wound in his jaw, chose to hazard his life, rather than suffer his surgeon to take off his beard. *Memoires*, tom. iii., p. 214. See also Niebuhr, *Arabie*, p. 61.

The remaining verses of this chapter, 21-25, contain an elegant and very expressive description of a country depopulated, and left to run wild, from its adjuncts and circumstances: the vineyards and cornfields, before well cultivated, now overrun with briars and thorns; much grass, so that the few cattle that are left, a young cow and two sheep, have their full range, and abundant pasture, so as to yield milk in plenty to the scanty family of the owner; the thinly scattered people living, not on corn, wine, and oil, the produce of cultivation; but on milk and honey, the gifts of nature; and the whole land given up to the wild beasts, so that the miserable inhabitants are forced to go out armed with bows and arrows, either to defend themselves against the wild beasts, or to supply themselves with necessary food by hunting.

A VERY judicious friend has sent me the following observations on the preceding prophecy, which I think worthy of being laid before the reader; though they are in some respects different from my own view of the subject.

"To establish the primary and literal meaning of a passage of Scripture is evidently laying the true foundation for any subsequent views or improvements from it.

“The kingdom of Judah, under the government of Ahaz, was reduced very low. Pekah, king of Israel, had slain in Judea one hundred and twenty thousand in one day; and carried away captive two hundred thousand including women and children, with much spoil. To add to this distress, Rezin, king of Syria, being confederate with Pekah, had taken Elath, a fortified city of Judah, and carried the inhabitants to Damascus. I think it may also be gathered from the sixth verse of chap. viii., that the kings of Syria and Israel had a considerable party in the land of Judea, who, regardless of the Divine appointment and promises, were disposed to favor the elevation of Tabeal, a stranger, to the throne of David.

“In this critical conjuncture of affairs, Isaiah was sent with a message of mercy, and a promise of deliverance, to Ahaz. He was commanded to take with him Shearjashub, his son whose name contained a promise respecting the captives lately made by Pekah, whose return from Samaria, effected by the expostulation of the prophet Oded and the concurrence of the princes of Ephraim, was now promised as a pledge of the Divine interposition offered to Ahaz in favor of the house of David. And as a farther token of this preservation, notwithstanding the incredulity of Ahaz, Isaiah was directed to predict the birth of another son which should be born to him within the space of a year, and to be named Emmanuel, signifying thereby the protection of God to the land of Judah and family of David at this present conjuncture, with reference to the promise of the Messiah who was to spring from that family, and be born in that land. Compare chap. 8:8. Hence Isaiah testifies, chap. 8:18: ‘Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me are for signs and for types in Israel.’ Compare Zechariah 3:8: ‘Thy companions are men of sign and type:’ see Dr. Lowth on this verse. The message of Divine displeasure against Israel is in like manner expressed by the names the prophet Hosea was directed to give his children; see Hosea 1:and ii.

“Concerning this child, who was to be named Immanuel, the prophet was commissioned to declare, that notwithstanding the present scarcity prevailing in the land from its being harassed by war, yet within the space of time wherein this child should be of age to discern good and evil, both these hostile kings, viz., of Israel and Syria, should be cut off; and the country enjoy such plenty, that butter and honey, food accounted of

peculiar delicacy, should be a common repast. See Harmer's Observations, p. 299.

“To this it may be objected that Isaiah's son was not named Immanuel, but Maher-shalal-hash-baz; the signification of which bore a threatening aspect, instead of a consolatory one. To this I think a satisfactory answer may be given. Ahaz, by his unbelief and disregard of the message of mercy sent to him from God, (for instead of depending upon it he sent and made a treaty with the king of Assyria,) drew upon himself the Divine displeasure, which was expressed by the change of the child's name, and the declaration that though Damascus and Samaria should, according to the former prediction, fall before the king of Assyria, yet that this very power, i.e., Assyria, in whom Ahaz trusted for deliverance, (see 2 Kings 16:7, etc.,) should afterwards come against Judah, and ‘fill the breadth of the land,’ which was accomplished in the following reign, when Jerusalem was so endangered as to be delivered only by miracle. The sixth and seventh verses of chap. 8:indicate, I think, as I before observed, that the kings of Syria and Israel had many adherents in Judah, who are said to refuse the peaceful waters of Shiloah or Siloam, him that is to be sent, who ought to have been their confidence, typified by the fountain at the foot of Mount Zion, whose stream watered the city of Jerusalem; and therefore, since the splendor of victory, rather than the blessings of peace, was the object of their admiration, compared to a swelling river which overflowed its banks, God threatens to chastise them by the victorious armies of Ashur. The prophet at the same time addresses words of consolation to such of the people who yet feared and trusted in Jehovah, whom he instructs and comforts with the assurance (ver. 10) that they shall prove the fulfillment of the promise contained in the name Immanuel.

“But it may still be objected, that according to this interpretation of the fourteenth verse of chap. 7:nothing miraculous occurs, which is readily admitted; but the objection rests upon the supposition that something miraculous was intended; whereas the word אִשׁוּר oth, ‘sign,’ does by no means generally imply a miracle, but most commonly an emblematic representation, (see Ezekiel 4:3-12; 11:20:20; Zechariah 6:14,) either by actions or names, of some future event either promised or threatened. Exodus 3:12; 1 Samuel 2:34; 2 Kings 19:29; Jeremiah 44:29, 30, are all

examples of a future event given as a sign or token of something else which is also future. The birth of Isaiah's son was indeed typical of him whose name he was, at first, appointed to bear, viz., Immanuel, even as Oshea the son of Nun had his name changed to Jehoshua, the same with Jesus, of whom he was an eminent type. Hence the prophet, in the ninth chapter, breaks forth into a strain of exultation: 'To us a child is born;' after which follow denunciations against Rezin and the kingdom of Israel, which are succeeded by declarations, that when Assyria had completed the appointed chastisement upon Judah and Jerusalem, that empire should be destroyed. The whole of the tenth chapter is a very remarkable prophecy, and was probably delivered about the time of Sennacherib's invasion.

"But still it will be urged, that St. Matthew, when relating the miraculous conception of our Lord, says, 'Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet,' etc. To this it may readily be answered, that what was spoken by the prophet was indeed now fulfilled in a higher, more important, and also in a more literal sense, than the primary fulfillment could afford, which derived all its value from its connection with this event, to which it ultimately referred.

"In like manner the prophecy of Isaiah, contained in the second chapter, received a complete fulfillment in our Savior's honoring Capernaum with his residence, and preaching throughout Galilee; though there appears reason to interpret the passage as having a primary respect to the reformation wrought by Hezekiah and which, at the eve of the dissolution of the kingdom of Israel by the captivity of the ten tribes, extended to the tribes of Asher and Zebulun, and many of the inhabitants of Ephraim and Manasseh, who were hereby stirred up to destroy idolatry in their

“In several passages of St. Matthew’s Gospel, our translation conveys the idea of things being done in order to fulfill certain prophecies; but I apprehend that if the words *ἵνα καὶ ὁπῶς* were rendered as simply denoting the event, so that and thus was fulfilled, the sense would be much clearer. For it is obvious that our Lord did not speak in parables or ride into Jerusalem previously to his last passover, simply for the purpose of fulfilling the predictions recorded, but also from other motives; and in chap. 2: the evangelist only remarks that the circumstance of our Lord’s return from Egypt corresponded with the prophet Hosea’s relation of that part of the history of the Israelites. So in the twenty-third verse Joseph dwelt at Nazareth because he was directed so to do by God himself; and the sacred historian, having respect to the effect afterwards produced, (see John 7:41, 42, 52,) remarks that this abode in Nazareth was a means of fulfilling those predictions of the prophets which indicate the contempt and neglect with which by many the Messiah should be treated. Galilee was considered by the inhabitants of Judea as a degraded place, chiefly from its vicinity to the Gentiles; and Nazareth seems to have been proverbially contemptible; and from the account given of the spirit and conduct of the inhabitants by the evangelists, not without reason.”-E. M. B.

To my correspondent, as well as to many learned men, there appears some difficulty in the text; but I really think this is quite done away by that mode of interpretation which I have already adopted; and as far as the miraculous conception is concerned, the whole is set in the clearest and strongest light, and the objections and cavils of the Jeers entirely destroyed.

CHAPTER 8

Prediction respecting the conquest of Syria and Israel by the Assyrians, 1-4. Israel, for rejecting the gentle stream of Shiloah, near Jerusalem, is threatened to be overflowed by the great river of Assyria, manifestly alluding by this strong figure to the conquests of Tiglath-pileser and Shalmaneser over that kingdom, 5-7. The invasion of the kingdom of Judah by the Assyrians under Sennacherib foretold, 8. The prophet assures the Israelites and Syrians that their hostile attempts against Judah shall be frustrated, 9, 10. Exhortation not to be afraid of the wrath of man, but to fear the displeasure of God, 11-13. Judgments which shall overtake those who put no confidence in Jehovah, 14, 15. The prophet proceeds to warn his countrymen against idolatry, divination, and the like sinful practices, exhorting them to seek direction from the word of God, professing in a beautiful apostrophe that this was his own pious resolution. And to enforce this counsel, and strengthen their faith, he points to his children, whose symbolic names were signs or pledges of the Divine promises, 16-20. Judgments of God against the finally impenitent, 21, 22.

The prophecy of the foregoing chapter relates directly to the kingdom of Judah only: the first part of it promises them deliverance from the united invasion of the Israelites and Syrians; the latter part, from ver. 17, denounces the desolation to be brought upon the kingdom of Judah by the Assyrians. The sixth, seventh, and eighth verses of this chapter seem to take in both the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. "This people that refuseth the waters of Shiloah," may be meant of both: the Israelites despised the kingdom of Judah, which they had deserted, and now attempted to destroy; the people of Judah, from a consideration of their own weakness, and a distrust of God's promises, being reduced to despair, applied to the Assyrians for assistance against the two confederate kings. But how could it be said of Judah, that they rejoiced in Rezin, and the son of Remaliah, the enemies confederated against them? If some of the people were inclined to revolt to the enemy, (which however does not clearly appear from any part of the history or the prophecy,) yet there was nothing like a

tendency to a general defection. This, therefore, must be understood of Israel. The prophet denounces the Assyrian invasion, which should overwhelm the whole kingdom of Israel under Tiglath-pileser, and Shalmaneser; and the subsequent invasion of Judah by the same power under Sennacherib, which would bring them into the most imminent danger, like a flood reaching to the neck, in which a man can but just keep his head above water. The two next verses, 9 and 10, are addressed by the

עלה, calah, נקיים nikkayon from נקה nakah, עליו elyon from עלה alah, etc., the ך yod supplying the place of the radical ה he. גלה galah signifies to show, to reveal; properly, as Schroederus says, (*De Vestitu Mulier. Hebr. p. 294.*) to render clear and bright by rubbing; to polish. גליו gillayon, therefore, according to this derivation, is not a roll or volume: but may very well signify a polished tablet of metal, such as was anciently used for a mirror. The Chaldee paraphrast renders it by לוח luach, a tablet, and the same word, though somewhat differently pointed, the Chaldee paraphrast and the rabbins render a mirror, chap. 3:23. The mirrors of the Israelitish women were made of brass finely polished, Exodus 38:8, from which place it likewise appears that what they used were little hand mirrors which they carried with them even when they assembled at the door of the tabernacle. I have a metalline mirror found in Herculaneum, which is not above three inches square. The prophet is commanded to take a mirror, or brazen polished tablet, not like these little hand mirrors, but a large one; large enough for him to engrave upon it in deep and lasting characters, בחרט אנוש becheret enosh, with a workman's graving tool, the prophecy which he was to deliver. חרט cheret in this place certainly signifies an instrument to write or engrave with: but חרית charit, the same word, only differing a little in the form, means something belonging to a lady's dress, chap. 3:22, (where however five MSS. leave out the ך yod, whereby only it differs from the word in this place,) either a crimping-pin, which might be not unlike a graving tool, as some will have it, or a purse, as others infer from 2 Kings 5:23. It may therefore be called here חרט אנוש cheret enosh, a workman's instrument, to distinguish it from חרט אשה cheret ishshah, an instrument of the same name, used by the women. In this manner he was to record the prophecy of the destruction of Damascus and Samaria by the Assyrians; the subject and sum of which prophecy is here expressed with great brevity in four words, מהר שלל הש בז maher shalal hash baz; i.e., to hasten the spoil, to take quickly the prey; which are afterwards applied as the name of the prophet's son, who was made a sign of the speedy completion of it; Maher-shalal-hash-baz; Haste-to-the-spoil, Quick-to-the-prey. And that it might be done with the greater solemnity, and to preclude all doubt of the real delivery of the prophecy before the event, he calls witnesses to attest

the recording of it.

The prophet is commanded to take a great roll, and yet four words only are to be written in it, **מָהֵר שָׁלַל הַשׁ בּוֹ** maker shalal hash baz, Make haste to the spoil; fall upon the prey. The great volume points out the land of Judea; and the few words the small number of inhabitants, after the ten tribes were carried into captivity.

The words were to be written with a man's pen; i.e., though the prophecy be given in the visions of God, yet the writing must be real; the words must be transcribed on the great roll, that they may be read and publicly consulted. Or, **חֶרֶט אֲנוֹשׁ** cherot enosh, the pen or graver of the weak miserable man, may refer to the already condemned Assyrians, who though they should be the instruments of chastening Damascus and Samaria, should themselves shortly be overthrown. The four words may be considered as the commission given to the Assyrians to destroy and spoil the cities. Make haste to the spoil; Fall upon the prey, etc.

Verse 4. *For before the child*— For my father and my mother, one MS. and the Vulgate have his father and his mother. The prophecy was accordingly accomplished within three years; when Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria, went up against Damascus and took it, and carried the people of it captive to Kir, and slew Rezin, and also took the Reubenites and the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, and carried them captive to Assyria, 2 Kings 15:29; 16:9; 1 Chronicles 5:26.

Verse 6. *Forasmuch as this people refuseth "Because this people have rejected"*— The gentle waters of Shiloah, a small fountain and brook just without Jerusalem, which supplied a pool within the city for the use of the inhabitants, is an apt emblem of the state of the kingdom and house of David, much reduced in its apparent strength, yet supported by the blessing of God; and is finely contrasted with the waters of the Euphrates, great, rapid, and impetuous; the image of the Babylonian empire, which God threatens to bring down like a mighty flood upon all these apostates of both kingdoms, as punishment for their manifold iniquities, and their contemptuous disregard of his promises. The brook and the river are put for the kingdoms to which they belong, and the different states of which

respectively they most aptly represent. Juvenal, inveighing against the corruption of Rome by the importation of Asiatic manners, says, with great elegance, that “the Orontes has been long discharging itself into the Tiber:”—

Jampridem Syrus in Tiberim defluxit Orontes.

And Virgil, to express the submission of some of the Eastern countries to the Roman arms, says:—

Euphrates ibat jam mollior undis.

AE. n. 8:726.

“The waters of the Euphrates now flowed more humbly and gently.”

But the happy contrast between the brook and the river gives a peculiar beauty to this passage of the prophet, with which the simple figure in the Roman poets, however beautiful, yet uncontrasted, cannot contend.

Verse 8. *He shall reach even to the neck*— He compares Jerusalem, says Kimchi, to the head of the human body. As when the waters come up to a man’s neck, he is very near drowning, (for a little increase of them would go over his head,) so the king of Assyria coming up to Jerusalem was like a flood reaching to the neck—the whole country was overflowed, and the capital was in imminent danger. Accordingly the Chaldee renders reaching to the neck by reaching to Jerusalem.

Verse 9. *Associate yourselves “Know ye this”*— God by his prophet plainly declares to the confederate adversaries of Judah, and bids them regard and attend to his declaration, that all their efforts shall be in vain. The present reading, רעו rou, is subject to many difficulties; I follow that of the Septuagint, דעו deu, γνωτε. Archbishop Secker approves this reading. דעו deu know ye this, is parallel and synonymous to האזינו haazinu, give ear to It, in the next line. The Septuagint have likewise very well paraphrased the conclusion of this verse: “When ye have

strengthened yourselves, ye shall be broken; and though ye again strengthen yourselves, again shall ye be broken;” taking חֲזוּ chottu as meaning the same with נִשְׁבְּרוּ , shall be broken.

Verse 11. With a strong hand “*As taking me by the hand*”— Eleven MSS., (two ancient,) of Kennicott’s, thirty-four of De Rossi’s, and seven editions, read כְּחֹזֶקֶת kechezkath; and so Symmachus, the Syriac, and Vulgate. Or rather with a strong hand, that is, with a strong and powerful influence of the prophetic Spirit.

Verse 12. Say ye not, A confederacy “*Say ye not, It is holy*”— קֶשֶׁר kesher. Both the reading and the sense of this word are doubtful. The Septuagint manifestly read קָשָׁה kashah; for they render it by ἀκληρον, hard. The Syriac and Chaldee render it מֵרְדָא merda, and מֵרֹד merod, rebellion. How they came by this sense of the word, or what they read in their copies, is not so clear. But the worst of it is, that neither of these readings or renderings gives any clear sense in this place. For why should God forbid his faithful servants to say with the unbelieving Jews, It is hard; or, There is a rebellion; or, as our translators render it, a confederacy? And how can this be called “walking in the way of this people?” ver. 11, which usually means, following their example, joining with them in religious worship. Or what confederacy do they mean? The union of the kingdoms of Syria and Israel against Judah? That was properly a league between two independent states, not an unlawful conspiracy of one part against another in the same state; this is the meaning of the word קֶשֶׁר kesher. For want of any satisfactory interpretation of this place that I can meet with, I adopt a conjecture of Archbishop Secker, which he proposes with great diffidence, and even seems immediately to give up, as being destitute of any authority to support it. I will give it in his own words:”Videri potest ex cap. 5:16, et hujus cap. 13, 14, 19, legendum קָדוֹשׁ vel קָדוֹשׁ kadosh, eadem sententia, qua אֱלֹהֵינוּ Eloheynu, Hosea 14:3. Sed nihil necesse est. Vide enim Jeremiah 11:9; Ezekiel 22:25. Optime tamen sic responderent huic versiculo versiculi 13, 14.” The passages of Jeremiah and Ezekiel above referred to seem to me not at all to clear up the sense of the word קֶשֶׁר kesher in this place. But the context greatly favors the conjecture here given, and makes it highly probable: “Walk not in the

way of this people; call not their idols holy, nor fear ye the object of their fear:” (that is, the **σεβασματα**, or gods of the idolaters; for so fear here signifies, to wit, the thing feared. So God is called “The fear of Isaac,” Genesis 31:42, 63:) “but look up to JEHOVAH as your Holy One; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread; and he shall be a holy Refuge unto you.” Here there is a harmony and consistency running through the whole sentence; and the latter part naturally arises out of the former, and answers to it. Idolatry, however, is full of fears. The superstitious fears of the Hindoos are very numerous. They fear death, bad spirits generally, and hobgoblins of all descriptions. They fear also the cries of jackalls, owls, crows, cats, asses, vultures, dogs, lizards, etc. They also dread different sights in the air, and are alarmed at various dreams. See WARD’S Customs. Observe that the difference between **קשר** kesher and **קדש** kadosh is chiefly in the transposition of the two last letters, for the letters **ר** resh and **ד** daleth are hardly distinguishable in some copies, printed as well as MS.; so that the mistake, in respect of the letters themselves, is a very easy and a very common one. — L.

Verse 14. And he shall be for a sanctuary “*And he shall be unto you a sanctuary*”— The word **לכם** lachem, unto you, absolutely necessary, as I conceive, to the sense, is lost in this place: it is preserved by the Vulgate, “et erit vobis in sanctificationem.” The Septuagint have it in the singular number: **εστασι σοι εις αγιασμον**, it shall be to THEE. Or else, instead of **מקדש** mikdash, a sanctuary, we must read **מוקש** mokesh, a snare, which would then be repeated without any propriety or elegance, at the end of the verse. The Chaldee reads instead of it **משפט** mishpat, judgment; for he renders it by **פורה** purean, which word frequently answers to **משפט** mishpat in his paraphrase. One MS. has in stead of **מקדש ולאב** mikdash uleben, **להם לאב** lahem leeben, which clears the sense and construction. But the reading of the Vulgate is, I think, the best remedy to this difficulty; and is in some degree authorized by **להם** lahem, the reading of the MS. above mentioned.

Verse 16. Among my disciples.— **בלמדי** belimmudai. The Septuagint render it **του μη μαθειν**. Bishop Chandler, Defence of Christianity, p.

308, thinks they read **מלמד**, that it be not understood, and approves of this reading. — Abp. Secker.

Verse 18. Lord of hosts— One MS. reads **אלהי צבאות** Elohey tsebaoth, God of hosts.

Verse 19. Should not a people seek “Should they seek?”— After **ידרש** yidrosch, the Septuagint, repeating the word, read **הידרש** hayidrosch: **ουκ εθνος προς θεον αυτου εκζητησουσι; τι εκζητησουσι περι των ζωντων τους νεκρους;** Should not a nation seek unto its God? Why should you seek unto the dead concerning the living? and this repetition of the verb seems necessary to the sense; and, as Procopius on the place observes, it strongly expresses the prophet’s indignation at their folly.

Verse 20. To the law and to the testimony “Unto the command, and unto the testimony.”— “Is not **תעודה** teudah here the attested prophecy, ver. 1-4? and perhaps **תורה** torah the command, ver. 11-15? for it means sometimes a particular, and even a human, command; see Proverbs 6:20, and 7:1, 2, where it is ordered to be hid, that is, secretly kept.”-Abp. Secker. So Deschamps, in his translation, or rather paraphrase, understands it: “Tenons nous a l’instrument authentique mis en depot par ordre du Seigneur,” “Let us stick to the authentic instrument, laid up by the command of the Lord.” If this be right, the sixteenth verse must be understood in the same manner.

Because there is no light in them “In which there is no obscurity.”— **שחור** shachor, as an adjective, frequently signifies dark, obscure; and the noun **שחר** shachar signifies darkness, gloominess, Joel 2:2, if we may judge by the context:—

*“A day of darkness and obscurity;
Of cloud, and of thick vapor;
As the gloom spread upon the mountains:
A people mighty and numerous.”*

Where the gloom, **שחר** shachar, seems to be the same with the cloud and

thick vapor mentioned in the line preceding. See Lamentations 4:8, and Job 30:30. See this meaning of the word שָׁחַר shachar well supported in Christ. Muller. Sat. Observat. Philippians p. 53, Lugd. Bat. 1752. The morning seems to have been an idea wholly incongruous in the passage of Joel; and in this of Isaiah the words in which there is no morning (for so it ought to be rendered if שָׁחַר shachar in this place signifies, according to its usual sense, morning) seem to give no meaning at all. “It is because there is no light in them,” says our translation. If there be any sense in these words, it is not the sense of the original; which cannot justly be so translated. Qui n’a rien d’obscur, “which has no obscurity.”-Deschamps. The reading of the Septuagint and Syriac, שֹׁחַד shochad, gift, affords no assistance towards the clearing up of any of this difficult place. R. D. Kimchi says this was the form of an oath: “By the law and by the testimony such and such things are so.” Now if they had sworn this falsely, it is because there is no light, no illumination, שָׁחַר shachar, no scruple of conscience, in them.

Ver. 21. Hardly bestead “Distressed”— Instead of נִקְשָׁה niksseh, distressed, the Vulgate, Chaldee, and Symmachus manifestly read נִכְשָׁל nichshal, stumbling, tottering through weakness, ready to fall; a sense which suits very well with the place.

And look upward “And he shall cast his eyes upward.”— The learned professor Michaelis, treating of this place (Not. in de Sacr. Poes. Hebr. Prael. ix.) refers to a passage in the Koran which is similar to it. As it is a very celebrated passage, and on many accounts remarkable, I shall give it here at large, with the same author’s farther remarks upon it in another place of his writings. It must be noted here that the learned professor renders נִבַּט nibbat, בֵּן הַבֵּיט bean hibbit, in this and the parallel place, chap. 5:30, which I translate he looketh by it thundereth, from Schultens, Orig. Ling. Hebr. Lib. 1:cap. 2, of the justness of which rendering I much doubt. This brings the image of Isaiah more near in one circumstance to that of Mohammed than it appears to be in my translation:—

“Labid, contemporary with Mohammed, the last of the seven Arabian poets who had the honor of having their poems, one of each, hung up in

the entrance of the temple of Mecca, struck with the sublimity of a passage in the Koran, became a convert to Mohammedism; for he concluded that no man could write in such a manner unless he were Divinely inspired.

“One must have a curiosity to examine a passage which had so great an effect upon Labid. It is, I must own, the finest that I know in the whole Koran: but I do not think it will have a second time the like effect, so as to tempt any one of my readers to submit to circumcision. It is in the second chapter, where he is speaking of certain apostates from the faith. ‘They are like,’ saith he, ‘to a man who kindles a light. As soon as it begins to shine, God takes from them the light, and leaves them in darkness that they see nothing. They are deaf, dumb, and blind; and return not into the right way. Or they fare as when a cloud, full of darkness, thunder, and lightning, covers the heaven. When it bursteth, they stop their ears with their fingers, with deadly fear; and God hath the unbelievers in his power. The lightning almost robbeth them of their eyes: as often as it flasheth they go on by its light; and when it vanisheth in darkness, they stand still. If God pleased, they would retain neither hearing nor sight.’ That the thought is beautiful, no one will deny; and Labid, who had probably a mind to flatter Mohammed, was lucky in finding a passage in the Koran so little abounding in poetical beauties, to which his conversion might with any propriety be ascribed. It was well that he went no farther; otherwise his taste for poetry might have made him again an infidel.” Michaelis, *Erpenii Arabische Grammatik abgekürzt, Vorrede*, s. 32.

CHAPTER 9

This chapter contains an illustrious prophecy of the Messiah. He is represented under the glorious figure of the sun, or light, rising on a benighted world, and diffusing joy and gladness wherever he sheds his beams, 1-3. His conquests are astonishing and miraculous, as in the day of Midian; and the peace which they procure is to be permanent, as denoted by the burning of all the implements of war, 4, 5. The person and character of this great Deliverer are then set forth in the most magnificent terms which the language of mankind could furnish, 6. The extent of his kingdom is declared to be universal, and the duration of it eternal, 7. The prophet foretells most awful calamities which were ready to fall upon the Israelites on account of their manifold impieties, 8-21.

NOTES ON CHAP. 9

Verse 1. *Dimness* “*Accumulated darkness*”— Either מנדחה menuddechah, fem. to agree with אפלה aphelah; or אפל המנדה aphel hammenuddach, alluding perhaps to the palpable Egyptian darkness, Exodus 10:21.

The land of Zebulun— Zebulun, Naphtali, Manasseh, that is, the country of Galilee all round the sea of Gennesareth, were the parts that principally suffered in the first Assyrian invasion under Tiglath-pileser; see 2 Kings 15:29; 1 Chronicles 5:26. And they were the first that enjoyed the blessings of Christ’s preaching the Gospel, and exhibiting his miraculous works among them. See Mede’s Works, p. 101, and 457. This, which makes the twenty-third verse of chap. 8: in the Hebrew, is the first verse in chap. 9: in our authorized version. Bishop Lowth follows the division in the Hebrew.

Verse 3. *And not increased the joy* “*Thou hast increased their joy*”— Eleven MSS. of Kennicott’s and six of De Ross’s, two ancient, read לוּ lo,

it, according to the Masoretical correction, instead of לֹא lo, not. To the same purpose the Targum and Syriac.

The joy in harvest— כְּשִׂמְחַת בַּקִּצִּיר kesimchath bakkatsir. For בַּקִּצִּיר bakkatsir one MS. of Kennicott's and one of De Rossi's have קִצִּיר katsir, and another הַקִּצִּיר hakkatsir, "the harvest;" one of which seems to be the true, reading, as the noun preceding is in regimine.

Verse 5. *Every battle of the warrior "The greaves of the armed warrior"*— סֶן סֶן seon soen. This word, occurring only in this place, is of very doubtful signification. Schindler fairly tells us that we may guess at it by the context. The Jews have explained it, by guess I believe, as signifying battle, conflict: the Vulgate renders it violenta praedatio. But it seems as if something was rather meant which was capable of becoming fuel for the fire, together with the garments mentioned in the same sentence. In Syriac the word, as a noun, signifies a shoe, or a sandal, as a learned friend suggested to me some years ago. See Luke 15:22; Acts 12:8. I take it, therefore, to mean that part of the armor which covered the legs and feet, and I would render the two words in Latin by caliga caligati. The burning of heaps of armor, gathered from the field of battle, as an offering made to the god supposed to be the giver of victory, was a custom that prevailed among some heathen nations; and the Romans used it as an emblem of peace, which perfectly well suits with the design of the prophet in this place. A medal struck by Vespasian on finishing his wars both at home and abroad represents the goddess Peace holding an olive branch in one hand, and, with a lighted torch in the other, setting fire to a heap of armor. Virgil mentions the custom:—

*"-Cum primam aciem Praeneste sub ipsa
Stravi, scutorumque incendi victor acervos."*

AEn. lib. viii., ver. 561.

*“Would heaven, (said he,) my strength and youth recall,
Such as I was beneath Praeneste’s wall —
Then when I made the foremost foes retire
And set whole heaps of conquered shields on fire.”*

DRYDEN.

See Addison on Medals, Series 2:18. And there are notices of some such practice among the Israelites, and other nations of the most early times. God promises to Joshua victory over the kings of Canaan. “To-morrow I will deliver them up all slain before Israel: thou shalt hough their horses, and burn their chariots with fire,” Joshua 11:6. See also Nahum 2:13. And the psalmist employs this image to express complete victory, and the perfect establishment of peace:—

*“He maketh wars to cease, even to the end of the land:
He breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder;
And burneth the chariots in the fire.”*

— *Psalm 46:9.*

עגלות agaloth, properly plausira, impedimenta, the baggage-wagons: which however the Septuagint and Vulgate render scuta, “shields;” and the Chaldee, “round shields,” to show the propriety of that sense of the word from the etymology; which, if admitted, makes the image the same with that used by the Romans.

Ezekiel, chap. 39:8-10, in his bold manner has carried this image to a degree of amplification which I think hardly any other of the Hebrew poets would have attempted. He describes the burning of the arms of the enemy, in consequence of the complete victory to be obtained by the Israelites over Gog and Magog:—

*“Behold, it is come to pass, and it is done,
 Saith the Lord JEHOVAH.
 This is the day of which I spoke:
 And the inhabitants of the cities of Israel shall go forth.
 And shall set on fire the armor, and the shield,
 And the buckler, and the bow, and the arrows,
 And the clubs and the lances;
 And they shall set them on fire for seven years.
 And they shall not bear wood from the field;
 Neither shall they hew from the forest:
 For of the armor shall they make their fires;
 And they shall spoil their spoilers,
 And they shall plunder their plunderers.”*

R. D. Kimchi, on this verse says this refers simply to the destruction of the Assyrians. Other battles are fought man against man, and spear against spear; and the garments are rolled in blood through the wounds given and received: but this was with burning, for the angel of the Lord smote them by night, and there was neither sword nor violent commotion, nor blood; they were food for the fire, for the angel of the Lord consumed them.

Verse 6. *The government shall be upon his shoulder*— That is, the ensign of government; the scepter, the sword, the key, or the like, which was borne upon or hung from the shoulder. See note on chap. 22:22.

And his name shall be called— אֵל גִּבּוֹר *gibbor*, the prevailing or conquering God.

The everlasting Father “The Father of the everlasting age”— Or אֲבִי עֵד *Abi ad*, the Father of eternity. The Septuagint have *μεγαλης βουλης αγγελος*, “the Messenger of the Great Counsel.” But instead of אֲבִי אֵד *Abi ad*, a MS. of De Rossi has אֲבֵעֶזֶר *Abezer*, the helping Father; evidently the corruption of some Jew, who did not like such an evidence in favor of the Christian Messiah.

Prince of Peace— שר שלום sar shalom, the Prince of prosperity, the Giver of all blessings.

A MS. of the thirteenth century in Kennicott's collection has a remarkable addition here. "He shall be a stumbling-block, המכשלה; the government is on his shoulder." This reading is nowhere else acknowledged, as far as I know.

Verse 7. Of the increase— In the common Hebrew Bibles, and in many MSS., this word is written with the close or final למרבה ם. But in twelve of Kennicott's MSS., and twelve of De Rossi's, it is written with the open מ mem; but here it is supposed to contain mysteries, viz., that Jerusalem shall be shut up, closed, and confined, till the days of the Messiah.

This is an illustrious prophecy of the incarnation of Christ, with an enumeration of those characters in which he stands most nearly related to mankind as their Savior; and of others by which his infinite majesty and Godhead are shown. He shall appear as a child, born of a woman, born as a Jew, under the law, but not in the way of ordinary generation. He is a Son given-the human nature, in which the fullness of the Godhead was to dwell, being produced by the creative energy of the Holy Ghost in the womb of the Virgin. See Matthew 1:20, 21, 23, 25, and Luke 1:35, and Isaiah 7:14, and the notes on those passages. As being God manifested in the flesh, he was wonderful in his conception, birth, preaching, miracles, sufferings, death, resurrection, and ascension; wonderful in his person, and wonderful in his working. He is the Counsellor that expounds the law; shows its origin, nature, and claims; instructs, pleads for the guilty; and ever appears in the presence of God for men. He is the mighty God; God essentially and efficiently prevailing against his enemies, and destroying ours. He is the Father of eternity; the Origin of all by ing, and the Cause of the existence, and particularly the Father, of the spirits of all flesh. The Prince of peace-not only the Author of peace, and the Dispenser of peace, but also he that rules by peace, whose rule tends always to perfection, and produces prosperity. Of the increase of his government-this Prince has a government, for he has all power both in heaven and in earth: and his

government increases, and is daily more and more extended, and will continue till all things are put under his feet. His kingdom is ordered—every act of government regulated according to wisdom and goodness; is established so securely as not to be overthrown; and administered in judgment and justice, so as to manifest his wisdom, righteousness, goodness, and truth. Reader, such is that Jesus who came into the world to save sinners! Trust in HIM!

Chap. 9:8—chap. 10:4. This whole passage reduced to its proper and entire form, and healed of the dislocation which it suffers by the absurd division of the chapters, makes a distinct prophecy, and a just poem, remarkable for the regularity of its disposition and the elegance of its plan. It has no relation to the preceding or following prophecy; though the parts, violently torn asunder, have been, on the one side and the other, patched on to them. Those relate principally to the kingdom of Judah, this is addressed exclusively to the kingdom of Israel. The subject of it is a denunciation of vengeance awaiting their crimes. It is divided into four parts, each threatening the particular punishment of some grievous offense—of their pride, of their perseverance in their vices, of their impiety, and of their injustice. To which is added a general denunciation of a farther reserve of Divine wrath, contained in a distich, before used by the prophet on a like occasion, chap. 5:25, and here repeated after each part. This makes the intercalary verse of the poem; or, as we call it, the burden of the song.

“Post hoc comma (cap. 9:4) interponitur spatium unius lineae, in Cod. 2 et 3: idemque observatur in 245. in quo nullum est spatium ad finem capitis ix.” Kennicott, Var. Lect.

“After this clause (chap. 9:4) is interposed the space of one line in Cod. 2 and 3. The same is likewise observed in Cod. 245, in which no space exists at the end of chap. ix.”

Verse 8. Lord “JEHOVAH”— For יהוה Adonai, thirty MSS. of Kennicott’s, and many of De Rossi’s, and three editions, read יהוה Yehovah.

Verse 9. *Pride and stoutness of heart* “Carry themselves haughtily”—

וידעו veyadeu, “and they shall know;” so ours and the Versions in general. But what is it that they shall know? The verb stands destitute of its object; and the sense is imperfect. The Chaldee is the only one, as far as I can find, that expresses it otherwise. He renders the verb in this place by ואתרברבו veithrabrabu, “they exalt themselves, or carry themselves haughtily; the same word by which he renders גבהו gabehu, chap. 3:16. He seems, therefore, in this place to have read ויגבהו vaiyigbehu, which agrees perfectly well with what follows, and clears up the difficulty. Archbishop Secker conjectured וידברו vayedabberu, referring it to לאמר lemor, in the next verse, which shows that he was not satisfied with the present reading. Houbigant reads וירעו vaiyereu, et pravi facti sunt, they are become wicked, which is found in a MS.; but I prefer the reading of the Chaldee, which suits much better with the context.

Houbigant approves of this reading; but it is utterly unsupported by any evidence from antiquity: it is a mere mistake of ר resh for ד daleth; and I am surprised that it should be favored by Houbigant.

Verse 10. *The bricks*— “The eastern bricks,” says Sir John Chardin, (see Harmer’s *Observ. I.*, p. 176,) “are only clay well moistened with water, and mixed with straw, and dried in the sun.” So that their walls are commonly no better than our mud walls; see Maundrell, p. 124. That straw was a necessary part in the composition of this sort of bricks, to make the parts of the clay adhere together, appears from Exodus 5: These bricks are properly opposed to hewn stone, so greatly superior in beauty and durability. The sycamores, which, as Jerome on the place says, are timber of little worth, with equal propriety are opposed to the cedars. “As the grain and texture of the sycamore is remarkably coarse and spongy, it could therefore stand in no competition at all (as it is observed, Isaiah 9:10) with the cedar, for beauty and ornament.”—Shaw, *Supplement to Travels*, p. 96. We meet with the same opposition of cedars to sycamores, 1 Kings 10:27, where Solomon is said to have made silver as the stones, and cedars as the sycamores in the vale for abundance. By this *meshal*, or figurative and sententious speech, they boast that they shall easily be able to repair their present losses, suffered perhaps by the first Assyrian

invasion under Tiglath-pileser; and to bring their affairs to a more flourishing condition than ever.

Some of the bricks mentioned above lie before me. They were brought from the site of ancient Babylon. The straw is visible, kneaded with the clay; they are very hard, and evidently were dried in the sun; for they are very easily dissolved in water.

Verse 11. *The adversaries of Rezin against him* “*The princes of Retsin against him*”— For צֹרֵי tsarey, enemies, Houbigant, by conjecture, reads שָׂרֵי sarey, princes; which is confirmed by thirty of Kennicott’s and De Rossi’s MSS., (two ancient,) one of my own, ancient; and nine more have צִי tsaddi, upon a rasure, and therefore had probably at first שָׂרֵי sarey. The princes of Retsin, the late ally of Israel, that is, the Syrians, expressly named in the next verse, shall now be excited against Israel.

The Septuagint in this place give us another variation; for רִצִּי Retsin, they read הַר צִיּוֹן har tsiyon, ὄρος σιών, Mount Sion, of which this may be the sense; but JEHOVAH shall set up the adversaries of Mount Sion against him, (i.e., against Israel,) and will strengthen his enemies together; the Syrians, the Philistines, who are called the adversaries of Mount Sion. See Simonis Lex. in voce סַכַּח sachach.

Verse 12. *With open mouth* “*On every side*”— בְּכֹל פֶּה bechol peh, in every corner, in every part of their country, pursuing them to the remotest extremities, and the most retired parts. So the Chaldee בְּכֹל אֹתָר bechol athar, in every place.

Verse 14. *In one day*.— Thirteen MSS. of Kennicott and De Rossi read בְּיוֹם beyond in a day; and another has a rasure in the place of the letter בְּ beth.

Verse 17. *The Lord* “*JEHOVAH*”— For אֲדֹנָי Adonai, a great number of MSS. read יְהוָה Yehovah.

Verse 18. *For wickedness*— Wickedness rageth like a fire, destroying and laying waste the nation: but it shall be its own destruction, by bringing down the fire of God’s wrath, which shall burn up the briars and the thorns; that is, the wicked themselves. Briars and thorns are an image frequently applied in Scripture, when set on fire, to the rage of the wicked; violent, yet impotent, and of no long continuance. “They are extinct as the fire of thorns,” Psalm 118:12. To the wicked themselves, as useless and unprofitable, proper objects of God’s wrath, to be burned up, or driven away by the wind. “As thorns cut up they shall be consumed in the fire,” Isaiah 33:12. Both these ideas seem to be joined in Psalm 58:9:—

*“Before your pots shall feel the thorn,
As well the green as the dry, the tempest shall bear them
away.”*

The green and the dry is a proverbial expression, meaning all sorts of them, good and bad, great and small, etc. So Ezekiel: “Behold, I will kindle a fire, and it shall devour every green tree, and every dry tree,” chap. 20:47. D’Herbelot quotes a Persian poet describing a pestilence under the image of a conflagration: “This was a lightning that, falling upon a forest, consumed there the green wood with the dry.” See Harmer’s Observations, Vol. II., p. 187.

Verse 20. *The flesh of his own arm* “*The flesh of his neighbor*”— “του βραχιονος του αδελφου αυτου, the Septuagint Alexand. Duplex versio, quarum altera legit רעו reo, quae vox extat, Jeremiah 6:21. Nam רעו rea, αδελφος

which two tribes were most closely connected both in blood and situation as brothers and neighbors; “and both of them in the midst of their own dissensions shall agree in preying upon Judah.” The common reading, “shall devour the flesh of his own arm,” in connection with what follows, seems to make either an inconsistency, or an anticlimax; whereas by this correction the following verse becomes an elegant illustration of the foregoing. — L.

CHAPTER 10

God's judgments against oppressive rulers, 1-4. The prophet foretells the invasion of Sennacherib, and the destruction of his army. That mighty monarch is represented as a rod in the hand of God to correct his people for their sins; and his ambitious purposes, contrary to his own intentions, are made subservient to the great desires of Providence, 5-11. Having accomplished this work, the Almighty takes account of his impious vauntings, 12-14; and threatens utter destruction to the small and great of his army, represented by the thorns, and the glory of the forest, 15-19. This leads the prophet to comfort his countrymen with the promise of the signal interposition of God in their favor, 24-27. Brief description of the march of Sennacherib towards Jerusalem, and of the alarm and terror which he spread every where as he hastened forward, 28-32. The spirit and rapidity of the description is admirably suited to the subject. The affrighted people are seen fleeing, and the eager invader pursuing; the cries of one city are heard by those of another; and groan swiftly succeeds to groan, till at length the rod is lifted over the last citadel. In this critical situation, however, the promise of a Divine interposition is seasonably renewed. The scene instantly changes; the uplifted arm of this mighty conqueror is at once arrested and laid low by the hand of heaven; the forest of Lebanon, (a figure by which the immense Assyrian host is elegantly pointed out, is hewn down by the axe of the Divine vengeance; and the mind is equally pleased with the equity of the judgment, and the beauty and majesty of the description, 33, 34.

NOTES ON CHAP. 10

Verse 2. My people— Instead of עַמִּי ammi, my people, many MSS., and one of my own, ancient, read עַמּוֹ ammo, his people. But this is manifestly a corruption.

Verse 4. Without me— That is, without my aid: they shall be taken

captive even by the captives, and shall be subdued even by the vanquished. “The ך god in בלתי bilti is a pronoun, as in Hosea 13:4.”-Kimchi on the place. One MS. has לבלתי lebilti.

As the people had hitherto lived without God in worship and obedience; so they should now be without his help, and should perish in their transgressions.

Verse 6. O Assyrian “Ho to the Assyrian”— Here begins a new and distinct prophecy, continued to the end of the twelfth chapter: and it appears from ver. 9-11 of this chapter, that this prophecy was delivered after the taking of Samaria by Shalmaneser; which was in the sixth year of the reign of Hezekiah: and as the former part of it foretells the invasion of Sennacherib, and the destruction of his army, which makes the whole subject of this chapter it must have been delivered before the fourteenth of the same reign.

The staff in their hand “The staff in whose hand”— The word הוּ hu, the staff itself, in this place seems to embarrass the sentence. I omit it on the authority of the Alexandrine copy of the Septuagint: nine MSS., (two ancient,) and one of my own, ancient, for וּמַמָּה הוּ umatter ho, read מַמְהוּ mattehu, his staff. Archbishop Secker was not satisfied with the present reading. He proposes another method of clearing up the sense, by reading בְּיוֹם beyom, in the day, instead of בְּיָדָם beyadam, in their hand: “And he is a staff in the day of mine indignation.”

Verse 12. The Lord “JEHOVAH”— For אֲדֹנָי Adonai, fourteen MSS. and three editions read יְהוָה Yehovah.

The fruit “The effect”— “פְּרִי peri, f. צְבִי tsebi, vid. 13:19, sed confer, Proverbs 1:31; 31:16, 31.”-SECKER. The Chaldee renders the word פְּרִי peri by עִבְדֵי obadey, works; which seems to be the true sense; and I have followed it. — L.

Verse 13. Like a valiant man”Strongly seated.” Twelve MSS. agree with

the Keri in reading כביר kabbir, without the א aleph. And Sal. ben Melec and Kimchi thus explain it: “them who dwelled in a great and strong place I have brought down to the ground.”

Verse 15. No wood “*Its master.*”— I have here given the meaning, without attempting to keep to the expression of the original, לֹא עֵץ lo ets, “the no-wood;” that which is not wood like itself, but of a quite different and superior nature. The Hebrews have a peculiar way of joining the negative particle לֹא lo to a noun, to signify in a strong manner a total negation of the thing expressed by the noun.

*“How hast thou given help (לֹא כֹחַ lelo choach) to the no-strength?
And saved the arm (לֹא עֵז lo oz) of the no-power?
How hast, thou given counsel (לֹא חִכְמָה lelo chochmah)
to the no-wisdom?”*

Job 26:2, 3.

That is, to the man totally deprived of strength, power, and wisdom.

“Ye that rejoice (לֹא דְבַר lelo dabar) in nothing.”

Amos 6:13.

That is, in your fancied strength, which is none at all, a mere nonentity.

*“For I am God, (וְלוֹ אֵישׁ velo ish,) and no-man;
The Holy One in the midst of thee, yet do not frequent
cities.”*

Hosea 11:9.

*“And the Assyrian shall fall by a sword (לֹא אִישׁ lo ish)
of no-man;
And a sword of (לֹא אָדָם lo adam) no-mortal, shall*

devour him.”

Isaiah 31:8.

“Wherefore do ye weigh out your silver (בלוא לחם belo lechem) for the no-bread.”

Isaiah 55:2.

So here ל א עץ lo ets means him who is far from being an inert piece of wood, but is an animated and active being; not an instrument, but an agent.

Verse 16. The Lord “JEHOVAH.”— For אדני Adonai, fifty-two MSS., eleven editions, and two of my own, ancient, read יהוה, Jehovah, as in other cases.

And under his glory— That is, all that he could boast of as great and strong in his army, (Sal. ben Melec in loc.,) expressed afterwards, ver. 18, by the glory of his forest, and of his fruitful field.

Verse 17. And it shall burn and devour his thorns “And he shall burn and consume his thorn.”— The briars and thorns are the common people; the glory of his forest are the nobles and those of highest rank and importance. See note on chap. 9:17, and compare Ezekiel 20:47. The fire of God’s wrath shall destroy them, both great and small; it shall consume them from the soul to the flesh; a proverbial expression; soul and body, as we say; it shall consume them entirely and altogether; and the few that escape shall be looked upon as having escaped from the most imminent danger; “as a firebrand plucked out of the fire,” Amos 4:11; **ως δια πυρος**, so as by fire, 1 Corinthians 3:15; as a man when a house is burning is forced to make his escape by running through the midst of the fire.

I follow here the reading of the Septuagint, **כמאש נסס** kemash noses, **ως ο φευγων απω φλογος χαιομενης**, as he who flees from the burning flame. Symmachus also renders the latter word by **φευγων**, flying.

Verse 21. The remnant shalt return-unto the mighty God.— **אל גבור** El gibbor, the mighty or conquering God; the Messiah, the same person

mentioned in ver. 6 of the preceding chapter.

Verse 22. *For though thy people Israel*— I have endeavored to keep to the letter of the text as nearly as I can in this obscure passage; but it is remarkable that neither the Septuagint, nor St. Paul, Romans 9:28, who, except in a few words of no great importance, follows them nearly in this place, nor any one of the ancient Versions, take any notice of the word שֹׁטֵף shoteph, overflowing; which seems to give an idea not easily reconcilable with those with which it is here joined. 1:S. Maerlius (Schol. Philolog. ad Selecta S. Cod. loca) conjectures that the two last letters of this word are by mistake transposed, and that the true reading is שֹׁפֵט shophet, judging, with strict justice. The Septuagint might think this sufficiently expressed by εὐδικαίωσιν, in righteousness. One MS., with St. Paul and Septuagint Alex., omits בו bo in ver. 22; sixty-nine of Kennicott's and seventeen of De Rossi's MSS. and eight editions, omit כל col, all, in ver. 23; and so St. Paul, Romans 9:28.

The learned Dr. Bagot, dean of Christ Church, Oxford, afterwards Bishop of Bristol and Norwich, in some observations on this place, which he has been so kind as to communicate to me, and which will appear in their proper light when he himself shall give them to the public, renders the word כליו kilayon by accomplishment, and makes it refer to the predictions of Moses; the blessing and the curse which he laid before the people, both conditional, and depending on their future conduct. They had by their disobedience incurred those judgments which were now to be fully executed upon them. His translation is, The accomplishment determined overflows with justice; for it is accomplished, and that which is determined the Lord God of hosts doeth in the midst of the land. — L. Some think that the words might be paraphrased thus: The determined destruction of the Jews shall overflow with righteousness, (צדקה tsedakah,) justification, the consequence of the Gospel of Christ being preached and believed on in the world. After the destruction of Jerusalem this word or doctrine of the Lord had free course, — did run, and was glorified.

Verse 24. *After the manner of Egypt* “*In the way of Egypt.*” — I think

there is a designed ambiguity in these words. Sennacherib, soon after his return from his Egyptian expedition, which, I imagine, took him up three years, invested Jerusalem. He is represented by the prophet as lifting up his rod in his march from Egypt, and threatening the people of God, as Pharaoh and the Egyptians had done when they pursued them to the Red Sea. But God in his turn will lift up his rod over the sea, as he did at that time, in the way, or after the manner, of Egypt; and as Sennacherib has imitated the Egyptians in his threats, and came full of rage against them from the same quarter; so God will act over again the same part that he had taken formerly in Egypt, and overthrow their enemies in as signal a manner. It was all to be, both the attack and the deliverance, **בדרך** bederech, or **כדרך** kederech, as a MS. has it in each place, in the way, or after the manner, of Egypt.

Verse 25. *The indignation* “*Mine indignation.*”—Indignatio mea, Vulg. **η οργη**, Sept. **μου η οργη κατα σου**, MS. Pachom. **μου η οργη κατα σου**, MS. 1:D. 2:So that **זעמי** zaami, or **הזעם** hazzaam, as one MS. has it, seems to be the true reading.

Verse 26. *And as his rod was upon the sea* “*And like his rod which he lifted up over the sea*”—The Jewish interpreters suppose here an ellipsis of **כ** ke, the particle of similitude, before **מטהו** mattehu, to be supplied from the line above; so that here are two similitudes, one comparing the destruction of the Assyrians to the slaughter of the Midianites at the rock of Oreb; the other to that of the Egyptians at the Red Sea. Aben Ezra, Kimchi, Sal. ben Melec.

Verse 27. *From off thy shoulder*—Bishop Lowth translates the whole verse thus:—

*“And it shall come to pass in that day,
His burden shall be removed from off thy shoulder;
And his yoke off thy neck:
Yea, the yoke shall perish from off your shoulders.”*

On which he gives us the following note: I follow here the Septuagint, who

for מִפְּנֵי שָׁמַיִם mippeney shamen read מִשְׁכַּחְמֵיכֶם mishshichmeychem, ἀπο τῶν ὤμων ὑμῶν, from your shoulders, not being able to make any good sense out of the present reading. I will add here the marginal conjectures of Archbishop Secker, who appears, like all others, to have been at a loss for a probable interpretation of the text as it now stands. “o. leg. שָׁכַח shakam; forte legend. מִבְּנֵי שָׁמַיִם mibbeney shamen, vide cap. 5:1. Zechariah 4:14: Et possunt intelligi Judaei uncti Dei, Psalm 105:15, vel Assyrii, מִשְׁמַנִּים mishmannim, hic ver. 16, ut dicat propheta depulsum iri jugum ab his impositum: sed hoc durius. Vel potest legi מִפְּנֵי שָׁמַיִם mippeney shami.”

Verse 28. *He is come to Aiath*— A description of the march of Sennacherib’s army approaching Jerusalem in order to invest it, and of the terror and confusion spreading and increasing through the several places as he advanced; expressed with great brevity, but finely diversified. The places here mentioned are all in the neighborhood of Jerusalem; from Ai northward, to Nob westward of it; from which last place he might probably have a prospect of Mount Sion. Anathoth was within three Roman miles of Jerusalem, according to Eusebius, Jerome and Josephus. Onomast. Loc. Hebr. et Antiq. Jud. 10:7, 3. Nob was probably still nearer. And it should seem from this passage of Isaiah that Sennacherib’s army was destroyed near the latter of these places. In coming out of Egypt he might perhaps join the rest of his army at Ashdod, after the taking of that place, which happened about that time, (see chap. xx. ;) and march from thence near the coast by Lachish and Libnah, which lay in his way from south to north, and both which he invested till he came to the north-west of Jerusalem, crossing over to the north of it, perhaps by Joppa and Lydda; or still more north through the plain of Esdraelon.

Verse 29. *They are gone over the passage “They have passed the strait”*— The strait here mentioned is that of Michmas, a very narrow passage between two sharp hills or rocks, (see 1 Samuel 14:4, 5,) where a great army might have been opposed with advantage by a very inferior force. The author of the Book of Judith might perhaps mean this pass, at least among others: “Charging them to keep the passages of the hill country, for by them there was an entrance into Judea; and it was easy to stop them

that would come up, because the passage was strait for two men at the most,” Judith 4:7. The enemies having passed the strait without opposition, shows that all thoughts of making a stand in the open country were given up, and that their only resource was in the strength of the city.

Their lodging— The sense seems necessarily to require that we read **לָמוּ** lamo, to them, instead of **לָנוּ** lanu, to us. These two words are in other places mistaken one for the other.

Thus chap. 44:7, for **לָמוּ** lamo, read **לָנוּ** lanu, with the Chaldee; and in the same manner Psalm 64:6, with the Syriac, and Psalm 80:7, on the authority of the Septuagint and Syriac, besides the necessity of the sense.

Verse 30. Cause it to be heard unto Laish, O poor Anathoth “Hearken unto her, O Laish; answer her, O Anathoth!”— I follow in this the Syriac Version. The prophet plainly alludes to the name of the place, and with a peculiar propriety, if it had its name from its remarkable echo. “**עֲנֹתוֹת** anathoth, responsiones: eadem ratio nominis, quae in **בֵּית עֲנַת** beith anath, locus echus; nam hodiernum ejus rudera ostenduntur in valle, scil. in medio montium, ut referent Robertus in Itiner. p. 70, et Monconnysius, p. 301.” Simonis Onomasticon Vet. Test. — L. Anathoth-Answers, replies; for the same reason that Bethany, **בֵּית עֲנַת** berth anath, had its name, the house of echo; the remains of which are still shown in the valley, i.e., among the mountains.

Verse 33. Shall lop the bough with terror— **פֹּאֲרָה** purah; but **פּוֹרָה** purah, wine-press, is the reading of twenty-six of Kennicott’s and twenty-three of De Rossi’s MSS., four ancient editions, with Symmachus, Theodotion, and the Chaldee.

Verse 34. Lebanon shall fall by a mighty one— **בְּאֲדִיר** beaddir, the angel of the Lord, who smote them, Kimchi. And so Vitranga understandls it. Others translate, “The high cedars of Lebanon shall fall:” but the king of Assyria is the person who shall be overthrown.

CHAPTER 11

The Messiah represented as a slender twig shooting up from the root of an old withered stem, which tender plant, so extremely weak in its first appearance, should nevertheless become fruitful and mighty, 1-4. Great equity of the Messiah's government, 5. Beautiful assemblages of images by which the great peace and happiness of his kingdom are set forth, 6-8. The extent of his dominion shall be ultimately that of the whole habitable globe, 9. The prophet, borrowing his imagery from the exodus from Egypt, predicts, with great majesty of language, the future restoration of the outcasts of Israel and the dispersed of Judah, (viz., the whole of the twelve tribes of Israel,) from their several dispersions, and also that blessed period when both Jews and Gentiles shall assemble under the banner of Jesus, and zealously unite in extending the limits of his kingdom, 10-16.

NOTES ON CHAP. 11

The prophet had described the destruction of the Assyrian army under the image of a mighty forest, consisting of flourishing trees growing thick together, and of a great height; of Lebanon itself crowned with lofty cedars, but cut down and laid level with the ground by the axe wielded by the hand of some powerful and illustrious agent. In opposition to this image he represents the great Person who makes the subject of this chapter as a slender twig shooting out from the trunk of an old tree, cut down, lopped to the very root, and decayed; which tender plant, so weak in appearance, should nevertheless become fruitful and prosper. This contrast shows plainly the connection between this and the preceding chapter, which is moreover expressed by the connecting particle; and we have here a remarkable instance of that method so common with the prophets, and particularly with Isaiah, of taking occasion, from the mention of some great temporal deliverance, to launch out into the display of the spiritual deliverance of God's people by the Messiah; for that this prophecy relates to the Messiah we have the express authority of St. Paul,

Romans 15:12. ‘He joins this paragraph, with respect to the days of the Messiah, with the fidelity that was in the days of Hezekiah.’—Kimchi, in ver. 1. Thus in the latter part of Isaiah’s prophecies the subject of the great redemption, and of the glories of the Messiah’s kingdom, arises out of the restoration of Judah by the deliverance from the captivity of Babylon, and is all along connected and intermixed with it.

Verse 4. *With the rod of his mouth* “*By the blast of his mouth*”— For **בִּשְׁבֶּט** beshebet, by the rod, Houbigant reads **בְּשִׁבְתוֹ** beshebeth, by the blast of his mouth, from **נָשַׁב** nashab, to blow. The conjecture is ingenious and probable; and seems to be confirmed by the Septuagint and Chaldee, who render it by the word of his mouth, which answers much better to the correction than to the present reading. Add to this, that the blast of his mouth is perfectly parallel to the breath of his lips in the next line.

Verse 5. *The girdle* “*The cincture*”— All the ancient Versions, except that of Symmachus, have two different words for girdle in the two hemistichs. It is not probable that Isaiah would have repeated **אָזֶר** azer, when a synonymous word so obvious as **חָגוֹר** chagor occurred. The tautology seems to have arisen from the mistake of some transcriber. The meaning of this verse is, that a zeal for justice and truth shall make him active and strong in executing the great work which he shall undertake. See note on chap. 5:27.

Verse 6. *The wolf also shall*, etc. “*Then shall the wolf*,” etc.— The idea of the renewal of the golden age, as it is called, is much the same in the Oriental writers with that of the Greeks and Romans: — the wild beasts grow tame; serpents and poisonous herbs become harmless; all is peace and harmony, plenty and happiness:—

*Occidet et serpens, et fallax herba veneni
Occidet.
Vega. Eclog. 4:24.*

*“The serpent’s brood shall die. The sacred ground
Shall weeds and noxious plants refuse to bear.”
— Nec magnos metuent armenta leones.*

VIRG. Eclog. 4:22.

“Nor shall the flocks fear the great lions.”

*Non lupus insidias explorat ovilia circum,
Nec gregibus nocturnus obambulat: acrior illum
Cura domat: timidæ damae cervique fugaces
Nunc interque canes, et circum tecta vagantur.*

VIRG. Georg. 3:537.

*“The nightly wolf that round the enclosure prowled,
To leap the fence, now plots not on the fold:
Tamed with a sharper pain, the fearful doe
And flying stag amidst the greyhounds go;
And round the dwellings roam, of man, their former foe.”*

DRYDEN.

*Nec vespertinus circumgemit ursus ovile,
Nec intumescit alta viperis humus.*

HOR. Epod. 16:51.

*“Nor evening bears the sheepfold growl around,
Nor mining vipers heave the tainted ground.”
DRYDEN.*

εσται δη τουτ' αμαρ, οπηνικα νεβρον εν ευνα
καρχαροδων δινεσθαι ιδων λυκος ουκ εθελησει.

THEOC. Idyl. 24:84.

There shall be a time when the ravenous wolf shall see the kid lying at ease, and shall feel no desire to do it an injury.

I have laid before the reader these common passages from the most elegant of the ancient poets, that he may see how greatly the prophet on the same subject has the advantage upon the comparison; how much the former fall short of that beauty and elegance, and variety of imagery, with which Isaiah has set forth the very same ideas. The wolf and the leopard not only forbear to destroy the lamb and the kid, but even take their abode and lie down together with them. The calf, and the young lion, and the fatling, not only come together, but are led quietly in the same band, and that by a little child. The heifer and the she-bear not only feed together, but even lodge their young ones, for whom they used to be most jealously fearful, in the same place. All the serpent kind is so perfectly harmless, that the sucking infant and the newly weaned child puts his hand on the basilisk's den, and plays upon the hole of the aspic. The lion not only abstains from preying on the weaker animals, but becomes tame and domestic, and feeds on straw like the ox. These are all beautiful circumstances, not one of which has been touched upon by the ancient poets. The Arabian and Persian poets elegantly apply the same ideas to show the effects of justice impartially administered, and firmly supported, by a great and good king:—

*“Mahmoud the powerful king, the ruler of the world,
To whose tank the wolf and the lamb come, together to
drink.”*

FERDUSI.

*“Through the influence of righteousness, the hungry wolf
Becomes mild, though in the presence of the white kid.”*

IBN ONEIN. JONES, Poes. Asiat. Comment., p. 380.

The application is extremely ingenious and beautiful: but the exquisite imagery of Isaiah is not equalled.

Verse 7. In this verse a word is omitted in the text, **יחדב** yachdav, together; which ought to be repeated in the second hemistich, being quite necessary to the sense. It is accordingly twice expressed by the Septuagint and Syriac.

Verse 8. *The cockatrice' den.*— This is supposed, both by the Targum and by Kimchi, to mean the pupil of this serpent's eye. "When," says Kimchi, "he is in the mouth of his den, in an obscure place, then his eyes sparkle exceedingly: the child, seeing this, and supposing it to be a piece of crystal, or precious stone, puts forth his hand to take it. What would be very dangerous at another time, shall be safe in the days of the Messiah; for the serpent will not hurt the child."

Verse 10. *A root of Jesse, which shall stand* etc. "***The root of Jesse, which standeth,***" etc.— St. John hath taken this expression from Isaiah, Revelation 5:5, and 22:16, where Christ hath twice applied it to himself. Seven MSS. have **עומד** omed, standing, the present participle. Radix Isaei dicitur jam stare, et aliquantum stetisse, in signum populorum. — VITRINA. "The root of Jesse is said to stand, and for some time to have stood, for an ensign to the people." Which rightly explains either of the two readings. The one hundred and tenth psalm is a good comment on this verse. See the notes there.

Verse 11. *And it shall come to pass in that day*— This part of the chapter contains a prophecy which certainly remains yet to be accomplished.

The Lord "JEHOVAH"— For **אדני** Adonai, thirty-three MSS. of Kennicott's, and many of De Rossi's, and two editions, read **יהוה** Yehovah.

The islands of the sea.— The Roman and Turkish empires, say Kimchi.

Verse 13. *The adversaries of Judah “And the enmity of Judah”*—

צָרְרִים tsorerim, Postulat pars posterior versus, ut intelligantur inimicitiae Judae in Ephraimum: et potest (צָרְרִים tsorerim) inimicitiam notare, ut (נְחֻמִּים nichumim) poenitentiam, Hosea 11:8. — SECKER.

Verse 15. *The Lord shall smite it in the seven streams “Smite with a drought”*—

The Chaldee reads הֶחֱרִיב hecherib; and so perhaps the Septuagint, who have ἐρημώσει, the word by which they commonly render it. Vulg. desolabit; “shall desolate.” The Septuagint, Vulgate, and Chaldee read הִדְרִיכָהּ hidrichahu, “shall make it passable,” adding the pronoun, which is necessary: but this reading is not confirmed by any MS.

Here is a plain allusion to the passage of the Red Sea. And the Lord’s shaking his hand over the river with his vehement wind, refers to a particular circumstance of the same miracle: for “he caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land,” Exodus 14:21. The tongue; a very apposite and descriptive expression for a bay such as that of the Red Sea. It is used in the same sense, Joshua 15:2, 5; 18:19. The Latins gave the same name to a narrow strip of land running into the sea: tenuem producit in aequora linguam. LUCAN. 2:613. He shall smite the river to its seven streams. This has been supposed to refer to the Nile, because it falls into the Mediterranean Sea by seven mouths: but R. Kimchi understands it of the Euphrates, which is the opinion of some good judges. See the Targum. See below.

Herodotus, lib. i, 189, tells a story of his Cyrus, (a very different character from that of the Cyrus of the Scriptures and Xenophon,) which may somewhat illustrate this passage, in which it is said that God would inflict a kind of punishment and judgment on the Euphrates, and render it fordable by dividing it into seven streams. “Cyrus, being impeded in his march to Babylon by the Gyndes, a deep and rapid river which falls into the Tigris, and having lost one of his sacred white horses that attempted to pass it, was so enraged against the river that he threatened to reduce it, and make it so shallow that it should be easily fordable even by women, who should not be up to their knees in passing it. Accordingly he set his whole army to work, and cutting three hundred and sixty trenches, from both

sides of the river, turned the waters into them, and drained them off.”

CHAPTER 12

Prophetic hymn of praise for the great mercies vouchsafed to the children of Israel in their deliverance from the great Babylonish captivity, and for redemption by the Messiah, 1-6.

This hymn seems, by its whole tenor, and by many expressions in it, much better calculated for the use of the Christian Church than for the Jewish, in any circumstances, or at any time that can be assigned. The Jews themselves seem to have applied it to the times of Messiah. On the last day of the feast of tabernacles they fetched water in a golden pitcher from the fountain of Shiloah, springing at the foot of Mount Sion without the city: they brought it through the water-gate into the temple, and poured it, mixed with wine, on the sacrifice as it lay upon the altar, with great rejoicing. They seem to have taken up this custom, for it is not ordained in the law of Moses, as an emblem of future blessings, in allusion to this passage of Isaiah, “Ye shall draw waters with joy from the fountains of salvation,” expressions that can hardly be understood of any benefits afforded by the Mosaic dispensation. Our Savior applied the ceremony, and the intention of it, to himself, and the effusion of the Holy Spirit, promised, and to be given, by him. The sense of the Jews in this matter is plainly shown by the following passage of the Jerusalem Talmud: “Why is it called the place or house of drawing?” (for that was the term for this ceremony, or for the place where the water was taken up) “Because from thence they draw the Holy Spirit; as it is written, And ye shall draw water with joy from the fountains of salvation.” See Wolf. *Curae Philol.* in N.T. on John 7:37, 39. — L. The water is Divine knowledge, says Kimchi, and the wells the teachers of righteousness. The Targum renders this in a very remarkable manner: “Ye shall receive with joy (אולפ חדת) *ulephan chadath*) a new doctrine from the chosen among the righteous.” Does not this mean the Gospel, the new covenant? And did not the Targumist speak as a prophet?

NOTES ON CHAP. 12

Verse 1. *Though thou wast angry* “*For though thou hast been angry*”— The Hebrew phrase, to which the Septuagint and Vulgate have too closely adhered, is exactly the same with that of St. Paul, Romans 6:17: “But thanks be to God, that ye were the slaves of sin; but have obeyed from the heart;” that is, “that whereas, or though, ye were the slaves of sin, yet ye have now obeyed from the heart the doctrine on the model of which ye were formed.”

Verse 2. *The Lord JEHOVAH*— The word יה' Yah read here is probably a mistake; and arose originally from the custom of the Jewish scribes, who, when they found a line too short for the word, wrote as many letters as filled it, and then began the next line with the whole word. In writing the word יהוה' Jehovah, the line might terminate with יה' Yah, the two first letters; and then at the beginning of the next line the whole word יהוה' Jehovah would be written. This might give rise to יהוה' יה' Yah Jehovah. The Yah is wanting here in two of Dr. Kennicott's MSS., in one ancient MS. of my own, and in the Septuagint, Vulgate, Syriac, and Arabic. See Houbigant and De Rossi.

***My song*—** The pronoun is here necessary; and it is added by the Septuagint, Vulgate, and Syriac, who read זמרתִי zimrathi, as it is in a MS. Two MSS. omit יה' Yah, see Houbigant, not. in loc. Another MS. has it in one word, זמרתִיה zimrathyah. Seven others omit יהוה' Jehovah. See Exodus 15:2, with Var. Lect. Kennicott.

Verse 4.

dwells. St. Paul, speaking of the mystery which had been proclaimed among the Gentiles, sums it up in these words: “which is CHRIST IN YOU, the hope of glory; whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus;” Colossians 1:27, 28. Well, therefore, may the inhabitant of Zion cry out and shout, and proclaim the greatness of her Redeemer.

CHAPTER 13

God mustereth the armies of his wrath against the inhabitants of Babylon, 1-6. The dreadful consequences of this visitation, and the terror and dismay of those who are the objects of it, 7-16. The horrid cruelties that shall be indicted upon the Babylonians by the Medes, 17, 18. Total and irrecoverable desolation of Babylon, 19-22.

This and the following chapter, — striking off the five last verses of the latter, which belong to a quite different subject, — contain one entire prophecy, foretelling the destruction of Babylon by the Medes and Persians; delivered probably in the reign of Ahaz, (see Vitriunya, 1:380,) about two hundred years before its accomplishment. The captivity itself of the Jews at Babylon, which the prophet does not expressly foretell, but supposes, in the spirit of prophecy, as what was actually to be effected, did not fully take place till about one hundred and thirty years after the delivery of this prophecy: and the Medes, who are expressly mentioned chap. 13:17, as the principal agents in the overthrow of the Babylonian monarchy, by which the Jews were released from that captivity, were at this time an inconsiderable people; having been in a state of anarchy ever since the fall of the great Assyrian empire, of which they had made a part, under Sardanapalus; and did not become a kingdom under Deioeces till about the seventeenth of Hezekiah.

The former part of this prophecy is one of the most beautiful examples that can be given of elegance of composition, variety of imagery, and sublimity of sentiment and diction, in the prophetic style; and the latter part consists of an ode of supreme and singular excellence.

The prophecy opens with the command of God to gather together the forces which he had destined to this service, ver. 2, 3. Upon which the prophet immediately hears the tumultuous noise of the different nations crowding together to his standard; he sees them advancing, prepared to execute the Divine wrath, ver. 4, 5. He proceeds to describe the dreadful consequences of this visitation, the consternation which will seize those

who are the objects of it; and, transferring unawares the speech from himself to God, ver. 11, sets forth, under a variety of the most striking images, the dreadful destruction of the inhabitants of Babylon which will follow, ver. 11-16, and the everlasting desolation to which that great city is doomed, ver. 17-22.

The deliverance of Judah from captivity, the immediate consequence of

that are said to be the sepulchres of the kings of Judah. See Maundrell, p. 76. You are to form to yourself an idea of an immense subterranean vault, a vast gloomy cavern, all round the sides of which there are cells to receive the dead bodies; here the deceased monarchs lie in a distinguished sort of state, suitable to their former rank, each on his own couch, with his arms beside him, his sword at his head, and the bodies of his chiefs and companions round about him. See Ezekiel 32:27. On which place Sir John Chardin's MS. note is as follows: "En Mingrelie ils dorment tous leurs epees sous leurs tetes, et leurs autres armes a leur cote; et on les enterre de mesme, leurs armes posees de cette facon." In Mingrelia they always sleep with their swords under their heads, and their other arms by their sides; and they bury their dead with their arms placed in the same manner. These illustrious shades rise at once from their couches, as from their thrones; and advance to the entrance of the cavern to meet the king of Babylon, and to receive him with insults on his fall.

The Jews now resume the speech; they address the king of Babylon as the morning-star fallen from heaven, as the first in splendor and dignity in the political world, fallen from his high state; they introduce him as uttering the most extravagant vaunts of his power and ambitious designs in his former glory. These are strongly contrasted in the close with his present low and abject condition.

Immediately follows a different scene, and a most happy image, to diversify the same subject, to give it a new turn, and an additional force. Certain persons are introduced who light upon the corpse of the king of Babylon, cast out and lying naked on the bare ground, among the common slain, just after the taking of the city; covered with wounds, and so disfigured, that it is some time before they know him. They accost him with the severest taunts; and bitterly reproach him with his destructive ambition, and his cruel usage of the conquered; which have deservedly brought him this ignominious treatment, so different from that which those of his rank usually meet with, and which shall cover his posterity with disgrace.

To complete the whole, God is introduced, declaring the fate of Babylon, the utter extirpation of the royal family, and the total desolation of the

city; the deliverance of his people, and the destruction of their enemies; confirming the irreversible decree by the awful sanction of his oath.

I believe it may with truth be affirmed, that there is no poem of its kind extant in any language, in which the subject is so well laid out, and 60 happily conducted, with such a richness of invention, with such variety of images, persons, and distinct actions, with such rapidity and ease of transition, in so small a compass, as in this ode of Isaiah. For beauty of disposition, strength of colouring, greatness of sentiment, brevity, perspicuity, and force of expression, it stands, among all the monuments of antiquity, unrivalled. — L.

NOTES ON CHAP. 13.

Verse 1. *The burden of Babylon*— The prophecy that foretells its destruction by the Medes and Persians: see the preceding observations.

Verse 2. *Exalt the voice*— The word להם להם lahem, “to them,” which is of no use, and rather weakens the sentence, is omitted by an ancient MS., and the Vulgate.

Verse 3. *I have commanded my sanctified ones*— מקדשׁי mekuddashai, the persons consecrated to this very purpose. Nothing can be plainer than that the verb כדשׁ kadash, “to make holy,” signifies also to consecrate or appoint to a particular purpose. Bishop Lowth translates, “my enrolled warriors.” This is the sense.

Verse 4. *Of the battle “For the battle.”*— The Bodleian MS. has למלחמה lemilchamah. Cyrus’s army was made up of many different nations. Jeremiah calls it an “assembly of great nations from the north country,” chap. 50:9. And afterwards mentions the kingdoms of “Ararat, Minni, and Ashchenaz, (i.e. Armenia, Corduene, Pontus or Phrygia, Vitring.,) with the kings of the Medes,” chap. 51:27, 28. See Xenophon. Cyrop.

Verse 5. *They come from a far country*— The word מֵאַרְץ־מֵרֹחַק meerets is wanting in one MS. and in the Syriac: “They come from afar.”

From the end of heaven— Kimchi says, Media, “the end of heaven,” in Scripture phrase, means, the EAST.

Verse 8. *And they shall be afraid “And they shall be terrified”*— I join this verb, וַיִּבְהֹלוּ venibhalu, to the preceding verse, with the Syriac and Vulgate.

Pangs and sorrows shall take hold on them “Pangs shall seize them”— The Septuagint, Syriac, and Chaldee read אֲחֻזָּם yochezum, instead of אֲחֻזָּי yochezun, which does not express the pronoun then, necessary to the sense.

Verse 10. *For the stars of heaven “Yea, the stars of heaven”*— The Hebrew poets, to express happiness, prosperity, the instauration and advancement of states, kingdoms, and potentates, make use of images taken from the most striking parts of nature, from the heavenly bodies, from the sun, moon, and stars: which they describe as shining with increased splendor, and never setting. The moon becomes like the meridian sun, and the sun’s light is augmented sevenfold; (see Isaiah 30:26;) new heavens and a new earth are created, and a brighter age commences. On the contrary, the overflow and destruction of kingdoms is represented by opposite images. The stars are obscured, the moon withdraws her light, and the sun shines no more! The earth quakes, and the heavens tremble; and all things seem tending to their original chaos, See Joel 2:10; 3:15, 16; Amos 8:9; Matthew 24:29; and De S. Poes. Herb. Prael. 6:et IX.

And the moon shall not cause her light to shine— This in its farther reference may belong to the Jewish polity, both in Church and state, which should be totally eclipsed, and perhaps shine no more in its distinct state for ever.

Verse 11. *I will punish the world “I will visit the world”*— That is, the Babylonish empire; as ἡ οὐκουμένη, for the Roman empire, or for Judea,

Luke 2:1; Acts 11:28. So the universus orbis Romanus, for the Roman empire; Salvian. lib. 5:Minos calls Crete his world: “Creten, quae meus est orbis,” Ovid. Metamorph. 8:9.

Verse 12. *I will make a man more precious than fine gold-wedge of Ophir.*— The Medes and Persians will not be satisfied with the spoils of the Babylonians. They seek either to destroy or enslave them; and they will accept no ransom for any man—either for אֲנוֹשׁ enosh, the poor man, or for אָדָם adam, the more honorable person. All must fall by the sword, or go into captivity together; for the Medes, (ver. 17,) regard not silver, and delight not in gold.

Verse 14. “*And the remnant*”— Here is plainly a defect in this sentence, as it stands in the Hebrew text; the subject of the proposition is lost. What is it that shall be like a roe chased? The Septuagint happily supply it, οἱ καταλελειμμένοι, רֵשָׁאֵר shear, the remnant. A MS. here supplies the word יוֹשֵׁב yosheb, the inhabitant; which makes a tolerably good sense; but I much prefer the reading of the Septuagint.

They shall-turn “They shall look”— That is, the forces of the king of Babylon, destitute of their leader, and all his auxiliaries, collected from Asia Minor, and other distant countries, shall disperse and flee to their respective homes.

Verse 15. *Every one that is found “Every one that is overtaken”*— That is, none shall escape from the slaughter; neither they who flee singly, dispersed and in confusion; nor they who endeavor to make their retreat in a more regular manner, by forming compact bodies: they shall all be equally cut off by the sword of the enemy. The Septuagint have understood it in this sense, which they have well expressed:—

ὅς γὰρ ἀν ἀλω ἠττηθησεται,
καὶ οἰτινες συνηγμενοι εἰσι πεσουνται μαχαίρα.

*“Whosoever is caught shall be overthrown,
And all that are collected together shall fall by the sword.”*

Where, for *ηττηθησεται*, MS. Pachom has *εκκενθησεται*, et *οι γ* Cod. Marchal. in margine, et MS. 1:D. 2:*εκκεντηθησεται*, which seems to be right, being properly expressive of the Hebrew.

Verse 17. Which shall not regard silver “*Who shall hold silver of no account*”— That is, who shall not be induced, by large offers of gold and silver for ransom, to spare the lives of those whom they have subdued in battle; their rage and cruelty will get the better of all such motives. We have many examples in the Iliad and in the Aeneid of addresses of the vanquished to the pity and avarice of the vanquishers, to induce them to spare their lives.

*Est domus alta: jacent penitus defossa talenta
Caelati argenti: sunt auri ponders facti
Infectique mihi: non hic victoria Teucrum
Vertitur; aut anima una dalbit discrimina tanta.
Dixerat: Aeneas contra cui talia reddit:
Argenti atque auri memoras quae multa talenta
Gnatis parce tuis.*

AEn. 10:526.

*“High in my dome are silver talents rolled,
With piles of labored and unlaboured gold.
These, to procure my ransom, I resign;
The war depends not on a life like mine:
One, one poor life can no such difference yield,
Nor turn the mighty balance of the field.
Thy talents, (cried the prince,) thy treasured store
Keep for thy sons.”*

Pitt.

It is remarkable that Xenophon makes Cyrus open a speech to his army, and in particular to the Medes, who made the principal part of it, with praising them for their disregard of riches. *ανδρες μηδοι, και παντες οι παροντες, εγω υμας οιδα σαφως, οτι ουτε χρηματων δεομενοι συν εμοι εξελθετε* “Ye Medes, and others who now hear me, I well know that you have not accompanied me in this expedition with a view of

acquiring wealth.”-Cyrop. lib. v.

Verse 18. *Their bows also shall dash*”*Their bows shall dash*”— Both Herodotus, 1:61, and Xenophon, Anab. iii., mention, that the Persians used large bows **τοξα μεγάλα**: and the latter says particularly that their bows were three cubits long, Anab. 4: They were celebrated for their archers, see chap 22:6; Jeremiah 49:35. Probably their neighbours and allies, the Medes, dealt much in the same sort of arms. In Psalm 28:34, and Job 20:24, mention is made of a bow of steel; if the Persian bows were of metal, we may easily conceive that with a metalline bow of three cubits’ length, and proportionably strong, the soldiers might dash and slay the young men, the weaker and unresisting of the inhabitants (for they are joined with the fruit of the womb and the children) in the general carnage on taking the city. **תרתשנה** terattashnah, shall be broken or shivered to pieces. This seems to refer, not to **נערים** nearim, young men, but to **קשתות** keshathoth, their bows. The bows of the young men shall be broken to pieces.

On the fruit, etc. “**And on the fruit**,” etc.— A MS. of Dr. Kennicott’s reads **ועל פרי** veal peri and on the fruit. And nine MSS. (three ancient) and two editions, with the Septuagint, Vulgate, and Syriac, add likewise the conjunction **ו** vau, and, to **על** al, upon, afterwards.

Verse 19. *And Babylon*— The great city of Babylon was at this time rising to its height of glory, while the Prophet Isaiah was repeatedly denouncing its utter destruction. From the first of Hezekiah to the first of Nebuchadnezzar, under whom it was brought to the highest degree of strength and splendor, are about one hundred and twenty years. I will here very briefly mention some particulars of the greatness of the place, and note the several steps by which this remarkable prophecy was at length accomplished in the total ruin of it.

It was, according to the lowest account given of it by ancient historians, a regular square, forty-five miles in compass, inclosed by a wall two hundred feet high and fifty broad; in which there were a hundred gates of brass. Its principal ornaments were the temple of Belus, in the middle of

which was a tower of eight stories of building, upon a base of a quarter of a mile square, a most magnificent palace, and the famous hanging gardens, which were an artificial mountain, raised upon arches, and planted with trees of the largest as well as the most beautiful sorts.

Cyrus took the city by diverting the waters of the Euphrates which ran through the midst of it, and entering the place at night by the dry channel. The river being never restored afterward to its proper course, overflowed the whole country, and made it little better than a great morass; this and the great slaughter of the inhabitants, with other bad consequences of the taking of the city, was the first step to the ruin of the place. The Persian monarchs ever regarded it with a jealous eye; they kept it under, and took care to prevent its recovering its former greatness. Darius Hystaspes not long afterward most severely punished it for a revolt, greatly depopulated the place, lowered the walls, and demolished the gates. Xerxes destroyed the temples, and with the rest the great temple of Belus, Herod. 3:159, Arrian Exp. Alexandri, lib. 7: The building of Seleucia on the Tigris exhausted Babylon by its neighborhood, as well as by the immediate loss of inhabitants taken away by Seleucus to people his new city, Strabo, lib. 16: A king of the Parthians soon after carried away into slavery a great number of the inhabitants, and burned and destroyed the most beautiful parts of the city, Valesii Excerpt. Diodori, p. 377. Strabo (ibid.) says that in his time great part of it was a mere desert; that the Persians had partly destroyed it; and that time and the neglect of the Macedonians, while they were masters of it, had nearly completed its destruction. Jerome (in loc.) says that in his time it was quite in ruins, and that the walls served only for the inclosure for a park or forest for the king's hunting. Modern travelers, who have endeavored to find the remains of it, have given but a very unsatisfactory account of their success. What Benjamin of Tudela and Pietro della Valle supposed to have been some of its ruins, Tavernier thinks are the remains of some late Arabian building. Upon the whole, Babylon is so utterly annihilated, that even the place where this wonder of the world stood cannot now be determined with any certainty! See also note on chap. 43:14.

We are astonished at the accounts which ancient historians of the best credit give of the immense extent, height, and thickness of the walls of

Nineveh and Babylon; nor are we less astonished when we are assured, by the concurrent testimony of modern travelers, that no remains, not the least traces, of these prodigious works are now to be found. Scattered fragments of its tiles and bricks are yet to be found. Proud Babylon reduced now to a few brick-bats! Our wonder will, I think, be moderated in both respects, if we consider the fabric of these celebrated walls, and the nature of the materials of which they consisted. Buildings in the east have always been, and are to this day, made of earth or clay, mixed or beat up with straw to make the parts cohere, and dried only in the sun. This is their method of making bricks; see on chap. 9:9. The walls of the city were built of the earth dugged out on the spot, and dried upon the place, by which means both the ditch and the wall were at once formed, the former furnishing materials for the latter. That the walls of Babylon were of this kind is well known; and Berosus expressly says, (apud Joseph. Antiq. 10:11,) that Nebuchadnezzar added three new walls both to the old and new city, partly of brick and bitumen, and partly of brick alone. A wall of this sort must have a great thickness in proportion to its height, otherwise it cannot stand. The thickness of the walls of Babylon is said to have been one-fourth of their height, which seems to have been no more than was absolutely necessary. Maundrell, speaking of the garden walls of Damascus, says, "They are of a very singular structure. They are built of great pieces of earth, made in the fashion of brick, and hardened in the sun. In their dimensions they are two yards long each, and somewhat more than one broad, and half a yard thick." And afterward, speaking of the walls of the houses, he says, "From this dirty way of building they have this amongst other inconveniences, that upon any violent rain the whole city becomes, by the washing of the houses, as it were a quagmire," p. 124. And see note on chap. 30:13. When a wall of this sort comes to be out of repair, and is neglected, it is easy to conceive the necessary consequences, namely, that in no long course of ages it must be totally destroyed by the heavy rains, and at length washed away, and reduced to its original earth.

— L.

Verse 21. *Satyrs*— A kind of beast like to man, which is called **מרמוש** marmots, a monkey. — Rabbi Parchon.

Verse 22. *In their pleasant palaces* "*In their palaces*"— **באלמנותיו**

bealmenoithaiv; a plain mistake, I presume, for בארמנתיו bearmenoithaiv. It is so corrected in two MSS., the Syriac, Chaldee, and Vulgate.

πολυποδες δ' εν εμοι θαλαμας φωκαι τε μελαιναι
οικα ποιησονται ακηδεα, χητει λαων.

HOM. Hymn. in Apol. 77.

Of which the following passage of Milton may be taken for a translation, though not so designed:—

*“And in their palaces,
Where luxury late reigned, sea monsters whelped,
And stabled.”*

Par. Lost, 11:750.

This image of desolation is handled with great propriety and force by some of the Persian poets:—

[A]

*“The spider holds the veil in the palace of Caesar;
The owl stands centinel on the watch-tower of Afrasiab.”*

On this quotation Sir W. Jones observes, [A] noubet is an Arabic word, signifying a turn, a change, a watch; hence [A] noubet zudun in Persian signifies to relieve the guards by the sounds of drums and trumpets. Their office is given by the poet to the owl; as that of [P] purdeh dar, or chamberlain, is elegantly assigned to the spider.

CHAPTER 14

Deliverance of Israel from captivity, which shall follow the downfall of the great Babylonish empire, 1, 2. Triumphant ode or song of the children of Jacob, for the signal manifestation of Divine vengeance against their oppressors, 3-23. Prophecy against the Assyrians, 24, 25. Certainty of the prophecy, and immutability of the Divine counsels, 26, 27. Palestine severely threatened, 28-31. God shall establish Zion in these troublous times, 32.

NOTES ON CHAP. 14

Verse 1. *And will yet choose Israel.*— That is, will still regard Israel as his chosen people; however he may seem to desert them, by giving them up to their enemies, and scattering them among the nations. Judah is sometimes called Israel; see Ezekiel 13:16; Malachi 1:1; 2:11: but the name of Jacob and of Israel, used apparently with design in this place, each of which names includes the twelve tribes, and the other circumstances mentioned in this and the next verse, which did not in any complete sense accompany the return from the captivity of Babylon, seem to intimate that this whole prophecy extends its views beyond that event.

Verse 2. *For servants and handmaids*— For thrallis and thralleses. — OLD BIBLE. Male and female slaves.

Verse 3. *In the day “In that day”*— בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא bayom hahu. The word הַהוּא hahu is added in two MSS. of Kennicott’s, and was in the copies from which the Septuagint and Vulgate translated: *εν τη ημερα εκεινη*, in die illa, (*η αναπαυσει*, MS. Pachom. adding ה,) in that day. This is a matter of no great consequence: however, it restores the text to the common form, almost constantly used on such occasions; and is one among many instances of a word apparently lost out of the printed copies.

Verse 4. *This proverb*”*This parable*”— **משל** *mashal*, I take this to be the general name for poetic style among the Hebrews, including every sort of it, as ranging under one or other, or all of the characters, of sententious, figurative, and sublime; which are all contained in the original notion, or in the use and application of the word *mashal*. Parables or proverbs, such as those of Solomon, are always expressed in short pointed sentences; frequently figurative, being formed on some comparison; generally forcible and authoritative, both in the matter and the form. And such in general is the style of the Hebrew poetry. The verb *mashal* signifies to rule; to exercise authority; to make equal; to compare one thing with another; to utter parables, or acute, weighty, and powerful speeches, in the form and manner of parables, though not properly such. Thus Balaam’s first prophecy, (Numbers 23:7-10,) is called his *mashal*; though it has hardly any thing figurative in it: but it is beautifully sententious, and, from the very form and manner of it, has great spirit, force, and energy. Thus Job’s last speeches, in answer to his three friends, chap. 27-31., are called *mashals*; from no one particular character, which discriminates them from the rest of the poem, but from the sublime, the figurative, the sententious manner which equally prevails through the whole poem, and makes it one of the first and most eminent examples extant of the truly great and beautiful in poetic style. See the note on Proverbs 1:1.

The Septuagint in this place render the word by

the exactor of tribute.

Verse 9. *Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee*— That is, Nebuchadnezzar. “It (hell) hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the earth;—the ghosts (rephaim) of all the mighty ones, or goats, (עֲתוּדַי) attudey,) of the earth—all the oppressors of mankind.” What a most terrible idea is here! Tyrannical kings who have oppressed and spoiled mankind, are here represented as enthroned in hell; and as taking a Satanic pleasure in seeing others of the same description enter those abodes of misery!

Verse 11. *Cover thee “Thy covering.”*— Twenty-eight MSS. (ten ancient) of Kennicott’s, thirty-nine of De Rossi’s, twelve editions, with the Septuagint and Vulgate, read מְכַסֶּכָּה umechassecha, in the singular number.

Verse 12. *O Lucifer, son of the morning*— The Versions in general agree in this translation, and render הֵיְלֵל heilel as signifying Lucifer, φωσφορος, the morning star, whether Jupiter or Venus; as these are both bringers of the morning light, or morning stars, annually in their turn. And although the context speaks explicitly concerning Nebuchadnezzar, yet this has been, I know not why, applied to the chief of the fallen angels, who is most incongruously denominated Lucifer, (the bringer of light!) an epithet as common to him as those of Satan and Devil. That the Holy Spirit by his prophets should call this arch-enemy of God and man the light-bringer, would be strange indeed. But the truth is, the text speaks nothing at all concerning Satan nor his fall, nor the occasion of that fall, which many divines have with great confidence deduced from this text. O how necessary it is to understand the literal meaning of Scripture, that preposterous comments may be prevented! Besides, I doubt much whether our translation be correct. λλθη heilel, which we translate Lucifer, comes from λλθ yalal, yell, howl, or shriek, and should be translated, “Howl, son of the morning;” and so the Syriac has understood it; and for this meaning Michaelis contends: see his reasons in Parkhurst, under λλη halal.

Verse 13. *I will ascend into heaven*— I will get the empire of the whole

world. I will exalt my throne above the stars of God—above the Israelites, who are here termed the stars of God. So the Targum of Jonathan, and R. D. Kimchi. This chapter speaks not of the ambition and fall of Satan, but of the pride, arrogance, and fall of Nebuchadnezzar.

The mount of the congregation “The mount of the Divine Presence”— It appears plainly from Exodus 25:22, and 29:42, 43, where God appoints the place of meeting with Moses, and promises to meet with him before the ark to commune with him, and to speak unto him; and to meet the children of Israel at the door of the tabernacle; that the tabernacle, and afterwards the door of the tabernacle, and Mount Zion, (or Moriah, which is reckoned a part of Mount Zion,) whereon it stood, was called the tabernacle, and the mount of convention or of appointment; not from the people’s assembling there to perform the services of their religion, (which is what our translation expresses by calling it the tabernacle of the congregation,) but because God appointed that for the place where he himself would meet with Moses, and commune with him, and would meet with the people. Therefore **δεωμ ρη** har moed, the “mountain of the assembly,” or **δεωμ ληα** ohel moed, the “tabernacle of the assembly,” means the place appointed by God, where he would present himself; agreeably to which I have rendered it in this place, the mount of the Divine Presence.

Verse 19. *Like an abominable branch “Like the tree abominated”*— That is, as an object of abomination and detestation; such as the tree is on which a malefactor has been hanged. “It is written,” saith St. Paul, Galatians 3:13, “Cursed is every man that hangeth on a tree,” from Deuteronomy 21:23. The Jews therefore held also as accursed and polluted the tree itself on which a malefactor had been executed, or on which he had been hanged after having been put to death by stoning. “Non suspendunt super arbore, quae radicibus solo adhaereat; sed super ligno eradicato, ut ne sit excisio molesta: nam lignum, super quo fuit aliquis suspensus, cum suspendioso sepelitur; ne maneat illi malum nomen, et dicant homines, Istud est lignum, in quo suspensus est ille, **ο δεινα**. Sic lapis, quo aliquis fuit lapidatus; et gladius, quo fuit occisus is qui est occisus; et sudarium sive mantile, quo fuit aliquis strangulatus; omnia haec cum iis, qui perierunt, sepeliuntur.” Maimonides, apud Casaub. in Baron.

Exercitat. 16:An. 34, Numbers 134. “Cum itaque homo suspensum maximae esset abominationi-Judaei quoque prae caeteris abominabantur lignum quo fuerat suspensus, ita ut illud quoque terra tegerent, tanquam rem abominabilem. Unde interpres Chaldaeus haec verba transtulit כהט טמור kechat temir, sicut virgultum absconditum, sive sepultum.” Kalinski, *Vaticina Observationibus Illustrata*, p. 342.

“The Jews never hang any malefactor upon a tree that is growing in the earth, but upon a post fixed in the ground, that it might never be said, ‘That is the tree on which such a one was hanged;’ for custom required that the tree should be buried with the malefactor. In like manner the stone by which a criminal was stoned to death, or the sword by which he was beheaded, or the napkin or handkerchief by which he was strangled, should be buried with him in the same grave.” “For as the hanged man was considered the greatest abomination, so the very post or wood on which he was hanged was deemed a most abominable thing, and therefore buried under the earth.”

Agreeably to which Theodoret, *Hist. Ecclesiast.* 1:17, 18, in his account of the finding of the cross by Helena, says, “That the three crosses were buried in the earth near the place of our Lord’s sepulcher.” And this circumstance seems to confirm the relation of the discovery of the cross of Christ. The crosses were found where the custom required they should be buried.

The raiment of those that are slain “Clothed with the slain”—

Thirty-five MSS., (ten ancient,) and three editions, have the word fully written, לבוש lebus. It is not a noun, but the participle passive; thrown out among the common slain and covered with the dead bodies. So ver. 11, the earth-worm is said to be his bedcovering. This reading is confirmed by two ancient MSS. in my own collection.

Verse 20. *Because thou hast destroyed thy land*, etc. “***Because thou hast destroyed thy country; thou hast slain thy people***”— Xenophon gives an instance of this king’s wanton cruelty in killing the son of Gobrias, on no other provocation than that, in hunting, he struck a boar and a lion which the king had missed. *Cyrop.* 4:309.

Verse 23. *I will sweep it with the besom of destruction “I will plunge it in the miry gulf of destruction”*— I have here very nearly followed the Version of the Septuagint; the reasons for which see in the last note on De Poesi Hebr. Praelect, xxviii.

The besom of destruction, as our Version renders it. **במטאת** *bematate*. This, says Kimchi, is a Chaldee word: and it is worthy of remark that the prophet, writing to the Chaldeans, uses several words peculiar to their own language to point out the nature of the Divine judgments, and the causes of them. See the note on Jeremiah 10:11. Sixteen of Kennicott’s MSS., and seventeen of De Rossi’s, and one ancient of my own, have the word **במטאת** *bematatey*, in the plural. “I will sweep her with the besoms of destruction.”

Verse 25. *I will break the Assyrian-upon my mountains “To crush the Assyrian-on my mountains”*— The Assyrians and Babylonians are the same people, Herod. 1:199, 200. Babylon is reckoned the principal city in Assyria, *ibid.* 178. Strabo says the same thing, lib. 16:sub init. The circumstance of this judgment being to be executed on God’s mountains is of importance; it may mean the destruction of Sennacherib’s army near Jerusalem, and have a still farther view: compare Ezekiel 39:4; and see Lowth on this place of Isaiah.

Verse 28. *In the year that king Ahaz died was this burden*— Uzziah had subdued the Philistines, 2 Chronicles 26:6, 7; but, taking advantage of the weak reign of Ahaz, they invaded Judea, and took, and held in possession, some cities in the southern part of the kingdom. On the death of Ahaz, Isaiah delivers this prophecy, threatening them with the destruction that Hezekiah, his son, and great-grandson of Uzziah, should bring upon them: which he effected; for “he smote the Philistines, even unto Gaza, and the borders thereof,” 2 Kings 18:8. Uzziah, therefore, must be meant by the rod that smote them, and by the serpent from whom should spring the flying fiery serpent, ver. 29, that is, Hezekiah, a much more terrible enemy than even Uzziah had been.

The Targum renders the twenty-ninth verse in a singular way. “For, from

the sons of Jesse shall come forth the Messiah; and his works among you shall be as the flying serpent.”

Verse 30. *And the first-born of the poor*, etc.— The Targum goes on applying all to the Messiah. “And the poor of the people shall he feed, and the humble shall dwell securely in his days: and he shall kill thy children with famine, and the remnant of thy people shall he slay.”

I will kill “*He will slay*”— The Septuagint reads **הִמִּית** hemith, to the third person, **αυελεει**; and so the Chaldee. The Vulgate remedies the confusion of persons in the present text, by reading both the verbs in the first person.

Verse 31. *There shall come from the north a smoke* “*From the north cometh a smoke*”— That is, a cloud of dust raised by the march of Hezekiah’s army against Philistia; which lay to the south-west from Jerusalem. A great dust raised has, at a distance, the appearance of smoke: Fumantes pulvere campi; “The fields smoking with dust.”-VIRG. AEn. 11:908.

Verse 32. *The messengers of the nation* “*The ambassadors of the nations*”— The Septuagint read **גוֹיִם** goyim, **εθνον**, plural; and so the Chaldee, and one MS. The ambassadors of the neighboring nations, that send to congratulate Hezekiah on his success, which in his answer he will ascribe to the protection of God. See 2 Chronicles 32:23. Or, if **גוי** goi singular, the reading of the text, be preferred, the ambassadors sent by the Philistines to demand peace. — L.

The Lord hath founded Zion— Kimchi refers this to the state of Zion under Hezekiah, when the rest of the cities of Judea had been taken, and this only was left for a hope to the poor of God’s people: and God so defended it that Rabshakeh could not prevail against it.

The true Church of God is a place of safety; for as all its members are devoted to God, and walk in his testimonies, so they are continually defended and supported by him. In the congregations of his people, God

dispenses his light and salvation; hence his poor or humble ones expect in his ordinances the blessings they need.

CHAPTER 15

Prediction of very heavy calamities about to fall upon the Moabites, 1-9.

This and the following chapter, taken together, make one entire prophecy, very improperly divided into two parts. The time of its delivery, and consequently of its accomplishment, which was to be in three years from that time, is uncertain; the former not being marked in the prophecy itself, nor the latter recorded in history. But the most probable account is, that it was delivered soon after the foregoing, in the first year of Hezekiah; and that it was accomplished in his fourth year, when Shalmaneser invaded the kingdom of Israel. He might probably march through Moab; and to secure every thing behind him, possess himself of the whole country, by taking their principal strong places Ar and Kirhares. — L. The authorized Version which we have followed in the margin, places the prophecy in this chapter fourteen years earlier than that contained in the two preceding,

Jeremiah has happily introduced much of this prophecy of Isaiah into his own larger prophecy against the same people in his forty-eighth chapter, denouncing God's judgment on Moab, subsequent to the calamity here foretold, and to be executed by Nebuchadnezzar; by which means several mistakes of transcribers in the present text of both prophets may be rectified.

NOTES ON CHAP. 15

Verse 1. *Because in the night*— בליל beleil. That both these cities should be taken in the night is a circumstance somewhat unusual; but not so material as to deserve to be so strongly insisted upon. Vitranga, by his remark on this word, shows that he was dissatisfied with it in its plain and obvious meaning, and is forced to have recourse to a very hard metaphorical interpretation of it. Noctu vel nocturno impetu; vel metaphoricè, repente, subito, inexpectata destructione: placet posterius.

Calmet conjectures, and I think it probable, that the true reading is כליל keleil, as the night. There are many mistakes in the Hebrew text arising from the very great similitude of the letters כ beth, and כ caph, which in many MSS., and some printed editions, are hardly distinguishable. Admitting this reading, the translation will be,—

*“Because Ar is utterly destroyed, Moab is undone!
Because Kir is utterly destroyed, Moab is undone!”*

Verse 2. He is gone to Bajith, and to Dibon—עלה הבית alah habbayith, should be rendered, he is gone to the HOUSE, i.e., to their chief temple, where they practiced idolatry. Dibon was the name of a tower where also was an idolatrous temple; thither they went to weep and pray before their idols, that they might interpose and save them from their calamities. So R. D. Kimchi. Me is gone to Bajith and to Dibon: but Bishop Lowth reads Beth Dibon; this is the name of one place; and the two words are to be joined together, without the ו vau intervening. So the Chaldee and Syriac. This reading is not supported by any MS. or Version: but some MSS., instead of ער ar, have עיר ir, a city, others have עד ad, unto, and some editions have על al, upon. But all these help little, though they show that the place puzzled both the scribes and the editors.

On all their heads shall be baldness, etc.” On every head there is baldness,” etc.— Herodotus, 2:36, speaks of it as a general practice among all men, except the Egyptians, to cut off their hair as a token of mourning. “Cut off thy hair, and cast it away,” says Jeremiah, 7:29, “and take up a lamentation.”

τουτο νυ και γερας οιον οιζυροισι βροτοισι
κειρασθαι τε κομην, βαλειν τ' απο δακρυ παρειων.

Hom. Odyss. 4:197.

*“The rites of wo
Are all, alas! the living can bestow;
O’er the congenial dust enjoined to shear*

A heifer of three years old “*A young heifer.*”— Hebrew, a heifer three years old, in full strength; as Horace uses equa trima, for a young mare just coming to her prime. Bochart observes, from Aristotle, Hist. Animal. lib. 4: that in this kind of animals alone the voice of the female is deeper than that of the male; therefore the lowing of the heifer, rather than of the bullock, is chosen by the prophet, as the more proper image to express the mourning of Moab. But I must add that the expression here is very short and obscure; and the opinions of interpreters are various in regard to the meaning. Compare Jeremiah 48:34.

Shall they go it up “*They shall ascend*”— For **עלה** yaaleh, the Septuagint and a MS. read in the plural, **עלו** yaalu. And from this passage the parallel place in Jeremiah 48:5 must be corrected; where, for **עלה בכי** yaaleh bechi, which gives no good sense, read **עלה בו** yaaleh bo.

Verse 7. “*Shall perish*”— **אבדו** abadu or **אבדה** abadeh. This word seems to have been lost out of the text: it is supplied by the parallel place, Jeremiah 48:36. The Syriac expresses it by **עבר** aber, praeterit, “he hath passed;” and the Chaldee by **יתבזזו** yithbazezun, diripientur.

To the brook of the willows “*To the valley of willows*”— That is, to Babylon. Hieron. and Jarchi in loc., both referring to Psalm 137:2. So likewise Prideaux, Le Clerc, etc.

Verse 9. *The waters of Dimon*— Some have Dibon, others have Ribon and Rimon. St. Jerome observes that the same town was called both Dibon and Dimon. The reading is therefore indifferent.

Upon him that escapeth of Moab, etc. “*Upon the escaped of Moab, and Ariel, and the remnant of Admah.*”— The Septuagint for **עריה** aryeh read **אריאל** ariel. Ar Moab was called also Ariel or Areopolis, Hieron. and Theodoret. See Cellarius. They make **אדמה** Admah also a proper name. Michaelis thinks that the Moabites might be called the remnant of Admah, as sprung from Lot and his daughters, escaped from the destruction of that and the other cities; or, metaphorically, as the Jews are

called princes of Sodom, and people of Gomorrah, chap. 1:10.

Bibliothèque Orient. Part v., p. 195. The reading of this verse is very doubtful; and the sense, in every way in which it can be read, very obscure. — L. Calmet thinks there may be a reference to 1 Chronicles 11:22, where it is said, “Benaiah slew two lion-like men of Moab,” or the two Ariels of Moab, and would therefore translate, “I will bring down the remnant of Moab like Ariel, (which Benaiah smote,) and them that are escaped like Adamah.” They shall be exterminated, as were the inhabitants of those two cities. Ariel was a double city—the river Arnon dividing it in two. This is the two Ariels of Moab—not two lion-like men, much less two lions. See Calmet on this place.

CHAPTER 16

The distress of Moab pathetically described by the son of the prince, or ruler of the land, being forced to flee for his life through the desert, that he may escape to Judea; and the young women, like young birds scared from their nest, wade helpless through the fords of Arnon, the boundary of their country, to seek protection in some foreign land, 1, 2. The prophet addresses Sion, exhorting her to show mercy to her enemies in their distress, that her throne may be established in righteousness, 3-5. Exceeding great pride of Moab, 6. The terrible calamities about to fall upon Moab farther described by the languishing of the vine, the ceasing of the vintage, the sound of the prophet's bowels quivering like a harp, etc., 7-13. Awful nearness of the full accomplishment of the prophecy, 14.

NOTES ON CHAP. 16

Verse 1. *Send ye the lamb*, etc. “*I will send forth the son*, etc.”— Both the reading and meaning of this verse are still more doubtful than those of the preceding. The Septuagint and Syriac read אשלח eshlach, I will send, in the first person singular, future tense: the Vulgate and Talmud Babylon, read שלח shelach, send, singular imperative: some read שלחו shilchu, send ye forth, or shalechu, they send forth. The Syriac, for כר car, a lamb, reads בר bar, a son, which is confirmed by five MSS. of Kennicott and De Rossi. The two first verses describe the distress of Moab on the Assyrian invasion in which even the son of the prince of the country is represented as forced to flee for his life through the desert, that he may escape to Judea; and the young women are driven forth like young birds cast out of the nest, and endeavoring to wade through the fords of the river Arnon. Perhaps there is not so much difficulty in this verse as appears at first view. “Send the lamb to the ruler of the land,” may receive light from 2 Kings 3:4, 5: “And Mesha, king of Moab, was a sheepmaster, and rendered unto the king of Israel one hundred thousand lambs with their

wool, and one hundred thousand rams: but when Ahab was dead, the king of Moab rebelled against Israel.” Now the prophet exhorts them to begin paying the tribute as formerly, that their punishment might be averted or mitigated.

Verse 3. *Take counsel “Impart counsel”*— The Vulgate renders the verbs in the beginning of this verse in the singular number, So the Keri; and so likewise sixty-one MSS. of Kennicott’s and De Rossi’s have it, and nineteen editions, and the Syriac. The verbs throughout the verse are also in the feminine gender; agreeing with Zion, which I suppose to be understood.

Verse 4. *Let mine outcasts dwell with thee, Moab “Let the outcasts of Moab sojourn with thee, O Zion”*— Setting the points aside, this is by much the most obvious construction of the Hebrew, as well as most agreeable to the context, and the design of the prophet. And it is confirmed by the Septuagint *οι φυγαδες μωαβ*, and Syriac.

The oppressors “The oppressor”— Perhaps the Israelites, who in the time of Ahab invaded Judah, defeated his army, slaying one hundred and twenty thousand men, and brought the kingdom to the brink of destruction. Judah, being now in a more prosperous condition, is represented as able to receive and to protect the fugitive Moabites. And with those former times of distress the security and flourishing state of the kingdom under the government of Hezekiah is contrasted.

Verse 5. *In mercy shall the throne be established*— May not this refer to the throne of Hezekiah? Here we have the character of such a king as cannot fail to be a blessing to the people. 1. “He sitteth on the throne in truth”—He does not merely profess to be the father and protector of his people: but he is actually such. 2. He is judging. He is not a man of war or blood, who wastes his subjects’ lives and treasures in contentions with neighboring nations, in order to satisfy his ambition by the extension of his territory. On the contrary, his whole life is occupied in the distribution of justice. 3. He seeketh judgment. He seeks out the poor distressed ones who cannot make their way to him, and avenges them on their oppressors. 4. He hastens righteousness. He does not suffer any of the courts of

justice to delay the determination of the causes brought before them: he so orders that the point in litigation be fairly, fully, and speedily heard; and then judgment pronounced. Delays in the execution of justice answer little end but the enriching of unprincipled lawyers.

Verse 6. *We have heard of the pride of Moab* “*We have heard the pride of hIoab*”— For **נא** ge, read **נא** geah; two MSS., one ancient, and Jeremiah 48:29. Zephaniah, chap. 2:8-10, in his prophecy against Moab, the subject of which is the same with that of Jeremiah in his forty-eighth chapter, (see the note on chap. 15:1,) enlarges much on the pride of Moab, and their insolent behavior towards the Jews:—

*“I have heard the reproach of Moab;
And the revilings of the sons of Ammon:
Who have reproached my people;
And have magnified themselves against their borders.
Therefore, as I live, saith JEHOVAH God of hosts, the God
of Israel:*

*Surely Moab shall be as Sodom,
And the sons of Ammon as Gomorrah:
A possession of nettles, and pits of salt,
And a desolation for ever.
The residue of my people shall spoil them,
And the remnant of my nation shall dispossess them:
This shall they have for their pride;
Because they have raised a reproach, and have magnified
themselves
Against the people of JEHOVAH God of hosts.”*

Verse 7. *For the foundations of Kir-hareseth* “*For the men of Kirhares.*”— A palpable mistake in this place is happily corrected by the parallel text of Jeremiah 48:31, where, instead of **אֲשֵׁי־שׁ** ashishey, foundations or flagons, nve read **אֲנָשִׁי** anshey, men. In the same place of Jeremiah, and in ver. 36, and here in ver. 11, the name of the city is Kirhares, not Kirhareseth.

Verse 8. *Languish* “*Are put to shame*”— Here the text of Jeremiah leaves us much at a loss, in a place that seems to be greatly corrupted. The

foreign countries.

הלמו halemu, knocked down, demolished; that is overpowered, intoxicated. The drunkards of Ephraim are called by the prophet, chap. 28:1, "הלומי יי" halumey yayin, drinkers of wine. See Schultens on Proverbs 23:25. Gratius, speaking of the Mareotic wine, says of it,

Pharios quae fregit noxia reges. CYNEG. 312.

Verse 9. With the weeping "As with the weeping"— For בביכי bibechi, a MS. reads בכי bechi. In Jeremiah 48:32, it is מבכי mibbechi. The Septuagint read כביכי kibeki, as with weeping, which I follow.

For thy summer fruits and for thy harvest is fallen "And upon thy vintage the destroyer hath fallen."— ועל קצירך הידד נפל veal ketsirech heidad naphal. In these few words there are two great mistakes, which the text of Jeremiah 18:32 rectifies. For קצירך ketsirech, it has בצירך betsirech; and for הידד heidad, שדד shoded; both which corrections the Chaldee in this place confirms. As to the first,

*"Hesebon and Eleale, and
The flowery dale of Sibmah, clad with vines,"*

were never celebrated for their harvests; it was the vintage that suffered by the irruption of the enemy; and so read the Septuagint and Syriac. הידד

shouting”— The Septuagint read **השבת** hisbeth, passive, and in the third person; rightly, for God is not the speaker in this place. The rendering of the Septuagint is **πεπαυται γαρ κελευσμα**, “the cry ceaseth;” which last word, necessary to the rendering of the Hebrew and to the sense, is supplied by MSS. Pachom. and 1:D. II., having been lost out of the other copies.

Verse 12. *When it is seen that Moab*, etc. “*When Moab shall see*,” etc.— For **נראה** nirah, a MS. reads **ראה** raah, and so the Syriac and Chaldee. “Perhaps **כי נראה** ki nirah is only a various reading of **כי נלאה** ki nilah.” SECKER. A very probable conjecture.

Verse 14. *Within three years*— **בשלש** beshal ish **כשלש** keshalish, according, or in or about three years, is the reading of nine of Kennicott’s and De Rossi’s MSS., and two ancient editions.

But the present reading may well stand: “Now, the Lord hath spoken, saying, Within three years, as the years of a hireling.” It seems as if this prophecy had been delivered before, without any time specified for its fulfillment; but now the time is determined” in three years, as the years of a hireling”—for, as a hireling counts even to a single day, and will not abide with his employer an hour beyond the time agreed on; so, in three years, even to a day, from the delivery of this prophecy, shall destruction come upon Moab. This is the import of the present text; but if we take **כשלש** keshalish, AS in three years, or in about three years’ time, the prophecy is not so definite.

These three years, says Calmet, are mentioned from the death of Ahaz, see chap. 14:28, and end the third year of Hezekiah, three years before the taking of Samaria by Shalmaneser. This conquerer did not ruin Moab so completely as not to leave a man in the land; the final desolation of Moab was reserved for Nebuchadnezzar, five years after the taking of Jerusalem.

Feeble “And without strength.”— An ancient MS., with the Septuagint, reads **ולא** velo, “and not.”

CHAPTER 17

Judgments of God upon Damascus, 1-3; and upon Israel, 4-6. Good effects of these judgments on the small remnant or gleaning that should escape them, 7, 8. The same judgments represented in other but stronger terms, and imputed to irreligion and neglect of God, 9-11. The remaining verses are a distinct prophecy, a beautiful detached piece, worked up with the greatest elegance, sublimity, and propriety; and forming a noble description of the formidable invasion and sudden overthrow of Sennacherib, exactly suitable to the event, 12-14.

This prophecy by its title should relate only to Damascus; but it full as much concerns, and more largely treats of, the kingdom of Samaria and the Israelites, confederated with Damascus and the Syrians against the kingdom of Judah. It was delivered probably soon after the prophecies of the seventh and eighth chapters, in the beginning of the reign of Ahaz; and was fulfilled by Tiglath-pileser's taking Damascus, and carrying the people captives to Kir, (2 Kings 16:9,) and overrunning great part of the kingdom of Israel, and carrying a great number of the Israelites also captives to Assyria; and still more fully in regard to Israel, by the conquest of the kingdom, and the captivity of the people, effected a few years after by Shalmaneser. — L.

NOTES ON CHAP. 17

Verse 1. *The burden of Damascus.*— Which is, according to the common version, The cities of Aroer are forsaken. It has already been observed by the learned prelate that the prophecy, as it relates to Damascus, was executed in the beginning of the reign of Ahaz, probably about the third year. If we credit Midrash, the Damascenes were the most extensive and flagrant of all idolaters. “There were in Damascus three hundred and sixty-five streets, in each of these was an idol, and each idol had his peculiar day of worship; so that the whole were worshipped in the course

of the year.” This, or any thing like this, was a sufficient reason for this city’s destruction.

A ruinous heap— For **מעי** mei, “a ruinous heap,” the Septuagint reads **לעי** lei, “for a ruin,” the Vulgate **כעי** kei, “as a ruin.” I follow the former.

Verse 2. The cities of Aroer are forsaken “*The cities are deserted for ever*”— What has Aroer on the river Arnon to do with Damascus? and if there be another Aroer on the northern border of the tribe of Gad, as Reland seems to think there might be, this is not much more to the purpose. Besides, the cities of Aroer, if Aroer itself is a city, makes no good sense. The Septuagint, for **ערהר** aroer, read **עדי עד** adey ad, **εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα**, for ever, or for a long duration. The Chaldee takes the word for a verb from **ערה** arah, translating it **חרבו** cherebu, devastabuntur, “they shall be wasted.” The Syriac read **עדועיר** adoeir. So that the reading is very doubtful. I follow the Septuagint as making the plainest sense.

Verse 3. The remnant of Syria “*The pride of Syria.*”— For **שאר** shear, “remnant,” Houbigant reads **שא** seeth, “pride,” answering, as the sentence seems evidently to require, to **כבוד** cabod, “the glory of Israel.” The conjecture is so very probable that I venture to follow it.

As the glory— **בכבוד** bichbod, “IN the glory,” is the reading of eight MSS., and ten editions.

Verse 4. In that day— That is, says Kimchi, the time when the ten tribes of Israel, which were the glory of Jacob, should be carried into captivity.

Verse 6. Is when the harvestman gathereth “*As when one gathereth*”— That is, the king of Assyria shall sweep away the whole body of the people, as the reaper strippeth off the whole crop of corn; and the remnant shall be no more in proportion than the scattered ears left to the gleaner. The valley of Rephaim near Jerusalem was celebrated for its plentiful harvest; it is here used poetically for any fruitful country. One MS., and one ancient edition, has **באסף** beesoph, “IN gathering,” instead

of **כאסף** keesoph, “AS the gathering.”

Verse 8. *The altars, the work of his hands* “*The altars dedicated to the work of his hands*”— The construction of the words, and the meaning of the sentence, in this place are not obvious; all the ancient Versions, and most of the modern, have mistaken it. The word **מעשה** maeseh, “the work,” stands in regimine with **מזבחות** mizbechoth, “altars,” not in opposition to it; it means the, altars of the work of their hand; that is of the idols, which are the work of their hands. Thus Kimchi has explained it, and Le Clerc has followed him.

Verse 9. *As a forsaken bough, and an uppermost branch* “*the Hivites and the Amorites*”— **החרש והאמיר** hachoresh vechaamir. No one has ever yet been able to make any tolerable sense of these words. The translation of the Septuagint has happily preserved what seems to be the true reading of the text, as it stood in the copies of their time; though the words are now transposed, either in the text or in their Version; **οι αμαρρατοι και οι ευατοι**, “the Amorites and the Hivites.” It is remarkable that many commentators, who never thought of admitting the reading of the Septuagint, understand the passage as referring to that very event which their Version expresses; so that it is plain that nothing can be more suitable to the context. “My father,” says Bishop Lowth, “saw the necessity of admitting this variation at a time when it was not usual to make so free with the Hebrew text.” Mr. Parkhurst is not satisfied with the prelate’s adoption of the reading of the Septuagint, “the Hivites and the Amorites.” He thinks the difficult words should be thus rendered; he takes the whole verse: “And his fortified cities shall be like the leaving, or what is left **כעזובת** caazubath, of or in a ploughed field, **החרש** hachoresh, or on a branch which they leave coram, before, the children of Israel.” Which he considers a plain reference to the Mosaic laws relative to the not gleaning of their ploughed fields, vineyards, and oliveyards, but leaving **עזב** ozeb, somewhat of the fruits, for the poor of the land; Leviticus 9:9, 10; Deuteronomy 24:19-21, in the Hebrew. I fear that the text is taken by storm on both interpretations. One MS. has **כל ערי** col arey, “all the cities;” and instead of **החלש** hachalash, “of the branch,” six MSS. have **החדש** hachodesh, “of the month.” But this is probably a

mistake.

Verse 10. *Strange slips* “*Shoots from a foreign soil.*”— The pleasant plants, and shoots from a foreign soil, are allegorical expressions for strange and idolatrous worship; vicious and abominable practices connected with it; reliance on human aid, and on alliances entered into with the neighboring nations, especially Egypt; to all which the Israelites were greatly addicted, and in their expectations from which they should be grievously disappointed.

Verse 12. *Wo to the multitude*— The three last verses of this chapter seem to have no relation to the foregoing prophecy, to which they are joined. It is a beautiful piece, standing singly and by itself; for neither has it any connection with what follows: whether it stands in its right place, or not, I cannot say. It is a noble description of the formidable invasion and the sudden overthrow of Sennacherib; which is intimated in the strongest terms and the most expressive images, exactly suitable to the event.

Like the rushing of mighty waters!— Five words, three at the end of the twelfth verse, and two at the beginning of the thirteenth, are omitted in eight MSS., with the Syriac; that is, in effect, the repetition contained in the first line of ver. 13 in this translation, is not made. After having observed that it is equally easy to account for the omission of these words by a transcriber if they are genuine, or their insertion if they are not genuine, occasioned by his carrying his eye backwards to the word **לאמים** leammim, or forwards to **שאו** yeshao, I shall leave it to the reader’s judgment to determine whether they are genuine or not. Instead of **כהמות** cahamoth, “as the roaring,” five MSS. and the Vulgate have **כהמו** kehamon, “as the multitude.”

Verse 14. *He is not* “*He is no more.*”— For **אֵיננו** einennu ten MSS. of Dr. Kennicott’s, (three ancient,) ten of De Rossi’s, and two editions, and the Septuagint, Syriac, Chaldee, Vulgate, and Arabic, have **ואֵיננו** veeineno. This particle, authenticated by so many good vouchers, restores the sentence to its true poetical form, implying a repetition of some part of the parallel line preceding, thus:—

***“At the season of evening, behold terror!
Before the morning, and [behold] he is no more!”***

That spoil us— For שוסינו shoseynu, them that spoil us, fifteen MSS., one edition, and the Syriac have שוסנו shosenu, him that spoileth us. And for לבוזינו lebozezeynu, them that rob us, six MSS. and the Syriac have לבוזנו lebozzeno, him that robbeth us: and these readings make the place answer better to Sennacherib, according to Lowth’s conjecture. Though God may permit the wicked to prevail for a time against his people, yet in the end those shall be overthrown, and the glory of the Lord shall shine brightly on them that fear him; for the earth shall be subdued, and the universe filled with his glory. Amen, and Amen!

CHAPTER 18

This chapter contains a very obscure prophecy; possibly designed to give the Jews, and perhaps the Egyptians, whose country is supposed to be meant, 1, 2, and with whom many Jews resided, an indignation of God's interposition in favor of Sion, 3, 4; and of his counsels in regard to the destruction of their common enemy, Sennacherib, whose vast army, just as he thought his projects ripe, and ready to be crowned with success, 5, should become a prey to the beasts of the field, and to the fowls of heaven, 6; and that Egypt should be grateful to God for the deliverance vouchsafed her, 7.

This is one of the most obscure prophecies in the whole Book of Isaiah. The subject of it, the end and design of it, the people to whom it is addressed, the history to which it belongs, the person who sends the messengers, and the nation to whom the messengers are sent, are all obscure and doubtful. — L.

NOTES ON CHAP. 18

Verse 1. *Wo to the land*—**הוי ארץ** hoi arets! This interjection should be translated ho! for it is properly a particle of calling: Ho, land! Attend! Give ear!

Shadowing with wings “***The winged cymbal***—**צלצל כנפים** tsiltsal kenaphayim. I adopt this as the most probable of the many interpretations that have been given of these words. It is Bochart's: see Phaleg, 4:2. The Egyptian sistrum is expressed by a periphrasis; the Hebrews had no name for it in their language, not having in use the instrument itself. The cymbal they had was an instrument in its use and sound not much unlike the sistrum; and to distinguish it from the sistrum, they called it the cymbal with wings. The cymbal was a round hollow piece of metal, which, being struck against another, gave a ringing sound: the sistrum was a round

instrument, consisting of a broad rim of metal, through which from side to side ran several loose laminae or small rods of metal, which being shaken, gave a like sound. These, projecting on each side, had somewhat the appearance of wings; or might be very properly expressed by the same word which the Hebrews used for wings, or for the extremity, or a part of any thing projecting. The sistrum is given in a medal of Adrian, as the proper attribute of Egypt. See Addison on Medals, Series 3:No. 4; where the figure of it may be seen. The frame of the sistrum was in shape rather like the ancient lyre; it was not round.

If we translate shadowing with wings, it may allude to the multitude of its vessels, whose sails may be represented under the notion of wings. The second verse seems to support this interpretation. Vessels of bulrushes, **גומא** gome, or rather the flag papyrus, so much celebrated as the substance on which people wrote in ancient times, and from which our paper is denominated. The sails might have been made of this flag: but whole canoes were constructed from it. Mat sails are used to the present day in China. The Vulgate fully understood the meaning of the word, and has accordingly translated, in vasis papyri, “in vessels of papyrus.” Reshi vesselis. — Old Ms. Bib. This interpretation does not please Bp. Lowth, and for his dissent he gives the following reasons:—

In opposition to other interpretations of these words which have prevailed, it may be briefly observed that **צלצל** tsiltzel is never used to signify shadow, nor is **כנף** canaph applied to the sails of ships. If, therefore, the words are rightly interpreted the winged cymbal, meaning the sistrum, Egypt must be the country to which the prophecy is addressed. And upon this hypothesis the version and explanation must proceed. I farther suppose, that the prophecy was delivered before Sennacherib’s return from his Egyptian expedition, which took up three years; and that it was designed to give to the Jews, and perhaps likewise to the Egyptians, an intimation of God’s counsels in regard to the destruction of their great and powerful enemy.

Which is beyond the rivers of Ethiopia “Which borders on the rivers of Cush”— What are the rivers of Cush? whether the eastern branches of the

lower Nile, the boundary of Egypt towards Arabia, or the parts of the upper Nile towards Ethiopia, it is not easy to determine. The word מעבר meeber signifies either on this side or on the farther side: I have made use of the same kind of ambiguous expression in the translation.

Verse 2. *In vessels of bulrushes* “*In vessels of papyrus*”— This circumstance agrees perfectly well with Egypt. It is well known that the Egyptians commonly used on the Nile a light sort of ships, or boats, made of the reed papyrus. *Ex ipso quidem papyro navigia texunt.* PLINY, 42:11.

Conseritur bibula Memphitis cymba papyro.
LUCAN, 4:136.

Go, ye swift messengers— To this nation before mentioned, who, by the Nile, and by their numerous canals, have the means of spreading the report in the most expeditious manner through the whole country: go, ye swift messengers, and carry this notice of God’s designs in regard to them. By the swift messengers are meant, not any particular persons specially appointed to this office, but any of the usual conveyers of news whatsoever, travelers, merchants, and the like, the instruments and agents of common fame. These are ordered to publish this declaration made by the prophet throughout Egypt, and to all the world; and to excite their attention to the promised visible interposition of God.

***Scattered* “*Stretched out in length*”**— Egypt, that is, the fruitful part, exclusive of the deserts on each side, is one long vale, through the middle of which runs the Nile, bounded on each side to the east and west by a chain of mountains seven hundred and fifty miles in length; in breadth from one to two or three days’ journey: even at the widest part of the Delta, from Pelusium to Alexandria, not above two hundred and fifty miles broad. Egmont and Hayman, and Poccocke.

***Peeled* “*Smoothed*”**— Either relating to the practice of the Egyptian priests, who made their bodies smooth by shaving off their hair, (see Herod. 2:37;) or rather to their country’s being made smooth, perfectly plain and level, by the overflowing of the Nile.

Meted out “Meted out by line”— It is generally referred to the frequent necessity of having recourse to mensuration in Egypt, in order to determine the boundaries after the inundations of the Nile; to which even the origin of the science of geometry is by some ascribed. Strabo, lib. 17:sub init.

Trodden down— Supposed to allude to a peculiar method of tillage in use among the Egyptians. Both Herodotus, (lib. ii.,) and Diodorus, (lib. i.,) say that when the Nile had retired within its banks, and the ground became somewhat dry, they sowed their land, and then sent in their cattle, (their hogs, says the former,) to tread in the seed; and without any farther care expected the harvest.

The rivers have spoiled “The rivers have nourished”— The word **בָּזָא** bazeu is generally taken to be an irregular form for **בָּזְזוּ** bazezu, “have spoiled,” as four MSS. have it in this place; and so most of the Versions, both ancient and modern, understand it. On which Schultens, Gram. Hebrews p. 491, has the following re; mark:”Ne minimam quidem speciem veri habet **בָּזָא** bazau, Esai. 18:2, elatum pro **בָּזְזוּ** bazazu, deripiunt. Haec esset anomalia, cui nihil simile in toto linguae ambitu. In talibus nil finire, vel fateri ex mera agi conjectura, tutius justiusque. Radicem **בָּזָא** baza olim extare potuisse, quis neget? Si cognatum quid sectandum erat, ad **בָּזָה** bazah, contempsit, potius decurrendum fuisset; ut **בָּזָא** bazeu, pro **בָּזוּ** bazu, sit enuntiatum, vel **בָּזִיב** baziv. Digna phrasis, flumina contemunt terram, i.e., inundant.” “**בָּזָא** baza, Arab. extulit se superbius, item subjecit sibi: unde praet. pl. **בָּזָא** bazeu, subjecerunt sibi, i.e., inundarunt.”-Simonis’ Lexic. Heb.

A learned friend has suggested to me another explanation of the word. **בָּזָא** baza, Syr., and **בֵּיזָא** beiza, Chald., signifies uber, “a dug,” mamma, “a breast;” agreeably to which the verb signifies to nourish. This would perfectly well suit with the Nile: whereas nothing can be more discordant than the idea of spoiling and plundering; for to the inundation of the Nile Egypt owed every thing; the fertility of the soil, and the very soil itself. Besides, the overflowing of the Nile came on by gentle degrees, covering with out laying waste the country: “Mira aeque natura fluminis, quod cum

caeteri omnes abluant terras et eviscerent, Nilus tanto caeteris major adeo nihil exedit, nec abradit, ut contra adjiciat vires; minimumque in eo sit, quod solum temperet. Illato enim limo arenas saturat ac jungit; debetque illi Aegyptus non tantum fertilitatem terrarum, sed ipsas. — Seneca, Nat. Quaest., 4:2. I take the liberty, therefore, which Schultens seems to think allowable in this place, of hazarding a conjectural interpretation. It is a fact that the Ganges changes its course, and overruns and lays barren whole districts, from which it was a few years back several miles distant. Such changes do not nourish but spoil the ground.

Verse 3. *When he lifteth up an ensign* “*When the standard is lifted up*”— I take God to be the Agent in this verse; and that by the standard and the trumpet are meant the meteors, the thunder, the lightning, the storm, earthquake, and tempest, by which Sennacherib’s army shall be destroyed, or by which at least the destruction of it shall be accompanied; as it is described in chap. 10:16, 17; 29:6, and 30:30, 31. See also Psalm 76., and the title of it, according to the Septuagint, Vulgate and Aethiopic. They are called, by a bold metaphor, the standard lifted up, and the trumpet sounded. The latter is used by Homer, I think with great force, in his introduction to the battle of the gods; though I find it has disgusted some of the minor critics:—

βραχε δ’ ευρεια χθων,
αμφι δε σαλπιγζεν μεγας ουρανος.

II. 21:388.

*“Heaven in loud thunders bids the trumpet sound,
And wide beneath them groans the rending ground.”*

Pope

Verse 4. *For so the Lord said unto me* “*For thus hath JEHOVAH said unto me*”— The subject of the remaining part of this chapter is, that God would comfort and support his own people, though threatened with immediate destruction by the Assyrians; that Sennacherib’s great designs and mighty efforts against them should be frustrated; and that his vast expectations

should be rendered abortive, when he thought them mature, and just ready to be crowned with success; that the chief part of his army should be made a prey for the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air, (for this is the meaning of the allegory continued through the fifth and sixth verses;) and that Egypt, being delivered from his oppression, and avenged by the hand of God of the wrongs which she had suffered, should return thanks for the wonderful deliverance, both of herself and of the Jews, from this most powerful adversary.

Like a clear heat “*Like the clear heat*”— The same images are employed by an Arabian poet:—

*Solis more fervens, dum frigus; quumque ardet
Sirius, tum vero frigus ipse et umbra.*

Which is illustrated in the note by a like passage from another Arabian poet:—

Calor est hyeme, refrigerium aestate.

Excerpta ex Hamasa; published by Schultens, at the end of Erpenius’s Arabic Grammar, p. 425.

Upon herbs “*After rain*”— “אור” aur here signifies rain, according to what is said Job 36:11: ‘The cloud scatters his rain.’ -Kimchi. In which place of Job the Chaldee paraphrast does indeed explain אורו auro by מטריה matereyh; and so again ver. 21 and chap. 36:30. This meaning of the word seems to make the best sense in this place; it is to be wished that it were better supported.

In the heat of harvest “*In the day of harvest.*”— For כחם bechom, in the heat, fourteen MSS., (several ancient,) the Septuagint, Syriac, Arabic, and Vulgate read כיום beyom, in the day. The mistake seems to have arisen from כחם kechom in the line above.

Verse 5. *The flower* “*The blossom*”— Hebrews her blossom; נצה

nitstah, that is, the blossom of the vine, גֶּפֶן gephen, vine, understood, which is of the common gender. See Genesis 40:10. Note, that by the defective punctuation of this word, many interpreters, and our translators among the rest, have been led into a grievous mistake, (for how can the swelling grape become a blossom?) taking the word נִצְחָה nitstah for the predicate; whereas it is the subject of the proposition, or the nominative case to the verb.

Verse 7. *The present “A gift”*— The Egyptians were in alliance with the kingdom of Judah, and were fellow-sufferers with the Jews under the invasion of their common enemy Sennacherib; and so were very nearly interested in the great and miraculous deliverance of that kingdom, by the destruction of the Assyrian army. Upon which wonderful event it is said, 2 Chronicles 32:23, that “many brought gifts unto Jehovah to Jerusalem, and presents to Hezekiah king of Judah; so that he was magnified of all nations from henceforth. “ It is not to be doubted, that among these the Egyptians distinguished themselves in their acknowledgments on this occasion.

Of a people “From a people”— Instead of אֶם awn, a people, the Septuagint and Vulgate read מֵעַם meam, from a people, which is confirmed by the repetition of it in the next line. The difference is of importance; for if this be the true reading, the prediction of the admission of Egypt into the true Church of God is not so explicit as it might otherwise seem to be. However, that event is clearly foretold at the end of the next chapter. — L.

CHAPTER 19

Prophecy concerning Egypt, in which her lamentable condition under the Babylonians, Persians, etc., Is forcibly pointed out, 1-17. The true religion shall be propagated in Egypt; referring primarily to the great spread of Judaism in that country in the reign of the Ptolemies, and ultimately to its reception of the Gospel in the latter days, 18-22. Profound peace between Egypt, Assyria, and Israel, and their blessed condition under the Gospel, 23-25.

Not many years after the destruction of Sennacherib's army before Jerusalem, by which the Egyptians were freed from the yoke with which they were threatened by so powerful an enemy, who had carried on a successful war of three years' continuance against them; the affairs of Egypt were again thrown into confusion by intestine broils among themselves, which ended in a perfect anarchy, that lasted some few years. This was followed by an aristocracy, or rather tyranny, of twelve princes, who divided the country between them, and at last by the sole dominion of Psammitichus, which he held for fifty-four years. Not long after that followed the invasion and conquest of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar, and then by the Persians under Cambyses, the son of Cyrus. The yoke of the Persians was so grievous, that the conquest of the Persians by Alexander may well be considered as a deliverance to Egypt; especially as he and his successors greatly favored the people and improved the country. To all these events the prophet seems to have had a view in this chapter; and in particular, from ver. 18, the prophecy of the propagation of the true religion in Egypt seems to point to the flourishing state of Judaism in that country, in consequence of the great favor shown to the Jews by the Ptolemies. Alexander himself settled a great many Jews in his new city Alexandria, granting them privileges equal to those of the Macedonians. The first Ptolemy, called Soter, carried great numbers of them thither, and gave them such encouragement that still more of them were collected there from different parts; so that Philo reckons that in his time there were a million of Jews in that country. These worshipped the God of their

fathers; and their example and influence must have had a great effect in spreading the knowledge and worship of the true God through the whole country. See Bp. Newton on the Prophecies, Dissert. xii.

NOTES ON CHAP. 19

Verse 1. *The burden of Egypt.*— That is, the prophet's declaration concerning Egypt.

Verse 3. *They shall seek to the idols, and to the charmers, and to them that have familiar spirits, and to the wizards.*— And thei schul asken their symulacres, and their debynouris, and their devyl clepers, and their devyl sacristers. — Old Bible. The import of the original words has already been given where they occur in the Pentateuch. See Deuteronomy 18:10, etc.

Verse 4. *A cruel lord "Cruel lords"*— Nebuchadnezzar in the first place, and afterwards the whole succession of Persian kings, who in general were hard masters, and grievously oppressed the country. Note, that for קשה kasheh, lord, a MS. reads קשימ kashim, lords, agreeable to which is the rendering of the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate.

Verse 5. *The river shall be wasted and dried up.*— The Nile shall not overflow its banks; and if no inundation, the land must become barren. For, as there is little or no rain in Egypt, its fertility depends on the overflowing of the Nile.

Verse 6. *Shall turn the rivers far away "Shall become putrid"*— האזניחו heeznichu. This sense of the word, which Simonis gives in his Lexicon, from the meaning of it in Arabic, suits the place much better than any other interpretation hitherto given; and that the word in Hebrew had some such signification, is probable from 2 Chronicles 29:19, where the Vulgate renders it by pollut, polluted, and the Targum, by profaned, and made abominable, which the context in that place seems plainly to require. The form of the verb here is very irregular; and the rabbins and grammarians seem to give no probable account of it.

Verse 8. *The fishers also* “*And the fishers*”— There was great plenty of fish in Egypt; see Numbers 11:5. “The Nile, “says Diodorus, lib. i., “abounds with incredible numbers of all sorts of fish. “ And much more the lakes. So Egmont, Pococke, etc.

Verse 9. *They that work in fine flax*— פִּשְׁתִּים שְׂרִיקוֹת pishtim sericoth, heckled flax, i.e., flax dressed on the heckle, or comb used for that purpose. The Vulgate uses the word pectentes, combing.

They that weave networks shall be confounded-And confoundeden schul ben that wrogten flax, plattinge and webynge sotel thingis. — Old MS. Bible.

Verse 10. *And they shall be broken*, etc. “*Her stores*”— שְׂתֵיחָה shathotheyha, ἀποθηκῆαι, granaries. — Aquila.

***All that make sluices and ponds for fish* “*All that make a gain of pools for fish.*”—** This obscure line is rendered by different interpreters in very different manners. Kimchi explains אַגְמֵי agmey as if it were the same with אַגְמָה agemah, from Job 30:25, in which he is followed by some of the rabbins, and supported by the Septuagint: and שֶׁחַר secher, which I translate gain, and which some take for nets or enclosures, the Septuagint render by ζυθον, strong drink or beer, which it is well known was much used in Egypt; and so likewise the Syriac, retaining the Hebrew word שֶׁכַר sekra. I submit these very different interpretations to the reader’s judgment. The Version of the Septuagint is as follows: **καὶ πάντες οἱ ποιοῦντες τὸν ζυθὸν λυπηθήσονται, καὶ τὰς ψυχὰς πονεσοῦσι** “And all they that make barley wine shall mourn, and be grieved in soul.”

Verse 11. *The counsel of the wise counselors of Pharaoh is become brutish* “*Have counseled a brutish counsel*”— The sentence as it now stands in the Hebrew, is imperfect: it wants the verb. Archbishop Secker conjectures that the words יוֹעֲצֵי פַרְעֹה yoatsey pharoh should be transposed; which would in some degree remove the difficulty. But it is to be observed, that the translator of the Vulgate seems to have found in his copy the verb יַעֲצוּ yaatsu added after פַרְעֹה pharoh: Sapientes

consiliarii Pharaonis dederunt consilium insipiens, “The wise counsellors of Pharaoh gave unwise counsel. “ This is probably the true reading: it is perfectly agreeable to the Hebrew idiom, makes the construction of the sentence clear, and renders the transposition of the words above mentioned unnecessary. — L.

Verse 12. “*Let them come*” — Here too a word seems to have been left out of the text. After **חֹכְמַיְכָא** chochameycha, thy wise men, two MSS., one ancient, add **יָבֹאוּ** yibu, let them come; which, if we consider the form and construction of the sentence, has very much the appearance of being genuine: otherwise the connective conjunction at the beginning of the next member is not only superfluous but embarrassing. See also the Version of the Septuagint, in which the same deficiency is manifest.

Let them tell thee now “*And let them declare*” — For **יִדְעוּ** yidu, let them know, perhaps we ought to read **יִדְעִיאוּ** yodiu, let them make known. — Secker. The Septuagint and Vulgate favor this reading, **εἰπατωισαυ**, let them declare.

Verse 13. *Are deceived* “*They have caused*, “etc.— The text has **וְהִתְעוּ** vehithu, AND they have caused to err. Fifty of Kennicott’s MSS., fifty-three of De Rossi’s, and one of my own, ancient, thirty-two editions, and the Vulgate and Chaldee. omit the **ו** vau, and.

Stay “*Pillars*” — **פִּנְתָּי** pinnath, to be pointed as plural pinnoth, without doubt. So Grotius, and so the Chaldee.

Verse 14. *In the midst thereof* — **בְּקִרְבָּם** bekirbam; so the Septuagint, and perhaps more correctly.” — Secker. So likewise the Chaldee.

Verse 15. *The head or tail, branch or rush* — R. D. Kimchi says, there are some who suppose that these words mean the dragon’s head and tail; and refer to all those who are conversant in astronomy, astrology, etc.

Verse 16. *Shall Egypt be* “*The Egyptians shall be*” — **יִהְיוּ** yihyu, they shall be, plural, MS. Bodl. Septuagint, and Chaldee. This is not proposed

as an emendation, for either form is proper.

Verse 17. *And the land of Judah*— The threatening hand of God will be held out and shaken over Egypt, from the side of Judea; through which the Assyrians will march to invade it. It signifies that kind of terror that drives one to his wit's end, that causes him to reel like a drunken man, to be giddy through astonishment. Such is the import of **חג חג** chag, and **חגה** chagah. Five MSS. and two editions have **לחגה** lechagah.

Verse 18. *The city of destruction "The city of the sun"*— **עיר החרם** ir hacheres. This passage is attended with much difficulty and obscurity. First, in regard to the true reading. It is well known that Onias applied it to his own views, either to procure from the king of Egypt permission to build his temple in the Hieropolitan Nome, or to gain credit and authority to it when built; from the notion which he industriously propagated, that Isaiah had in this place prophesied of the building of such a temple. He pretended that the very place where it should be built was expressly named by the prophet, **עיר החרם** ir hacheres, the city of the sun. This possibly may have been the original reading. The present text has **ההחרם** ir or haheres, the city of destruction; which some suppose to have been introduced into the text by the Jews of Palestine afterwards, to express their detestation of the place, being much offended with this schismatical temple in Egypt. Some think the latter to have been the true reading, and that the prophet himself gave this turn to the name out of contempt, and to intimate the demolition of this Hieropolitan temple; which in effect was destroyed by Vespasian's orders, after that of Jerusalem, "Videtur propheta consulto scripsisse **הרם** heres, pro **חרם** cheres, ut alibi scribitur **בית או** beith aven pro **בית אל** beith El: **איש בשת** ish bosheth pro **באל** ish baal, etc. Vide Lowth in loc." —Secker. "It seems that the prophet designedly wrote **הרם** heres, destruction, for **חרם** cheres, the sun: as elsewhere **בית או** beith aven, the house of iniquity, is written for **בית אל** beith El, the house of God; **איש בשת** ish bosheth for **איש באל** ish baal, "etc. But on the supposition that **עיר החרם** air hacheres is the true reading, others understand it differently. The word **הרם** heres in Arabic signifies a lion; and Conrad Ikenius has written a dissertation

(Dissert. Philol. Theol. XVI.) to prove that the place here mentioned is not Heliopolis, as it is commonly supposed to be, but Leontopolis in the Heliopolitan Nome, as it is indeed called in the letter, whether real or pretended, of Onias to Ptolemy, which Josephus has inserted in his Jewish Antiquities, lib. 13:c. 3. And I find that several persons of great learning and judgment think that Ikenius has proved the point beyond contradiction. See Christian. Muller. Saturæ Observ. Philolog. Michaelis Bibliothecæ Oriental, Part v., p. 171. But, after all, I believe that neither Onias, Heliopolis, nor Leontopolis has any thing to do with this subject. The application of this place of Isaiah to Onias's purpose seems to have been a mere invention, and in consequence of it there may perhaps have been some unfair management to accommodate the text to that purpose; which has been carried even farther than the Hebrew text; for the Greek version has here been either translated from a corrupted text, or wilfully mistranslated or corrupted, to serve the same cause. The place is there called *πολις ασεδεκ*, the city of righteousness; a name apparently contrived by Onias's party to give credit to their temple, which was to rival that of Jerusalem. Upon the whole, the true reading of the Hebrew text in this place is very uncertain; fifteen MSS. and seven editions have *חרה* cheres, the city of Hacheres, or, of the sun. So likewise Symmachus, the Vulgate, Arabic, Septuagint, and Complutensian. On the other hand, Aquila, Theodotion, and the Syriac read *חרה* heres, destruction; the Chaldee paraphrase takes in both readings.

The reading of the text being so uncertain, no one can pretend to determine what the city was that is here mentioned by name; much less to determine what the four other cities were which the prophet does not name. I take the whole passage from the 18th verse to the end of the chapter, to contain a general intimation of the future propagation of the knowledge of the true God in Egypt and Syria, under the successors of Alexander; and, in consequence of this propagation, of the early reception of the Gospel in the same countries, when it should be published to the world. See more on this subject in Prideaux's Connect. An. 145; Dr. Owen's Inquiry into the present state of the Septuagint Version, p. 41; and Bryant's Observations on Ancient History, p. 124. — L.

Verse 19. *An altar to the Lord*— צבאות tsebaoth, “of hosts, “or Yehovah tsebaoth, is added by eight MSS. of good repute, and the Syriac Version.

Verse 23. *Shall there be a highway*— Under the latter kings of Persia, and under Alexander, Egypt, Judea, and Assyria lived peaceably under the same government, and were on such friendly terms that there was a regular, uninterrupted intercourse between them, so that the Assyrian came into Egypt and the Egyptian into Assyria, and Israel became the third, i.e., was in strict union with the other two; and was a blessing to both, as affording them some knowledge of the true God, ver. 24.

Verse 25. *Blessed be Egypt-Assyria-and Israel*— All these countries shall be converted to the Lord. Concerning Egypt, it was said, chap. 18:7, that it should bring gifts to the Lord at Jerusalem. Here it is predicted, ver. 19, that there shall be an altar to the Lord in Egypt itself; and that they, with the Assyrians shall become the people of God with the Israelites. This remains partly to be fulfilled. These countries shall be all, and perhaps at no very distant time from this, converted to the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER 20

The Prophet Isaiah a sign to Egypt and Cush or Ethiopia, that the captives and exiles of these countries shall be indignantly treated by the king of Assyria, 1-6.

NOTES ON CHAP. 20

Tartan besieged Ashdod or Azotus, which probably belonged at this time to Hezekiah's dominions; see 2 Kings 18:8. The people expected to be relieved by the Cushites of Arabia and by the Egyptians. Isaiah was ordered to go uncovered, that is, without his upper garment, the rough mantle commonly worn by the prophets, (see Zechariah 13:4,) probably three days to show that within three years the town should be taken, after the defeat of the Cushites and Egyptians by the king of Assyria, which event should make their case desperate, and induce them to surrender. Azotus was a strong place; it afterwards held out twenty-nine years against Psammitichus, king of Egypt, Herod. 2:157. Tartan was one of Sennacherib's generals, 2 Kings 18:17, and Tirhakah, king of the Cushites, was in alliance with the king of Egypt against Sennacherib. These circumstances make it probable that by Sargon is meant Sennacherib. It might be one of the seven names by which Jerome, on this place, says he was called. He is called Sacherdonus and Sacherdan in the book of Tobit. The taking of Azotus must have happened before Sennacherib's attempt on Jerusalem; when he boasted of his late conquests, chap. 37:25. And the warning of the prophet had a principal respect to the Jews also, who were too much inclined to depend upon the assistance of Egypt. As to the rest history and chronology affording us no light, it may be impossible to clear either this or any other hypothesis, which takes Sargon to be Shalmaneser or Asarhaddon, etc., from all difficulties. — L. Kimchi says, this happened in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah.

Verse 2. *Walking naked and barefoot.*— It is not probable that the

prophet walked uncovered and barefoot for three years; his appearing in that manner was a sign that within three years the Egyptians and Cushites should be in the same condition, being conquered and made captives by the king of Assyria. The time was denoted as well as the event; but his appearing in that manner for three whole years could give no premonition of the time at all. It is probable, therefore, that the prophet was ordered to walk so for three days to denote the accomplishment of the event in three years; a day for a year, according to the prophetic rule, Numbers 14:34; Ezekiel 4:6. The words שלש ימים shalosh yamim, three days, may possibly have been lost out of the text, at the end of the second verse, after יחפ yacheph, barefoot; or after the same word in the third verse, where, in the Alexandrine and Vatican copies of the Septuagint, and in MSS. Pachom. and 1:D. 2: the words τρια ετη, three years, are twice expressed. Perhaps, instead of שלש ימים shalosh yamim, three days, the Greek translator might read שלש שנים shalosh shanim, three years, by his own mistake, or by that of his copy, after יחפ yacheph in the third verse, for which stands the first τρια ετη, three years, in the Alexandrine and Vatican Septuagint, and in the two MSS. above mentioned. It is most likely that Isaiah's walking naked and barefoot was done in a vision; as was probably that of the Prophet Hosea taking a wife of whoredoms. None of these things can well be taken literally.

From thy foot—רגליך ragleycha, thy feet, is the reading of thirty-four of Kennicott's and De Rossi's MSS., four ancient editions, with the Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate, and Arabic.

CHAPTER 21

Prediction of the taking of Babylon by the Medes and Persians at the time of a great festival, 1-9. Short application of the prophecy to the Jews, partly in the person of God, and partly in his own, 10. Obscure prophecy respecting Dumah, 11, 12. Prophecy concerning the Arabians to be fulfilled in a very short time after its delivery, 13-17.

The first ten verses of this chapter contain a prediction of the taking of Babylon by the Medes and Persians. It is a passage singular in its kind for its brevity and force, for the variety and rapidity of the movements, and for the strength and energy of coloring with which the action and event are painted. It opens with the prophet's seeing at a distance the dreadful storm that is gathering and ready to burst upon Babylon. The event is intimated in general terms, and God's orders are issued to the Persians and Medes to set forth upon the expedition which he has given them in charge. Upon this the prophet enters into the midst of the action; and in the person of Babylon expresses, in the strongest terms, the astonishment and horror that seizes her on the sudden surprise of the city at the very season dedicated to pleasure and festivity, ver. 3, 4. Then, in his own person, describes the situation of things there, the security of the Babylonians, and in the midst of their feasting the sudden alarm of war, ver. 5. The event is then declared in a very singular manner. God orders the prophet to set a watchman to look out, and to report what he sees; he sees two companies marching onward, representing by their appearance the two nations that were to execute God's orders, who declare that Babylon is fallen, ver. 6-9.

But what is this to the prophet, and to the Jews, the object of his ministry? The application, the end, and design of the prophecy are admirably given in a short, expressive address to the Jews, partly in the person of God, partly in that of the prophet: "O my threshing " "O my people, whom for your punishment I shall make subject to the Babylonians, to try and to prove you, and to separate the chaff from the corn, the bad from the good, among you; hear this for your consolation:

your punishment, your slavery, and oppression will have an end in the destruction of your oppressors.” —L.

NOTES ON CHAP. 21

Verse 1. *The desert of the sea*— This plainly means Babylon, which is the subject of the prophecy. The country about Babylon, and especially below it towards the sea, was a great flat morass, overflowed by the Euphrates and Tigris. It became habitable by being drained by the many canals that were made in it.

Herodotus, lib. 1:184, says that “Semiramis confined the Euphrates within its channel by raising great dams against it; for before it overflowed the whole country like a sea. “ And Abydenus, (quoting Megasthenes, apud Euseb. Praep. Evang. 9:41,) speaking of the building of Babylon by Nebuchadonosor, says, “it is reported that all this part was covered with water and was called the sea; and that Belus drew off the waters, conveying them into proper receptacles, and surrounded Babylon with a wall. “ When the Euphrates was turned out of its channel by Cyrus, it was suffered still to drown the neighboring country; and, the Persian government, which did not favor the place, taking no care to remedy this inconvenience, it became in time a great barren morassy desert, which event the title of the prophecy may perhaps intimate. Such it was originally; such it became after the taking of the city by Cyrus; and such it continues to this day.

As whirlwinds in the south “Like the southern tempests”— The most vehement storms to which Judea was subject came from the desert country to the south of it. “Out of the south cometh the whirlwind, “Job 37:9. “And there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, “Job 1:19. For the situation of Idumea, the country (as I suppose) of Job, see Lamentations 4:21 compared with Job 1:1, was the same in this respect with that of Judea:—

*“And JEHOVAH shall appear over them,
And his arrow shall go forth as the lightning;
And the Lord JEHOVAH shall sound the trumpet;
And shall march in the whirlwinds of the south.”*

Zechariah 9:14.

Verse 2. *The treacherous dealer dealeth treacherously, and the spoiler spoileth* “*The plunderer is plundered, and the destroyer is destroyed.*”—
הַשׁוֹדֵד וְהַשׁוֹדֵד שׁוֹדֵד הַבּוֹגֵד בּוֹגֵד הַבּוֹגֵד habbaged boged vehashshoded shoded. The MSS. vary in expressing or omitting the וּ vau, in these four words. Ten MSS. of Kennicott are without the וּ vau in the second word, and eight MSS. are without the וּ vau in the fourth word; which justifies Symmachus, who has rendered them passively: ο αθετων αθετειται και ο ταλαιπωριζων ταλαιπωρει. He read שׁוֹדֵד בּוֹגֵד שׁוֹדֵד bagud shadud. Cocceius (Lexicon in voce) observes that the Chaldee very often renders the verb בּוֹגֵד bagad, by בּוֹז bazaz, he spoiled; and in this place, and in 33:1, by the equivalent word אָנַס anas, to press, give trouble; and in chap. 24:16 both by אָנַס anas and בּוֹז bazaz; and the Syriac in this place renders it by טָלַם talam, he oppressed.

All the sighing thereof have I made to cease “*I have put an end to all her vexations*”—Hebrews “Her sighing; that is, the sighing caused by her. “So Kimchi on the place: “It means those who groaned through fear of him: for the suffixes of the nouns refer both to the agent and the patient. All those who groaned before the face of the king of Babylon he caused to rest; “Chald. And so likewise Ephrem Syr. in loc., edit. Assemani: “His groans, viz., the grief and tears which the Chaldeans occasioned through the rest of the nations.”

Verse 5. *Prepare the table* “*The table is prepared*”—In Hebrew the verbs are in the infinitive mood absolute, as in Ezekiel 1:14: “And the animals ran and returned, רָצוּא וְשׁוֹב ratso veshob, like the appearance of the lightning; “just as the Latins say, currere et reverti, for currebant et revertabantur. See chap. 33:11, and the note there.

Arise, ye princes, and anoint the shield.— Kimchi observes that several of the rabbins understood this of Belshazzar’s impious feast and death. The king of a people is termed the shield, because he is their defense. The command, Anoint the shield, is the same with Anoint a new king. Belshazzar being now suddenly slain, while they were all eating and drinking, he advises the princes, whose business it was, to make speed and anoint another in his stead.

Verse 7. And he saw a chariot, etc. “**And he saw a chariot with two riders; a rider on an ass, a rider on a camel**” — This passage is extremely obscure from the ambiguity of the term רכב recheb, which is used three times, and which signifies a chariot, or any other vehicle, or the rider in it; or a rider on a horse, or any other animal; or a company of chariots, or riders. The prophet may possibly mean a cavalry in two parts, with two sorts of riders; riders on asses or mules, and riders on camels; or led on by two riders, one on an ass, and one on a camel. However, so far it is pretty clear, that Darius and Cyrus, the Medes and the Persians, are intended to be distinguished by the two riders on the two sorts of cattle. It appears from Herodotus, 1:80, that the baggage of Cyrus’ army was carried on camels. In his engagement with Croesus, he took off the baggage from the camels, and mounted his horsemen upon them; the enemy’s horses, offended with the smell of the camels, turned back and fled. — L.

Verse 8. And he cried, A lion “**He that looked out on the watch**” — The present reading, אריה aryeh, a lion, is so unintelligible, and the mistake so obvious, that I make no doubt that the true reading is הרואה haroeh, the seer; as the Syriac translator manifestly found it in his copy, who renders it by דקוא duka, a watchman.

Verse 9. Here cometh a chariot of men, etc. “**A man, one of the two riders**” — So the Syriac understands it, and Ephrem Syr.

Verse 10. O my threshing — “O thou, the object upon which I shall exercise the severity of my discipline; that shalt lie under my afflicting hand, like corn spread upon the floor to be threshed out and winnowed, to

separate the chaff from the wheat! “The image of threshing is frequently used by the Hebrew poets, with great elegance and force, to express the punishment of the wicked and the trial of the good, or the utter dispersion and destruction of God’s enemies. Of the different ways of threshing in use among the Hebrews, and the manner of performing them, see the note on chap. 28:27.

Our translators have taken the liberty of using the word threshing in a passive sense, to express the object or matter that is threshed; in which I have followed them, not being able to express it more properly, without departing too much from the form and letter of the original. “Son of my floor, “Hebrews It is an idiom of the Hebrew language to call the effect, the object, the adjunct, any thing that belongs in almost any way to another, the son of it. “O my threshing. “The prophet abruptly breaks off the speech of God; and instead of continuing it in the form in which he had begun, and in the person of God, “This I declare unto you by my prophet, “he changes the form of address, and adds, in his own person, “This I declare unto you from God.”

Verse 11. *The burden of Dumah* “*The oracle concerning Dumah.*”—
 Pro דומה Dumah, Codex R. Meiri habet אדום Edom; and so the Septuagint, Vid. Kimchi ad h. 50:Biblia Michaelis, Halae, 1720, not. ad 50:See also De Rossi. Bishop Lowth translates the prophecy thus:—

11. THE ORACLE CONCERNING DUMAH.

A voice crieth to me from Seir:

Watchman, what from the night?

Watchman, what from the night?

12. *The watchman replieth:—*

The morning cometh, and also the night.

If ye will inquire, inquire ye: come again.

This differs very little from our common Version. One of Kennicott’s MSS., and one of my own, omit the repetition, “Watchman, what from the night?”

This prophecy, from the uncertainty of the occasion on which it was uttered, and from the brevity of the expression, is extremely obscure. The Edomites as well as the Jews were subdued by the Babylonians. They inquire of the prophet how long their subjection is to last: he intimates that the Jews should be delivered from their captivity; not so the Edomites. Thus far the interpretation seems to carry with it some degree of probability. What the meaning of the last line may be, I cannot pretend to divine. In this difficulty the Hebrew MSS. give no assistance. The MSS. of the Septuagint, and the fragments of the other Greek Versions, give some variations, but no light. This being the case, I thought it best to give an exact literal translation of the whole two verses, which may serve to enable the English reader to judge in some measure of the foundation of the various interpretations that have been given of them.

The burden of Dumah. — R. D. Kimchi says, “His father understood this of the destruction of Dumah (one of the cities of the Ishmaelites) by the inhabitants of Seir; and that they inquired of the prophet to know the particular time in which God had given them a commission against it. The prophet answered: The morning—the time of success to you, cometh, is just at hand; and the night—the time of utter destruction to the inhabitants of Dumah, is also ready.”

I have heard the words applied in the way of general exhortation. 1. Every minister of God is a watchman. He is continually watching for the safety and interests of his people, and looking for the counsel of God that he may be properly qualified to warn and to comfort. 2. Such are often called to denounce heavy judgments; they have the burden of the word of the Lord to denounce against the impenitent, the backslider, the lukewarm, and the careless. 3. When the watchman threatens judgments, some are awakened, and some mock: Watchman, what of the night? “What are the judgments thou threatenest, and when are they to take place?” 4. To this question, whether seriously or tauntingly proposed, the watchman answers: 1. The morning cometh—there is a time of repentance granted; a morning of God’s long-suffering kindness now appears: and also the night—the time in which God will no longer wait to be gracious, but will cut you off as cumberers of the ground. 2. But if you will inquire seriously how you are to escape God’s judgments, inquire ye. 3. There is still a door of hope; continue to

pray for mercy. 4. Return from your iniquities. 5. Come to God, through Christ, that ye may obtain salvation.

Verse 13. *The burden upon Arabia* “*The oracle concerning Arabia*”— This title is of doubtful authority. In the first place, because it is not in many of the MSS. of the Septuagint; it is in MSS. Pachom. and 1:D. 2. only, as far as I can find with certainty. Secondly, from the singularity of the phraseology; for מִשָּׂא massa is generally prefixed to its object without a preposition, as מִשָּׂא בָבֶל massa babel; and never but in this place with the preposition בֵּת beth. Besides, as the word בַּעֲרָב baarab occurs at the very beginning of the prophecy itself, the first word but one, it is much to be suspected that some one, taking it for a proper name and the object of the prophecy, might note it as such by the words מִשָּׂא בַּעֲרָב massa baarab written in the margin, which he might easily transfer to the text. The Septuagint did not take it for a proper name, but render it ἐν τῷ δρυμῷ ἑσπερας, “in the forest, in the evening, “and so the Chaldee, which I follow; for otherwise, the forest in Arabia is so indeterminate and vague a description, that in effect it means nothing at all. This observation might have been of good use in clearing up the foregoing very obscure prophecy, if any light had arisen from joining the two together by removing the separating title; but I see no connection between them. The Arabic Version has, “The prophecy concerning the Arabians, and the children of Chedar.”

This prophecy was to have been fulfilled within a year of the time of its delivery, see ver. 16; and it was probably delivered about the same time with the rest in this part of the book, that is, soon before or after the 14th of Hezekiah, the year of Sennacherib’s invasion. In his first march into Judea, or in his return from the Egyptian expedition, he might perhaps overrun these several clans of Arabians; their distress on some such occasion is the subject of this prophecy. — L.

Verse 14. *The land of Tema* “*The southern country*”— θάιμα, Sept.; Austri, Vulg. They read תֵּימָן teiman, which seems to be right; for probably the inhabitants of Tema might be involved in the same calamity with their brethren and neighbors of Kedar, and not in a condition to give them

assistance, and to relieve them, in their flight before the enemy, with bread and water. To bring forth bread and water is an instance of common humanity in such cases of distress; especially in those desert countries in which the common necessities of life, more particularly water, are not easily to be met with or procured. Moses forbids the Ammonite and Moabite to be admitted into the congregation of the Lord to the tenth generation. One reason which he gives for this reprobation is their omission of the common offices of humanity towards the Israelites; “because they met them not with bread and water in the way, when they came forth out of Egypt, “Deuteronomy 23:4.

Verse 17. *The archers, the mighty men of the children of Kedar* “*The mighty bowmen of the sons of Kedar*”— Sagittariorum fortium, Vulg.; transposing the two words, and reading גִּבּוֹרֵי קֶשֶׁת gibborey kesheth; which seems to be right. The strong men of the bow, the most excellent archers.

***For the Lord hath spoken it* “*For JEHOVAH hath spoken it.*”**— The prophetic Carmina of Marcius, foretelling the battle of Cannae, lib. 25:12, conclude with the same kind of solemn form: Nam mihi ita Jupiter fatus est; “Thus hath Jupiter spoken to me. “ Observe that the word נֶאֱמַר naam, to pronounce, to declare, is the solemn word appropriated to the delivering of prophecies: “Behold, I am against the prophets, saith (נֶאֱמַר naam, pronounceth) JEHOVAH, who use their tongues, וַיִּנְאֲמֵן נֶאֱמַר vaiyinuameum, and solemnly pronounce, He hath pronounced it; “ Jeremiah 23:31. What God says shall most assuredly come to pass; he cannot be deceived.

CHAPTER 22

Prophecy concerning Jerusalem, 1-14. Sentence against Shebna, who was over the household, 15-19. Prophecy concerning Eliakim, the son of Hilkiyah, 20, 21. From Eliakim, Isaiah, (agreeably to the mode universally adopted in the prophetic writings, of making the things then present, or which were shortly to be accomplished, types or representations of things to be fulfilled upon a larger scale in distant futurity,) makes a transition to the Messiah, of whom Eliakim was a type, to whom the words will best apply, and to whom some passages in the prophecy must be solely restrained, 20-24. The sentence against Shebna again confirmed, 25.

This prophecy, ending with the fourteenth verse of this chapter, is entitled, “The oracle concerning the valley of vision, “by which is meant Jerusalem, because, says Sal. ben Melech, it was the place of prophecy. Jerusalem, according to Josephus, was built upon two opposite hills Sion and Acra, separated by a valley in the midst. He speaks of another broad valley between Acra and Moriah, Bell. Jud. 5:13; 6:6. It was the seat of Divine revelation; the place where chiefly prophetic vision was given, and where God manifested himself visibly in the holy place. The prophecy foretells the invasion of Jerusalem by the Assyrians under Sennacherib; or by the Chaldeans under Nebuchadnezzar. Vitringa is of opinion that the prophet has both in view: that of the Chaldeans in the first part, ver. 1-5, which he thinks relates to the flight of Zedekiah, 2 Kings 25:4, 5; and that of the Assyrians in the latter part, which agrees with the circumstances of that time, and particularly describes the preparations made by Hezekiah for the defense of the city, ver. 8-11. Compare 2 Chronicles 32:2-5. — L.

NOTES ON CHAP. 22

Verse 1. Art-gone up to the house-tops “*Are gone up to the house-tops*” — The houses in the east were in ancient times, as they are

still, generally, built in one and the same uniform manner. The roof or top of the house is always flat, covered with broad stones, or a strong plaster of terrace, and guarded on every side with a low parapet wall; see Deuteronomy 22:8. The terrace is frequented as much as any part of the house. On this, as the season favors, they walk, they eat, they sleep, they transact business, (1 Samuel 9:25, see also the Septuagint in that place,) they perform their devotions Acts 10:9. The house is built with a court within, into which chiefly the windows open: those that open to the street are so obstructed with lattice-work that no one either without or within can see through them. Whenever, therefore, any thing is to be seen or heard in the streets, any public spectacle, any alarm of a public nature, every one immediately goes up to the house-top to satisfy his curiosity. In the same manner, when any one has occasion to make any thing public, the readiest and most effectual way of doing it is to proclaim it from the house-tops to the people in the streets. “What ye hear in the ear, that publish ye on the house-top, “saith our Savior, Matthew 10:27. The people running all to the tops of their houses gives a lively image of a sudden general alarm. Sir John Chardin’s MS. note on this place is as follows: “Dans les festes pour voir passer quelque chose, et dans les maladies pour les annoncer aux voisins en allumant des lumieres, le peuple monte sur les terrasses. “ “In festivals, in order to see what is going forward, and in times of sickness, in order to indicate them to neighbors by lighting of candles, the people go up to the house-tops.”

Verse 3. *All thy rulers-are bound by the archers “All thy leaders-are fled from the bow”*— There seems to be somewhat of an inconsistency in the sense according to the present reading. If the leaders were bound, אסרו usseru, how could they flee away? for their being bound, according to the obvious construction and course of the sentence, is a circumstance prior to their flight. I therefore follow Houbigant, who reads הסרו huseru, remoti sunt, “they are gone off. “גלו galu, transmigraverunt, Chaldee; which seems to confirm this emendation.

Verse 6. *Chariots of men “The Syriac”*— It is not easy to say what אדם רכב recheb adam, a chariot of men, can mean. It seems by the form of the sentence, which consists of three members, the first and the third

mentioning a particular people, that the second should do so likewise. Thus **בִּרְכַב אָרָם וּפָרָשִׁים** berecheb aram uparashim, “with chariots the Syrian, and with horsemen: “ the similitude of the letters **ד** daleth and **ר** resh is so great, and the mistakes arising from it are so frequent, that I readily adopt the correction of Houbigant, **אָרָם** aram, Syria, instead of **אָדָם** adam, man; which seems to me extremely probable. The conjunction **ו** vau, and, prefixed to **פָּרָשִׁים** parashim, horsemen, seems necessary in whatever way the sentence may be taken; and it is confirmed by five MSS., (one ancient,) four of De Rossi’s, and two ancient of my own; one by correction of Dr. Kennicott’s, and three editions. Kir was a city belonging to the Medes. The Medes were subject to the Assyrians in Hezekiah’s time, (see 2 Kings 16:9, and 17:6;) and so perhaps might Elam (the Persians) likewise be, or auxiliaries to them.

Verse 8. *The armor “The arsenal”*— Built by Solomon within the city, and called the house of the forest of Lebanon; probably from the great quantity of cedar from Lebanon which was employed in the building. See 1 Kings 7:2, 3.

Verse 9. *Ye gathered together the waters “And ye shall collect the waters”*— There were two pools in or near Jerusalem, supplied by springs: the upper pool, or the old pool, supplied by the spring called Gihon, 2 Chronicles 32:30, towards the higher part of the city, near Sion, or the city of David, and the lower pool, probably supplied by Siloam, towards the lower part. When Hezekiah was threatened with a siege by Sennacherib, he stopped up all the waters of the fountains without the city; and brought them into the city by a conduit, or subterranean passage cut through the rock; those of the old pool, to the place where he had a double wall, so that the pool was between the two walls. This he did in order to distress the enemy, and to supply the city during the siege. This was so great a work that not only the historians have made particular mention of it, 2 Kings 20:20; 2 Chronicles 32:2, 3, 5, 30; but the son of Sirach also has celebrated it in his encomium on Hezekiah. “Hezekiah fortified his city, and brought in water into the midst thereof: he digged the hard rock with iron, and made wells for water, “Ecclus. 48.

Verse 11. *Unto the maker thereof “To him that hath disposed this”*— That is, to God the Author and Disposer of this visitation, the invasion with which he now threatens you. The very same expressions are applied to God, and upon the same occasion, chap. 37:26:—

*“Hast thou not heard of old, that I have disposed it;
And of ancient times, that I have formed it?”*

Verse 13. *Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die.*— This has been the language of all those who have sought their portion in this life, since the foundation of the world. So the poet:—

*Heu, heu nos miseri! quam totus homuncio nil est!
Sic erimus cuncti, postquam nos auferet orcus.
Ergo vivamus, dum licet esse, bene.*

Alas alas! what miserable creatures are we, only the semblances of men! And so shall we be all when we come to die. Therefore let us live joyfully while we may.

Domitian had an image of death hung up in his dining-room, to show his guests that as life was uncertain, they should make the best of it by indulging themselves. On this Martial, to flatter the emperor, whom he styles god, wrote the following epigram:—

*Frangere thoros, pete vina, tingere nardo.
Ipse jubet mortis te meminisse Deus.*

Sit down to table—drink heartily—anooint thyself with spikenard; for God himself commands thee to remember death.

So the adage:—

*Ede, bibe, lude
post mortem nulla voluptas.*

*“Eat, drink, and play, while here ye may:
No revelry after your dying day.”*

St. Paul quotes the same heathen sentiment, 1 Corinthians 15:32: “Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.”

Anacreon is full in point, and from him nothing better can be expected:—

ὥς οὖν εἴ' εὐδι ἐστίν,
καὶ πινε καὶ κυβευε
καὶ σπενδε τῷ λυαίῳ
μὴ νουσοῦς, ἣν τις ἐλθῆ,
λεγῆ, σε μὴ δεῖ πινεῖν.

ANAC. Od. xv., 50:11.

*“While no tempest blots your sky,
Drink, and throw the sportful dye:
But to Bacchus drench the ground,
Ere you push the goblet round;
Lest some fatal illness cry,
‘Drink no more the cup of joy.’”*

ADDISON.

Verse 14. *It was revealed in mine ears “The voice of Jehovah”*— The Vulgate has vox Domini; as if in his copy he had read קול יהוה kol Yehovah; and in truth, without the word קול kol, voice, it is not easy to make out the sense of the passage; as appears from the strange versions which the rest of the ancients, (except the Chaldee,) and many of the moderns, have given of it; as if the matter were revealed in or to the ears of JEHOVAH: εν τοις ωσι κυριου, in the ears of the Lord, Septuagint. Vitranga translates it, Revelatus est in auribus meis JEHOVAH, “JEHOVAH hath revealed it in mine ears,” and refers to 1 Samuel 2:27; 3:21: but the

construction in those places is different, and there is no speech of God added; which here seems to want something more than the verb נגלה nagleh to introduce it. Compare chap. 5:9, where the text is still more imperfect.

The Lord God of hosts— אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת Adonai Yehovah tsebaoth. But אֲדֹנָי Adonai, Lord, is omitted by two of Kennicott's and De Rossi's MSS., and by two of my own; by three editions, and the Septuagint, Syriac and Arabic.

Verse 15. *Go-unto Shebna*— The following prophecy concerning Shebna seems to have very little relation to the foregoing, except that it might have been delivered about the same time; and Shebna might be a principal person among those whose luxury and profaneness is severely reprehended by the prophet in the conclusion of that prophecy, ver. 11-14.

Shebna the scribe, mentioned in the history of Hezekiah, chap. 36., seems to have been a different person from this Shebna, the treasurer or steward of the household, to whom this prophecy relates. The Eliakim here mentioned was probably the person who, at the time of Sennacherib's invasion, was actually treasurer, the son of Hilkiah. If so, this prophecy was delivered, as the preceding, (which makes the former part of the chapter,) plainly was, some time before the invasion of Sennacherib. As to the rest, history affords us no information.

“And say unto him”— Here are two words lost out of the text, which are supplied by two of Dr. Kennicott's MSS., one ancient, which read אֲלֵי וְאָמַרְתָּ veamarta elaiy, and thou shalt say unto him; by the Septuagint, καὶ εἶπὸν αὐτῷ, and in the same manner by all the ancient versions. It is to be observed that this passage is merely historical, and does not admit of that sort of ellipsis by which in the poetical parts a person is frequently introduced speaking, without the usual notice, that what follows was delivered by him.

Verse 16. *A sepulcher on high-in a rock*— It has been observed before,

on chap. 14., that persons of high rank in Judea, and in most parts of the east, were generally buried in large sepulchral vaults, hewn out in the rock for the use of themselves and their families. The vanity of Shebna is set forth by his being so studious and careful to have his sepulcher on high—in a lofty vault; and that probably in a high situation, that it might be more conspicuous. Hezekiah was buried, למעלה lemalah, εν αναβασει, Sept.: in the chiefest, says our translation; rather, in the highest part of the sepulchres of the sons of David, to do him the more honor, 2 Chronicles 32:33. There are some monuments still remaining in Persia of great antiquity, called Naksi Rustam, which give one a clear idea of Shebna's pompous design for his sepulcher. They consist of several sepulchers, each of them hewn in a high rock near the top; the front of the rock to the valley below is adorned with carved work in relievo, being the outside of the sepulcher. Some of these sepulchers are about thirty feet in the perpendicular from the valley, which is itself perhaps raised above half as much by the accumulation of the earth since they were made. See the description of them in Chardin, Pietro della Valle, Thevenot, and Kempfer. Diodorus Siculus, lib. 17., mentions these ancient monuments, and calls them the sepulchres of the kings of Persia. — L.

Verse 17. Cover thee— That is, thy face. This was the condition of mourners in general, and particularly of condemned persons. See Esther 6:12; 7:8.

Verse 19. I will drive thee— אהרסך ehersecha, in the first person, Syr. Vulg.

Verse 21. To the inhabitants— ליושבי leyoshebey, in the plural number, four of Dr. Kennicott's MSS., (two ancient,) and two of De Rossi's, with the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate.

Verse 22. And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder— As the robe and the baldric, mentioned in the preceding verse, were the ensigns of power and authority, so likewise was the key the mark of office, either sacred or civil. The priestess of Juno is said to be the key-bearer of the goddess, κλειδουχος ἡπασ AEschyl. Suppl. 299. A

female high in office under a great queen has the same title:—

καλλιθοη κλειδουχος ολυμπιαδος βασιλειης.

“Callithoe was the key-bearer of the Olympian queen.”

Auctor Phoronidis ap. Clem. Alex. p. 418, edit. Potter. This mark of office was likewise among the Greeks, as here in Isaiah, borne on the shoulder; the priestess of Ceres, *κατωμαδιαν εχε κλαιδα*, had the key on her shoulder. Callim. Ceres, ver. 45. To comprehend how the key could be borne on the shoulder, it will be necessary to say something of the form of it: but without entering into a long disquisition, and a great deal of obscure learning, concerning the locks and keys of the ancients, it will be sufficient to observe, that one sort of keys, and that probably the most ancient, was of considerable magnitude, and as to the shape, very much bent and crooked. Aratus, to give his reader an idea of the form of the constellation Cassiopeia, compares it to a key. It must be owned that the passage is very obscure; but the learned Huëtius has bestowed a great deal of pains in explaining it, *Animadvers. in Manilii, lib. 1:355*; and I think has succeeded very well in it. Homer *Odyss. 21:6*, describes the key of Ulysses' storehouse as *ευκαμπης*, of a large curvature; which Eustathius explains by saying it was *δρεπανοειδης*, in shape like a reaphook. Huëtius says the constellation Cassiopeia answers to this description; the stars to the north making the curve part, that is, the principal part of the key; the southern stars, the handle. The curve part was introduced into the key-hole; and, being properly directed by the handle, took hold of the bolts within, and moved them from their places. We may easily collect from this account, that such a key would lie very well upon the shoulder; that it must be of some considerable size and weight, and could hardly be commodiously carried otherwise. Ulysses' key was of brass, and the handle of ivory: but this was a royal key. The more common ones were probably of wood. In Egypt they have no other than wooden locks and keys to this day; even the gates of Cairo have no better. Baumgarten, *Peregr. 1:18*. Thevenot, part ii., chap. 10. But was it not the representation of a key, either cut out in cloth and sewed on the shoulder of the garment, or embroidered on that part of the garment itself? The idea of a huge key of a gate, in any kind of metal, laid across the shoulder, is to me very

ridiculous.

In allusion to the image of the key as the ensign of power, the unlimited extent of that power is expressed with great clearness as well as force by the sole and exclusive authority to open and shut. Our Savior, therefore, has upon a similar occasion made use of a like manner of expression, Matthew 16:19; and in Revelation 3:7 has applied to himself the very words of the prophet.

Verse 23. A nail— In ancient times, and in the eastern countries, as the way of life, so the houses, were much more simple than ours at present. They had not that quantity and variety of furniture, nor those accommodations of all sorts, with which we abound. It was convenient and even necessary for them, and it made an essential part in the building of a house, to furnish the inside of the several apartments with sets of spikes, nails, or large pegs, upon which to dispose of and hang up the several movables and utensils in common use, and proper to the apartment. These spikes they worked into the walls at the first erection of them, the walls being of such materials that they could not bear their being driven in afterwards; and they were contrived so as to strengthen the walls by binding the parts together, as well as to serve for convenience. Sir John Chardin's account of this matter is this: "They do not drive with a hammer the nails that are put into the eastern walls. The walls are too hard, being of brick; or, if they are of clay, too moldering: but they fix them in the brick-work as they are building. They are large nails, with square heads like dice, well made, the ends being bent so as to make them cramp-irons. They commonly place them at the windows and doors, in order to hang upon them, when they like, veils and curtains. " Harmer's Observ. 1:p. 191. And we may add, that they were put in other places too, in order to hang up other things of various kinds; as appears from this place of Isaiah, and from Ezekiel 15:3, who speaks of a pin or nail, "to hang any vessel thereon. " The word used here for a nail of this sort is the same by which they express that instrument, the stake, or large pin of iron, with which they fastened down to the ground the cords of their tents. We see, therefore, that these nails were of necessary and common use, and of no small importance in all their apartments; conspicuous, and much exposed to observation: and if they seem to us mean and insignificant, it is

because we are not acquainted with the thing itself, and have no name to express it but by what conveys to us a low and contemptible idea. “Grace hath been showed from the Lord our God, “saith Ezra, chap. 9:8, “to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a nail in his holy place: “ that is, as the margin of our Bible explains it, “a constant and sure abode.”

*“He that doth lodge near her (Wisdom’s) house,
Shall also fasten a pin in her walls.”*

Ecclus. 14:24.

The dignity and propriety of the metaphor appears from the Prophet Zechariah’s use of it:—

*“From him shall be the corner-stone, from him the nail,
From him the battle-bow,
From him every ruler together.”*

Zechariah 10:4.

And Mohammed, using the same word, calls Pharaoh the lord or master of the nails, that is, well attended by nobles and officers capable of administering his affairs. Koran, Sur. 38:11, and 89:9. So some understand this passage of the Koran. Mr. Sale seems to prefer another interpretation.

Taylor, in his Concordance, thinks יָתֵד yathed means the pillar or post that stands in the middle, and supports the tent, in which such pegs are fixed to hang their arms, etc., upon; referring to Shaw’s Travels, p. 287. But יָתֵד yathed is never used, as far as appears to me, in that sense. It was indeed necessary that the pillar of the tent should have such pegs on it for that purpose; but the hanging of such things in this manner upon this pillar does not prove that יָתֵד yathed was the pillar itself.

A glorious throne “A glorious seat”— That is, his father’s house and all his own family shall be gloriously seated, shall flourish in honor and prosperity; and shall depend upon him, and be supported by him.

Verse 24. *All the glory*— One considerable part of the magnificence of the eastern princes consisted in the great quantity of gold and silver vessels which they had for various uses. “Solomon’s drinking vessels were of gold, and all the vessels of the house of the forest of Lebanon were of pure gold; none were of silver; it was nothing accounted of in Solomon’s days;” 1 Kings 10:21. “The vessels in the house of the forest of Lebanon, “the armory of Jerusalem so called, “were two hundred targets, and three hundred shields of beaten gold. “ Ibid. ver. 16, 17. These were ranged in order upon the walls of the armory, (see Cant. 4:4,) upon pins worked into the walls on purpose, as above mentioned. Eliakim is considered as a principal stake of this sort, immovably fastened in the wall for the support of all vessels destined for common or sacred uses; that is, as the principal support of the whole civil and ecclesiastical polity. And the consequence of his continued power will be the promotion and flourishing condition of his family and dependents, from the highest to the lowest.

Vessels of flagons “*Meaner vessels*”— נְבִלִים nebalim seems to mean earthen vessels of common use, brittle, and of little value, (see Lamentations 4:2; Jeremiah 48:12,) in opposition to אֲגָנוֹת aganoth, goblets of gold and silver used in the sacrifices. Exodus 24:6.

Verse 25. *The nail that is fastened*— This must be understood of Shebna, as a repetition and confirmation of the sentence above denounced against him.

WHAT is said of Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, ver. 20-24, is very remarkable; and the literal meaning is not easy to be understood. From chap. 9:6, and from Revelation 3:7, it seems to belong to our Lord alone. The removal of Shebna from being over the treasure of the Lord’s house, ver. 19, and the investiture of Eliakim with his robe, girdle, office, and government, ver. 20, etc., probably point out the change of the Jewish priesthood, and the proclaiming of the unchangeable priesthood of Christ. See Psalm 110:4. Eliakim signifies The resurrection of the Lord; or, My God, he shall arise. Hilkiah signifies The Lord my portion or lot. The key of David, shutting and opening, etc., may intend the way of salvation through Christ alone. For the hope of salvation and eternal life comes only through Eliakim, the

resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

It is said, ver. 24, “They shall hang upon him all the glory of his father’s house “-for, in Jesus Christ dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and the offspring and the issue, **הצאצאים** hatstseetsaim from **צא** yatsa, to go out, — the suckers from the root; the sideshoots, the apostles and primitive ministers of his word. The issue, **הצפיעות** hatstsephioth, probably means the issue’s issue; so the Targum. The grandchildren, all those who believe on the Lord Jesus through their word.

“The nail that is fastened in the sure place shall be removed, “ver. 25, Kimchi refers not to Eliakim, but to Shebna, ver. 17-19. By, “They shall hang upon him all vessels of small quantity and large quantity, “has been understood the dependence of all souls, of all capacities, from the lowest in intellect to the most exalted on the Lord Jesus, as the only Savior of all lost human spirits.

As the literal interpretation of this prophecy has not been found out, we are justified from parallel texts to consider the whole as referring to Jesus Christ, and the government of the Church, and the redemption of the world by him. Nor are there many prophecies which relate to him more clearly than this, taken in the above sense.

CHAPTER 23

Prophecy denouncing the destruction of Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar, delivered upwards of one hundred and twenty years before its accomplishment, at a period when the Tyrians were in great prosperity, and the Babylonians in abject subjection to the Assyrian empire; and, consequently, when an event of so great magnitude was improbable in the highest degree, 1-14. Tyre shall recover its splendor at the termination of seventy years, the days of ONE king, or kingdom, by which must be meant the time allotted for the duration of the Babylonish empire, as otherwise the prophecy cannot be accommodated to the event, 15-17. Supposed reference to the early conversion of Tyre to Christianity, 18.

NOTES ON CHAP. 23

Verse 1. *The burden of Tyre*— Tyre, a city on the coast of Syria, about lat. 32° N. was built two thousand seven hundred and sixty years before Christ. There were two cities of this name; one on the continent, and the other on an island, about half a mile from the shore; the city on the island was about four miles in circumference. Old Tyre resisted Nebuchadnezzar for thirteen years; then the inhabitants carried, so to speak, the city to the forementioned island, ver. 4. This new city held out against Alexander the Great for seven months; who, in order to take it, was obliged to fill up the channel which separated it from the main land. In A.D. 1289 it was totally destroyed by the sultan of Egypt; and now contains only a few huts, in which about fifty or sixty wretched families exist. This desolation was foretold by this prophet and by Ezekiel, one thousand nine hundred years before it took place!

Howl, ye ships of Tarshish— This prophecy denounces the destruction of Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar. It opens with an address to the Tyrian negotiators and sailors at Tarshish, (Tartessus, in Spain,) a place which, in the course of their trade, they greatly frequented. The news of the

destruction of Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar is said to be brought to them from Chittim, the islands and coasts of the Mediterranean; “for the Tyrians, “says Jerome on ver. 6, “when they saw they had no other means of escaping, fled in their ships, and took refuge in Carthage and in the islands of the Ionian and AEgean sea. “ From whence the news would spread and reach Tarshish; so also Jarchi on the same place. This seems to be the most probable interpretation of this verse.

Verse 2. *Be still “Be silent”*— Silence is a mark of grief and consternation. See chap. 47:5. Jeremiah has finely expressed this image:—

*“The elders of the daughter of Zion sit on the ground, they are silent:
They have cast up dust on their heads, they have girded themselves with sackcloth.
The virgins of Jerusalem hang down their heads to the ground.”*

Lamentations 2:10.

Verse 3. *The seed of Sihor “The seed of the Nile”*— The Nile is called here Shichor, as it is Jeremiah 2:18, and 1 Chronicles 13:5. It had this name from the blackness of its waters, charged with the mud which it brings down from Ethiopia when it overflows, Et viridem AEgyptum nigra fecundat arena; as it was called by the Greeks Melas, and by the Latins Melo, for the same reason. See Servius on the above line of Virgil, Georg. 4:291. It was called Siris by the Ethiopians, by some supposed to be the same with Shichor. Egypt by its extraordinary fertility, caused by the overflowing of the Nile supplied the neighboring nations with corn, by which branch of trade the Tyrians gained great wealth.

Verse 4. *Be thou ashamed, O Zidon*— Tyre is called ver. 12, the daughter of Sidon. “The Sidonians, “says Justin, 18:3, “when their city was taken by the king of Ascalon, betook themselves to their ships, and landed, and built by Tyre. “ Sidon, as the mother city is supposed to be deeply affected with the calamity of her daughter.

Nor bring up virgins “*Nor educated virgins.*”— **וְרוֹמַמְתִּי** veromamti; so an ancient MS. Of Dr. Kennicott’s prefixing the **ו** vau, which refers to the negative preceding, and is equivalent to **וְלֹא** velo. See Deuteronomy 23:6; Proverbs 30:3. Two of my own MSS. have **ו** vau in the margin.

Verse 7. Whose antiquity is of ancient days “*Whose antiquity is of the earliest date*”— Justin, in the passage above quoted, had dated the building of Tyre at a certain number of years before the taking of Troy; but the number is lost in the present copies. Tyre, though not so old as Sidon, was yet of very high antiquity: it was a strong city even in the time of Joshua. It is called **עִיר מִבְצָר צָר** ir mibtsar tsor, “the city of the fortress of Sor, “Joshua 19:29. Interpreters raise difficulties in regard to this passage, and will not allow it to have been so ancient; with what good reason I do not see, for it is called by the same name, “the fortress of Sor, “in the history of David, 2 Samuel 24:7, and the circumstances of the history determine the place to be the very same. See on ver. 1.

Whose antiquity is of ancient days, may refer to Palaetyrus, or Old Tyre.

Her own feet shall carry her afar off to sojourn.— This may belong to the new or insular Tyre; her own feet, that is, her own inhabitants, shall carry her—shall transport the city, from the continent to the island. “But the text says it shall be carried far off, and the new city was founded only half a mile distant from the other. “ I answer, **מְרַחֵק** merachok does not always signify a great distance, but distance or interval in general; for in Joshua 3:4 **רַחֵק** rachok is used to express the space between the camp and the ark, which we know to have been only two thousand cubits. Some refer the sojourning afar off to the extent of the commercial voyages undertaken by the Tyrians and their foreign connexions.

Verse 10. O daughter of Tarshish— Tyre is called the daughter of Tarshish; perhaps because, Tyre being ruined, Tarshish was become the superior city, and might be considered as the metropolis of the Tyrian people; or rather because of the close connection and perpetual intercourse between them, according to that latitude of signification in which the Hebrews use the words son and daughter to express any sort of

conjunction and dependence whatever. מֵזַח mezach, a girdle, which collects, binds, and keeps together the loose raiment, when applied to a river, may mean a mound, mole, or artificial dam, which contains the waters and prevents them from spreading abroad. A city taken by siege and destroyed, whose walls are demolished, whose policy is dissolved, whose wealth is dissipated, whose people is scattered over the wide country, is compared to a river whose banks are broken down, and whose waters, let loose and overflowing all the neighboring plains, are wasted and lost. This may possibly be the meaning of this very obscure verse, of which I can find no other interpretation that is at all satisfactory. — L.

Verse 13. Behold the land of the Chaldeans— This verse is extremely obscure; the obscurity arises from the ambiguity of the agents, which belong to the verbs, and of the objects expressed by the pronouns; from the change of number of the verbs, and of gender in the pronouns. The MSS. give us no assistance, and the ancient Versions very little. The Chaldee and Vulgate read שְׂמוּחַ samoah, in the plural number. I have followed the interpretation which, among many different ones, seemed to be most probable, that of Perizonius and Vitringa.

The Chaldeans, Chasdim, are supposed to have had their origin, and to have taken their name, from Chesed, the son of Nachor, the brother of Abraham. They were known by that name in the time of Moses, who calls Ur in Mesopotamia, from whence Abraham came, to distinguish it from other places of the same name, Ur of the Chaldeans. And Jeremiah calls them an ancient nation. This is not inconsistent with what Isaiah here says of them: “This people was not, “that is, they were of no account, (see Deuteronomy 32:21;) they were not reckoned among the great and potent nations of the world till of later times; they were a rude, uncivilized, barbarous people, without laws, without settled habitations; wandering in a wide desert country (צִיִּים tsiyim) and addicted to rapine like the wild Arabians. Such they are represented to have been in the time of Job, chap. 1:17, and such they continued to be till Assur, some powerful king of Assyria, gathered them together, and settled them in Babylon in the neighboring country. This probably was Ninus, whom I suppose to have lived in the time of the Judges. In this, with many eminent chronologers, I

follow the authority of Herodotus, who says that the Assyrian monarchy lasted but five hundred and twenty years. Ninus got possession of Babylon from the Cuthean Arabians; the successors of Nimrod in that empire collected the Chaldeans, and settled a colony of them there to secure the possession of the city, which he and his successors greatly enlarged and ornamented. They had perhaps been useful to him in his wars, and might be likely to be farther useful in keeping under the old inhabitants of that city, and of the country belonging to it; according to the policy of the Assyrian kings, who generally brought new people into the conquered countries; see Isaiah 36:17; 2 Kings 17:6, 24. The testimony of Dicaearchus, a Greek historian contemporary with Alexander, (apud. Steph. de Urbibus, in voc. [χαλδαίος](#).) in regard to the fact is remarkable, though he is mistaken in the name of the king he speaks of. He says that “a certain king of Assyria, the fourteenth in succession from Ninus, (as he might be, if Ninus is placed, as in the common chronology, eight hundred years higher than we have above set him,) named, as it is said, Chaldaeus, having gathered together and united all the people called Chaldeans, built the famous city, Babylon, upon the Euphrates.” —L.

Verse 14. *Howl, ye shops*— The Prophet Ezekiel hath enlarged upon this part of the same subject with great force and elegance:—

*“Thus saith the Lord JEHOVAH concerning Tyre:—
At the sound of thy fall, at the cry of the wounded,
At the great slaughter in the midst of thee, shall not the
islands tremble?
And shall not all the princes of the sea descend from their
thrones,
And lay aside their robes, and strip off their embroidered
garments?
They shall clothe themselves with trembling, they shall sit
on the ground;
They shall tremble every moment, they shall be astonished
at thee.
And they shall utter a lamentation over thee, and shall say
unto thee:
How art thou lost, thou that wast inhabited from the seas!*”

The renowned city, that was strong in the sea, she and her inhabitants!

That struck with terror all her neighbors!

*Now shall the coasts tremble in the day of thy fall,
And the isles that are in the sea shall be troubled at thy
departure.”*

Ezekiel 26:15-18.

Verse 15. *According to the days of one king*— what is, of one kingdom; see Daniel 7:17, 8:20. Nebuchadnezzar began his conquests in the first year of his reign; from thence to the taking of Babylon by Cyrus are seventy years, at which time the nations subdued by Nebuchadnezzar were to be restored to liberty. These seventy years limit the duration of the Babylonish monarchy. Tyre was taken by him towards the middle of that period; so did not serve the king of Babylon during the whole period, but only for the remaining part of it. This seems to be the meaning of Isaiah; the days allotted to the one king or kingdom, are seventy years; Tyre, with the rest of the conquered nations, shall continue in a state of subjection and desolation to the end of that period. Not from the beginning and through the whole of the period; for, by being one of the latest conquests, the duration of that state of subjection in regard to her, was not much more than half of it. “All these nations, “saith Jeremiah, 25:11, “shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. “ Some of them were conquered sooner, some later; but the end of this period was the common term for the deliverance of them all.

There is another way of computing the seventy years, from the year in which Tyre was actually taken to the nineteenth of Darius Hystaspis; whom the Phoenicians, or Tyrians, assisted against the Ionians, and probably on that account might then be restored to their former liberties and privileges. But I think the former the more probable interpretation. — L.

Sing as a harlot— Fidicinam esse meretricum est. says Donatus in Terent. Eunuch. 3:2, 4.

*Nec meretrix tibicina, cujus
Ad strepitum salias.*

HOR. 1:Epist. 14:25.

*“Nor harlot minstrel sings, when the rude sound
Tempts you with heavy heels to thump the ground.”*

FRANCIS.

Sir John Chardin, in his MS. note on this place, says: — C’est que les vieilles prostituees, — ne font que chanter quand les jeunes dancent, et les animer par l’instrument et par la voix. “The old prostitutes do nothing but sing, while the young ones dance; and animate them both by vocal and instrumental music.”

Verse 17. *After the end of seventy years*— Tyre, after its destruction by Nebuchadnezzar, recovered, as it is here foretold, its ancient trade, wealth, and grandeur; as it did likewise after a second destruction by Alexander. It became Christian early with the rest of the neighboring countries. St. Paul himself found many Christians there, Acts 21:4. It suffered much in the Diocletian persecution. It was an archbishopric under the patriarchate of Jerusalem, with fourteen bishoprics under its jurisdiction. It continued Christian till it was taken by the Saracens in 639; was recovered by the Christians in 1124; but in 1280 was conquered by the Mamelukes, and afterwards taken from them by the Turks in 1517. Since that time it has sunk into utter decay; is now a mere ruin, a bare rock, “a place to spread nets upon, “as the Prophet Ezekiel foretold it should be, chap. 26:14. See Sandy’s Travels; Vitranga on the place; Bp. Newton on the Prophecies, Dissert. xi.

CHAPTER 24

Dreadful judgments impending over the people of God, 1-4. Particular enumeration of the horrid impieties which provoked the Divine vengeance, 5, 6. Great political wretchedness of the transgressors, 7-12. The calamities shall be so great that only a small remnant shall be left in the land, as it were the gleanings of the vintage, 13. The rest, scattered over the different countries, spread there the knowledge of God, 14-16. Strong figures by which the great distress and long captivity of the transgressors are set forth, 17-22. Gracious promise of a redemption from captivity; and of an extension of the kingdom of God in the latter days, attended with such glorious circumstances as totally to eclipse the light and splendor of the previous dispensation, 23.

From the thirteenth chapter to the twenty-third inclusive, the fate of several cities and nations is denounced: of Babylon, of the Philistines, Moab, Damascus, Egypt, Tyre. After having foretold the destruction of the foreign nations, enemies of Judah, the prophet declares the judgments impending on the people of God themselves for their wickedness and

be brought upon the country by these great revolutions, involving all orders and degrees of men, changing entirely the face of things, and destroying the whole polity, both religious and civil; without entering into minute circumstances, or necessarily restraining it by particular marks to one great event, exclusive of others of the same kind. — L.

NOTES ON CHAP. 24

Verse 4. *The world languisheth*— The world is the same with the land; that is, the kingdoms of Judah and Israel, orbis Israeliticus. See note on chap. 13:11.

Verse 5. *The laws “The law”*— תורה torah, singular: so read the Septuagint, Syriac, and Chaldee.

Verse 6. *Are burned “Are destroyed”*— For חרו charu, read חרבו charebu. See the Septuagint, Syriac, Chaldee and Symmachus.

Verse 8. *The mirth*, etc.— שאן sheon, the noise. גאון geon, the pride, is the reading of three of De Rossi’s MSS., with the Septuagint and Arabic.

Verse 9. *Strong drink “Palm wine”*— This is the proper meaning of the word שכר shechar, σικερα. See note on chap. 5:11. All enjoyment shall cease: the sweetest wine shall become bitter to their taste.

Verse 11. *All joy is darkened “All gladness is passed away”*— For ערבה arebah, darkened, read עברה aberah, passed away, transposing a letter. Houbigant, Secker. Five of Dr. Kennicott’s and five of De Rossi’s MSS., several ancient, add כל col, all, after משוש mesos: the Septuagint adds the same word before it.

Verse 14. *They shall lift up their voice “But these shall lift up their voice”*— That is, they that escaped out of these calamities. The great distresses brought upon Israel and Judah drove the people away, and dispersed them all over the neighboring countries: they fled to Egypt, to

Asia Minor, to the islands and the coasts of Greece. They were to be found in great numbers in most of the principal cities of these countries. Alexandria was in a great measure peopled by them. They had synagogues for their worship in many places, and were greatly instrumental in propagating the knowledge of the true God among these heathen nations, and preparing them for the reception of Christianity. This it what the prophet seems to mean by the celebration of the name of JEHOVAH in the waters, in the distant coasts, and in the uttermost parts of the land. מִיִּם mayim, the waters; υδωρ, Sept.; υδατα, Theod.; not מִיִּם miyam from the sea.

Verse 15. *In the isles of the sea* “*In the distant coasts of the sea.*” — For בְּאֵיִם beirim, in the valleys, I suppose we ought to read בְּאֵיִם beiyim, in the isles, which is in a great degree justified by the repetition of the word in the next member of the sentence, with the addition of הַיָּם haiyam, the sea, to vary the phrase, exactly in the manner of the prophet. אֵיִם iyim is a word chiefly applied to any distant countries, especially those lying on the Mediterranean Sea. Others conjecture בְּאֵרִים biorim, בְּחֹרִים bechorim, בְּהָרִים beharim, בְּאֵמִים beummim, בְּעַמִּים beammim, בְּחֹרִים bechorim, בְּאֹרִים beurim, a בָּרֵךְ bar, illustrate-Le Clerc. Twenty-three MSS. of Kennicott’s, many of De Rossi’s, and some of my own, read בְּאֹרִים beorim, in the valleys. The Septuagint do not acknowledge the reading of the text, expressing here only the word אֵיִם iyim, ἐν ταῖς νησοῖς, in the islands, and that not repeated. But MSS. Pachom. and 1:D. 2: supply in this place the defect in the other copies of the Septuagint thus, δια τουτο η δοξα κυριου εσται εν ταῖς νησοῖς της θαλασσης εν ταῖς νησοῖς το ονομα του κυριου θεου ισραηλ ενδοξον εσται “Therefore the glory of the Lord shall be in the isles of the sea: in the islands shall the name of the Lord God of Israel be glorified. “ Kimchi says, that by בְּאֹרִים beirim, in the valleys is meant the cities, because they were generally built in valleys. The Vulgate has in doctrinis, and so my old MS., in techingis. Coverdale translates, Praise the name of the Lord God of Israel in the valleys and in the floodis. It should not be revered in the fires; none of the ancient Versions understood it thus. According to which the Septuagint had in their Hebrew copy בְּאֵיִם beiyim, repeated

afterwards, not בארִים beurim.

Verse 16. *But I said*— The prophet speaks in the person of the inhabitants of the land still remaining there, who should be pursued by Divine vengeance, and suffer repeated distresses from the inroads and depredations of their powerful enemies. Agreeably to what he said before in a general denunciation of these calamities:—

*“Though there be a tenth part remaining in it;
Even this shall undergo a repeated destruction.”*

Chap. 6:13. See the note there. — L.

My leanness, my leanness-Or, my secret; so the Vulgate, Montanus, and my old MS; רזן razan has this meaning in Chaldee; but in Hebrew it signifies to make lean, to waste. This sentence in the Hebrew has a strange connection of uncouth sounds: אוֹי לִי בּוֹגְדִים בַּגְדוּ וּבְגַד בַּגְדִים בַּגְדוּ וְאָמַר רָזִי לִי רָזִי לִי Vaomer, razi li razi li, oi li, bogedim bagadu, ubeged bogedim bagadu. This may be equalled by the translation in my Old MS. Bible: And I seide, my priveye thinge to me: my priveye thinge to me: woo to me: The lawe breykyng thei breken: and in lawe brekyng of the overdon thingis, they breken the lawe.

The treacherous dealers have dealt treacherously “The plunderers plunder”— See note on chap. 21:2.

Verse 17. *Fear, and the pit* “*The terror, the pit*”— If they escape one calamity, another shall overtake them.

*“As if a man should flee from a lion, and a bear should overtake him:
Or should betake himself to his house, and lean his hand on the wall,
And a serpent should bite him.”*

Amos 5:19.

“For, “as our Savior expressed it in a like parabolical manner, “wheresoever the carcass is there shall the eagles be gathered together, “Matthew 24:28. The images are taken from the different methods of hunting and taking wild beasts, which were anciently in use. The terror was a line strung with feathers of all colors which fluttering in the air scared and frightened the beasts into the toils, or into the pit which was prepared for them. *Nec est mirum, cum maximos ferarum greges linea pennis distincta contineat, et in insidias agat, ab ipso effectu dicta formido.* Seneca de Ira, 2:12. The pit or pitfall, fovea; digged deep in the ground, and covered over with green boughs, turf, etc., in order to deceive them, that they might fall into it unawares. The snare, or toils, indago; a series of nets, inclosing at first a great space of ground, in which the wild beasts were known to be; and then drawn in by degrees into a narrower compass, till they were at last closely shut up, and entangled in them. — L.

For **מכּוּל** mikkol, a MS. reads **מפּני** mippeney, as it is in Jeremiah 48:44, and so the Vulgate and Chaldee. But perhaps it is only, like the latter, a Hebraism, and means no more than the simple preposition **מ** mem. See Psalm cii. 6. For it does not appear that the terror was intended to scare the wild beasts by its noise. The paronomasia is very remarkable; **פּחַד** pachad, **פּחַת** pachath, **פַּךְ** pach: and that it was a common proverbial form, appears from Jeremiah’s repeating it in the same words, chap. 48:43, 44.

Verse 18. Out of the midst of the pit “From the pit”— For **מיתּוּךְ** mittoch, from the midst of, a MS. reads **מִן** min, from, as it is in Jeremiah 48:44; and so likewise the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate.

Verse 19. The earth “The land”— **הָאָרֶץ** haarets, forte delendum **הֵ** he, ut ex praecedente ortum. Vid. seqq. — Secker. “Probably the **הֵ** he, in **הָאָרֶץ** haarets, should be blotted out, as having arisen from the preceding.”

Verse 20. Like a cottage “Like a lodge for a night”— See note on chap. 1:8.

Verse 21. *On high-upon the earth.*— That is, the ecclesiastical and civil polity of the Jews, which shall be destroyed. The nation shall continue in a state of depression and dereliction for a long time. The image seems to be taken from the practice of the great monarchs of that time; who, when they had thrown their wretched captives into a dungeon, never gave themselves the trouble of inquiring about them; but let them lie a long time in that miserable condition, wholly destitute of relief, and disregarded. God shall at length revisit and restore his people in the last age: and then the kingdom of God shall be established in such perfection, as wholly to obscure and eclipse the glory of the temporary, typical, preparative kingdom now subsisting.

Verse 23. *Before his ancients gloriously*— In the sight of their old men he shall be glorified. Old MS. BIBLE.

“The figurative language of the prophets is taken from the analogy between the world natural and an empire or kingdom considered as a world politic. Accordingly the whole world natural, consisting of heaven and earth, signifies the whole world politic, consisting of thrones and people; or so much of it as is considered in prophecy: and the things in that world signify the analogous things in this. For the heavens and the things thereto signify thrones and dignities, and those who enjoy them; and the earth with the things thereon, the inferior people; and the lowest parts of the earth, called hades or hell, the lowest or most miserable part of them. Great earthquakes, and the shaking of heaven and earth, are put for the shaking of kingdoms, so as to distract and overthrow them; the creating a new heaven and earth, and the passing away of an old one, or the beginning and end of a world, for the rise and ruin of a body politic signified thereby. The sun, for the whole species and race of kings, in the kingdoms of the world politic; the moon, for the body of the common people, considered as the king’s wife; the stars, for subordinate princes and great men; or for bishops and rulers of the people of God, when the sun is Christ: setting of the sun, moon, and stars. darkening the sun, TURNING the moon into blood and falling of the stars, for the ceasing of a kingdom. “ Sir 1. Newton’s Observations on the Prophecies, Part I., chap. 2.

These observations are of great consequence and use, in explaining the

phraseology of the prophets.

CHAPTER 25

The short glance which the prophet gave at the promised restoration of the people of God and the Messiah's kingdom, in the close of the preceding chapter, makes him break out into a rapturous song of praise in this, where although he alludes to temporal mercies, such as the destruction of the cities which had been at war with Zion, the ruin of Moab, and other signal interpositions of Divine Providence in behalf of the Jews; yet he is evidently impressed with a more lively sense of future and much higher blessings under the Gospel dispensation, in the plenitude of its revelation, of which the temporal deliverances vouchsafed at various times to the primitive kingdoms of Israel and Judah were the prototypes, 1-5. These blessings are described under the figure of a feast made for all nations, 6; the removing of a veil from their faces, 7; the total extinction of the empire of death by the resurrection from the dead, the exclusion of all sorrow, and the final overthrow of all the enemies of the people of God, 8-12.

It does not appear to me that this chapter has any close and particular connection with the chapter immediately preceding, taken separately, and by itself. The subject of that was the desolation of the land of Israel and Judah, by the just judgment of God, for the wickedness and disobedience of the people: which, taken by itself, seems not with any propriety to introduce a hymn of thanksgiving to God for his mercies to his people in delivering them from their enemies. But taking the whole course of prophecies, from the thirteenth to the twenty-fourth chapter inclusive, in which the prophet foretells the destruction of several cities and nations, enemies to the Jews, and of the land of Judah itself, yet with intimations of a remnant to be saved, and a restoration to be at length effected by a glorious establishment of the kingdom of God: with a view to this extensive scene of God's providence in all its parts, and in all its consequences, the prophet may well be supposed to break out into this song of praise; in which his mind seems to be more possessed with the prospect of future mercies than with the recollection of the past. — L.

NOTES ON CHAP. 25

Verse 1. *Thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth.*— That is, All thy past declarations by the prophets shall be fulfilled in their proper time.

Verse 2. *A city “The city”*— Nineveh, Babylon, Ar, Moab, or any other strong fortress possessed by the enemies of the people of God.

For the first **מַעִיר** meir, of a city, the Syriac and Vulgate read **הַעִיר** hair, the city; the Septuagint and Chaldee read **עָרִים** arim, cities, in the plural, transposing the letters. After the second **מַעִיר** meir, a MS. adds **לַגֵּל** lagol, for a heap.

A palace of strangers “The palace of the proud ones”— For **זָרִים** zarim, strangers, MS. Bodl. and another read **זְדִים** zedim, the proud: so likewise the Septuagint; for they render it **αἰσῆσι** here, and in ver. 5, as they do in some other places: see Deuteronomy 18:20, 22. Another MS. reads **צָרִים** tsarim, adversaries; which also makes a good sense. But **זָרִים** zarim, strangers, and **זְדִים** zedim, the proud, are often confounded by the great similitude of the letters **ד** dalet and **ר** resh. See Malachi 3:15; 4:1; Psalm 19:14, in the Septuagint; and Psalm 54:5, where the Chaldee reads **זְדִים** zedim, compared with Psalm 86:16.

Verse 4. *As a storm against the wall “Like a winter-storm.”*— For **קִיר** kir, read **קֹר** kor: or, as **עִיר** ir from **עָרָר** arar, so **קִיר** kir from **קָרָר** karar. — Capellus.

Verse 5. *Of strangers “Of the proud”*— The same mistake here as in ver. 2: see the note there. Here **זְדִים** zedim, the proud, is parallel to **עָרִיצִים** aritsim, the formidable: as in Psalm 54:5, and 86:14.

The heat with the shadow of a cloud “As the heat by a thick cloud”— For **חֹרֵב** choreb, the Syriac, Chaldee, Vulgate, and two MSS. read **כְּחֹרֵב**

kechoreb, which is a repetition of the beginning of the foregoing parallel line; and the verse taken out of the parallel form, and more fully expressed, would run thus: “As a thick cloud interposing tempers the heat of the sun on the burnt soil; so shalt thou, by the interposition of thy power, bring low and abate the tumult of the proud, and the triumph of the formidable.”

Verse 6. *In this mountain*— Zion, at Jerusalem. In his Church.

Shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast— Salvation by Jesus Christ. A feast is a proper and usual expression of joy in consequence of victory, or any other great success. The feast here spoken of is to be celebrated on Mount Sion; and all people, without distinction, are to be invited to it. This can be no other than the celebration of the establishment of Christ’s kingdom, which is frequently represented in the Gospel under the image of a feast; “where many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven;” Matthew 8:11. See also Luke 14:16; 24:29, 30. This sense is fully confirmed by the concomitants of this feast expressed in the next verse, the removing of the veil from the face of the nations, and the abolition of death: the first of which is obviously and clearly explained of the preaching of the Gospel; and the second must mean the blessing of immortality procured for us by Christ, “who hath abolished death, and through death hath destroyed him that had the power of death.”

Of wines on the lees “Of old wines”— Hebrews lees; that is, of wines kept long on the lees. The word used to express the lees in the original signifies the preservers; because they preserve the strength and flavor of the wine. “All recent wines, after the fermentation has ceased, ought to be kept on their lees for a certain time, which greatly contributes to increase their strength and flavor. Whenever this first fermentation has been deficient, they will retain a more rich and sweet taste than is natural to them in a recent true vinous state; and unless farther fermentation is promoted by their lying longer on their own lees, they will never attain their genuine strength and flavor, but run into repeated and ineffectual fermentations, and soon degenerate into a liquor of an acetous kind. All wines of a light and austere kind, by a fermentation too great, or too long continued, certainly degenerate into a weak sort of vinegar; while the

stronger not only require, but will safely bear a stronger and often-repeated fermentation; and are more apt to degenerate from a defect than excess of fermentation into a vapid, rosy, and at length into a putrescent state. “ Sir Edward Barry, Observations on the Wines of the Ancients, p. 9, 10.

Thevenot observes particularly of the Shiras wine, that, after it is refined from the lees, it is apt to grow sour. “Il a beaucoup de lie; c’est pourquoi il donne puissamment dans la teste; et pour le rendre plus traitable on le passe par un chausse d’hypocras; apres quoi il est fort clair, et moins fumeux. Ils mettent ce vin dans des grandes jarres de terres qui tiennent dix ou douze jusqu’a quatorze carabas: mais quand l’on a entame une jarre, il faut la vuider au plutost, et mettre le vin qu’on en tire dans des bouteilles ou carabas; car si l’on y manque en le laissant quelque tems apres que la jarre est entamee il se gate et s’aigrit. “ Voyages, Tom. 2:p. 245. “It has much sediment, and therefore is intoxicating. In order to make it more mellow, they strain it through a hypocrites’ sleeve, after which it is very clear and less heady. They lay up this wine in great earthen jars, which hold from ten to fourteen carabas: but when a jar is unstopped, it is necessary to empty it immediately, and put the wine into bottles, or carabas; for if it be left thus in the jar, it will spoil and become acid.”

The caraba, or girba, is a goat’s skin drawn off from the animal, having no apertures but those occasioned by the tail, the feet, and the neck. One opening is left, to pour in and draw off the liquor. This skin goes through a sort of tanning process, and is often beautifully ornamented, as is the case with one of these girbas now lying before me.

This clearly explains the very elegant comparison, or rather allegory, of Jeremiah, chap. 48:11; where the reader will find a remarkable example of the mixture of the proper with the allegorical, not uncommon with the Hebrew poets:—

*“Moab hath been at ease from his youth,
And he hath settled upon his lees;
Nor hath he been drawn off from vessel to vessel,
Neither hath he gone into captivity:
Wherefore his taste remaineth in him,
And his flavor is not changed.”*

Sir John Chardin’s MS. note on this place of Jeremiah is as follows: “On change ainsi le vin de coupe en coupe en Orient; et quand on en entame une, il faut la vuidier en petites coupes ou bouteilles, sans quoy il s’aigrit. “They change the wine from vessel to vessel in the east; and when they unstop a large one, it is necessary to empty it into small vessels, as otherwise it will grow sour.”

Verse 7. *The face of the covering cast over all people* “*The covering that covered the face of all the peoples*”— MS. Bodl. reads על פני כל al peney chol. The word פני peney, face, has been removed from its right place into the line above, where it makes no sense; as Houbigant conjectured. “The face of the covering, “etc. He will unveil all the Mosaic ritual, and show by his apostles that it referred to, and was accomplished in, the sacrificial offering of Jesus Christ.

Verse 8. *He will swallow up death*— He, by the grace of God, will taste death for every man. Hebrews 2:9. Probably, swallow up death, and taste death, in both these verses, refer to the same thing: Jesus dying instead of a guilty world. These forms of speech may refer to the punishment of certain criminals; they were obliged to drink a cup of poison. That cup which every criminal in the world must have drunk, Jesus Christ drank for them; and thus he swallowed up death: but as he rose again from the dead, complete victory was gained.

From these three verses we learn:—

I. That the Gospel is a plenteous provision: “I will make a feast for all people.”

II. That it is a source of light and salvation: “I will destroy the veil. I will abolish death. and bring life and immortality to light.”

III. That it is a source of comfort and happiness: “I will wipe away all tears from off all faces.”

As in the Arabic countries a covering was put over the face of him who was condemned to suffer death, it is probable that the words in ver. 7 may refer to this. The whole world was condemned to death, and about to be led out to execution, when the gracious Lord interposed, and, by a glorious sacrifice, procured a general pardon.

Verse 9. *It shall be said “Shall they say”*— So the Septuagint and Vulgate, in the plural number. They read **וְאָמְרוּ** veameru, the Syriac reads **וְאָמְרָה** veamarta, thou shalt say. They shall say, i.e., the Jews and the Gentiles—Lo, this [Jesus Christ] is our God: we have waited for him, according to the predictions of the prophets. We have expected him, and we have not been disappointed; therefore will we be glad, and rejoice in his salvation.

Verse 10. *Shall the hand of the Lord rest “The hand of JEHOVAH shall give rest”*— Hebrews **תָּנַחַח** tenuach, quiescet. Annon **תָּנַיַח** taniach, quietem dabit, shall rest; shall give rest, ut Graeci, **ἀναπαύσειν δώσει**, et Copt.?-Mr. WOIDE. That is, “shall give peace and quiet to Sion, by destroying the enemy; “ as it follows.

As straw is trodden down “As the straw is threshed”— Hoc junta ritum loquitur Palastinae et multarum Orientis provinciarum, quae ob pratorum et foeni penuriam paleas preparant esui animantium. Sunt autem carpenta ferrata rotis per medium in serrarum modum se volventibus, quae stipulam conterunt; et comminuunt in paleas. Quomodo igitur plaustris ferratis paleae conteruntur, sic conteretur Moab sub eo; sive sub Dei potentia, sive in semetipso, ut nihil in eo integri remaneat. “This is spoken in reference to the mode of threshing in Palestine, and various other Asiatic provinces. Because of the scarcity of meadow land and hay they make chopped straw for the cattle. They have large wheels studded over with iron teeth or nails,

by which, on the out-of-door threshing-floors, they pound and reduce the straw into chaff. As, therefore, the straw is reduced to chaff by bringing the iron-shod wheel over it; so shall Moab be bruised by the power of God, that nothing whole shall remain.” —Hieron. in loc. See the note on chap. 28:27.

For the dunghill “Under the wheels of the car.”— For **מדמנה** madmenah, the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate read **מרכבה** mercabah, which I have followed. See Joshua 15:31, compared with 19:5, where there is a mistake very nearly the same. The keri, **במי** bemi, is confirmed by twenty-eight MSS., seven ancient, and three editions.

Verse 11. *As he that swimmeth spreadeth forth his hands to swim “As he that sinketh stretcheth out his hands to swim”*— There is great obscurity in this place: some understand God as the agent; others, Moab. I have chosen the latter sense, as I cannot conceive that the stretching out of the hands of a swimmer in swimming can be any illustration of the action of God stretching out his hands over Moab to destroy it. I take **השחה** hashshocheh, altering the point on the **ש** sin. on the authority of the Septuagint, to be the participle of **שחה** shachah, the same with **שוח** shuach, and **שחח** shachach, to bow down, to be depressed; and that the prophet designed a paronomasia here, a figure which he frequently uses between the similar words **שחה** shachah, and **שחורת** shechoth. As **תחתיו** tachtaiv, in his place, or on the spot, as we say in the preceding verse, gives us an idea of the sudden and complete destruction of Moab; so **בקרב** bekirbo, in the midst of him, means that this destruction shall be open, and exposed to the view of all: the neighboring nations shall plainly see him struggling against it, as a man in the midst of the deep waters exerts all his efforts by swimming, to save himself from drowning. — L.

CHAPTER 26

This chapter, like the foregoing, is a song of praise, in which thanksgivings for temporal and spiritual mercies are beautifully mingled, though the latter still predominate. Even the sublime and evangelical doctrine of the resurrection seems here to be hinted at, and made to typify the deliverance of the people of God from a state of the lowest misery; the captivity, the general dispersion, or both. This hymn too, like the preceding, is beautifully diversified by the frequent change of speakers. It opens with a chorus of the Church, celebrating the protection vouchsafed by God to his people; and the happiness of the righteous, whom he guards, contrasted with the misery of the wicked, whom he punishes, 1-7. To this succeeds their own pious resolution of obeying, trusting, and delighting in God, 8. Here the prophet breaks in, in his own person, eagerly catching the last words of the chorus, which were perfectly in unison with the feelings of his own soul, and which he beautifully repeats, as one musical instrument reverberates the sound of another on the same key with it. He makes likewise a suitable response to what had been said on the judgments of God, and observes their different effects on the good and the bad; improving the one, and hardening the other, 9-11. After this, a chorus of Jews express their gratitude to God for past deliverances, make confession of their sins, and supplicate his power, which they had been long expecting, 12-18. To this God makes a gracious reply, promising deliverance that should be as life from the dead, 19. And the prophet, (apparently alluding to the command of Moses to the Israelites, when the destroying angel was to go through the land of Egypt,) concludes with exhorting his people to patience and resignation, till God sends the deliverance he has promised, 20, 21.

NOTES ON CHAP. 26

Verse 1. *We have a strong city*— In opposition to the city of the enemy, which God hath destroyed, chap. 25. See the note there.

Salvation-for walls and bulwarks— **חומת וחל** chomsoth vachel, walls and redoubts, or the walls and the ditch. **חל** chel properly signifies the ditch or trench without the wall; see Kimchi. The same rabbin says, This song refers to the time of salvation, i.e., the days of the Messiah.

Verse 2. The righteous nation— The converted Gentiles shall have the gates opened-a full entrance into all the glories and privileges of the Gospel; being fellow heirs with the converted Jews. The Jewish peculiarity is destroyed, for the middle wall of partition is broken down.

The truth— The Gospel itself-as the fulfillment of all the ancient types, shadows, and ceremonies; and therefore termed the truth, in opposition to all those shadowy rites and ceremonies. “The law was given by Moses; but grace and TRUTH came by Jesus Christ; “ John 1:17, and see the note there.

Verse 3. In perfect peace— **שלום שלום** shalom, shalom, “peace, peace, “i.e., peace upon peace-all kinds of prosperity-happiness in this world and in the world to come.

Because he trusteth in thee “Because they have trusted in thee”— So the Chaldee, **בטחו** betacho. The Syriac and Vulgate read **בטוח** batachnu, “we have trusted. “ Schroeder, Gram. Hebrews p. 360, explains the present reading **בטוח** batuach, impersonally, confisum est.

Verse 4. In the Lord JEHOVAH “In JEHOVAH”— In JAH JEHOVAH, Heb.; but see Houbigant, and the note on chap. 12:2.

Everlasting strength— **צור עולמים** tsur olamim, “the rock of ages; “ or, according to Rab. Maimon, — the eternal Fountain, Source, or Spring. Does not this refer to the lasting streams from the rock in the desert? And that rock was Christ. ge han hoped in the Lord fro the everlastinge worldis. — *OLD MS. BIBLE.*

Verse 8. Have we waited for thee “We have placed our confidence in thy

name”— The Septuagint, Syriac, and Chaldee read קוינו kavinu, without the pronoun annexed.

Verse 9. *Have I desired thee*— Forty-one MSS. of Dr. Kennicott’s and many of De Rossi’s, (nine ancient,) and five editions read אויתך invithicha. It is proper to note this; because the second ך yod being omitted in the text, the Vulgate and many others have rendered it in the third person.

When thy judgments, etc.— It would be better to read, When thy judgments were in the earth, the inhabitants of the world have learned (למדו lamedu) righteousness. Men seldom seek God in prosperity; they are apt to rest in an earthly portion: but God in mercy embitters this by adversity; then there is a general cry after himself as our chief, solid, and only permanent good.

Verse 16. *Lord, in trouble have they visited thee “O JEHOVAH, in affliction we have sought thee”*— So the Septuagint and two MSS. have פקדנך pekadnucha, in the first person plural. And so perhaps it should be צקנו tsaknu, in the first person; but how the Septuagint read this word is not clear; and this last member of the verse is extremely obscure.

For למו lamo, “on them,” the Septuagint read לנו lanu, “on us,” in the first person likewise; a frequent mistake; see note on chap. 10:29.

Verse 18. *We have-brought forth wind*— The learned Professor Michaelis explains this image in the following manner: “Rariorem morbum describi, empneumatosin, aut ventosam molam, dictum; quo quae laborant diu et sibi et peritis medicis gravidae videntur, tandemque post omnes verae graviditatis molestias et labored ventum ex utero emittunt: quem morbum passim describunt medici. “ Syntagma Comment., vol. ii., p. 165. The empneumatosin, or windy inflation of the womb, is a disorder to which females are liable. Some have had this in such wise, for a long time together, that they have appeared to themselves, and even to very skillful medical men, to be pregnant; and after having endured much pain, and even the throes of apparent childbearing, they have been eased and restored to

health by the emission of a great quantity of wind from the uterus. This disorder is well known to medical men. “The Syriac translator seems to have understood it in this manner: Enixi sumus, ut illae quae ventos pariunt. “We have brought forth as they who bring forth wind.”

In the earth “*In the land*”— בארץ bearets; so a MS., the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate.

Verse 19. My dead body “*My deceased*”— All the ancient Versions render it in the plural; they read נבלותי niblothai, my dead bodies. The Syriac and Chaldee read נבלותיהם niblotheyhem, their dead bodies. No MS. yet found confirms this reading.

The dew of herbs “*The dew of the dawn*”— Lucis, according to the Vulgate; so also the Syriac and Chaldee.

The deliverance of the people of God from a state of the lowest depression is explained by images plainly taken from the resurrection of the dead. In the same manner the Prophet Ezekiel represents the restoration of the Jewish nation from a state of utter dissolution by the restoring of the dry bones to life, exhibited to him in a vision, chap. 37., which is directly thus applied and explained, ver. 11-13. And this deliverance is expressed with a manifest opposition to what is here said above, ver. 14, of the great lords and tyrants, under whom they had groaned:—

***“They are dead, they shall not live;
They are deceased tyrants, they shall not rise:”***

that they should be destroyed utterly, and should never be restored to their former power and glory. It appears from hence, that the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead was at that time a popular and common doctrine; for an image which is assumed in order to express or represent any thing in the way of allegory or metaphor, whether poetical or prophetic, must be an image commonly known and understood; otherwise it will not answer the purpose for which it is assumed. — L.

Kimchi refers these words to the days of the Messiah, and says, “Then many of the saints shall rise from the dead. “ And quotes Daniel 12:2. Do not these words speak of the resurrection of our blessed Lord; and of that resurrection of the bodies of men, which shall be the consequence of his body being raised from the dead?

Thy dead men shall live, — with my dead body shall they arise.— This seems very express.

Verse 20. *Comes my people, enter thou into thy chambers*— An exhortation to patience and resignation under oppression, with a confident expectation of deliverance by the power of God manifestly to be exerted in the destruction of the oppressor. It seems to be an allusion to the command of Moses to the Israelites, when the destroying angel was to go through the land of Egypt, “not to go out at the door of their houses until the morning; “ Exodus 12:22. And before the passage of the Red Sea: “Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of JEHOVAH. JEHOVAH shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace, “Exodus 14:13, 14.

Verse 21. *The earth also shall disclose her blood*— Crimes of cruelty and oppression, which have passed away from the eyes of men, God will bring into judgment, and exact punishment for them. O what a reckoning will the kingdoms of the earth have with God, for the torrents of blood which they have shed for the gratification of the lust of power and ambition! Who shall live when he doeth this?

CHAPTER 27

Destruction of the enemies of the Church, 1. God's care of his vineyard, 2-11. Prosperity of the descendants of Abraham in the latter days, 12, 13.

The subject of this chapter seems to be the nature, the measure, and the design of God's dealings with his people. 1. His judgments inflicted on their great and powerful enemies, ver. 1. 2. His constant care and protection of his favorite vineyard, in the form of a dialogue, ver. 2. 3. The moderation and lenity with which the severity of his judgments have been tempered, ver. 7. 4. The end and design of them, to recover them from idolatry, ver. 9. And, 5. The recalling of them, on their repentance, from their several dispersions, ver. 12. The first verse seems connected with the two last verses of the preceding chapter. — L.

NOTES ON CHAP. 27

Verse 1. *Leviathan*— The animals here mentioned seem to be the crocodile, rigid by the stiffness of the backbone, so that he cannot readily turn himself when he pursues his prey; hence the easiest way of escaping from him is by making frequent and short turnings: the serpent or dragon, flexible and winding, which coils himself up in a circular form: and the sea monster, or whale. These are used allegorically, without doubt for great potentates, enemies and persecutors of the people of God: but to specify the particular persons or states designed by the prophet under these images, is a matter of great difficulty, and comes not necessarily within the design of these notes. R. D. Kimchi says, leviathan is a parable concerning the kings of the Gentiles: it is the largest fish in the sea, called also **תנין** tannin, the dragon, or rather the whale. By these names the Grecian, Turkish, and Roman empires are intended. The dragon of the sea seems to mean some nation having a strong naval force and extensive commerce. See Kimchi on the place.

Verse 2. Sing ye unto her— אָנוּ לָהּ anu lah. Bishop Lowth translates this, Sing ye a responsive song; and says that עָנָה anah, to answer, signifies occasionally to sing responsively; and that this mode of singing was frequently practiced among the ancient Hebrews. See De Poes. Sac. Hebrews Prael. xix., at the beginning.

This, indeed, was the ancient method of singing in various nations. The song was divided into distinct portions, and the singers sang alternately. There is a fine specimen of this in the song of Deborah and Barak; and also in the Idyls of Theocritus, and the Eclogues of Virgil.

This kind of singing was properly a dialogue in verse, sung to a particular tune, or in the mode which is now termed recitativo. I have seen it often practiced on funeral occasions among the descendants of the aboriginal Irish. The poems of Ossian are of this kind.

The learned Bishop distinguishes the parts of this dialogue thus:—

3. JEHOVAH. It is I, JEHOVAH, that preserve her; I will water her every moment: I will take care of her by night; And by day I will keep guard over her.

4. VINEYARD. I have no wall for my defense: O that I had a fence of the thorn and brier! JEHOVAH. Against them should I march in battle, I should burn them up together.

5. Ah! let her rather take hold of my protection. VINEYARD. Let him make peace with me! Peace let him make with me!

6. JEHOVAH. They that come from the root of Jacob shall flourish, Israel shall bud forth; And they shall fill the face of the world with fruit.

A vineyard of red wine— The redder the wine, the more it was valued, says Kimchi.

Bishop Lowth translates, To the beloved vineyard. For חֶמֶר chemer, red,

a multitude of MSS. and editions have **חמד** chemed, desirable. This is supported by the Septuagint and Chaldee.

Verse 3. *Lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day-* “*I will take care of her by night; and by day I will keep guard over her*”— For **פ' יפקד** pen yiphkod, lest any visit it, the Syriac read **ואפקד** veephkod, and I will visit it. Twenty MSS. of Kennicott's, fourteen of De Rossi's, and two of my own, and six editions read **אפקד** ephkod, I will visit, in the first person.

Verse 4. *Fury is not in me* “*I have no wall*”— For **חמה** chemah, anger, the Septuagint and Syriac read **חומה** chomah, wall. An ancient MS. has **חמה** cheimah. For **בה** bad, in her, two MSS. read **בם** bam, in them, plural. The vineyard wishes for a wall and a fence of thorns-human strength and protection, (as the Jews were too apt to apply to their powerful neighbors for assistance, and to trust to the shadow of Egypt:) JEHOVAH replies, that this would not avail her, nor defend her against his wrath. He counsels her, therefore, to betake herself to his protection. On which she entreats him to make peace with her.

From the above note it appears that the bishop reads, **חומה** chomah, wall, for **חמה** chemah, anger or fury, in accordance with the Syriac and Septuagint. The letter **ו** vau makes the only difference, which letter is frequently absent from many words where its place is supplied by the point . cholem: it might have been so here formerly; and in process of time both vau and cholem might have been lost. The Syriac supports the learned bishop's criticism, as the word [S] shora is there used; which word in the plural is found, Hebrews 11:30: “By faith the walls of Jericho. “ The bishop thinks the Septuagint is on his side: to me, it seems neither for nor against the criticism. The words in the Vatican copy are **εγω πολις οχυρα**, I am a fortified city; which the Arabic follows: but instead of **οχυρα**, the Codex Alexandrinus has **ισχυρα**, I am a STRONG city.

The word **חומה** chomah, wall, is not found in any MS. in the collections of Kennicott and De Rossi, nor in any of my own MSS.

However, one of Dr. Kennicott's MSS. has **חַיְמָה** cheimah; but probably that which now appears to be a ך yod was formerly a ך vau, and now partially obliterated.

This song receives much light from being collated with that in chap. v.; and perhaps the bishop's criticism will find its best support from such a collation. In ver. 5 of that chapter, God threatens to take away the wall of his vineyard: this was done; and here the vineyard complains, I have no wall, and wishes for any kind of defense rather than be thus naked. This is the only natural support of the above criticism.

“About Tripoli there are abundance of vineyards and gardens, inclosed, for the most part, with hedges, which chiefly consist of the rhamnus, paliurus, oxyacantha, “etc. Rawolf, p. 21, 22. A fence of thorns is esteemed equal to a wall for strength, being commonly represented as impenetrable. See Micah 7:4; Hosea 2:6.

Who would set the briers and thorns against me “O that I had a fence of the thorn and brier”— Seven MSS., (two ancient,) and one edition, with the Syriac, Vulgate, and Aquila, read **וְשִׂית** veshayith, with the conjunction ך vau prefixed: Who would set the briers and thorns. **מִי יִתְּנֵנִי שְׂמִיר שַׂיִת** mi yitteneni shamir shayith, Who shall give me the brier and thorn, i.e., for a defense: but hear Kimchi: “Who (the vineyard) hath given me (Jehovah) the brier and the thorn instead of good grapes.”

Verse 5. Or “Ah”— For **או** o I read **אוי** oi, as it was at first in a MS. The ך yod was easily lost, being followed by another ך yod.

Verse 6. To take root “From the root”— For **יִשְׂרֹשׁ** yashresh, I read, with the Syriac, **מִשְׂרֹשׁ** mishshoresh. And for **יִצִּיץ וּפְרָח** yatsits uparach, **פְּרָח יִצִּיטוּ פָּרַח** yatsitsu parach, joining the ך vau to the first word, and taking that into construction with the first part of the sentence, Israel shall bud forth. I suppose the dialogue to be continued in this verse, which pursues the same image of the allegory, but in the way of metaphor.

Verse 9. *The groves* “*And if the groves*”— **סלו** velo. Four MSS., two ancient, of Kennicott’s, and one ancient of my own, with the Septuagint; this makes a fuller sense.

Verse 10. *There shall the calf feed*— That is, the king of Egypt, says Kimchi.

Verse 11. *The boughs thereof* “*Her boughs*”— **קציריה** ketsireyha, MS. and Vulg.; that is, the boughs of the vineyard, referring still to the subject of the dialogue above.

The scarcity of fuel, especially wood, in most parts of the east is so great, that they supply it with every thing capable of burning; cow-dung dried, roots, parings of fruit, withered stalks of herbs and flowers; see Matthew 6:21-30. Vine-twigs are particularly mentioned as used for fuel in dressing their food, by D’Arvieux; La Roque, Palestine, p. 198. Ezekiel says, in his parable of the vine, used figuratively for the people of God, as the vineyard is here: “Shall wood be taken thereof to do any work? or will men take a pin of it to hang any vessel thereon? Behold, it is cast into the fire for fuel; “ chap. 15:3, 4. “If a man abide not in one, “saith our Lord, “he is cast forth as a branch of the vine and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned; “ John 15:6. They employed women and children to gather these things, and they laid them up in store for use. The dressing and pruning their vines afforded a good supply of the last sort of fuel; but the prophet says that the vines themselves of the beloved vineyard shall be blasted, withered, and broken, and the women shall come and gather them up, and carry away the whole of them to make their fires for domestic uses. See Harmer’s Observations, vol. i., p. 254, etc.

Verse 12. *The channel of the river*— The river Sabbath, beyond which the Israelites were carried captive. — Kimchi.

Verse 13. *The great trumpet shall be blown*— Does not this refer to the time spoken of by our Lord, Matthew 24:31: He shall send forth his angels—the preachers of his Gospel with a great sound of a trumpet—the earnest invitation to be saved by Jesus Christ; and shall gather his elect—the

Jews, his ancient chosen people, from the four winds-from all parts of the habitable globe in which they have been dispersed.

In this prophet there are several predictions relative to the conversion of Egypt to the true faith, which have not yet been fulfilled, and which must be fulfilled, for the truth of God cannot fail. Should Egypt ever succeed in casting off the Ottoman yoke, and fully establish its independence, it is most likely that the Gospel of Christ would have a speedy entrance into it; and, according to these prophecies, a wide and permanent diffusion. At present the Mohammedan power is a genuine antichrist. This also the Lord will remove in due time.

CHAPTER 28

This chapter begins with a denunciation of the approaching ruin of the Israelites by Shalmaneser, whose power is compared to a tempest or flood, and his keenness to the avidity with which one plucks and swallows the grape that is soonest ripe, 1-4. It then turns to the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, who were to continue a kingdom after the final captivity of their brethren; and gives first a favorable prognostication of their affairs under Hezekiah, 5, 6; but soon changes to reproofs and threatenings for their intemperance and their profaneness, 7, 8. They are introduced as not only scornfully rejecting, but also mocking and ridiculing, the instructions of the prophet, 9, 10. To this God immediately retorts in terms alluding to their own mocking, but differently applied, 11-13. The prophet then addresses these scoffers, 14; who considered themselves as perfectly secure from every evil, 15; and assures them that there was no method under heaven but one, by which they could be saved, 16; that every other vain resource should fail in the day of visitation, 17, 18. He then farther adds, that the judgments of God were particularly levelled against them; and that all the means to which they trusted for warding them off should be to no purpose, 19, 20; as the Almighty, who, on account of his patience and long-suffering, is amiably described as unacquainted with punishing, had nevertheless determined to punish them, 21, 22. The prophet then concludes with a beautiful parable in explanation and defense of God's dealing with his people, 23-29.

NOTES ON CHAP. 28

Verse 1. *Wo to the crown of pride*— By the crown of pride, etc., Samaria is primarily understood. “Sebaste, the ancient Samaria, is situated on a long mount of an oval figure, having first a fruitful valley, and then a ring of hills running round about it;” Maundrell, p. 58. “E regione horum ruderum mons est peramoenus, planitie admodum frugifera circumseptus, super quem olim Samaria urbs condita fuit;” Fureri Itinerarium, p. 93. The city, beautifully situated on the top of a round hill, and surrounded

immediately with a rich valley and a circle of other hills beyond it, suggested the idea of a chaplet or wreath of flowers worn upon their heads on occasions of festivity, expressed by the proud crown and the fading flower of the drunkards. That this custom of wearing chaplets in their banquets prevailed among the Jews, as well as among the Greeks and Romans, appears from the following passage of the book of Wisdom:—

*“Let us fill ourselves with costly wine and ointments,
And let no flower of the spring pass by us:
Let us crown ourselves with rose-buds before they are
withered.”*

Wisd. 2:7, 8.

Verse 2. Behold the Lord hath a mighty and strong one “*Behold the mighty one, the exceedingly strong one*”— אַמִּיט לַאֲדֹנָי ammits ladonai, fortis Domino, i.e., fortissimus, a Hebraism. For לַאֲדֹנָי ladonai, to the Lord, thirty-eight MSS. Of Dr. Kennicott’s and many of De Rossi’s, with some of my own, and two editions, read לַיהוָה laihovah, to JEHOVAH.

Verse 3. The crown of pride, the drunkards of Ephraim “*The proud crown of the drunkards of Ephraim*”— I read עֲטָרוֹת ataroth, crowns, plural, to agree with the verb תִּרְמַסְנָה teramasnah, “shall be trodden down.”

Verse 4. The hasty fruit before the summer “*The early fruit before the summer*”— “No sooner doth the boccure, (the early fig,) draw near to perfection in the middle or latter end of June, than the kermesz or summer fig begins to be formed, though it rarely ripens before August; about which time the same tree frequently throws out a third crop, or the winter fig, as we may call it. This is usually of a much longer shape and darker complexion than the kermesz, hanging and ripening upon the tree even after the leaves are shed; and, provided the winter proves mild and temperate, is gathered as a delicious morsel in the spring; “Shaw, Travels, p. 370, fol. The image was very obvious to the inhabitants of Judea and the neighboring countries, and is frequently applied by the prophets to express a desirable object; by none more elegantly than by Hosea, chap.

9:10:—

*“Like grapes in the wilderness I found Israel;
Like the first ripe fig in her prime, I saw your fathers.”*

Which when he that looketh upon it seeth “Which whoso seeth, he plucketh it immediately”— For יִרְאֶה yireh, which with הִרְאֶה haroeh makes a miserable tautology, read, by a transposition of a letter, יִרְאֶה yoreh; a happy conjecture of Houbigant. The image expresses in the strongest manner the great ease with which the Assyrians shall take the city and the whole kingdom, and the avidity with which they shall seize the rich prey without resistance.

Verse 5. *In that day*— Thus far the prophecy relates to the Israelites, and manifestly denounces their approaching destruction by Shalmaneser. Here it turns to the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, the remnant of God’s people who were to continue a kingdom after the final captivity of the Israelites. It begins with a favorable prognostication of their affairs under Hezekiah; but soon changes to reproofs and threatenings for their intemperance, disobedience, and profaneness.

Jonathan’s Targum on this verse is worthy of notice: “In that time Messiah, the Lord of hosts מְשִׁיחַא דַּיִי צְבָאוֹת meshicha dayai tsebaoth, shall be a crown of joy and a diadem of praise to the residue of his people. “ Kimchi says the rabbins in general are of this opinion. Here then the rabbins, and their most celebrated Targum, give the incommunicable name, יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת Yehovah tsebaoth, the Lord of hosts, to our ever blessed Redeemer, Jesus Christ.

Verse 6. *The battle to the gate* “*The war to the gate of the enemy.*”— That is, who pursue the fleeing enemy even to the very gates of their own city. “But we were upon them even unto the entering of the gate,” 2 Samuel 11:23; that is, we drove the enemy back to their own gates. See also 1 Samuel 17:52. The Targum says, The Messiah shall give the victory to those who go out to battle, that he may bring them back to their own houses in peace.

Verse 9. Whom shall he teach knowledge?"Whom, say they, would he teach knowledge?"— The scoffers mentioned below, ver. 14, are here introduced as uttering their sententious speeches; they treat God's method of dealing with them, and warning them by his prophets, with contempt and derision. What, say they, doth he treat us as mere infants just weaned? doth he teach us like little children, perpetually inculcating the same elementary lessons, the mere rudiments of knowledge; precept after precept, line after line, here and there, by little and little? imitating at the same time, and ridiculing, in ver. 10, the concise prophetic manner. God, by his prophet, retorts upon them with great severity their own contemptuous mockery, turning it to a sense quite different from what they intended. Yes, saith he, it shall be in fact as you say; ye shall be taught by a strange tongue and a stammering lip; in a strange country; ye shall be carried into captivity by a people whose language shall be unintelligible to you, and which ye shall be forced to learn like children. And my dealing with you shall be according to your own words: it shall be command upon command for your punishment; it shall be line upon line, stretched over you to mark your destruction, (compare 2 Kings 21:13;) it shall come upon you at different times, and by different degrees, till the judgments, with which from time to time I have threatened you, shall have their full accomplishment.

Jerome seems to have rightly understood the general design of this passage as expressing the manner in which the scoffers, by their sententious speeches, turned into ridicule the warnings of God by his prophets, though he has not so well explained the meaning of the repetition of their speech in ver. 13. His words are on ver. 9 "Solebant hoc ex persona prophetarum ludentes dicere: " and on ver. 14 "Quod supra diximus, cum irrisione solitos principes Judaeorum prophetis dicere, manda, remanda, et caetera his similia, per quae ostenditur, nequaquam eos prophetarum credidisse sermonibus, sed prophetiam habuisse despectui, praesens ostendit capitulum, per quod appellantur viri illusores. " Hieron. in loc.

And so Jarchi interprets the word **משלים** mishelim in the next verse: Qui dicunt verba irrisionis parabolice. " And the Chaldee paraphrases ver. 11 to the same purpose, understanding it as spoken, not of God, but of the

people deriding his prophets: “Quoniam in mutatione loquelae et in lingua subsannationis irridebant contra prophetas, qui prophetabant populo huic.” —L.

Verse 10. *For precept must be upon precept*— The original is remarkably abrupt and sententious. The hemistichs are these:—

כִּי צוֹ לְצוֹ לְצוֹ לְצוֹ

latsav tsav latsav tsav ki

קוֹ לְקוֹ קוֹ לְקוֹ

lakau kau lakau kau

זְעִיר שָׁם זְעִיר שָׁם

sham zeeir sham zeeir

For, — Command to command, command to command.

Line to line, line to line.

A little there, a little there.

Kimchi says צוֹ tsau, precept, is used here for

*For sende efter sende, sende efter sende:
Abide efter abiide, abide efter abiide:
Lytyl ther, lytyl ther.*

Coverdale is also singular:—

*Commande that may be commanded;
Byd that maye be bydden:
Foorbyd that maye be forbydden;
Kepe backe that maye be kepte backe:
Here a litle, there a litle.*

Verse 12. *This is the rest* “*This is the true rest*”— The sense of this verse is: God had warned them by his prophets that their safety and security, their deliverance from their present calamities and from the apprehensions of still greater approaching, depended wholly on their trust in God, their faith and obedience; but they rejected this gracious warning with contempt and mockery.

Verse 15. *A covenant with death*— To be in covenant with, is a kind of proverbial expression to denote perfect security from evil and mischief of any sort:—

*“For thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field;
And the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee.”*

Job 5:23.

*“And I will make a covenant for them with the beasts of
the field. And with the fowls of heaven, and with the
creeping things
of the ground.”*

Hosea 2:18.

That is, none of these shall hurt them. But Lucan, speaking of the Psylli, whose peculiar property it was to be unhurt by the bite of serpents, with

which their country abounded, comes still nearer to the expression of Isaiah in this place:—

*Gens unica terras
Incolit a saevo serpentum innoxia morsu
Marmaridae Psylli. —
Pax illis cum morte data est.*

Pharsal. 9:891.

*“Of all who scorching Afric’s sun endure,
None like the swarthy Psyllians are secure:
With healing gifts and privileges graced,
Well in the land of serpents were they placed:
Truce with the dreadful tyrant death they have,
And border safely on his realm the grave.”*

ROWE.

We have made a covenant with death and with hell are we at agreement— עשינו חזה asinu chozeh, we have made a vision, we have had an interview, struck a bargain, and settled all preliminaries. So they had made a covenant with hell by diabolic sacrifice, כרתנו ברית carathnu berith. “We have cut the covenant sacrifice; “ they divided it for the contracting parties to pass between the separated victim; for the victim was split exactly down the middle, so that even the spinal marrow was exactly divided through its whole length; and being set opposite to each other, the contracting parties entered, one at the head part, the other at the feet; and, meeting in the center, took the covenant oath. Thus, it is intimated, these bad people made an agreement with שאול sheol, with demons, with whom they had an interview; i.e., meeting them in the covenant sacrifice! To such a pitch had the Israelitish idolatry reached at that time!

Verse 16. Behold, I lay in Zion— See the notes on the parallel places in the margin. Kimchi understands this of Hezekiah; but it most undoubtedly

belongs to Jesus Christ alone; and his application of it to himself, even the Jews could not contest. See the margin as above.

Verse 18. *Your covenant with death shall be disannulled* “*Your covenant with death shall be broken*”— For כפר caphar, which seems not to belong to this place, the Chaldee reads תפר taphar, which is approved by Houbigant and Secker. See Jeremiah 33:21, where the very same phrase is used. See Prelim. Dissert. p. 1.

Verse 20. *For the bed is shorter*— A mashal or proverbial saying, the meaning of which is, that they will find all means of defense and protection insufficient to secure them, and cover them from the evils coming upon them. מסך massek, chap. 22:8, the covering, is used for the outworks of defense, the barrier of the country; and here, in the allegorical sense, it means much the same thing. Their beds were only mattresses laid on the floor; and the coverlet a sheet, or in the winter a carpet, laid over it, in which the person wrapped himself. For כהתכנס kehithcannes, it ought probably to be מהתכנס mehithcannes. Houbigant, Secker.

Verse 21. *As in Mount Perazim*— כהר kehar; but בהר bahar, IN the mount, is the reading of two of Kennicott’s, one of De Rossi’s, and one of my own MSS.

Verse 22. *The Lord God*— אדני יהוה Adonai Jehovah. Adonai is omitted by four of Kennicott’s MSS., and in the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic.

Verse 23. *Give ye ear, and hear my voice* “*Listen ye, and hear my voice*”— The foregoing discourse, consisting of severe reproofs, and threatenings of dreadful judgments impending on the Jews for their vices, and their profane contempt of God’s warnings by his messengers, the prophet concludes with an explanation and defense of God’s method of dealing with his people in an elegant parable or allegory; in which he employs a variety of images, all taken from the science of agriculture. As the husbandman uses various methods in preparing his land, and adapting it to the several kinds of seeds to be sown, with a due observation of times

and seasons; and when he hath gathered in his harvest, employs methods as various in separating the corn from the straw and the chaff by different instruments, according to the nature of the different sorts of grain; so God, with unerring wisdom, and with strict justice, instructs, admonishes, and corrects his people; chastises and punishes them in various ways, as the exigence of the case requires; now more moderately, now more severely; always tempering justice with mercy; in order to reclaim the wicked, to improve the good, and, finally, to separate the one from the other.

Verse 26. *For his God doth instruct him*— All nations have agreed in attributing agriculture, the most useful and the most necessary of all sciences, to the invention and to the suggestions of their deities. “The Most High hath ordained husbandry, “saith the son of Sirach, *Ecclus. 7:15.*

*Namque Ceres fertur fruges, Liberque liquoris
Vitigeni laticem mortalibus instituisse.*

LUCRETIVS, 5:14.

*“Ceres has taught mortals how to produce fruits;
and Bacchus has taught them how to cultivate the vine.”*

ὁ δ' ἠπιος ἀνθρώποισι
δεξιά σημαίνει, λαούς δ' ἐπὶ ἔργον εἰρῆναι
μυμνησκῶν βιοτοιο λέγει δ' ὅτι βῶλος ἀριστή
βουσι τε καὶ μακελῆσι λέγει δ' ὅτι δεξιάι ὠραι
καὶ φυτὰ γυρῶσαι, καὶ σπέρματα πάντα βαλεσθῆαι.

ARATUS, *Phantom. v.*

*“He, Jupiter, to the human race
Indulgent, prompts to necessary toil
Man provident of life; with kindly signs
The seasons marks, when best to turn the glebe
With spade and plough, to nurse the tender plant,
And cast o'er fostering earth the seeds abroad.”*

Verses 27, 28. Four methods of threshing are here mentioned, by different instruments; the flail, the drag, the wain, and the treading of the cattle. The staff or flail was used for the *infirmiora semina*, says Jerome, the grain that was too tender to be treated in the other methods. The drag consisted of a sort of strong planks, made rough at the bottom, with hard stones or iron; it was drawn by horses or oxen over the corn sheaves spread on the floor, the driver sitting upon it. Kempfer has given a print representing the manner of using this instrument, *Amaen. Exot.* p. 682, fig. 3. The wain was much like the former; but had wheels with iron teeth, or edges like a saw: *Ferrata carpenta rotis per medium in serrarum modum se volventibus.* Hieron. in loc. From this it would seem that the axle was armed with iron teeth or serrated unheels throughout. See a description and print of such a machine used at present in Egypt for the same purpose in Niebuhr's *Voyage en Arabie*, Tab. 17:p. 123; it moves upon three rollers armed with iron teeth or wheels to cut the straw. In Syria they make use of the drag, constructed in the very same manner as above described; Niebuhr, *Description de l'Arabie*, p. 140. This not only forced out the grain, but cut the straw in pieces for fodder for the cattle; for in the eastern countries they have no hay. See Harmer's *Observ.* 1:p. 425. The last method is well known from the law of Moses, which "forbids the ox to be muzzled, when he treadeth out the corn;" Deuteronomy 25:4.

Verse 28. *The bread-corn*— I read וּלְהֵם velahem, on the authority of the Vulgate and Symmachus; the former expresses the conjunction וְ vau, omitted in the text, by autem; the latter by δε.

Bruise it with his horsemen "***Bruise it with the hoofs of his cattle.***"— For פֶּרְשָׁיו parashaiv, horsemen or teeth, read פֶּרְסָיו perasaiv, hoofs. So the Syriac, Symmachus, Theodotion, and the Vulgate. The first is read with שׁ shin, the latter with ס samech, the pronunciation is nearly the same.

CHAPTER 29

Distress of Ariel, or Jerusalem, on Sennacherib's invasion, with manifest allusion, however, to the still greater distress which it suffered from the Romans, 1-4. Disappointment and fall of Sennacherib described in terms, like the event, the most awful and terrible, 5-8. Stupidity and hypocrisy of the Jews, 9-16. Rejection of the Jews, and calling of the Gentiles, 17. The chapter concludes by a recurrence to the favourite topics of the prophet, viz., the great extension of the Messiah's kingdom in the latter days, and the future restoration of Israel, 18-24.

The subject of this and the four following chapters is the invasion of Sennacherib; the great distress of the Jews while it continued; their sudden and unexpected deliverance by God's immediate interposition in their favor; the subsequent prosperous state of the kingdom under Hezekiah; interspersed with severe reproofs, and threats of punishment, for their hypocrisy, stupidity, infidelity, their want of trust in God, and their vain reliance on the assistance of Egypt; and with promises of better times, both immediately to succeed, and to be expected in the future age. The whole making, not one continued discourse, but rather a collection of different discourses upon the same subject; which is treated with great elegance and variety. Though the matter is various, and the transitions sudden, yet the prophet seldom goes far from his subject. It is properly enough divided by the chapters in the common translation. — L.

NOTES ON CHAP. 29

Verse 1. Ariel— That Jerusalem is here called by this name is very certain: but the reason of this name, and the meaning of it as applied to Jerusalem, is very obscure and doubtful. Some, with the Chaldee, suppose it to be taken from the hearth of the great altar of burnt-offerings which Ezekiel plainly calls by the same name, and that Jerusalem is here considered as the seat of the fire of God, אֵל אֵלֶּיךָ אֵלֶּיךָ אֵלֶּיךָ ur el which should issue from thence to consume his enemies: compare chap. 31:9. Some, according

to the common derivation of the word, אֵל אַרִי *ari el*, the lion of God, or the strong lion, suppose it to signify the strength of the place, by which it was enabled to resist and overcome all its enemies. *τινες δε φασι την πολιν ουτως ειρησθαι επει, δια θεου, λεοντος δικην εσπαραττε τους ανταιροντας.* Procop. in loc. There are other explanations of this name given: but none that seems to be perfectly satisfactory. — Lowth.

From Ezekiel 43:15, we learn that Ari-el was the name of the altar of burnt-offerings, put here for the city itself in which that altar was. In the second verse it is said, I will distress Ari-el, and it shall be unto me as Ari-el. The first Ari-el here seems to mean Jerusalem, which should be distressed by the Assyrians: the second Ari-el seems to mean the altar of burntofferings. But why is it said, “Ari-el shall be unto me as Ari-el?” As the altar of burntofferings was surrounded daily by the victims which were offered: so the walls of Jerusalem shall be surrounded by the dead bodies of those who had rebelled against the Lord, and who should be victims to his justice. The translation of Bishop Lowth appears to embrace both meanings: “I will bring distress upon Ari-el; and it shall be to me as the hearth of the great altar.”

Add ye year to year— Ironically. Go on year after year, keep your solemn feasts; yet know, that God will punish you for your hypocritical worship, consisting of mere form destitute of true piety. Probably delivered at the time of some great feast, when they were thus employed.

Verse 2. *There shall be heaviness and sorrow* “*There shall be continual mourning and sorrow*”— Instead of your present joy and festivity.

And it shall be unto me as Ariel “*And it shall be unto me as the hearth of the great altar.*”— That is, it shall be the seat of the fire of God; which shall issue from thence to consume his enemies. See note on ver. 1. Or, perhaps, all on flame; as it was when taken by the Chaldeans; or covered with carcasses and blood, as when taken by the Romans: an intimation of which more distant events, though not immediate subjects of the prophecy, may perhaps be given in this obscure passage.

Verse 3. *And I will camp against thee round about* “*And I will encamp*

against thee like David” — For כדור caddur, some kind of military engine, כדוד kedavid, like David, is the reading of the Septuagint, two MSS. of Kennicott’s, if not two more: but though Bishop Lowth adopts this reading, I think it harsh and unnecessary.

Forts “Towers” — For מצרת metsuroth, read מצדות metsudoth: so the Septuagint and five MSS. of Dr. Kennicott’s, one of them ancient, and four of De Rossi’s.

Verse 4. *And thy speech shall be low out of the dust “And from out of the dust thou shalt utter a feeble speech”* — That the souls of the dead uttered a feeble stridulous sound, very different from the natural human voice, was a popular notion among the heathens as well as among the Jews. This appears from several passages of their poets; Homer, Virgil, Horace. The pretenders to the art of necromancy, who were chiefly women, had an art of speaking with a feigned voice, so as to deceive those who applied to them, by making them believe that it was the voice of the ghost. They had a way of uttering sounds, as if they were formed, not by the organs of speech, but deep in the chest, or in the belly; and were thence called εγγαστριμυθοι, ventriloqui: they could make the voice seem to come from beneath the ground, from a distant part, in another direction, and not from themselves; the better to impose upon those who consulted them. εξεπιτηδες το γενος τουτο τον αμυδρον ηχον επιτηδευονται, ινα δια την ασαφειαν της φωνης τον του ψευδους αποδιδρασκωσιν ελεγχον. Psellus De Daemonibus, apud Bochart, 1:p. 731. “These people studiously acquire, and affect on purpose, this sort of obscure sound; that by the uncertainty of the voice they may the better escape being detected in the cheat. “ From these arts of the necromancers the popular notion seems to have arisen, that the ghost’s voice was a weak, stridulous, almost inarticulate sort of sound, very different from the speech of the living.

Verse 5. *The multitude of thy strangers “The multitude of the proud”* — For זרײך zarayich, thy strangers, read זדים zedim, the proud, according to the Septuagint; parallel to and synonymous with עריצים aritsim, the terrible, in the next line: the ר resh was at first ד daleth in a MS. See note

on chap. 25:2.

The fifth, sixth, and seventh verses contain an admirable description of the destruction of Sennacherib's army, with a beautiful variety of the most expressive and sublime images: perhaps more adapted to show the greatness, the suddenness, and horror of the event, than the means and manner by which it was effected. Compare chap. 30:30-33.

Verse 7. *As a dream*— This is the beginning of the comparison, which is pursued and applied in the next verse. Sennacherib and his mighty army are not compared to a dream because of their sudden disappearance; but the disappointment of their eager hopes is compared to what happens to a hungry and thirsty man, when he awakes from a dream in which fancy had presented to him meat and drink in abundance, and finds it nothing but a vain illusion. The comparison is elegant and beautiful in the highest degree, well wrought up, and perfectly suited to the end proposed. The image is extremely natural, but not obvious: it appeals to our inward feelings, not to our outward senses; and is applied to an event in its concomitant circumstances exactly similar, but in its nature totally different. See De S. Poes. Hebr. Praelect. 12:For beauty and ingenuity it may fairly come in competition with one of the most elegant of Virgil, greatly improved from Homer, Iliad 22:199, where he has applied to a different purpose, but not so happily, the same image of the ineffectual working of imagination in a dream:—

*Ac veluti in somnis, oculos ubi languida pressit
Nocte quies, nec quicquam avidos extendere cursus
Velle videmur, et in mediis conatibus aegri
Succidimus; non lingua valet, non corpore notae
Sufficiunt vires, nec vox, nec verba sequuntur.*

AEn., 12:908.

*“And as, when slumber seals the closing sight,
 The sick wild fancy labors in the night;
 Some dreadful visionary foe we shun
 With airy strides, but strive in vain to run;
 In vain our baffled limbs their powers essay;
 We faint, we struggle, sink, and fall away;
 Drain’d of our strength, we neither fight nor fly,
 And on the tongue the struggling accents die.”*

PITT.

Lucretius expresses the very same image with Isaiah:—

*Ut bibere in somnis sitiens quum quaerit, et humor
 Non datur, ardorem in membris qui stinguere possit;
 Sed laticum simulacra petit, frustraue laborat,
 In medioque sitit torrenti flumine potans.*

As a thirsty man desires to drink in his sleep,

Verse 9. *Stay yourselves, and wonder*— הִתְמַהְמְהוּ hithmahmehu, go on what-what-whatting, in a state of mental indetermination, till the overflowing scourge take you away. See the note on Psalm 119:60.

They are drunken, but not with wine— See note on chap. 51:21.

Verse 11. *I cannot; for it is sealed “I cannot read it; for it is sealed up.”*— An ancient MS. and the Septuagint have preserved a word here, lost out of the text; לִקְרוֹת likroth, (for לִקְרֹאוֹת,) ἀναγνώσαι, read it.

Verse 13. *The Lord “JEHOVAH”*— For אֲדֹנָי Adonai, sixty-three MSS. of Kennicott’s, and many of De Rossi’s, and four editions, read יְהוָה Yehovah, and five MSS. add יְהוָה .

Kimchi makes some just observations on this verse. The vision, meaning the Divine revelation of all the prophets, is a book or letter that is sealed-is not easily understood. This is delivered to one that is learned-instructed in the law. Read this; and he saith, I cannot, for it is sealed; a full proof that he does not wish to know the contents else he would apply to the prophet to get it explained. See Kimchi on the place.

And their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men “And vain is their fear of me teaching the commandments of men”— I read for וְתַהֲוֹ vattehi, וְתַהֲוֹ vethohu, with the Septuagint, Matthew 15:9; Mark 8:7; and for מְלֻמְמֵדָה melummedah, מְלֻמְמֵדִים melummedim, with the Chaldee.

Verse 17. *And Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field “Ere Lebanon become like Carmel”*— A mashal, or proverbial saying, expressing any great revolution of things; and, when respecting two subjects, an entire reciprocal change: explained here by some interpreters, I think with great probability, as having its principal view beyond the revolutions then near at hand, to the rejection of the Jews, and the calling of the Gentiles. The first were the vineyard of God, כֶּרֶם אֵל kerem El, (if the prophet, who loves an allusion to words of like sounds, may be supposed to have intended one here,) cultivated and watered by him in

vain, to be given up, and to become a wilderness: compare chap. 5:1-7. The last had been hitherto barren; but were, by the grace of God, to be rendered fruitful. See Matthew 21:43; Romans 11:30, 31. Carmel stands here opposed to Lebanon, and therefore is to be taken as a proper name.

Verse 21. *Him that reproveth in the gate* “*Him that pleaded in the gate*”— “They are heard by the treasurer, master of the horse, and other principal officers of the regency of Algiers, who sit constantly in the gate of the palace for that purpose: “ that is, the distribution of justice. — Shaw’s Travels, p. 315, fol. He adds in the note, “That we read of the elders in the gate. Deuteronomy 21:15; 25:7; and, Isaiah 29:21; Amos 5:10, of him that reproveth and rebuketh in the gate. The Ottoman court likewise seems to have been called the Porte, from the distribution of justice and the despatch of public business that is carried on in the gates of it.”

Verse 22. *Who redeemed Abraham*— As God redeemed Abraham from among idolaters and workers of iniquity, so will he redeem those who hear the words of the Book, and are humbled before him, ver. 18, 19.

Concerning the house of Jacob “The God of the house of Jacob”— I read אל El as a noun, not a preposition: the parallel line favors this sense; and there is no address to the house of Jacob to justify the other.

Neither shall his face now wax pale “His face shall no more be covered with confusion.”— “חורו” yechoro, Chald. *στ ο μεταβαλει*, Theod. *εντραπησεται*, Syr. *נחפרו* necaphro, videtur legendum *חפרו* yechepheru: hic enim solum legitur verbum, חור chavar, nec in linguis affinibus habet pudoris significationem.” —SECKER. “Here alone is the verb חור charar read; nor has it in the cognate languages the signification of shame.”

Verse 23. *But when he seeth his children, the work of mine hands* “*For when his children shall see the work of my hands*”— For בראותו birotho I read בראות בירוית, with the Septuagint and Syriac.

CHAPTER 30

The Jews reproved for their reliance on Egypt, 1-7. Threatened for their obstinate adherence to this alliance, 8-17. Images the most elegant and lofty, by which the intense gloriousness of Messiah's reign at the period when all Israel shall be added to the Church is beautifully set forth, 18-26. Dreadful fall of Sennacherib's army, an event most manifestly typical of the terrible and sudden overthrow of Antichrist; as, unless this typical reference be admitted, no possible connection can be imagined between the stupendous events which took place in Hezekiah's reign, and the very remote and inconceivably more glorious displays of Divine vengeance and mercy in the days of the Messiah, 27-33.

NOTES ON CHAP. 30

Verse 1. *And that cover with a covering* “Who ratify covenants”—Hebrews “Who pour out a libation. “Sacrifice and libation were ceremonies constantly used, in ancient times by most nations in the ratifying of covenants: a libation therefore is used for a covenant, as in Greek the word **σπονδη**, for the same reason, stands for both. This seems to be the most easy explication of the Hebrew phrase, and it has the authority of the Septuagint, **εποιησατε συνθηκας**.

Verse 4. *Hanes*—Six MSS. of Kennicott's, and perhaps six others, with four of De Rossi's, read **חִנָּם** chinnam, in vain, for **הָנֵס** Hanes; and so also the Septuagint, who read likewise **יָגֵעוּ** yageu, labored, for **יָגִיעוּ** yaggiu, arrived at.

Verse 5. *Were-ashamed*—Eight MSS. (one ancient) of Kennicott's, and ten of De Rossi's, read **הִבִּישׁ** hobish, without **א** aleph. So the Chaldee and Vulgate.

But a shame “*But proved even a shame*”—Four MSS. (three ancient)

after כִּי ki, add אִם im, unless, which seems wanted to complete the phrase in its usual form.

Verse 6. *The burden*— מַשָּׂא massa seems here to be taken in its proper sense; the load, not the oracle. The same subject is continued; and there seems to be no place here for a new title to a distinct prophecy.

Does not burden of the beasts of the South in this place relate to the presents sent by Hoshea king of Israel to the South-to Egypt, which lay south of Judea, to engage the Egyptians to succor him against the king of Assyria?

Into the land of trouble and anguish “*Through a land of distress and difficulty*”— The same deserts are here spoken of which the Israelites passed through when they came out of Egypt, which Moses describes, Deuteronomy 8:15, as “that great and terrible wilderness wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought; where there was no water. “ And which was designed to be a kind of barrier between them and Egypt, of which the Lord had said, “Ye shall henceforth return no more that way, “Deuteronomy 17:16.

Shall not profit them— A MS. adds in the margin the word לָמוֹ lamo, them, which seems to have been lost out of the text: it is authorized by the Septuagint and Vulgate.

Verse 7. *Their strength is to sit still* “*Rahab the Inactive.*”— The two last words, הֵם שָׁבֵת hem shabeth joined into one, make the participle pihel הַמְּשַׁבֵּת hammeshabbeth. I find the learned Professor Doederlein, in his version of Isaiah, and note on this place, has given the same conjecture; which he speaks of as having been formerly published by him. A concurrence of different persons in the same conjecture adds to it a greater degree of probability.

Verse 8. *For ever and ever* “*For a testimony for ever*”— לְעֵד leed. So the Syriac, Chaldee, Vulgate, and Septuagint, in MSS. Pachom. and 1:D. 2:ⲁⲓⲠⲟ ⲙⲁⲣⲧⲣⲟⲓⲟⲛ, which two words have been lost out of the other copies of

the Septuagint.

Verse 12. *In oppression “In obliquity”*— **בַּעֲשֵׂק** beakesh, transposing the two last letters of **בַּעֲשֵׂק** beoshek, in oppression, which seems not to belong to this place: a very probable conjecture of Houbigant.

Verse 13. *Swelling out to a high wall “A swelling in a high wall”*— It has been observed before, that the buildings of Asia generally consist of little better than what we call mud walls. “All the houses at Ispahan, “says Thevenot, Vol. II., p. 159, “are built of bricks made of clay and straw, and dried in the sun; and covered with a plaster made of a fine white stone. In other places in Persia the houses are built with nothing else but such bricks, made with tempered clay and chopped straw, well mingled together, and dried in the sun, and then used: but the least rain dissolves them. “ Sir John Chardin’s MS. remark on this place of Isaiah is very apposite: Murs en Asie etant faits de terre se fendent ainsi par milieu et de haut en bas. “The walls in Asia being made of earth often cleave from top to bottom. “ This shouts clearly how obvious and expressive the image is. The psalmist has in the same manner made use of it, to express sudden and utter destruction:—

*“Ye shall be slain all of you;
Ye shall be like an inclining wall, like a shattered fence.”*

Psalm 62:4.

Verse 14. *He shall not spare “And spareth it not”*— Five MSS. add the conjunction **ו** vau to the negative; **וְלֹא** velo.

Verse 17. *At the rebuke of five shall ye flee “At the rebuke of five, ten thousand of you shall flee”*— In the second line of this verse a word is manifestly omitted, which should answer to one thousand in the first: the Septuagint supply **πολλοι**, **רַבִּים** rabbim. But the true word is **רַבְבָּה** rebabah, as I am persuaded any one will be convinced, who will compare the following passages with this place:—

*“How should one chase a thousand;
And two put ten thousand (רַבְבָּה) to flight?”*

Deuteronomy 32:30.

*“And five of you shall chase a hundred;
And a hundred of you shall chase (רַבְבָּה) ten thousand.”*

Leviticus 26:8.

Verse 18. *And therefore will he be exalted “Even for this shall he expect in silence”*— For יָרוּם yarum, he shall be exalted, which belongs not to this place, Houbigant reads יָדוּם yadum, he shall be silent: and so it seems to be in a MS. Another MS. instead of it reads יָשׁוּב yashub, he shall return. The mistakes occasioned by the similitude of the letters דַּ dalet and רַ resh are very frequent, as the reader may have already observed.

Verse 19. *For the people shall dwell in Zion “When a holy people shall dwell in Sion”*— λαος αγιος, Septuagint; עַם קָדוֹשׁ am kadosh. The word קָדוֹשׁ kadosh, lost out of the text, but happily supplied by the Septuagint, clears up the sense, otherwise extremely obscure. When the rest of the cities of the land were taken by the king of Assyria, Zion was preserved, and all that were in it.

Thou shalt weep no more “Thou shalt implore him with weeping”— The negative particle לֹ lo is not acknowledged by the Septuagint. It may perhaps have been written by mistake for לוֹ lo, to him, of which there are many examples.

Verse 20. *Though the Lord “Though JEHOVAH”*— For אֲדֹנָי Adonai, sixteen MSS. and three editions have יְהוָה Yehovah, many of De Rossi’s have the same reading; all my own have יְהוָה Yehovah.

Verse 21. *When ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left “Turn not aside, to the right or to the left.”*— The Syriac Chaldee, and

Vulyate, translate as if, instead of כִּי־וְכִי ki-vechi, they read לֹא־וֶלוֹ lo-velo.

Verse 22. *Ye shall defile “Ye shall treat as defiled”*— The very prohibition of Moses, Deuteronomy 7:25, only thrown out of the prose into the poetical form: “The graven images of their gods ye shall burn with fire: thou shalt not desire the silver or the gold that is on them; nor take it unto thee, lest thou be snared therein; for it is an abomination to JEHOVAH thy God.”

Verse 25. *When the towers fall “When the mighty fall.”*— מִגְדָּלִים migdalim, μεγαλους, Sym.; μεγαλυνομενους, Aquila; רַבְרַבִּי rabrebin, Chard.; all signifying mighty sizes.

Verse 26. *Shall be sevenfold*— The text adds כְּאוֹר שִׁבְעַת הַיָּמִים keor shibath haiyamayim, “as the light of seven days, “a manifest gloss, taken in from the margin; it is not in most of the copies of the Septuagint. It interrupts the rhythmical construction, and obscures the sense by a false, or at least an unnecessary, interpretation.

By moon, sun, light, are to be understood the abundance of spiritual and temporal felicity with which God should bless them in the days of the Messiah, which should be sevenfold, i.e. vastly exceed all that they had ever before possessed.

Verse 27. *And the burden thereof is heavy “And the flame raged violently”*— מַשָּׂאָה massaah; this word seems to be rightly rendered in our translation, the flame, Judges 20:38, 40, etc.; a sign of fire, Jeremiah 6:1; called properly מַשָּׂאֵת masseeth, an elevation, from its tending upwards.

Verse 28. *To sift the nations with a sieve of vanity “To toss the nations with the van of perdition”*— The word לַהֲנַפֵּה lahanaphah is in its form very irregular. Kimchi says it is for לַהֲנִיֵּף lehaniph. Houbigant supposes it to be a mistake, and shows the cause of it; the joining it to the הֵ he, which should begin the following word. The true reading is לַהֲנִיֵּף הַגּוֹיִם lehaniph haggoyim, “to sift the nations.”

The Vulgate seems to be the only one of the ancient interpreters who has explained rightly the sense; but he has dropped the image: *ad perdendas gentes in nihilum*, “to reduce the nations to nothing. “ Kimchi’s explanation is to the following effect: “נַפְחָהּ naphah is a van with which they winnow corn; and its use is to cleanse the corn from the chaff and straw: but the van with which God will winnow the nations will be the van of emptiness or perdition; for nothing useful shall remain behind, but all shall come to nothing, and perish. In like manner, a bridle is designed to guide the horse in the right way; but the bridle which God will put in the jaws of the people shall not direct them aright, but shall make them err, and lead them into destruction. “ This latter image the prophet has applied to the same subject afterwards, ch. 37:29:—

“I will put my bridle in thy jaws, And turn thee back by the way in which thou camest.”

And as for the former it is to be observed, that the van of the ancients was a large instrument, somewhat like a shovel, with a long handle, with which they tossed the corn mixed with the chaff and chopped straw into the air, that the wind might separate them. See Hammond on Matthew 3:12.

There shall be a bridle in the jaws— A metaphor taken from a headstrong, unruly horse: the bridle checks, restrains, and directs him. What the true God does in restraining sinners has been also attributed to the false gods of the heathen. Thus AEschylus, *prom. Vinc.* 691:—

αλλθ επηναγκαζε νιν
διος χαλινος προς βιαν πρασσειν ταδε.

*“But the bridle of Jupiter violently
constrained him to do these things.”*

Verse 30. *The Lord shall cause his glorious voice to be heard*— Kimchi understands this of the great destruction of the Assyrian host by the angel of the Lord. Instead of **בְּזַעַף אֵץ** *bezaaph ais*, “with swift anger, “five of Dr. Kennicott’s MSS. and one of my own, read **בְּזַעַם אֵף** *bezaam aph*,

“with detestation indignant. “ For אֵץ ats, “swift, “which is the common reading, forty-two of Kennicott’s, forty-three of De Rossi’s, and two of my own, have אַץ ats, “wrath or fury. “ The former reading, אֵץ ats, is not found in any Bible previously to that of Van der Hooght, in 1705; and there it seems to be a typographical mistake.

Verse 31. Which smote with a rod “*He that was ready to smite with his staff*”— “Post אַשְׁשׁוּר אַשְׁשׁוּר ashshur, forte excidit אַשְׁר אַשְׁר asher.” —SECKER. After אַשְׁשׁוּר ashshur, probably אַשְׁר אַשְׁר asher, “which, “has been omitted.

Verse 32. The grounded staff “*The rod of his correction*”— For מוֹסְדָה musadah, the grounded staff, of which no one yet has been able to make any tolerable sense, Le Clerc conjectured מוֹסְרָה musarah, of correction; (see Proverbs 22:15;) and so it is in two MSS., (one of them ancient,) and seems to be so in the Bodleian MS. The Syriac has דְּשׁוּעַ בְּרָהּ deshuebedah, Virgo domans, vet subjectionis, “the taming rod, or rod of subjection.”

With tabrets and harps— With every demonstration of joy and thanksgiving for the destruction of the enemy in so wonderful a manner: with hymns of praise, accompanied with musical instruments. See ver. 29.

With it “*Against them.*”— For בָּהּ bah. against her, fifty-two MSS. and five editions read בָּם bam, against them.

Verse 33. For Tophet is ordained— Tophet is a valley very near to Jerusalem, to the southeast, called also the valley of Hinnom or Gehenna; where the Canaanites, and afterwards the Israelites, sacrificed their children, by making them pass through the fire, that is, by burning them in the fire, to Molech, as some suppose. It is therefore used for a place of punishment by fire; and by our blessed Savior in the Gospel for hell-fire, as the Jews themselves had applied it. See Chald. on Isaiah 33:14, where מוֹקְדֵי עֵלָם mokedey olam is rendered “the Gehenna of everlasting fire. “ Here the place where the Assyrian army was destroyed is called Tophet by a metonymy; for the Assyrian army was destroyed probably at a greater distance from Jerusalem, and quite on the opposite side of it: for

Nob is mentioned as the last station, from which the king of Assyria should threaten Jerusalem, chap. 10:32, where the prophet seems to have given a very exact chorographical description of his march in order to attack the city; which however he never reached. — L.

CHAPTER 31

The Jews again reproved for their confidence in Egypt, finely contrasted with their neglect of the power and protection of God, 1-3. Deliverance and protection are, notwithstanding, promised, expressed by two similes; the first remarkably lofty and poetical, the latter singularly beautiful and tender, 4, 5. Exhortation to repentance, joined with the prediction of a more reformed period, 6, 7. This chapter concludes like the preceding, with a prophecy of the fall of Sennacherib, 8, 9.

NOTES ON CHAP. 31

Verse 1. *Wo to them that go down to Egypt*— This is a reproof to the Israelites for forming an alliance with the Egyptians, and not trusting in the Lord.

And stay on horses “*Who trust in horses*”— For ועל veal, and upon, first twenty MSS. of Kennicott’s, thirty of De Rossi’s, one of my own, and the Septuagint, Arabic, and Vulgate, read על al, upon, without the conjunction, which disturbs the sense.

Verse 2. *His words* “*His word*”— דברו debaro, singular, without י yod, two MSS. of Dr. Kennicott’s the Septuagint, and Targ. Hieros. דרכיו derachaiv, his ways, is found in one MS.

Verse 3. He that helpeth (the Egyptians) shall fall and he that is holpen (the Israelites) shall fall down-together.

Verse 4. *Like as the lion*— This comparison is exactly in the spirit and manner, and very nearly approaching to the expression, of Homer.

βη ρ' ιμεν, ωστε λεων ορεσιτροφος, οστ' επιδευης
δηρον εη κρειων, κελεται δε ε θυμος αγηνωρ,

μηλων πειρησοντα, και ες πυκινον δομον ελθειν
 ειπερ γαρ χ' ευρησι παρ' αυτοψι βωτορας ανδρας
 συν κυσι και δουρεσσι φυλασσοντας περι μηλα,
 ου ρα τ' απειρητος μεμονε σταθμοιο διεσθαι.
 αλλ' ογ' αρ η ηρπαξε μεταλμενος, ηε και αυτος
 εβλητ' εν πρωτοισι θοης απο χειρος ακοντι.

Iliad 12:299.

*As the bold lion, mountain-bred, now long
 Famished, with courage and with hunger stung
 Attempts the thronged fold: him nought appals,
 Though dogs and armed shepherds stand in guard
 Collected; he nathless undaunted springs
 O'er the high fence, and rends the trembling prey;
 Or, rushing onward, in his breast receives
 The well-aimed spear.*

Of metaphors, allegories, and comparisons of the Hebrew poets, in which the Divine nature and attributes are represented under images taken from brutes and other low objects; of their effect, their sublimity, and the causes of it; see De Sac. Poes. Heb., Praelect. 16:sub. fin.

Verse 5. *Passing over “Leaping forward”*— The generality of interpreters observe in this place an allusion to the deliverance which God vouchsafed to his people when he destroyed the first-born of the Egyptians, and exempted those of the Israelites sojourning among them by a peculiar interposition. The same word is made use of here which is used upon that occasion, and which gave the name to the feast which was instituted in commemoration of that deliverance, פסח pesach. But the difficulty is to reconcile the commonly received meaning of that word with the circumstances of the similitude here used to illustrate the deliverance represented as parallel to the deliverance in Egypt.

*“As the mother birds hovering over their young,
 So shall JEHOVAH God of hosts protect Jerusalem;
 Protecting and delivering, passing over, and rescuing
 her.”*

This difficulty is, I think, well solved by Vitringa, whose remark is the more worthy of observation, as it leads to the true meaning of an important word, which hitherto seems greatly to have been misunderstood, though Vitringa himself, as it appears to me, has not exactly enough defined the precise meaning of it. He says, “פסח pasach signifies to cover, to protect by covering: *σκεπασω υμας*, Septuagint. JEHOVAH obteget ostium; ‘The Lord will cover or protect the door.’ “ whereas it means that particular action or motion by which God at that time placed himself in such a situation as to protect the house of the Israelite against the destroying angel; to spring forward, to throw one’s self in the way, in order to cover and protect. Cocceius comes nearer to the true meaning than Vitringa, by rendering it gradum facere, to march, to step forward; Lexicon in voc. The common meaning of the word פסח pasach upon other occasions is to halt, to be lame, to leap, as in a rude manner of dancing, (as the prophets of Baal did, 1 Kings 18:26,) all which agrees very well together; for the motion of a lame person is a perpetual springing forward, by throwing himself from the weaker upon the stronger leg. The common notion of God’s passage over the houses of the Israelites is, that in going through the land of Egypt to smite the first-born, seeing the blood on the door of the houses of the Israelites, he passed over, or skipped, those houses, and forbore to smite them. But that this is not the true notion of the thing, will be plain from considering the words of the sacred historian, where he describes very explicitly the action: “For JEHOVAH will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when he seeth the blood on the lintels and on the two side posts, JEHOVAH will spring forward over (or before) the door, *ופסח יהוה על הפתח* upasach Yehovah al happethach, and will not suffer the destroyer to come into your houses to smite you, “Exodus 12:23. Here are manifestly two distinct agents, with which the notion of passing over is not consistent, for that supposes but one agent. The two agents are the destroying angel passing through to smite every house, and JEHOVAH the Protector keeping pace with him; and who, seeing the door of the Israelite marked with the blood, the token prescribed, leaps forward, throws himself with a sudden motion in the way, opposes the destroying angel, and covers and protects that house against the destroying angel, nor suffers him to smite it. In this way of considering the action, the

beautiful similitude of the bird protecting her young answers exactly to the application by the allusion to the deliverance in Egypt. As the mother bird spreads her wings to cover her young, throws herself before them, and opposes the rapacious bird that assaults them, so shall JEHOVAH protect, as with a shield, Jerusalem from the enemy, protecting and delivering, springing forward and rescuing her; **υπερβαιων**, as the three other Greek interpreters, Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion, render it. The Septuagint, **περιποιησεται** instead of which MS. Pachom. has **περιβησεται**, circumeundo proteget, “in going about he shall protect, “which I think is the true reading. — Homer, 2:viii. 329, expresses the very same image by this word:—

αιας δ' ουκ αμελησε κασιγνητοιο πεσοντος,
αλλα θεων περιβη, και οι σακος αμφεκαλυψε:

“ — *But Ajax his broad shield displayed,
And screened his brother with a mighty shade.*”

—'ος χρυσην αμφιβεβηκας.

II. 1:37

Which the scholiast explains by **περιβεβηκας, υπερμαχεις**, i.e., “Thou who strictly guardest Chryses.” —L. On this verse Kimchi says, “The angel of the Lord which destroyed the Assyrians is compared to a lion, ver. 4, for his strength: and here (ver. 5) to flying birds, for his swiftness.

Verse 6. Have deeply revolted “*Have so deeply engaged in revolt.*” — All the ancient Versions read **יקימית** taamiku, in the second person, instead of **יקימית** heemiku, they have deeply revolted, etc.

Verse 7. Which your own hands have made unto you for a sin “*The sin, which their own hands have made.*” — The construction of the word **חַטָּא** chet, sin, in this place is not easy. The Septuagint have omitted it: MSS. Pachom. and 1:D. 2:and Cod. Marchal. in margine, supply the omission by the word **αμαρτιαν**, sin, or **αμαρτημα**, said to be from Aquila’s Version, which I have followed. The learned Professor Schroeder,

Institut. Ling. Hebrews p. 298, makes it to be in regimine with יְדֵיכֶם yedeychem, as an epithet, your sinful hands. The Septuagint render the pronoun in the third person, αἱ χεῖρες αὐτῶν, their hands; and an ancient MS. has, agreeable to that rendering, להֶם lahem, to them, for לָכֶם lachem, to you; which word they have likewise omitted, as not necessary to complete the sense.

Verse 8. *Then shall the Assyrian fall*, etc.— Because he was to be discomfited by the angel of the Lord, destroying in his camp, in one night, upwards of one hundred and eighty thousand men; and Sennacherib himself fell by the hands of the princes, his own sons. Not mighty men, for they were not soldiers; not mean men, for they were princes.

CHAPTER 32

Prophecy of great prosperity under Hezekiah; but, in its highest sense, applicable to Christ, 1-8. Description of impending calamities, 9-14. Rejection of the Jews, and calling of the Gentiles, 15. The future prosperity of the Church 16-20.

NOTES ON CHAP. 32

Verse 1. *Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness*— If King Hezekiah were a type of Christ, then this prophecy may refer to his time; but otherwise it seems to have Hezekiah primarily in view. It is evident, however, that in the fullest sense these words cannot be applied to any man; GOD alone can do all that is promised here.

*“When Sirius rages, and thine aching head,
Parched skin, and feeble knees refreshment need;
Then to the rock’s projected shade retire,
With Biblin wine recruit thy wasted powers.”*

Verse 3. *And the eyes of them that see shall not be dim* “*And him the eyes of those that see shall regard*”— For וּלְאֵי velo, and not, Le Clerc reads וּלְוֵ velo, and to him, of which mistake the Masoretes acknowledge there are fifteen instances; and many more are reckoned by others. The removal of the negative restores to the verb its true and usual sense.

Verse 5. *The vile person shall no more be called liberal*— The different epithets here employed require minute explanation.

The vile person- נָבֵל nabal, the pampered, fattened, brainless fellow, who eats to live, and lives to eat; who will scarcely part with any thing, and that which he does give he gives with an evil eye and a grudging heart.

Liberal- נָדִיב nadib; the generous, openhearted, princely man, who writes on all his possessions, For myself and mankind, and lives only to get and to do good.

The churl- כִּילַי kilai, the avaricious man; he who starves himself amidst his plenty, and will not take the necessaries of life for fear of lessening his stock.

Thus he differs from נָבֵל nabal, who feeds himself to the full, and regards no one else; like the rich man in the Gospel. The avaricious man is called כִּילַי kilai, from כִּי ki, for, לִי li, myself; or contracted from כֹּל col, all, and לִי li, to myself: all is mine; all I have is my own; and all I can get is for myself: and yet this man enjoys nothing; he withholds

*From back and belly too their proper fare:—
O cursed lust of gold, when for thy sake*

*The wretch throws up his interest in both worlds,
First starved in this, then damned in that to come!*

Bountiful-שוע שוּע shoa, he who is abundantly rich; who rejoices in his plenty, and deals out to the distressed with a liberal hand.

Verse 6. The vile person will speak villany “The fool will still utter folly”— A sort of proverbial saying, which Euripides (Bacchae, 369) has expressed in the very same manner and words: μωρα γαρ μωρος λεγει “The fool speaks folly. “ Of this kind of simple and unadorned proverb or parable, see De S. Poes, Hebr. Praelect. xxiv.

Against the Lord “Against JEHOVAH”— For אל El, two MSS. read אל al, more properly; but both are of nearly the same meaning.

Verse 7. The instruments also of the churl are evil “As for the niggard, his instruments are evil”— His machinations, his designs. The paronomasia, which the prophet frequently deals in, suggested this expression וכלי כליו vechelai kelaiv. The first word is expressed with some variety in the MSS. Seven MSS. read וכילי vekili, one וכל vechol, another וכולי vecoli.

To destroy the poor with lying words “To defeat the assertions of the poor in judgment”— A word seems to have been lost here, and two others to have suffered a small alteration, which has made the sentence very obscure. The Septuagint have happily retained the rendering of the lost word, and restored the sentence in all its parts: και διασκεδασαι λογους ταπεινων εν κρισει ולהפך דברי אביו במשפט ulehapher dibrey ebyon bemishpat, “And disperse the words of the poor in judgment. “ They frequently render the verb הפך haphar by διασκεδασαι, A MS. reads ולדבר uledabber, which gives authority for the preposition ל lamed, to, necessary to the sense, and the Septuagint, Syriac, and Chaldee read במשפט bemishpat, IN judgment.

Verse 8. Liberal things “Generous purposes”— “Of the four sorts of persons mentioned ver. 5, three are described, ver. 6, 7, and 8, but not the

fourth.” —SECKER. Perhaps for **והוֹשֵׁה** vehu, and he, we ought to read **וְשׂוֹעַ** veshoa, the bountiful.

Verse 9. Rise up, ye women “ye provinces. “ Ye careless daughters “ye cities.” —Targum.

From this verse to the end of the fourteenth, the desolation of Judea by the Chaldeans appears to be foretold.

Verse 11. *Gird sackcloth*— **שַׂק** sak, sackcloth, a word necessary to the sense, is here lost, but preserved by the Septuagint, MSS. Alex. and Pachom., and 1:D. II., and edit. Ald. and Comp., and the Arabic and Syriac.

Tremble-be troubled-strip you— **פִּשְׁטָה** peshotah, **רִגְזָה** regazah, etc. These are infinitives, with a paragogic **ה** he, according to Schultens, Institut. Ling. Hebr. p. 453, and are to be taken in an imperative sense.

Verse 12. *They shall lament-for the pleasant fields* “***Mourn ye for the pleasant field***” — The Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate read **סִפְדוּ** siphdu, mourn ye, imperative; twelve MSS., (five ancient,) two editions, the Septuagint, Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotion, Syriac, and Vulgate, all read **שָׂדֵה** sadeh, a field; not **שְׂדֵי** shedey, breasts.

Verse 13. *Shall come up thorns and briers* “***The thorn and the brier shall come up***” — All the ancient Versions read **וְשָׁמִיר** veshamir, with the conjunction. And an ancient MS. has **תַּעֲלֶה בּוֹ** taaleh bo, “shall come up in it, “which seems to be right; or rather **בָּהּ** bah: and there is a rasure in the place of **בוּ** bo in another ancient MS.

Yea, upon all the houses of joy— For **כִּי** ki, the ancient Versions, except the Vulgate, seem to have read **וּ** ve. **כִּי** ki may perhaps be a mistake for **בוּ** bo, or **בָּהּ** bah, in it, above mentioned. It is not necessary in this place.

The description of impending distress which begins at ver. 13 belongs to

other times than that of Sennacherib's invasion, from which they were so soon delivered. It must at least extend to the ruin of the country and city by the Chaldeans. And the promise of blessings which follows was not fulfilled under the Mosaic dispensation; they belong to the KINGDOM of Messiah. Compare ver. 15 with chap. 29:17, and see the note there.

Verse 14. *The palaces shall be forsaken*— The house of the sanctuary (the temple) shall be destroyed. — Targum.

The forts "Ophel"— It was a part of Mount Zion, rising higher than the rest, at the eastern extremity, near to the temple, a little to the south of it; called by Micah, chap. 4:8, "Ophel of the daughter of Zion." It was naturally strong by its situation; and had a wall of its own, by which it was separated from the rest of Zion.

Verse 15. *And the fruitful field*— **והכרמל** vehaccarmel. So fifteen MSS., six ancient, and two editions; which seems to make the noun an appellative.

Verse 17. *The work of righteousness*— Righteousness works and produces peace.

The effect of righteousness— **עבדת** abodath, the culture. Righteousness, cultivated by peace, produces tranquillity of mind and permanent security. Reader, hast thou the principle? If so, dost thou cultivate it? If thou dost, thou hast peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, and a sure and certain hope of everlasting life.

Verse 19. *The city shalt be low all a low place. "The city shall be laid level with the plain."*— For **ובשפלה** ubashephelah, the Syriac reads **וכשפלה** ukeshephelah. The city—probably Nineveh or Babylon: but this verse is very obscure. Saltus; Assyriorum regnum: civitas; magnifica Assyriorum castra. Ephrem Syr. ire loc. For **וברד** ubarad, a MS. has **וירד** vaiyered; and so conjectured Abp. Secker, referring to Zechariah 11:2.

Verse 20. *That sow beside all waters* “*Who sow your seed in every well-watered place*”— Sir John Chardin’s note on this place is: “This exactly answers the manner of planting rice; for they sow it upon the water, and before sowing, while the earth is covered with water, they cause the ground to be trodden by oxen, horses, and asses, who go mid-leg deep; and this is the way of preparing the ground for sowing. As they sow the rice on the water, they transplant it in the water. “ Harmer’s Observ. vol. 1:p. 280. “Rice is the food of two-thirds of mankind. “ Dr. Arbuthnot. “It is cultivated in most of the eastern countries. “ Miller. “It is good for all, and at all times. “ Sir J. Chardin, ib. “Le ris, qui est leur principal aliment et leur froment (i.e., des Siamois,) n’est jamais assez arrose; il croit au milieu de l’eau, et les campagnes ou on le cultive ressemblent plutot a de marets que non pas a des terres qu’on laboure avec la charue. Le ris a bien cette force, que quoy qu’il y ait six ou sept pieds d’eau sur lui, il pousse toujours sa tige au dessus; et le tuyau qui le porte s’eleve et croit a proportion de la hauteur de l’eau qui noye son champ. Voyage de l’Eveque de Beryte, p. 144. Paris, 1666. — L. “Rice, which is the principal grain and aliment of the Siamese, can never be too much watered. It grows in the water, and the fields where it is sown resemble marshes rather than fields cultivated by ploughing. Rice has that property that although it be covered with water six or seven feet deep, yet it raises its stalk above it; and this grows long in proportion to the depth of the water by which the field is inundated.”

CHAPTER 33

This chapter contains the sequel of the prophecy respecting Sennacherib. The prophet addresses himself to the Assyrian monarch, 1-4. The mercy and power of God acknowledged by the Jews, 5, 6. Distress and despair of the Jews at the approach of Sennacherib, 7-9. Gracious promise of deliverance, 10-13. Dreadful apprehensions of the wicked, and security of the righteous, 14-17. The security of the Jews under the reign of Hezekiah, and the wretched condition of Sennacherib and his army, 18-24.

The plan of the prophecy continued in this chapter, and which is manifestly distinct from the foregoing, is peculiarly elegant. To set it in a proper light, it will be necessary to mark the transitions from one part of it to another.

In ver. 1, the prophet addresses himself to Sennacherib, briefly, but strongly and elegantly, expressing the injustice of his ambitious designs, and the sudden disappointments of them.

In ver. 2, the Jews are introduced offering up their earnest supplications to God in their present distressful condition; with expressions of their trust and confidence in his protection.

In verses 3 and 4 the prophet in the name of God, or rather God himself, is introduced addressing himself to Sennacherib, and threatening him that, notwithstanding the terror which he had occasioned in the invaded countries, yet he should fall, and become an easy prey to those whom he had intended to subdue.

In verses 5 and 6, a chorus of Jews is introduced, acknowledging the mercy and power of God, who had undertaken to protect them; extolling it with direct opposition to the boasted power of their enemies, and celebrating the wisdom and piety of their king Hezekiah, who had placed his confidence in the favor of God.

Then follows, in verses 7, 8, and 9, a description of the distress and despair of the Jews, upon the king of Assyria's marching against Jerusalem, and sending his summons to them to surrender, after the treaty he had made with Hezekiah on the conditions of his paying, as he actually did pay to him, three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold. 2 Kings 18:14-16.

In ver. 10, God himself is again introduced, declaring that he will interpose in this critical situation of affairs, and disappoint the vain designs of the enemies of his people, by discomfiting and utterly consuming them.

Then follows, ver. 11-22, still in the person of God, which however falls at last into that of the prophet, a description of the dreadful apprehensions of the wicked in those times of distress and imminent danger; finely contrasted with the confidence and security of the righteous, and their trust in the promises of God that he will be their never-failing strength and protector.

The whole concludes, in the person of the prophet, with a description of the security of the Jews under the protection of God, and of the wretched state of Sennacherib and his army, wholly discomfited, and exposed to be plundered even by the weakest of the enemy.

Much of the beauty of this passage depends on the explanation above given of ver. 3 and 4, as addressed by the prophet, or by God himself, to Sennacherib; not as it is usually taken, as addressed by the Jews to God, ver. 3, and then ver. 4, as addressed to the Assyrians. To set this in a clear light, it may be of use to compare it with a passage of the Prophet Joel; where, speaking of the destruction caused by the locusts, he sets in the same strong light of opposition as Isaiah does here, the power of the enemy, and the power of JEHOVAH, who would destroy that enemy. Thus Isaiah to Sennacherib:—

“When thou didst raise thyself up, the nations were dispersed “—

Ver. 3.

“But now will I arise, saith JEHOVAH; Now will I be exalted.”

Ver. 10.

And thus Joel, chap. 2:20, 21:—

“His stink shall come up, and his ill savor shall ascend; Though he hath done great things. Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice; For JEHOVAH will do great things.” — L.

NOTES ON CHAP. 33

Verse 1. And dearest treacherously “Thou plunderer”— See note on chap. 21:2.

When thou shalt make an end to deal treacherously “When thou art weary of plundering”— “כנלתך cannelothecha, alibi non extat in s. s. nisi f. Job 15:29 — simplicius est legere ככלתך kechallothecha. Vid. Capell.; nec repugnat Vitringa. Vid. Daniel 9:24. כלה calah התיים hatim.” — Secker.

Verse 2. Be thou their arm every morning “Be thou our strength every morning”— For זרעם zeroam, their arm, the Syriac, Chaldee, and Vulgate read זרענו zeroenu, our arm, in the first person of the pronoun, not the third: the edition of Felix Pratensis has זרעתינו zeroetheynu in the margin.

The prophet is here praying against the enemies of God’s people; and yet this part of the prayer seems to be in their behalf: but from the above authorities it appears that OUR arm is the true reading, though I do not find it confirmed by any of Kennicott’s, De Rossi’s, or my own MSS. My old MS. Bible has, — Be thou our arm in early.

Verse 3. At the noise of the tumult “From thy terrible voice”— For המז

hamon, “multitude, “the Septuagint and Syriac read אַמִּיד amica, “terrible, “whom I follow.

Verse 6. *His treasure “Thy treasure.”*— ‘Ο θησαυρος σου, Sym. He had in his copy אֲצַרְךָ otsarcha, “thy treasure, “not אֲצַרוֹ otsaro, “his treasure.”

Verse 7. *Their valiant ones shall cry without “The mighty men raise a grievous cry”*— Three MSS. read אֲרֵאֵלִים erelim, that is, lions of God, or strong lions. So they called valiant men heroes; which appellation the Arabians Ver. 3. and Persians still use. See Bochart. Hieroz. Part 1:lib. 3:cap. 1. “Mahomet, ayant reconnu Hamzeh son oncle pour homme de courage et de valeur, lui donne le titre ou surnom d’Assad Allah, qui signifie le lion de Dieu. “ D’Herbelot, p. 427. And for חֲצָה chatsah, the Syriac and Chaldee, read קֶשָׁה kashah, whom I follow. The Chaldee, Syriac, Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion read אֲרֵאֵה לָהֶם ereh lahem, or יֵרֵאֵה yireh, with what meaning is not clear.

The word אֲרֵאֵלִים erellam, which we translate valiant ones, is very difficult; no man knows what it means. Kimchi supposes that it is the name of the angel that smote the Assyrian camp! The Vulgate, and my old MS., translate it seers; and most of the Versions understand it in this way. None of the MSS. give us any help, but as we see above in Lowth.

Verse 9. *Bashan and Carmel shake off their fruits “Bashan and Carmel are stripped of their beauty.”*— φανερα εσταυ, made manifest. Sept. They read וְנִעְרָה veneerah.

Verse 11. *Your breath “And my spirit”*— “For רֹחֶכֶם ruchechem, your spirit, read רֹחִי כִּמוֹ ruchi kemo. “ Secker. Which reading is confirmed by the Chaldee, where מֵימְרֵי meywri, “my word, “answers to רֹחִי ruchi, “my spirit.”

Verse 14. *The sinners in Zion are afraid*— Zion has been generally considered as a type of the Church of God. Now all the members of God’s

Church should be holy, and given to good works; sinners in Zion, therefore, are portentous beings! but, alas! where are they not? The Targum on this verse is worthy of notice: “The sinners in Zion are broken down; fear hath seized the ungodly, who are suffering for their ways. They say, Who among us shall dwell in Zion, where the splendor of the Divine Majesty is like a consuming fire? Who of us shall dwell in Jerusalem, where the ungodly are judged and delivered into hell for an eternal burning?” Everdurynge brennyngis. Old MS. Bible.

Verse 15. *That stoppeth his ears from heariny of blood* “*Who stoppeth his ears to the proposal of bloodshed*”— A MS. reads בַּדָּמִים *bedamim*, “in blood.”

Verse 18. *Where is the scribe?*— The person appointed by the king of Assyria to estimate their number and property in reference to their being heavily taxed.

Where is the receiver?— Or he who was to have collected this tribute.

Where is he that counted the towers?— That is, the commander of the enemy’s forces, who surveyed the fortifications of the city, and took an account of the height, strength, and situation of the walls and towers, that he might know where to make the assault with the greatest advantage; as Capaneus before Thebes is represented in a passage of the Phoenissae of Euripides, which Grotius has applied as an illustration of this place:—

ΕΚΕΙΝΟΣ ΕΠΤΑ ΠΡΟΣΒΑΣΕΙΣ ΤΕΚΜΑΙΡΕΤΑΙ
ΠΥΡΓΩΝ, ΑΝΩ ΤΕ ΚΑΙ ΚΑΤΩ ΤΕΙΧΗ ΜΕΤΡΩΝ.

Ver. 187.

*“To these seven turrets each approach he marks;
The walls from their proud summit to their base
Measuring with eager eye.”*

He that counted the towers “Those who were ordered to review the fortified places in Judea, that they might be manned and provisioned for the king of Assyria. So sure was he of gaining Jerusalem and subduing the

whole of Judea, that he had already formed all these arrangements.” — Dodd’s notes.

Verse 20. *Look upon Zion “Thou shalt see Zion”*— For **חָזַה** chazeh, “see, “read **תִּחְזֶה** techezeh, “thou shalt see, “with the Chaldee. — Houbigant. At the end of this verse we find in the Masoretic Bibles this note, **חֲצִי הַסֵּפֶר** chatsi hassepher, “the middle of the book; “ that is the middle of the book of Isaiah.

Verse 21. *The glorious Lord “The glorious name of JEHOVAH”*— I take **שֵׁם** shem for a noun, with the Septuagint and Syriac. See Psalm 20:1; Proverbs 18:10.

Verse 23. *Thy tacklings are loosed*— Here the Assyrians are represented under the figure of a ship wrecked by a violent storm; and the people on the beach, young, old, feeble, and diseased, gathering the spoil without any to hinder them. Kimchi, who understands the whole of this chapter of Hezekiah and the king of Assyria, says, “There are others of our rabbins who apply it all to the days of the Messiah.”

Their mast “Thy mast”— For **תֹּרְנָם** tornam, “their mast, “the Syriac reads **תֹּרְנֵיךָ** torneycha, “thy mast; “ the Septuagint and Vulgate, **תֹּרְנֵיךָ** tornecha, **ο ιστος σου εκλινεν**, “thy mast is fallen aside.” —Septuagint. They seem to have read **נָטָה** natah or **פָּנָה** panah, **תֹּרְנֵיךָ** tornecha, or rather, **לֹא כֹ** lo con, “is not firm, “the negative having been omitted in the present text by mistake. However, I have followed their sense, which seems very probable, as the present reading is to me extremely obscure.

Verse 24. *And the inhabitant shall not say*— This verse is somewhat obscure. The meaning of it seems to be, that the army of Sennacherib shall by the stroke of God be reduced to so shattered and so weak a condition, that the Jews shall fall upon the remains of them, and plunder them without resistance; that the most infirm and disabled of the people of Jerusalem shall come in for their share of the spoil; the lame shall seize the prey; even the sick and the diseased shall throw aside their infirmities, and recover strength enough to hasten to the general plunder. See above.

The last line of the verse is parallel to the first, and expresses the same sense in other words. Sickness being considered as a visitation from God, a punishment of sin; the forgiveness of sin is equivalent to the removal of a disease. Thus the psalmist:—

*“Who forgiveth all thy sin;
And healeth all thine infirmities.”*

Psalm 103:3.

Where the latter line only varies the expression of the former. And our blessed Savior reasons with the Jews on the same principle: “Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins are forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk?” Mark 2:9. See also Matthew 8:17; Isaiah 53:4. Qui locus Isaiae, 1 Peter 2:24, refertur ad remissionem peccatorum: hic vero ad sanationem morborum, quia ejusdem potentiae et bonitatis est utrumque praestare; et, quia peccatis remissis, et morbi, qui fructus sunt peccatorum, pelluntur. “Which passage of Isaiah has reference, in 1 Peter 2:24, to the remission of sins, and here to the healing of diseases, because both are effects of the same power and goodness; and because with the remission of sins was associated the removal of disorders, the fruits of sin.” —Wetstein on Matthew 8:17.

That this prophecy was exactly fulfilled, I think we may gather from the history of this great event given by the prophet himself. It is plain that Hezekiah, by his treaty with Sennacherib, by which he agreed to pay him three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold, had stripped himself of his whole treasure. He not only gave him all the silver and gold that was in his own treasury and in that of the temple, but was even forced to cut off the gold from the doors of the temple and from the pillars, with which he had himself overlaid them, to satisfy the demands of the king of Assyria: but after the destruction of the Assyrian army, we find that he “had exceeding much riches, and that he made himself treasuries for silver, and for gold, and for precious stones, “etc.2 Chronicles 32:27. He was so rich, that out of pride and vanity he displayed his wealth to the ambassadors from Babylon. This cannot be

otherwise accounted for, than by the prodigious spoil that was taken on the destruction of the Assyrian army. — L. And thus, in the providence of God, he had the wealth which was exacted from him restored.

CHAPTER 34

The prophet earnestly exhorts all nations to attend to the communication which he has received from Jehovah, as the matter is of the highest importance, and of universal concern, 1. The wrath of God is denounced against all the nations that had provoked to anger the Defender of the cause of Zion, 2, 3. Great crowd of images, by which the final overthrow and utter extermination of every thing that opposes the spread of true religion in the earth are forcibly and majestically set forth; images so very bold and expressive as to render it impossible, without doing great violence to symbolical language, to restrain their import to the calamities which befell the Edomites in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, or in that of any other potentate, or even to the calamities which the enemies of the Church have yet suffered since the delivery of the prophecy. Edom must therefore be a type of Antichrist, the last grand adversary of the people of God; and consequently this most awful prophecy, in its ultimate signification, remains to be accomplished, 4-15. The Churches of God, at the period of the consummation, commanded to consult the book of Jehovah, and note the exact fulfillment of these terrible predictions in their minutest details. Not one jot or little relative even to the circumstances shadowed forth by the impure animals shall be found to fail; for what the mouth of the Lord has declared necessary to satisfy the Divine justice, his Spirit will accomplish, 16, 17.

This and the following chapter make one distinct prophecy; an entire, regular, and beautiful poem, consisting of two parts: the first containing a denunciation of Divine vengeance against the enemies of the people or Church of God; the second describing the flourishing state of the Church of God consequent upon the execution of those judgments. The event foretold is represented as of the highest importance, and of universal concern: ALL nations are called upon to attend to the declaration of it; and the wrath of God is denounced against all the nations, that is, all those that had provoked to anger the Defender of the cause of Zion. Among those, Edom is particularly specified. The principal provocation of Edom was

their insulting the Jews in their distress, and joining against them with their enemies, the Chaldeans; see Amos 1:11; Ezekiel 25:12; 35:16; Psalm 137:7. Accordingly the Edomites were, together with the rest of the neighboring nations, ravaged and laid waste by Nebuchadnezzar; see Jeremiah 25:15-26; Malachi 1:3, 4, and see Marsham, *Can. Chron. Saec. xviii.*, who calls this the age of the destruction of cities. The general devastation spread through all these countries by Nebuchadnezzar may be the event which the prophet has primarily in view in the thirty-fourth chapter: but this event, as far as we have any account of it in history, seems by no means to come up to the terms of the prophecy, or to justify so highly wrought and terrible a description; and it is not easy to discover what connection the extremely flourishing state of the Church or people of God, described in the next chapter, could have with those events, and how the former could be the consequence of the latter, as it is there represented to be. By a figure, very common in the prophetical writings, any city or people, remarkably distinguished as enemies of the people and kingdom of God, is put for those enemies in general. This seems here to be the case with Edom and Botsra. It seems, therefore, reasonable to suppose, with many learned expositors, that this prophecy has a farther view to events still future; to some great revolutions to be effected in later times, antecedent to that more perfect state of the kingdom of God upon earth, and serving to introduce it, which the Holy Scriptures warrant us to expect.

That the thirty-fifth chapter has a view beyond any thing that could be the immediate consequence of those events, is plain from every part, especially from the middle of it, ver. 5, 6; where the miraculous works wrought by our blessed Savior are so clearly specified, that we cannot avoid making the application: and our Savior himself has moreover plainly referred to this very passage, as speaking of him and his works, Matthew 11:4, 5. He bids the disciples of John to go and report to their master the things which they heard and saw; that the blind received their sight, the lame walked, and the deaf heard; and leaves it to him to draw the conclusion in answer to his inquiry, whether he who performed the very works which the prophets foretold should be performed by the Messiah, was not indeed the Messiah himself. And where are these works so distinctly marked by any of the prophets as in this place? and how could

they be marked more distinctly? To these the strictly literal interpretation of the prophet's words directs us. According to the allegorical interpretation they may have a farther view: this part of the prophecy may run parallel with the former and relate to the future advent of Christ; to the conversion of the Jews, and their restitution to their land; to the extension and purification of the Christian faith; events predicted in the Holy Scriptures as preparatory to it. Kimchi says, "This chapter points out the future destruction of Rome, which is here called Bosra; for Bosra was a great city of the Edomites. Now the major part of the Romans are Edomites, who profess the law of Jesus. The Emperor Caesar (qy. Constantine) was an Edomite, and so were all the emperors after him. The destruction of the Turkish empire is also comprehended in this prophecy." —L. As to the last, I say, Amen!

NOTES ON CHAP. 34

Verse 1. Harken "Attend unto me"— A MS. adds in this line the word אֲלֵי ali, unto me, after לְאֲמִים leummim; which seems to be genuine.

Verse 4. And all the host of heaven I See note on chap. 24:21, and De Sacra Poesi Hebraeorum, Prael. ix.

Verse 5. For my sword shall be bathed in heaven "For my sword is made bare in the heavens"— There seems to be some impropriety in this, according to the present reading: "My sword is made drunken, or is bathed in the heavens; " which forestalls, and expresses not in its proper place, what belongs to the next verse: for the sword of JEHOVAH was not to be bathed or glutted with blood in the heavens, but in Botsra and the land of Edom. In the heavens it was only prepared for slaughter. To remedy this, Archbishop Secker proposes to read, for בַּשָּׁמַיִם bashshamayim, בְּדָמִים bedamim; referring to Jeremiah 46:10. But even this is premature, and not in its proper place. The Chaldee, for רִוְתָה rivvethah, has תִּתְגַּלֵּי tithgalli, shall be revealed or disclosed: perhaps he read תְּרָאֵה teraeh or נִרְאֵה nirathah. Whatever reading, different I presume from the present, he might find in his copy, I follow the sense which he has given of it.

Verse 6. *The Lord hath a sacrifice* “*For JEHOVAH celebrateth a sacrifice*”—Ezekiel, chap. 39:16, 17, has manifestly imitated this place of Isaiah. He hath set forth the great leaders and princes of the adverse powers under the same emblems of goats, bulls, rams, fatlings, etc., and has added to the boldness of the imagery, by introducing God as summoning all the fowls of the air, and all the beasts of the field, and bidding them to the feast which he has prepared for them by the slaughter of the enemies of his people:—

*“And thou, son of man,
Thus saith the Lord JEHOVAH,
Say to the bird of every wing,
And to every beast of the field:
Assemble yourselves, and come;
Gather together from every side,
To the sacrifice which I make for you,
A great slaughter on the mountains of Israel.
And ye shall eat flesh and drink blood:
The flesh of the mighty shall ye eat,
And the blood of the lofty of the earth shall ye drink;
Of rams, of lambs, and of goats,
Of bullocks, all of them the fat ones of Bashan;
And ye shall eat fat, till ye are cloyed,
And drink blood, till ye are drunken;
Of my slaughter, which I have slain for you.”*

The sublime author of the Revelation, chap. 19:17, 18, has taken this image from Ezekiel, rather than from Isaiah.

Verse 7. *The unicorns shall come down*—רַעַמִּים reemim, translated wild goats by Bishop Lowth. The רַעַם reem Bochart thinks to be a species of wild goat in the deserts of Arabia. It seems generally to mean the rhinoceros.

With blood “*With their blood*”—מִדָּמָם middamam; so two ancient

MSS. of Kennicott's the Syriac, and Chaldee.

Verse 8. *The year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion* “*The year of recompense to the defender of the cause of Zion*”—As from דוּן *dun*, דין *din*, a judge; so from רוב *rub*, ריב *rib*, an advocate, or defender; Judici Sionis: Syriac.

Verse 11. *The cormorant*—קאת *kaath*, the pelican, from the root קיא *ki*, to vomit, because it is said she swallows shell-fish, and when the heat of her stomach has killed the fish, she vomits the shells, takes out the dead fish, and eats them.

The bittern—קפד *kippod*, the hedge-hog, or porcupine.

The owl—ינשופ *yanshoph*, the bittern, from נשפ *nashaph*, to blow, because of the blowing noise it makes, almost like the lowing of an ox. My old MS. Bible renders the words thus: — The foule in face like an asse, and the yrchoun, and the snyte (snipe.)

The line of confusion, and the stones of emptiness “*The plummet of emptiness over her scorched plains.*”—The word חוריה *choreyha*, joined to the 12th verse, embarrasses it, and makes it inexplicable. At least I do not know that any one has yet made out the construction, or given any tolerable explication of it. I join it to the 11th verse, and supply a letter or two, which seem to have been lost. Fifteen MSS. five ancient, and two editions, read חוריה *choreyha*; the first printed edition of 1486, I think nearer to the truth, חור חוריה *chor choreyha*. I read בחרריה *becharereyha*, or על חרריה *al chorereyha*; see Jeremiah 17:6. A MS. has חוריה *chodiah*, and the Syriac reads חדוה *chaduah*, gaudium, joining it to the two preceding words; which he likewise reads differently, but without improving the sense. However, his authority is clear for dividing the verses as they are here divided. I read שם *shem*, as a noun. They shall boast, יקראו *yikreu*; see Proverbs 20:6.

Verse 13. *And thorns shall come up in her palaces*—ועלו בארמנותיה

vealu bearmenotheyha; so read all the ancient versions.

A court for owls.— **עֵנָה** yaanah, the ostrich, from **עָנָה** anah, to cry, because of the noise it makes. “They roar,” says Dr. Shaw, “sometimes like a lion-sometimes like a bull. I have often heard them groan as if in the utmost distress.”

Verse 14. The wild beasts of the desert— **צִיִּים** tsiyim, the mountain cats.
— Bochart.

Wild beasts of the island— **אֵיִם** aiyim, the jackals.

The satyr— **שַׁעִיר** seir, the hairy one, probably the he-goat.

The screech owl— **לִילִית** lilith, the night-bird, the night-raven, nyctycorax, from **לַיִל** layil, or **לַיְלָה** lailah, the night.

Verse 15. The great owl— **קִפּוֹז** kippoz, the **ακοντιας**, or darter, a serpent so called because of its suddenly leaping up or darting on its prey. Probably the mongoz or ichneumon may be intended.

The vultures— **דַּיּוֹת** daiyoth, the black vultures. My old MS. Bible renders these names curiously: And ageyn cumen schul devylis: the beste, party of an asse, and party of a mam: and the wodwose, the tother schal crien to the tother. There schal byn lamyas, that is, thrisse, or a beste, havynge the body liic a woman, and hors feet. Ther hadde dichis, the yrchoun, and nurshide out littil chittis. There ben gadred kiitis, the top to the top. What language!

Every one with her mate.— A MS. adds **אֵל** el after **אִשָּׁה** ishshah, which seems necessary to the construction; and so the Syriac and Vulgate. Another MS. adds in the same place **אֵת** eth, which is equivalent.

Verse 16. My mouth “For the mouth of JEHOVAH”— For **הוּא** hu, five MSS., (three ancient,) read **יְהוָה** Jehovah, and another is so corrected; so

likewise the Septuagint. Two editions have צִוָּם tsivam; and so the Septuagint, Vulgate, and Arabic, with the edition of 1486, and a MS. has קִבְּצָם kebatsam, with the masculine pronoun instead of the feminine: and so in the next verses it is לָהֶם lahem, instead of לָהֶן lahen, in fourteen MSS., six of them ancient. — L. To see the importance of these various readings, the Hebrew Bible must be consulted.

CHAPTER 35

Flourishing state of the Church of God consequent to the awful judgments predicted in the preceding chapter. The images employed in the description are so very consolatory and sublime as to oblige us to extend their fulfillment to that period of the Gospel dispensation when Messiah shall take unto himself his great power and reign. The fifth and sixth verses were literally accomplished by our Savior and his apostles: but that the miracles wrought in the first century were not the only import of the language used by the prophet, is sufficiently plain from the context. They, therefore, have a farther application; and are contemporary with, or rather a consequence of, the judgments of God upon the enemies of the Church in the latter days; and so relate to the greater influence and extension of the Christian faith, the conversion of the Jews, their restoration to their own land, and the second advent of Christ. Much of the imagery of this chapter seems to have been borrowed from the exodus from Egypt: but it is greatly enlivened by the life, sentiments, and passions ascribed to inanimate objects; all nature being represented as rejoicing with the people of God in consequence of their deliverance; and administering in such an unusual manner to their relief and comfort, as to induce some commentators to extend the meaning of the prophecy to the blessedness of the saints in heaven, 1-10.

The various miracles our Lord wrought are the best comment on this chapter, which predicts those wondrous works and the glorious state of the Christian Church. See the parallel texts in the margin.

On this chapter Bishop Lowth has offered some important emendations. I shall introduce his translation, as the best yet given of this singular prophecy:—

1. The desert and the waste shall be glad;
And the wilderness shall rejoice, and flourish:

2. Like the rose shall it beautifully flourish;
And the well-watered plain of Jordan shall also rejoice:
The glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it,
The beauty of Carmel and of Sharon;
These shall behold the glory of JEHOVAH,
The majesty of our God.

3. Strengthen ye the feeble hands,
And confirm ye the tottering knees.

4. Say ye to the faint-hearted, Be ye strong;
Fear ye not; behold your God!
Vengeance will come; the retribution of God:
He himself will come, and will deliver you.

5. Then shall be unclosed the eyes of the blind;
And the ears of the deaf shall be opened:

6. Then shall the lame bound like the hart,
And the tongue of the dumb shall sing;
For in the wilderness shall burst forth waters,
And torrents in the desert:

7. And the glowing sand shall become a pool,
And the thirsty soil bubbling springs:
And in the haunt of dragons shall spring forth
The grass with the reed and the bulrush.

8. And a highway shall be there;
And it shall be called The way of holiness:
No unclean person shall pass through it:
But he himself shall be with them, walking in the way,
And the foolish shall not err therein:

9. No lion shall be there;
Nor shall the tyrant of the beasts come up thither:
Neither shall he be found there;

But the redeemed shall walk in it.

10. Yea, the ransomed of JEHOVAH shall return;
They shall come to Sion with triumph;
And perpetual gladness shall crown their heads.
Joy and gladness shall they obtain;
And sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

NOTES ON CHAP. 35

Verse 1. *Shall be glad*—שׂשׂוֹם 'yesusum; in one MS. the מ mem seems to have been added; and שׂוֹם sum is upon a rasure in another. None of the ancient versions acknowledge it; it seems to have been a mistake, arising from the next word beginning with the same letter. Seventeen MSS. have שׂשׂוֹם 'yesusum, both vaus expressed; and five MSS. שׂשׂוֹם 'yesusum, without the vaus. Probably the true reading is, "The wilderness and the dry place shall be glad. " Not for them.

Verse 2. *Rejoice even with joy and singing "The well-watered plain of Jordan shall also rejoice"*— For וְרָנָן veranen, the Septuagint read רָרָן 'yarden, τὰ ἐρηνα του ιορδανου, "the deserts of Jordan. " Four MSS. read גִּלְתָּ gulath; see Joshua 15:19: "Irrigua Jordani; " Houbigant. גִּידָתָּ gidoth, Ripae Jordani, "the banks of Jordan; " Kennicott. See De S. Poesi Hebr. Praelect. 20:note.

Unto it— For

word serab signifies that false appearance which in the eastern countries is often seen on sandy plains about noon, resembling a large lake of water in motion, and is occasioned by the reverberation of the sun beams: ‘by the quivering undulating motion of that quick succession of vapours and exhalations which are extracted by the powerful influence of the sun.’—Shaw, Trav. p. 378. It sometimes tempts thirsty travelers out of their way; but deceives them when they come near, either going forward, (for it always appears at the Same distance,) or quite vanishing. “ Q. Curtius has mentioned it: “Arenas vapor aestivi solis accendit; camporumque non alia, quam vasti et profundi aequoris species est.” — Lib. vii., c. 5. Dr. Hyde gives us the precise meaning and derivation of the word. “Dictum nomen Barca **הברקה** habberakah, splendorem, seu splendentem regionem notat; cum ea regio radiis solaribus tam copiose collustretur, ut reflexum ab arenis lumen adeo intense fulgens, a longinquo spectantibus, ad instar corporis solaris, aquarum speciem referat; et hinc arenarum splendor et radiatio, (et lingua Persica petito nomine,) dicitur [A] serab, i.e., aquae superficies seu superficialis aquarum species. “ Annot. in Peritsol., cap. ii.

“*Shall spring forth*”— The **ה** he in **רביצה** rebitseh seems to have been at first **מ** mem in MS. Bodl., whence Dr. Kennicott concludes it should be **רביסם** rebitsim. But instead of this word the Syriac, Vulgate, and Chaldee read some word signifying to grow, spring up, or abound. Perhaps **פרצה** paretsah, or **פרצו** paretsu, or **פרץ החציר** parats hachatsir, as Houbigant reads. — L.

Verse 8. And a highway— The word **ודרך** vederech is by mistake added to the first member of the sentence from the beginning of the following member. Sixteen MSS. of Dr. Kennicott’s, seven ancient, and two of De Rossi’s have it but once; so likewise the Syriac, Septuagint, and Arabic.

Err therein.— A MS. of Dr. Kennicott’s adds **בו** bo, in it, which seems necessary to the sense, and so the Vulgate, per eam, “by it. “ One of De Rossi’s has **שם** sham, there.

But it shall be for those “*But he himself shall be with them, walking in*

the way.”— That is, God; see ver. 4. “Who shall dwell among them, and set them an example that they should follow his steps. “ Our old English Version translated the place to this purpose, our last translators were misled by the authority of the Jews, who have absurdly made a division of the verses in the midst of the sentence, thereby destroying the construction and the sense.

Verse 9. *It shall not be found there* “*Neither shall he be found there*”— Three MSS. read וְלֹא velo, adding the conjunction; and so likewise the Septuagint and Vulgate. And four MSS., one ancient, read יִמְצֵא יִמַּמְטָא, the verb, as it certainly ought to be, in the masculine form.

The redeemed shall walk there— גְּאוּלִּים geulim. Those whose forfeited inheritances are brought back by the kinsman, גּוֹאֵל goel, the nearest of kin to the family. This has been considered by all orthodox divines as referring to the incarnation of our Lord, and his sacrificial offering. After גְּאוּלִּים geulim, one of De Rossi’s MSS. adds עַד עוֹלָם ad olam, for ever, “The redeemed shall walk there for ever.”

Verse 10. *The ransomed*— פְּדוּיִי peduyey, from פָּדָה padah, “to redeem by paying a price.” Those for whom a price was paid down to redeem them from bondage and death.

Sighing shall flee away.— אֲנַחָה anachah. Never was a sorrowful accent better expressed than in this strong guttural word, an-ach-ah; nearly the same with the Irish in their funeral wailings, och-och-on. The whole nation express all their mournful accents by these three monosyllables.

THIS chapter contains the following parts:—

1. We have here blessed promises of the latter-day glory.
2. The prophet may be considered as addressing the teachers of the Gospel, to show them that it was their business to encourage and direct the people in their expectation of redemption.

3. A promise of the manifestation of God among men is given.
4. The miracles which Christ should work are explicitly mentioned.
5. The privileges of Christianity are specified; there shall be, 1. Thorough teaching; 2. Holy walking.
6. Perfect safety.
7. Complete happiness. And—
8. Final glory.

The chapter shows also that no impurity should be tolerated in the Church of God; for as that is the mystical body of Christ, it should be like himself, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.

CHAPTER 36

Sennacherib, king of Assyria, comes against Judah, and takes all the fenced cities, 1. He afterwards sends a great host against Jerusalem; and his general Rabshakeh delivers an insulting and blasphemous message to Hezekiah 2-20. Hezekiah and his people are greatly afflicted at the words of Rabshakeh, 21, 22.

The history of the invasion of Sennacherib, and of the miraculous destruction of his army Which makes the subject of so many of Isaiah's prophecies, is very properly inserted here as affording the best light to many parts of those prophecies, and as almost necessary to introduce the prophecy in the thirty-seventh chapter, being the answer of God to Hezekiah's prayer, which could not be properly understood without it. We find the same narrative in the Second Book of Kings, chaps. 18., 19., 20.; and these chapters of Isaiah, 36., 37., 38., 39., for much the greater part, (the account of the sickness of Hezekiah only excepted,) are but a different copy of that narration. The difference of the two copies is little more than what has manifestly arisen from the mistakes of transcribers; they mutually correct each other, and most of the mistakes may be perfectly rectified by a collation of the two copies with the assistance of the ancient versions. Some few sentences, or members of sentences, are omitted in this copy of Isaiah, which are found in the other copy in the Book of Kings. Whether these omissions were made by design or mistake may be doubted. — L.

NOTES ON CHAP. 36

Verse 3. *Then came forth unto him*— Before these words the other copy, 2 Kings 18:18, adds, ויקראו אל המלך vaiyikreu el hammelech, “And they demanded audience of the king.”

Verse 5. *I say “Thou hast said”*— Fourteen MSS. (three ancient) of

Kennicott's and De Rossi's have it in the second person, אמרת amarta; and so the other copy, 2 Kings 18:20.

But they are but vain words— דבר שפתים debar sephathayim, a word of the lips. Thou dost talk about counsels, but thou hast none; about strength, but there is none with thee.

Verse 6. The staff of this broken reed— A weakened, faithless ally.

On Egypt— The Bodl. MS. adds מלך melech, the king of Egypt; and so perhaps the Chaldee might read.

It will go into his hand, and pierce it— Will take subsidy after subsidy, and do nothing for it.

Verse 7. But if thou say “But if ye say”— Two ancient MSS. have תאמרו tomeru in the plural number; so likewise the Septuagint, Chaldee, and the other copy, 2 Kings 18:22.

Ye shall worship before this altar “To worship only before this altar”— See 2 Chronicles 32:12.

Verse 10. Am I now come up without the Lord— Probably some apostate Israelitish priest might have encouraged the king of Assyria by telling him that JEHOVAH had given him a commission against Jerusalem.

Verse 12. That they may eat their own dung “Destined to eat their own dung”— לאכל leechol, that they may eat, as our translation literally renders it. But the Syriac reads מאכל meechol, that they may not eat, perhaps rightly, and afterward ומשתות umishshethoth, or ושתות ushethoth, to the same purpose. Seventeen of Dr. Kennicott's MSS., ten of De Rossi's and two of my own, read מימי meymey, the water; mine have מימי שניהם meymey sheneyhem, and write in the margin רגליהם regleyhem, the water of their feet, a modest way of expressing urine.

Verse 15. *This city shall not be delivered*— וְלֹא velo, AND this city. Ten of Kennicott's MSS., and nine of De Rossi's, with one (ancient) of my own, add the conjunction.

Verse 16. *Make an agreement*— בְּרַכָּהּ berachah, make a blessing with me; i.e., Give me a ransom for the city, and I will not destroy it; give me the yearly tribute thou hast promised.

Verse 17. *And vineyards*— The other copy, 2 Kings 18:32, adds here: “A land of oil-olive, and of honey; that ye may live, and not die: and hearken not unto Hezekiah when he seduceth you.”

Verse 19. *Where are the gods*— Many MSS. add the conjunction here also: And, or But, where are the gods, etc.

For other matters relative to this chapter, see the notes on 2 Kings 18:13, etc.

Of Sepharvaim— The other copy, 2 Kings 18:34, adds, of “Henah and Ivah.”

Have they delivered— וְכִי vechi. The copulative is not expressed here by the Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate, and three MSS.; nor is it in any other copy. Ib. Houbigant reads הֲכִי hachi, with the interrogative particle; a probable conjecture, which the ancient Versions above quoted seem to favor.

Verse 21. *But they held their peace* “*But the people held their peace*”— The word הָעָם haam, the people, is supplied from the other copy, and is authorized by a MS. which inserts it after אֹתוֹ otho.

CHAPTER 37

Hezekiah is greatly distressed, and sends to Isaiah the prophet to pray for him, 1-4. Isaiah returns a comfortable answer, and predicts the destruction of the king of Assyria and his army, 5-7. Sennacherib, hearing that his kingdom was invaded by the Ethiopians, sends a terrible letter to Hezekiah, to induce him to surrender, 9-13. Hezekiah goes to the temple, spreads the letter before the Lord, and makes a most affecting prayer, 14-20. Isaiah is sent to him to assure him that his prayer is heard; that Jerusalem shall be delivered; and that the Assyrians shall be destroyed, 21-35. That very night a messenger of God slays one hundred and eighty-five thousand Assyrians, 36. Sennacherib returns to Nineveh, and is slain by his own sons, 37, 38.

NOTES ON CHAP. 37

Verse 6. *Thus shall ye say*— כה תאמרו ko tomerun, “thus shall ye (explicitly, earnestly, and positively) say. “ The paragogic nun deepens and increases the sense.

Verse 7. *I will send a blast “I will infuse a spirit into him”*— “בו רוח” בו רוח nothen bo roach never signifies any thing but putting a spirit into a person: this was πνευμα δειλιας, the spirit of deceit.” —Secker. “I will send a blast “-I do not think that Archbishop Secker has hit the true meaning of these words. I believe רוח ruach means here a pestilential wind, such as the Arabs call simoom, that instantly suffocates both man and beast; and is what is termed “the angel of the Lord, “God’s messenger of death to the Assyrians, ver. 36.

Verse 8. *Rabshakeh returned*— From chap. 36:2, we learn that the king of Assyria had sent Rabshakeh from Lachish to Jerusalem; now it is likely that Rabshakeh had besieged that place, and that the king of Assyria had taken his station before this city, and despatched Rabshakeh against

Jerusalem. But, as in the verse above it is said, “he had departed from Lachish, “probably he had been obliged to raise the siege, and sat down before Libnah, which promised an easier conquest.

Verse 9. *He heard say concerning Tirhakah king of Ethiopia*— When he heard that Tirhakah king of Ethiopia had come out against him, then he sent that blasphemous manifesto which is contained in ver. 10-13, to terrify Hezekiah into submission. How much was this like, in words and spirit, to the manifesto sent to the Parisians by the late Duke of Brunswick, from the plains of Champaigne, in 1792, which was the forerunner of the mighty torrents of human blood which was shed in the French revolution! And what a blast of God fell upon him and his army-nearly like that which fell on the army of Sennacherib!

He sent messengers “He sent messengers again”— The word וישמע vaiyishma, “and he heard, “which occurs the second time in this verse, is repeated by mistake from the beginning of the verse. It is omitted in an ancient MS. It is a mere tautology, and embarrasses the sense. The true reading instead of it is, וישב veyesheb, “and he returned, “which the Septuagint read in this place, ἀπεστρεψε, and which is preserved in the other copy, 2 Kings 19:9: “He returned and sent, “that is, according to the Hebrew idiom, “he sent again.”

Verse 12. *As Gozan, and Haran*— חר Charan: but הר Haran is the reading of four of Kennicott’s MSS. and one of De Rossi’s.

Verse 14. *And read it “And read them”*— ויקראם vayikraem. So MS. Bodl. in this place; and so the other copy; instead of ויקראהו vayikraehu, “and read IT.”

And spread it “And spread them”— ויפרשהו vaiyiphresehu. הו hu is upon a rasure in a MS., which probably was at first □ mem. The same mistake as in the foregoing note.

Verse 15. *Unto the Lord “Before JEHOVAH”*— That is, in the sanctuary. For אל el, the Syriac, Chaldee, and the other copy, 2 Kings 19:15, read

לפני liphney, “before the face.”

Verse 18. *The nations*— הארצות haratsoth, “the lands; “ instead of this word, which destroys the sense, ten of Kennicott’s and five of De Rossi’s MSS. (one ancient) have here גוים goyim, “nations; “ which is undoubtedly the true reading, being preserved also in the other copy; 2 Kings 19:17. Another MS. suggests another method of rectifying the sense in this place, by reading מלכם malcam, “their king, “instead of ארצם artsam, “their land; “ but it ought to be מלכיהם malcheyhem, “all the countries and their kings.”

Verse 20. *Save us “Save us, we beseech thee”*— The supplicating particle, נא na, is supplied here from eighteen MSS., three ancient, of Dr. Kennicott, and ten of De Rossi, and from the other copy; 2 Kings 19:19.

That thou art the Lord, even thou only “That thou JEHOVAH art the only God.”— The word אלהים Elohim, “God, “is lost here in the Hebrew text, but preserved in the other copy; 2 Kings 19:19. The Syriac and Septuagint seem here to have had in their copies אלהים Elohim, instead of יהוה Yehovah.

Verse 21. *Then Isaiah-sent unto Hezekiah*— The Syriac and Septuagint understand and render the verb passively, was sent.

Whereas thou hast prayed to me against Sennacherib “Thy prayer unto me concerning Sennacherib-I have heard”— שמעתי shamati; this word, necessary to the sense, is lost in this place out of the Hebrew text. One MS. of Dr. Kennicott’s and one of De Rossi’s have it written above the line in a later hand. The Septuagint and Syriac found it in their copies; and it is preserved in the other copy; 2 Kings 19:20.

Verse 23. *Against the Holy One of Israel.*— For אל el, to, the other copy has על al, against, rather more properly.

Verse 24. *By thy servants “By thy messengers”*— The text has עבדיך

abdeycha, thy servants; but the true reading seems to be מלאכֵיךְ malacheycha, thy messengers, as in the other copy, 2 Kings 19:23; and as the Septuagint and Syriac found it in their copies in this place.

Reproached the Lord— אֲדֹנָי Adonai: but one of my MSS. has אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה Yehovah Adonai, Jehovah the Lord. This reading is not found, I think, in any other MS., but several have יְהוָה Yehovah for אֲדֹנָי Adonai.

I will enter into the height of his border “*I will penetrate into his extreme retreats*”— The text has מְרוֹם marom, the height which seems to have been taken by mistake from the line but one above. Two MSS. have here מַלּוֹן malon, the lodge or retreat; which is the word in the other copy, 2 Kings 19:23, and I think is the true reading.

The forest of has Carmel.— The forest and his fruitful field; that is, I will possess myself of the whole country.

Verse 25. Water “*Strange waters*”— The word זָרִים zarim, strange, lost out of the Hebrew text in this place, is supplied from the other copy. A MS. supplies the word רַבִּים rabbim, many, instead of it.

With the sole of my feet— With my infantry.

All the rivers of the besieged places “*All the canals of fenced places.*”— The principal cities of Egypt, the scene of his late exploits, were chiefly defended by deep moats, canals, or large lakes, made by labor and art, with which they were surrounded. See Harmer’s *Observ.* 2:p. 304. Claudian introduces Alaric boasting of his conquests in the same extravagant manner:—

“*Subsidere nostris
Sub pedibus montes; arescere vidimus amnes. —
Fregi Alpes, galeisque Padum victricibus hausit.
De Bello Getic. 526.*”

“The mountains have passed away under our feet; we have seen the rivers

dried up. I have broken the Alps, and laden out the Po with our victorious helmets.”

Verse 26. Lay waste defended cities into ruinous heaps “*Lay waste warlike nations; strong fenced cities.*”—גללים נצרים gallim nitstsim. It is not easy to give a satisfactory account of these two words, which have greatly embarrassed all the interpreters, ancient and modern. For גללים gallim I read גוים goyim, as the Septuagint do in this place, εθνη. The word נצרים netsim the Vulgate renders in this place compugnantium; in the parallel place, 2 Kings 19:25, pugnantium; and the Septuagint μαχιμων, fighting, warlike. This rendering is as well authorized as any other that I know of; and, with the reading of the Septuagint, perfectly clears up the construction. See the margin on all the preceding verses.

Verse 27. Corn blasted—שדמה shedemah, parched: it does not appear that there is any good authority for this word. The true reading seems to be שדפה shedephah, blasted, as it is in six MSS. (two ancient) here, and in the other copy.

Verse 29. Will I put my hook in thy nose—Et fraenum meum: Jonathan vocem מתג metheg, interpretatus est זמם zemam, i.e., annulum, sive uncum, eumque ferreum, quem infigunt naribus camelae: eoque trahitur, quoniam illa feris motibus agitur: et hoc est, quod discimus in Talmude; et camela cum annulo narium: scilicet, egreditur die sabbathi. “And my bridle: Jonathan interprets the word metheg by zemam, a ring, or that iron hook which they put in the nostrils of a camel to lead her about, check her in her restiveness, etc. And this is what we mean in the Talmud, when we say, And the camel with the ring of her nostrils shall go out on the Sabbath day.” —Jarchi in 2 Kings 19:28. Ponam circulum in naribus tuis. “I will put a ring in thy nostrils.” —Jerome. Just as at this day they put a ring into the nose of the bear, the buffalo, and other wild beasts, to lead them, and to govern them when they are unruly. Bulls are often ringed thus in several parts of England. The Hindoos compare a person who is the slave of his wife to a cow led by the ring in her nose.

Verse 36. Then the angel— Before “the angel, “the other copy, 2 Kings

19:35, adds “it came to pass the same night, that “_—

The Prophet Hosea, chap. 1:7, has given a plain prediction of the miraculous deliverance of the kingdom of Judah:—

*“And to the house of Judah I will be tenderly merciful:
And I will save them by JEHOVAH their God.
And I will not save them by the bow;
Nor by sword, nor by battle;
By horses, nor by horsemen.” —L.*

Verse 38. *His sons smote him*— What an awful punishment of his blasphemy! Who can harden his neck against God, and be successful? God does not lightly pass by blasphemy against himself, his government, his word, his Son, or his people. Let the profligate take care!

CHAPTER 38

Account of Hezekiah's dangerous sickness and miraculous recovery, 1-9. Tender and beautiful song of thanksgiving, in which this pious king breathed out the sentiments of a grateful heart, when his life was, as it were, restored. This ode may be adapted to other cases; and will always afford profit and pleasure to those who are not void of feeling and piety, 10-22.

NOTES ON CHAP. 38

Verse 1. *In those days*— The reader is requested to consult the notes on 2 Kings 20:in reference to the principal parts of this chapter.

Verse 2. *Then Hezekiah turned his face toward the wall*— The furniture of an eastern divan or chamber, either for the reception of company or for private use, consists chiefly of carpets spread on the floor in the middle; and of sofas, or couches ranged on one or more sides of the room, on a part raised somewhat above the floor. On these they repose themselves in the day, and sleep at night. It is to be observed that the corner of the room is the place of honor. Dr. Pococke, when he was introduced to the Sheikh of Furshout, found him sitting in the corner of his room. He describes another Arab Sheikh “as sitting in the corner of a large green tent, pitched in the middle of an encampment of Arabs; and the Bey of Girge as placed on a sofa in a corner to the right as one entered the room.” —Harmer’s Observ. 2:p. 60. Lady Mary Montague, giving an account of a visit which she made to the Kahya’s lady at Adrianople, says, “She ordered cushions to be given me; and took care to place me in the corner, which is the place of honor.” —Letter 33:The reason of this seems to be, that the person so placed is distinguished, and in a manner separated, from the rest of the company, and as it were guarded by the wall on each side. We are to suppose Hezekiah’s couch placed in the same situation; in which turning on either side, he must turn his face to the wall; by which he would

withdraw himself from those who were attending upon him in his apartment, in order to address his private prayer to God.

Verse 3. And he said, I beseech thee, O JEHOVAH, remember now how I have endeavored to walk before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart; and have done that which is good in thine eyes. And Hezekiah wept, and lamented grievously. — L.

Verse 4. *Now [before Isaiah was gone out into the middle court]* the word of JEHOVAH came unto him, saying, Go [back,] and say unto Hezekiah, Thus saith JEHOVAH the God of David thy father, I have heard thy supplication; I have seen thy tears. Behold [I will heal thee; and on the third day thou shalt go up into the house of JEHOVAH.

Verse 5. *And]* I will add unto thy days fifteen years. And I will deliver thee, and this city, from the hand of the king of Assyria; and I will protect this city. And [Hezekiah said, By what sign shall I know that I shall go up into the house of JEHOVAH?

Verse 7. *And Isaiah said,]* This shall be the sign unto thee from JEHOVAH, that JEHOVAH still bring to effect this word which he hath spoken.

The words in the translation included within crotchets are supplied from the parallel place, 2 Kings 20:4, 5, to make the narration more perfect. I have also taken the liberty, with Houbigant, of bringing forward the two last verses of this chapter, and inserting them in their proper places of the narration with the same mark. Kimchi's note on these two verses is as follows: "This and the following verse belong not to the writing of Hezekiah; and I see no reason why they are written here after the writing; for their right place is above, after And I will protect this city, ver. 6. And so they stand in the book of Kings, "2 Kings 20:7, 8. The narration of this chapter seems to be in some parts an abridgment of that of 2 Kings 20: The abridger, having finished his extract here with the eleventh verse, seems to have observed, that the seventh and eighth verses of 2 Kings 20: were wanted to complete the narration: he therefore added them at the end of the chapter, after he had inserted the song of Hezekiah, probably with

marks for their insertion in their proper places; which marks were afterwards neglected by transcribers. Or a transcriber might omit them by mistake, and add them at the end of the chapter with such marks. Many transpositions are, with great probability, to be accounted for in the same way.

Verse 6. *I will defend this city.*— The other copy, 2 Kings 20:6, adds: “for mine own sake, and for the sake of David my servant; “ and the sentence seems somewhat abrupt without it.

Verse 8. *Which is gone down “By which the sun is gone down”*— For **בשמש** bashshemesh, the Septuagint, Syriac, and Chaldee read **השמש**, hashshemesh. — Houbigant. In the history of this miracle in the book of Kings, (2 Kings 20:9-11,) there is no mention at all made of the sun, but only of the going backward of the shadow: which might be effected by a supernatural refraction. The first **ο ηλιος**, the sun, in this verse is omitted in the Septuagint, MS. Pachom.

Verse 9. *The writing of Hezekiah*— Here the book of Kings deserts us, the song of Hezekiah not being inserted in it. Another copy of this very obscure passage (obscure not only from the concise poetical style, but because it is probably very incorrect) would have been of great service. The MSS. and ancient Versions, especially the latter, will help us to get through some of the many difficulties which we meet with in it.

Verse 11. *The Lord “JEHOVAH”*— **יה** Yah, **יה** Yah, seems to be **יהוה** Yehovah, in MS. Bodl., and it was so at first written in another. So the Syriac. See Houbigant. I believe **יהוה** Yehovah was the original reading. See the note on chap. 12:2.

Verse 12. *Mine age-is removed from me as a shepherd’s tent*— **רעי** roi is put for **רעה** roeh, say the rabbis (Sal. Den Melec on the place;) but much more probably is written imperfectly for **רעים** roim, shepherds. See note on chap. 5:1.

I shall be removed from this state to another, as a shepherd removes his

tent from one place to another for the sake of his flock. Is not this a strong intimation of his belief in a future state?

I have cut off like a weaver my life “*My life is cut off as by the weaver*”— קִפַּדְתִּי kippadti. This verb is rendered passively, and in the third person, by the Syriac, Chaldee, and Vulgate.

Verse 13. The last line of the foregoing verse מִיּוֹם עַד לַיְלָה תִשְׁלִימֵנִי migom ad layelah tashlimeni, “In the course of the day thou wilt finish my web;” or, as the common version has it, “From day even to night wilt thou make an end of me,” is not repeated at the end of this verse in the Syriac version; and a MS. omits it. It seems to have been inserted a second time in the Hebrew text by mistake.

I reckoned till morning, etc. “*I roared until the morning like the lion*”— For שִׁיבְוִיִּתִּי shivvithi, the Chaldee has נִהַמֵּיתִי nihameith: he read שְׂאֲגִיתִי shaagti, the proper term for the roaring of a lion; often applied to the deep groaning of men in sickness. See Psalm 22., 32:3; 38:9; Job 3:24. The Masoretes divide the sentence, as I have done; taking כְּאֵרִי kaari, like a lion, into the first member; and so likewise the Septuagint.

Verse 14. *Like-a swallow* “*Like the swallow*”— כִּסִּיסִי kesis; so read two MSS., Theodot., and Hieron.

Mine eyes fail— For דָּלּוּ dallu the Septuagint read כָּלוּ calu, ἐξέλιπον. Compare Psalm lxi. 4; cxix. 82, 123; Lamentations 2:11; 4:17, in the Hebrew and in the Septuagint.

O LORD “*O Lord*”— For יְהוָה Jehovah, thirty MSS. and eight editions read אֲדֹנָי Adonai.

Undertake for me “*Contend for me*”— עֲשֵׂקָה ashekah, with שׁ shin, Jarchi: this sense of the word is established by Genesis 26:20: “He called the name of the well עֵשֶׂק esek, because they strove with him:” הִתְעַשְׂקוּ hithasseku, equivalent to יָרִיבוּ yaribu, at the beginning of the verse.

Verse 15. *I shall go softly all my years in the bitterness of my soul* “*Through the rest of my years will I reflect on this bitterness of my soul*”— אַדְדָּדֶה eddaddeh; recogitabo, Vulg., reputabo, Hieron. in loc.

Verse 16. *By these things men live* “*For this cause shall it be declared*”— περι αυτης γαρ ανηγγελη σοι, και εξηγειρας μου την πνοην, Sept. They read in their copies עליה יהוו לך ותחיי רוחי not very different from the present text, from which all the ancient Versions vary. They entirely omit two words, ולכל בה ulecol bahen; as to which there is some variation in the MSS. One MS. has ובכל ubechol, and in all; two others וכל vechol, and all, and ten MSS. have בהם bahem, in them, in the masculine gender.

Taking this as in the common Version, we may observe, it is not an unfrequent case, that afflictions, and especially such as tend to a speedy death, become the means, not only of saving the soul, but also of lengthening the life.

Make me to live “*Hast prolonged my life.*”— A MSS. and the Babylonish Talmud read ותחייני vetachayeni, and so the ancient Versions. It must necessarily be in the second person.

Verse 17. *For peace I had great bitterness* “*My anguish is changed into ease*”— מר לי מר mar li mar, “mutata mthi est amaritudo.”

Paronomasia; a figure which the prophet frequently admits. I do not always note it, because it cannot ever be preserved in the translation, and the sense seldom depends upon it. But here it perfectly clears up the great obscurity of the passage. See Lowth on the place.

Thou hast rescued— חשכת chashachta, with כ caph, instead of ק koph; so the Septuagint and Vulgate; Houbigant. See Chappelow on Job 33:18.

From perdition— משחת בלי mishshachath beli, ινα μη αποληται, Sept. ut non periret, “that it may not perish.” Vulg. Perhaps inverting the order of the words. See Houbigant.

Thou hast in love to my soul—חַשַׁקְתָּ chashakta, “thou hast lovingly embraced “ or kissed “my soul out of the pit of corruption.”

Verse 19. Thy truth—אֱלֹהֵי אֱמֶתְךָ el amittecha. A MS. omits אֱלֹהֵי el; and instead of אֱלֹהֵי el, an ancient MS. and one edition read אֱתֵת eth. The same mistake as in Psalm 2:7.

Verse 21. Let them take a lump of figs, etc.— God, in effecting this miraculous cure, was pleased to order the use of means not improper for that end. “Folia, et, quae non maturuere, fici, strumis illinuntur omnibusque quae emollienda sunt discutiendave.” —PLIN. Nat. Hist. 23:7. “Ad discutienda ea, quae in corporis parte aliqua coierunt, maxime possunt-ficus arida, “etc. — CELSUS, 5:11. See the note on 2 Kings 20:7. Philemon Holland translates the passage as a medical man: “The milke or white juice that the figge tree yieldeth is of the same nature that vinegre: and therefore it will cruddle milke as well as rennet, or rendles. The right season of gathering this milkie substance is before that the figs be ripe upon the tree; and then it must be dried in the shadow: thus prepared, it is good to break impostumes, and keepe ulcer open.”

CHAPTER 39

The Babylonish monarch sends letters of congratulation and a present to Hezekiah, on account of his recovery from his late dangerous illness, 1. The king of Judah shows the messengers of Merodach-baladan all the treasures of his house and kingdom, 2. The prophet takes occasion from this ostentatious display of the king to predict the captivity of the royal family, and of the people, by the Babylonians, 3-8.

NOTES ON CHAP. 39

Hitherto the copy of this history in the second book of Kings has been much the most correct; in this chapter that in Isaiah has the advantage. In the two first verses two mistakes in the other copy are to be corrected from this: for **הזקיהו** hizkiyahu, read **ויחזק** vayechezek, and was recovered; and for **וישמע** vaiyishma, he heard, read **וישמח** vaiyismach, he rejoiced.

Verse 1. At that time Merodach-baladan— This name is variously written in the MSS. Berodach, Medorach, Medarech, and Medurach.

“And ambassadors”— The Septuagint add here **και πρεσβεις**; that is, **ומלאכים** umalachim. and ambassadors; which word seems to be necessary to the sense, though omitted in the Hebrew text both here and in the other copy, 2 Kings 20:12. For the subsequent narration refers to them all along, “these men, whence came they?” etc.; plainly supposing them to have been personally mentioned before. See Houbigant.

Verse 6. To Babylon— **בבלה** babelah, so two MSS., (one ancient;) rightly, without doubt as the other copy (2 Kings 20:17) has it. This prediction was fulfilled about one hundred and fifty years after it was spoken: see Daniel 1:2, 3-7. What a proof of Divine omniscience!

Verse 8. *Then said Hezekiah*— The nature of Hezekiah’s crime, and his humiliation on the message of God to him by the prophet, is more expressly declared by the author of the book of the Chronicles: “But Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him; for his heart was lifted up; therefore there was wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem. Notwithstanding, Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart, both he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the wrath of the Lord came not upon them in the days of Hezekiah. And Hezekiah prospered in all his works. Howbeit, in the business of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent unto him to inquire of the wonder that was done in the land, God left him, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart. “2 Chronicles 32:25, 26, 30, 31.

There shall be peace and truth in my days.— I rather think these words should be understood as an humble inquiry of the king, addressed to the prophet. “Shall there be prosperity, **שְׁלוֹם** shalom, and truth in MY days?-Shall I escape the evil which thou predictest?” Understood otherwise, they manifest a pitiful unconcern both for his own family and for the nation. “So I be well, I care not how it may go with others. “ This is the view I have taken of the passage in 2 Kings 21:19. Let the reader judge whether this, or the former, should be preferred. See the concluding notes on 2 Kings xx.

CHAPTER 40

In this chapter the prophet opens the subject respecting the restoration of the Church with great force and elegance; declaring God's command to his messengers the prophets to comfort his people in their captivity, and to impart to them the glad tidings that the time of favor and deliverance was at hand, 1, 2. Immediately a harbinger is introduced giving orders, as usual in the march of eastern monarchs, to remove every obstacle, and to prepare the way for their return to their own land, 3-5. The same words, however, the New Testament Scriptures authorize us to refer to the opening of the Gospel dispensation. Accordingly, this subject, coming once in view, is principally attended to in the sequel. Of this the prophet gives us sufficient notice by introducing a voice commanding another proclamation, which calls of our attention from all temporary, fading things to the spiritual and eternal things of the Gospel, 6-11. And to remove every obstacle in the way of the prophecy in either sense, or perhaps to give a farther display of the character of the Redeemer, he enlarges on the power and wisdom of God, as the Creator and Disposer of all things. It is impossible to read this description of God, the most sublime that ever was penned, without being struck with inexpressible reverence and self-abasement. The contrast between the great Jehovah and every thing reputed great in this world, how admirably imagined, how exquisitely finished! What atoms and inanities are they all before HIM who sitteth on the circle of the immense heavens, and views the potentates of the earth in the light of grasshoppers, — those poor insects that wander over the barren heath for sustenance, spend the day in continual chirpings, and take up their humble lodging at night on a blade of grass! 12-26. The prophet concludes with a most comfortable application of the whole, by showing that all this infinite power and unsearchable wisdom is unweariedly and everlastingly engaged in strengthening, comforting, and saving his people, 27-31.

The course of prophecies which follow, from hence to the end of the book, and which taken together constitute the most elegant part of the sacred writings of the Old Testament, interspersed also with many passages of

the highest sublimity, was probably delivered in the latter part of the reign of Hezekiah. The prophet in the foregoing chapter had delivered a very explicit declaration of the impending dissolution of the kingdom, and of the captivity of the royal house of David, and of the people, under the kings of Babylon. As the subject of his subsequent prophecies was to be chiefly of the consolatory kind, he opens them with giving a promise of the restoration of the kingdom, and the return of the people from that captivity, by the merciful interposition of God in their favor. But the views of the prophet are not confined to this event. As the restoration of the royal family, and of the tribe of Judah, which would otherwise have soon become undistinguished, and have been irrecoverably lost, was necessary, in the design and order of Providence, for the fulfilling of God's promises of establishing a more glorious and an everlasting kingdom, under the Messiah to be born of the tribe of Judah, and of the family of David, the prophet connects these two events together, and hardly ever treats of the former without throwing in some intimations of the latter; and sometimes is so fully possessed with the glories of the future and more remote kingdom, that he seems to leave the more immediate subject of his commission almost out of the question.

Indeed this evangelical sense of the prophecy is so apparent, and stands forth in so strong a light, that some interpreters cannot see that it has any other; and will not allow the prophecy to have any relation at all to the return from the captivity of Babylon. It may therefore be useful to examine more attentively the train of the prophet's ideas, and to consider carefully the images under which he displays his subject. He hears a crier giving orders, by solemn proclamation, to Prepare the way of the Lord in the wilderness; to remove all obstructions before JEHOVAH marching through the desert; through the wild, uninhabited, impassable country. The deliverance of God's people from the Babylonish captivity is considered by him as parallel to the former deliverance of them from the Egyptian bondage. God was then represented as their king leading them in person through the vast deserts which lay in their way to the promised land of Canaan. It is not merely for JEHOVAH himself that in both cases the way was to be prepared, and all obstructions to be removed; but for JEHOVAH marching in person at the head of his people. Let us first see how this idea is pursued by the sacred poets who treat of the exodus, which is a

favourite subject with them, and affords great choice of examples:—

*“When Israel came out of Egypt,
The house of Jacob from the barbarous people;
Judah was his sanctuary,
Israel his dominion.”*
Psalm 114:1, 2.

*“JEHOVAH his God is with him;
And the shout of a king is among them:
God brought them out of Egypt” —*
Numbers 23:21, 22.

*“Make a highway for him that rideth through the deserts:
O God, when thou wentest forth before thy people.
When thou marchedst through the wilderness,
The heavens dropped” —*
Psalm 68:4, 7.

Let us now see how Isaiah treats the subject of the return of the people from Babylon. They were to march through the wilderness with JEHOVAH at their head, who was to lead them, to smooth the way before them, and to supply them with water in the thirsty desert; with perpetual allusion to the exodus:—

“Come ye forth from Babylon, flee ye from the land of the Chaldeans with the voice of joy: Publish ye this, and make it heard; utter it forth even to the end of the earth; Say ye, JEHOVAH hath redeemed his servant Jacob: They thirsted not in the deserts, through which he made them go; Waters from the rock he caused to flow for them; Yea, he clave the rock, and forth gushed the waters. “ Chap. 48:20, 21.

*“Remember not the former things;
And the things of ancient times regard not:”*
(That is, the deliverance from Egypt:)

*“Behold, I make a new thing;
Even now shall it spring forth; will ye not regard it?
Yea, I will make in the wilderness a way;
In the desert streams of water.”*

Chap. 43:18, 19.

*“But he that trusteth in me shall inherit the land,
And shall possess my holy mountain.
Then will I say: Cast up, cast up the causeway; make clear
the way;
Remove every obstruction from the road of my people.”*

Chap. 57:13, 14.

*“How beautiful appear on the mountains
The feet of the joyful messenger, of him that announceth
peace;*

*Of the joyful messenger of good tidings, of him that
announceth salvation;*

*Of him that saith to Sion, Thy God reigneth!
All thy watchmen lift up their voice, they shout together;
For face to face shall they see, when JEHOVAH returneth to
Sion.*

*Verily not in haste shall ye go forth,
And not by flight shall ye march along;
For JEHOVAH shall march in your front;
And the God of Israel shall bring up your rear.”*

Chap. 52:7, 8, 12.

Babylon was separated from Judea by an immense tract of country which was one continued desert; that large part of Arabia called very properly Deserta. It is mentioned in history as a remarkable occurrence, that

Nebuchadnezzar, having received the news of the death of his father, in order to make the utmost expedition in his journey to Babylon from Egypt and Phoenicia, set out with a few attendants, and passed through this desert. Berosus apud Joseph., *Antiq.* 10:11. This was the nearest way homewards for the Jews; and whether they actually returned by this way or not, the first thing that would occur on the proposal or thought of their return would be the difficulty of this almost impracticable passage. Accordingly the proclamation for the preparation of the way is the most natural idea, and the most obvious circumstance, by which the prophet could have opened his subject.

These things considered, I have not the least doubt that the return at the Jews from the captivity of Babylon is the first, though not the principal, thing in the prophet's view. The redemption from Babylon is clearly foretold and at the same time is employed as an image to shadow out a redemption of an infinitely higher and more important nature. I should not have thought it necessary to employ so many words in endeavoring to establish what is called the literal sense of this prophecy, which I think cannot be rightly understood without it, had I not observed that many interpreters of the first authority, in particular the very learned Vitringa, have excluded it entirely.

Yet obvious and plain as I think this literal sense is, we have nevertheless the irrefragable authority of John the Baptist, and of our blessed Savior himself, as recorded by all the Evangelists, for explaining this exordium of the prophecy of the opening of the Gospel by the preaching of John, and of the introduction of the kingdom of Messiah; who was to effect a much greater deliverance of the people of God, Gentiles as well as Jews, from the captivity of sin and the dominion of death. And this we shall find to be the case in many subsequent parts also of this prophecy, where passages manifestly relating to the deliverance of the Jewish nation, effected by Cyrus, are, with good reason, and upon undoubted authority, to be understood of the redemption wrought for mankind by Christ.

If the literal sense of this prophecy, as above explained, cannot be questioned, much less surely can the spiritual; which, I think, is allowed on all hands, even by Grotius himself. If both are to be admitted, here is a

plain example of the mystical allegory, or double sense, as it is commonly called, of prophecy; which the sacred writers of the New Testament clearly suppose, and according to which they frequently frame their interpretation of passages from the Old Testament. Of the foundation and properties of this sort of allegory, see De S. Poes. Hebr. Praelect. xi.

NOTES ON CHAP. 40

Verse 1. *Comfort ye, comfort ye*— “The whole of this prophecy, “says Kimchi, “belongs to the days of the Messiah.”

Verse 2. *Double for all her sins “Blessings double to the punishment.”*— It does not seem reconcilable to our notions of the Divine justice, which always punishes less than our iniquities deserve, to suppose that God had punished the sins of the Jews in double proportion; and it is more agreeable to the tenor of this consolatory message to understand it as a promise of ample recompense for the effects of past displeasure, on the reconciliation of God to his returning people. To express this sense of the passage, which the words of the original will very well bear, it was necessary to add a word or two in the version to supply the elliptical expression of the Hebrew. Compare chap. 61:7; Job 42:10; Zechariah 9:12. **חַטָּאִים** chattaah signifies punishment for sin, Lamentations 3:39; Zechariah 14:19. But Kimchi says, “Double here means the two captivities and emigrations suffered by the Israelites. The first, the Babylonish captivity; the second, that which they now endure.” This is not a bad conjecture.

Verse 3. *The voice of him that crieth to the wilderness “A voice crieth, In the wilderness”*— The idea is taken from the practice of eastern monarchs, who, whenever they entered upon an expedition or took a journey, especially through desert and unpractised countries, sent harbingers before them to prepare all things for their passage, and pioneers to open the passes, to level the ways, and to remove all impediments. The officers appointed to superintend such preparations the Latins call stratores. Ipse (Johannes Baptista) se stratorem vocat Messiae, cujus esset alta et elata voce homines in desertis locis habitantes ad itinera et vias Regi mox venturo sternendas et reficiendas hortari. — Mosheim, Instituta, Majora,

p. 96. "He (John the Baptist) calls himself the pioneer of the Messiah, whose business it was with a loud voice to call upon the people dwelling in the deserts to level and prepare the roads by which the King was about to march."

Diodorus's account of the marches of Semiramis into Media and Persia will give us a clear notion of the preparation of the way for a royal expedition: "In her march to Ecbatana she came to the Zarcean mountain, which, extending many furlongs, and being full of craggy precipices and deep hollows, could not be passed without taking a great compass about. Being therefore desirous of leaving an everlasting memorial of herself, as well as of shortening the way, she ordered the precipices to be digged down, and the hollows to be filled up; and at a great expense she made a shorter and more expeditious road, which to this day is called from her the road of Semiramis. Afterward she went into Persia, and all the other countries of Asia subject to her dominion; and wherever she went, she ordered the mountains and precipices to be levelled, raised causeways in the plain country, and at a great expense made the ways passable." — Diod. Sic. lib. ii.

The writer of the apocryphal book called Baruch expresses the same subject by the same images, either taking them from this place of Isaiah, or from the common notions of his countrymen: "For God hath appointed that every high hill, and banks of long continuance, should be cast down, and valleys filled up, to make even the ground, that Israel may go safely in the glory of God. " Chap. 5:7.

The Jewish Church, to which John was sent to announce the coming of Messiah, was at that time in a barren and desert condition, unfit, without reformation, for the reception of her King. It was in this desert country, destitute at that time of all religious cultivation, in true piety and good works unfruitful, that John was sent to prepare the way of the Lord by preaching repentance. I have distinguished the parts of the sentence according to the punctuation of the Masoretes, which agrees best both with the literal and the spiritual sense; which the construction and parallelism of the distich in the Hebrew plainly favors, and of which the Greek of the Septuagint and of the evangelists is equally susceptible.

John was born in the desert of Judea, and passed his whole life in it, till the time of his being manifested to Israel. He preached in the same desert: it was a mountainous country; however not entirely and properly a desert; for though less cultivated than other parts of Judea, yet it was not uninhabited. Joshua (chap. 15:61, 62) reckons six cities in it. We are so prepossessed with the idea of John's living and preaching in the desert, that we are apt to consider this particular scene of his preaching as a very important and essential part of history: whereas I apprehend this circumstance to be no otherwise important, than as giving us a strong idea of the rough character of the man, which was answerable to the place of his education; and as affording a proper emblem of the rude state of the Jewish Church at that time, which was the true wilderness meant by the prophet, in which John was to prepare the way for the coming of the Messiah.

Verse 4. Crooked— The word עֶקֶב akob is very generally rendered crooked: but this sense of the word seems not to be supported by any good authority. Ludolphus, Comment. ad Hist. Aethiop. p. 206, says “that in the Ethiopia language it signifies clivus, locus editus: “ and so the Syriac Version renders it in this place, עֶרְמָא arama: Hebrew, עֶרְמָה aramah, tumulus, acervus. Thus the parallelism would be more perfect: “the hilly country shall be made level, and the precipices a smooth plain.”

Verse 5. “The salvation of our God.”— These words are added here by the Septuagint: τὸ σωτηριον του θεου, אֵת יְשׁוּעַת אֱלֹהֵינוּ eth yesuath Eloheynu, as it is in the parallel place, chap. 52:10. The sentence is abrupt without it, the verb wanting its object; and I think it is genuine. Our

Verse 6. *The voice saint Cry “A voice saith Proclaim”*— To understand rightly this passage is a matter of importance; for it seems designed to give us the true key to the remaining part of Isaiah’s prophecies, the general subject of which is the restoration of the people and Church of God. The prophet opens the subject with great clearness and elegance: he declares at once God’s command to his messengers, (his prophets, as the Chaldee rightly explains it,) to comfort his people in captivity, to impart to them the joyful tidings, that their punishment has now satisfied the Divine justice, and the time of reconciliation and favor is at hand. He then introduces a harbinger giving orders to prepare the way for God, leading his people from Babylon, as he did formerly from Egypt, through the wilderness, to remove all obstacles, and to clear the way for their passage. Thus far nothing more appears to be intended than a return from the Babylonish captivity; but the next words seem to intimate something much greater:—

***“And the glory of JEHOVAH shall be revealed;
And all flesh shall see together the salvation of our God.”***

He then introduces a voice commanding him to make a solemn proclamation. And what is the import of it? that the people—the flesh, is of a vain temporary nature; that all its glory fadeth, and is soon gone; but that the word of God endureth for ever. What is this, but a plain opposition of the flesh to the spirit; of the carnal Israel to the spiritual; of the temporary Mosaic economy to the eternal Christian dispensation? You may be ready to conclude, (the prophet may be disposed to say,) by this introduction to my discourse, that my commission is only to comfort you with a promise of the restoration of your religion and polity, of Jerusalem, of the temple, and its services and worship in all its ancient splendor. These are earthly, temporary, shadowy, fading things, which shall soon pass away, and be destroyed for ever; these are not worthy to engage your attention in comparison of the greater blessings, the spiritual redemption, the eternal inheritance, covered under the veil of the former, which I have it in charge to unfold unto you. The law has only a shadow of good things; the substance is the Gospel. I promise you a restoration of the former, which, however, is only for a time, and shall be done away, according to God’s original appointment: but under that image I give you a view of the latter,

which shall never be done away, but shall endure for ever. This I take to be agreeable to St. Peter's interpretation of this passage of the prophet, quoted by him, 1 Peter 1:24, 25: "All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth and the flower thereof falleth away; but the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the Gospel is preached unto you. " This is the same word of the Lord of which Isaiah speaks, which hath now been preached unto you by the Gospel. The law and the Gospel are frequently opposed to one another by St. Paul, under the images of flesh and spirit: "Having begun in the spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" Galatians 3:3. — L.

All the Godliness thereof— "All its glory"— For חסדו chasdo read חדרו chadu; the Septuagint and Vulgate, and 1 Peter 1:24.

Verse 7. *The grass withereth*— The whole of this verse is wanting in three of Kennicott's and five of De Rossi's MSS., and in a very correct and ancient MS. of my own, and also in the Septuagint and Arabic.

Surely the people "Verily this people"— So the Syriac; who perhaps read העם הזה haam hazzeh.

Because the spirit of the Lord "When the wind of JEHOVAH"— רוח יהוה ruach Jehovah, a wind of JEHOVAH, is a Hebraism, meaning no more than a strong wind. It is well known that a hot wind in the east destroys every green thing. Compare Psalm ciii. 16. Two MSS. omit the word יהוה Yehovah, Jehovah.

Verse 9. *O Zion, that bringest good tidings* "O daughter, that bringest glad tidings to Zion"— That the true construction of the sentence is this, which makes Zion the receiver, not the publisher, of the glad tidings, which latter has been the most prevailing interpretation, will, I think, very clearly appear, if we rightly consider the image itself, and the custom and common practice from which it is taken. I have added the word daughter to express the feminine gender of the Hebrew participle, which I know not how to do otherwise in our language; and this is absolutely necessary in

order to ascertain the image. For the office of announcing and celebrating such glad tidings as are here spoken of, belongs peculiarly to the women. On occasion of any great public success, a signal victory, or any other joyful event, it was usual for the women to gather together, and with music, dances, and songs, to publish and celebrate the happy news. Thus after the passage of the Red Sea, Miriam, and all the women, with timbrels in their hands, formed a chorus, and joined the men in their triumphant song, dancing, and throwing in alternately the refrain or burden of the song:—

***“Sing ye to JEHOVAH, for he is greatly exalted;
The horse and his rider hath he cast into the sea.”
Exodus 15:20, 21.***

So Jephthah’s daughter collected a chorus or virgins, and with dances and songs came out to meet her father, and to celebrate his victory, Judges 11:34. After David’s conquest of Goliath, “all the women came out of the cities of Israel singing and dancing to meet Saul, with tabrets, with joy, and with instruments of music; “ and, forming themselves into two choruses, they sang alternately:—

***“Saul has slain his thousands:
And David his ten thousands.”***

1 Samuel 18:6, 7.

And this gives us the true sense of a passage in the sixty-eighth Psalm, which has frequently been misunderstood:—

***“JEHOVAH gave the word, (that is, the joyful news,)
The women, who published the glad tidings, were a great
company;
The kings of mighty armies did flee, did flee:
And even the matron, who stayed at home, shared the
spoil.”***

The word signifying the publishers of glad tidings is the same, and

expressed in the same form by the feminine participle, as in this place, and the last distich is the song which they sang. So in this place, JEHOVAH having given the word by his prophet, the joyful tidings of the restoration of Zion, and of God's returning to Jerusalem, (see chap. 52:8,) the women are exhorted by the prophet to publish the joyful news with a loud voice from eminences, whence they might best be heard all over the country; and the matter and burden of their song was to be, "Behold your God! " See on Psalm 68:11.

Verse 10. *His reward is with him, and his work before him.* "*His reward is with him, and the recompense of his work before him.*"— That is, the reward and the recompense which he bestows, and which he will pay to his faithful servants; this he has ready at hand with him, and holds it out before him, to encourage those who trust in him and wait for him.

Verse 11. *Shall gently lead those that are with young* "*The nursing ewes shall he gently lead.*"— A beautiful image, expressing, with the utmost propriety as well as elegance, the tender attention of the shepherd to his flock. That the greatest care in driving the cattle in regard to the dams and their young was necessary, appears clearly from Jacob's apology to his brother Esau, Genesis 33:13: "The flocks and the herds giving suck to their young are with me; and if they should be overdriven, all the flock will die. " Which is set in a still stronger light by the following remark of Sir John Chardin: "Their flocks, "says he, speaking of those who now live in the east after the patriarchal manner, "feed down the places of their encampments so quick, by the great numbers that they have, that they are obliged to remove them too often, which is very destructive to their flocks, on account of the young ones, who have not strength enough to follow. " Harmer's Observ. i., p. 126.

Verse 16. *And Lebanon is not sufficient*— The image is beautiful and uncommon. It has been imitated by an apocryphal writer, who however comes far short of the original:—

***“For all sacrifice is too little for a sweet savor unto thee:
And all the fat is not sufficient for thy burnt-offering.”***

Judith 16:16.

Does not the prophet mean here that all the burnt-offerings and sacrifices that could be offered were insufficient to atone for sin? That the nations were as nothing before him, not merely because of his immensity, but because of their insufficiency to make any atonement by their oblations for the iniquities which they had committed? Therefore the Redeemer was to come to Zion, etc.

Verse 19. *And casteth silver chains* “*And forgeth for it chains of silver.*”— For צורֶפֶח tsoreph, the participle, twenty-seven MSS., five ancient, and three editions, read צֶרֶפֶח tsaraph, pret. third person.

Verse 20. *Chooseth a tree that will not rot*— For what? To make a god out of it! The rich we find made theirs of gold and silver; the poor man was obliged to put up with a wooden god! From the words “he that hath no oblation chooseth a tree, “we may learn that the gold and silver necessary to make the graven image was first dedicated, and then formed into a god! How stupid is idolatry! Strange that these people did not perceive that there could be no help in these molten and wooden idols!

Verse 21. *Have ye not known*— On this verse Kimchi has a very interesting comment, an extract of which I subjoin. “The whole world may be considered as a house built up; heaven its roof; the stars its lamps; and the fruits of the earth its table spread. The Master of the house is God, blessed for ever; and man is the steward into whose hand all the business of the house is given. If he always consider in his heart that the Master of the house is continually over him, and that he keeps his eye upon his work, and if in consequence he acts wisely, he shall find favor in the eyes of the Master of the house. But if he find wickedness in the house, then will he remove him מִפְּקִידוֹתוֹ min pekidutho, ‘from his stewardship.’ The foolish steward does not think of this; for as his eyes do not see the

Master of the house, he saith in his heart, ‘I will eat and drink what I find in this house, and will take my pleasure in it; nor shall I be careful whether there be a master over this house or not.’ When the Lord of the house marks this, he comes and expels him from the house speedily, and with great anger; therefore it is said, ver. 23, He bringeth the princes to nothing. “It seems that this parable had been long in use among the Jews, as our blessed Lord alludes to it in his parable of the unjust steward. Or did the rabbin, finding it to his purpose, steal the parable from the Gospel? In both places it has great and peculiar beauties.

Have ye not understood from the foundations of the earth “Have ye not understood it from the foundations of the earth?”— The true reading seems to be ממוסדות mimmosedoth, to answer to מראש merosh in the foregoing line. It follows a word ending with מ mem, and out of three mems concurring, it was an easy mistake to drop the middle one.

Verse 22. *As a curtain “As a thin veil”*— “It is usual in the summer season, and upon all occasions when a large company is to be received, to have the court sheltered from heat or inclemency of the weather by a velum, umbrella, or veil, as I shall call it; which being expanded on ropes from one side of the parapet wall to the other, may be folded or unfolded at pleasure. The psalmist seems to allude to some covering of this kind in that beautiful expression of spreading out the heavens like a curtain.” — Shaw’s Travels, p. 274.

Verse 24. *And he shall also blow upon them “And if he but blow upon them”*— The Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate, and MS. Bodl., with another, have גמ gam, only, without the conjunction ו vau, and.

Verse 26. *Left up your eyes on high*— The rabbins say, He who is capable of meditating on the revolutions of the heavenly bodies, and does not meditate on them, is not worthy to have his name mentioned among men.

Verse 28. *There is no searching of his understanding “And that his understanding is unsearchable.”*— Twenty-four MSS., two editions, the

Septuagint and Vulgate, read **וְשֵׁן** veein, with the conjunction וְ vau.

Verse 31. *They shall mount zap with wings as eagles* “*They shall put forth fresh feathers like the moulting eagle*”— It has been a common and popular opinion that the eagle lives and retains his vigor to a great age; and that, beyond the common lot of other birds, he moults in his old age, and renews his feathers, and with them his youth. “Thou shalt renew thy youth like the eagle,” says the psalmist, ciii. 5; on which place St. Ambrose notes, *Aquila longam aetatem ducit, dum, vetustis plumis fatiscens, nova pennarum successione juvenescit*: “The eagle lives to a very advanced age; and in moulting his youth is renewed with his new feathers.”

Phile, *De Animalibus*, treating of the eagle, and addressing himself to the emperor Michael Palaeologus junior, raises his compliment upon the same notion:—

τουτου συ, βασιλευ, τον πολυν ζωις βιον,
αι νεουργων, και κρατων την φυσιν.

*“Long may’st thou live, O king; still like the eagle
Renew thy youth, and still retain thy vigor.”*

To this many fabulous and absurd circumstances are added by several ancient writers and commentators on Scripture; see Bochart, *Hieroz.* 2:ii. 1. Rabbi Saadiah says, Every tenth year the eagle flies near the sun; and when not able any longer to bear the burning heat, she falls down into the sea, and soon loses her feathers, and thus renews her vigor. This she does every tenth year till the hundredth, when, after she has ascended near the sun, and fallen into the sea, she rises no more. How much proof do such stories require! Whether the notion of the eagle’s renewing his youth is in any degree well founded or not, I need not inquire; it is enough for a poet, whether profane or sacred, to have the authority of popular opinion to support an image introduced for illustration or ornament. — L

CHAPTER 41

The prophet, having intimated the deliverance from Babylon, and the still greater redemption couched under it, resumes the subject. He begins with the Divine vocation of Abraham, the root of the Israelitish family, and his successful exploits against the idolaters, 1-7. He then recurs to the Babylonish captivity, and encourages the seed of Abraham, the friend of God, not to fear, as all their enemies would be ultimately subdued under them, 8-16; and every thing furnished necessary to refresh and comfort them in their passage homewards through the desert, 17-20. The prophet then takes occasion to celebrate the prescience of God, from his knowledge of events so very distant as instanced in the prediction concerning the messenger of glad tidings which should be given to Jerusalem to deliver her from all her enemies; and challenges the idols of the heathen to produce the like proof of their pretended divinity, 21-27. But they are all vanity, and accursed are they that choose them, 28, 29.

NOTES ON CHAP. 41

Verse 1. *Keep silence before me, O islands* “*Let the distant nations repair to me with new force of mind*”— $\epsilon\gamma\kappa\alpha\iota\nu\iota\zeta\epsilon\sigma\theta\epsilon$, Septuagint. For הַחֲרִישׁוּ hacharishu, be silent, they certainly read in their copy הַחֲדִישׁוּ hachadishu, be renewed; which is parallel and synonymous with כַּח יְחַלְפוּ yechalephu coach, “recover their strength;” that is, their strength of mind, their powers of reason; that they may overcome those prejudices by which they have been so long held enslaved to idolatry. A MS. has הַר har, upon a rasure. The same mistake seems to have been made in this word, Zephaniah 3:17. For $\text{יַחַרִּישׁ בְּאַהֲבָתוֹ}$ yacharish beahabatho, silebit in directions sua, as the Vulgate renders it; which seems not consistent with what immediately follows, exultabit super te in laude; the Septuagint and Syriac read $\text{יַחַדִּישׁ בְּאַהֲבָתוֹ}$ yachadish beahabatho, “he shall be renewed in his love. “ אֵלַי elai, to me, is wanting in one of De Rossi’s

MSS. and in the Syriac.

Verse 2. *The righteous man*— The Chaldee and Vulgate seem to have read צַדִּיק tsaddik. But Jerome, though his translation has justum, appears to have read צֶדֶק tsedek; for in his comment he expresses it by justum, sive justitiam. However, I think all interpreters understand it of a person. So the Septuagint in MS. Pachom. *εκαλεσεν αυτον*, “he hath called him;” “but the other copies have *αυτην*, her. They are divided in ascertaining this person; some explain it of Abraham, others of Cyrus. I rather think that the former is meant; because the character of the righteous man, or righteousness, agrees better with Abraham than with Cyrus. Besides, immediately after the description of the success given by God to Abraham and his posterity, (who, I presume, are to be taken into the account,) the idolaters are introduced as greatly alarmed at this event. Abraham was called out of the east; and his posterity were introduced into the land of Canaan, in order to destroy the idolaters of that country, and they were established there on purpose to stand as a barrier against the idolatry then prevailing, and threatening to overrun the whole face of the earth. Cyrus, though not properly an idolater or worshipper of images, yet had nothing in his character to cause such an alarm among the idolaters, ver. 5-7. Farther, after having just touched upon that circumstance, the prophet with great ease returns to his former subject, and resumes Abraham and the Israelites; and assures them that as God had called them, and chosen them for this purpose, he would uphold and support them to the utmost, and at length give them victory over all the heathen nations, their enemies; ver. 8-16. Kimchi is of the same mind and gives the same reasons.

Be gave them as the dust to his sword “Hath made them like the dust before his sword”— The image is strong and beautiful; it is often made use of by the sacred poets; see Psalm 1:4; 35:6; Job 21:18, and by Isaiah himself in other places, chap. 17:13; 29:5. But there is great difficulty in making out the construction. The Septuagint read קַשְׁתָּם חַרְבָּם kashtam, charbam, their sword, their bow, understanding it of the sword and bow of the conquered kings: but this is not so agreeable to the analogy of the image, as employed in other places. The Chaldee paraphrast and Kimchi

solve the difficulty by supposing an ellipsis of **לפני** liphney before those words. It must be owned that the ellipsis is hard and unusual: but I choose rather to submit to this, than, by adhering with Vitringa to the more obvious construction, to destroy entirely both the image and the sense. But the Vulgate by gladio ejus, to his sword, and arcui ejus, to his bow, seems to express **להרבו** lecharbo, to his sword, and **לקשתו** lekashto, to his bow, the admission of which reading may perhaps be thought preferable to Kimchi's ellipsis.

Verse 3. And passed safely “*He passeth in safety*”— The preposition seems to have been omitted in the text by mistake; the Septuagint and Vulgate seem to have had it in their copies; **εὐ εἰρημῆν**, to pace, **בשלום** beshalom, “prosperously. “ It is so in one of De Rossi's MSS.

Verse 4. Who hath wrought and done it “*Who hath performed and made these things*”— A word is here lost out of the text. It is sups plied by an ancient MS., **אלה** elleh, “these things; “ and by the Septuagint, **ταυτα**; and by the Vulgate, haec; and by the Chaldee, **אל** elin; all of the same meaning.

Verse 5. Were afraid “*And they were terrified*”— Three MSS. have **ויחרדו** vaiyecheridu, adding the conjunction **ו** vau, which restores the second member of the sentence to its true poetical form.

Verse 7. That it should not be moved “*That it shall not move.*”— Five MSS., (two ancient,) and the ancient Versions, add the conjunction **ו** vau, “and, “reading **ולא** velo, “and not, “which seems to be right.

Verse 9. And called thee from the chief men thereof “*And called from the extremities thereof*”— **אציל מאציליה** atsil meatsileyha, signifies the arm, ascilla, ala; and is used like **כנף** canaph, “the wing, “for any thing extended from the extremity of another, or joined on to it. It is here parallel with and synonymous to **מקצות** mikkatsoth, “from the ends, “in the preceding member.

Verse 10. Be not dismayed-**וְאֵל תִּשְׁתַּע** veal tishta, “AND be not dismayed. “ The ו vau is added by twenty-one of Dr. Kennicott’s MSS., thirty of De Rossi’s, and one of my own, and three editions. It makes the sense more complete.

Verse 14. *Fear not, thou worm Jacob*— In the rabbinical commentary on the five books of Moses, Yelamedenu, it is asked, Why are the Israelites called a worm? To signify, that as the worm does not smite, that is, gnaw the cedars, but with its mouth, which is very tender, yet it nevertheless destroys the hard wood; so all the strength of the Israelites is in prayer, by which they smite the wicked of this world, though strong like the cedars, to which they are compared, Ezekiel 31:3.

Verse 15. *A new sharp threshing instrument having teeth* “*A threshing wain; a new corn-drag armed with pointed teeth*” — See note on chap. 28:27, 28.

Thou shalt thresh the mountains— Mountains and hills are here used metaphorically for the kings and princes of the Gentiles. — Kimchi.

Verse 19. *I will plant in the wilderness the cedar*— The two preceding verses express God’s mercy to them in their passage through the dry deserts, in supplying them with abundant water, when distressed with thirst, in allusion to the exodus. This verse expresses the relief afforded to them, fainting with heat in their journey through that hot country, destitute of shelter, by causing shady trees, and those of the tallest and most beautiful kinds, to spring up for their defense. The apocryphal Baruch, speaking of the return from Babylon, expresses God’s protection of his people by the same image: “Even the woods and every sweet-smelling tree shall overshadow Israel by the commandment of God. “ Chap. 5:8.

The oil tree— This, Kimchi says, is not to be understood of the olive tree, for the olive is distinguished, Nehemiah 8:15; but it means the pine or fir, from which pitch is extracted.

Verse 20. *And consider*— The verb **שִׁמוּ** yasimu, without **לב** leb added, cannot signify to apply the heart, or to attend to a thing, as Houbigant has observed; he therefore reads **שִׁמוּ** yashshemu, they shall wonder. The conjecture is ingenious; but it is much more probable that the word **לב** leb is lost out of the text; for all the ancient versions render the phrase to the same sense, as if it were fully expressed, **שִׁמוּ לֵב** yasimu leb; and the Chaldee renders it paraphrastically, yet still retaining the very words in his paraphrase, **וְשׂוּ דַחְלְתֵי עַל לְבָהוּ** vishavvun dechalti al lebehon, “that they may put my fear in their heart. “ See also ver. 22, where the same phrase is used.

Verse 21. *Bring forth your strong reasons “Produce these your mighty powers”*— “Let your idols come forward which you consider to be so very strong. “ Hieron. in loc. I prefer this to all other interpretations of this place; and to Jerome’s own translation of it, which he adds immediately after, Afferte, si quid forte habetis. “Bring it forward, if haply ye have any thing. “ The false gods are called upon to come forth and appear in person; and to give evident demonstration of their foreknowledge and power by foretelling future events, and exerting their power in doing good or evil.

Verse 23. *That we may be dismayed, and behold it together “Then shall we be struck at once with admiration and terror.”*— The word **וְנִירָא** venere is written imperfectly in the Hebreto text; the Masoretes supply **ה** he at the end; and so it is read in twenty-two MSS. and four editions; that is, **וְנִירָאֵה** venireh, and we shall see. But the true reading seems to be **וְנִירָא** venira, and we shall fear, with **י** yod supplied, from **יָרָא** yara.

Verse 24. *Your work of naught “Your operation is less than naught”*— For **מֵאֵפֶה** meepha, read **מֵאֵפֶס** meephes; so the Chaldee and Vulgate. A manifest error of the text; compare chap. 40:17. The rabbins acknowledge no such error, but say that the former word signifies the same with the latter, by a change of the two letters **ס** samech and **ע** ain. — Sal ben Melec in loc.

Verse 25. *I have raised up one from the north*— “That is, “says Kimchi,

“the Messiah. The king of Assyria placed the ten tribes in Chalach and Chabar by the river Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes, 2 Kings 17:6, which lands lie northerly and easterly.”

He shall come upon princes “He shall trample on princes”— For יבא yabo, Le Clerc reads יבס yebes, from the Chaldee, who seems to read both words. “Forte legend. ויבס vaiyebes vel וירמס vaiyirmos: sequitur ׀. “ “This should perhaps be read ויבס vaiyebes, or וירמס vaiyirmos: a ׀ samech follows.” —Secker. See Nahum 3:14.

Verse 26. Your word— אמרתיהם imrntheychem; but, instead of this, one of my most ancient MSS. has דבריכם dibreychem. The meaning is nearly the same: but in this reading this His. is singular.

Verse 27. The first shall say to Zion, Behold, behold them “I first to Zion gave the word, Behold they are here”— This verse is somewhat obscure by the transposition of the parts of the sentence, and the peculiar manner in which it is divided into two parallel lines. The verb at the end of the sentence belongs to both parts; and the phrase, Behold, they are here! is parallel to the messenger of glad tidings; and stands like it, as the accusative case to the verb. The following paraphrase will explain the form and the sense of it. “I first, by my prophets, give notice of these events, saying, Behold, they are at hand! and I give to Jerusalem a messenger of glad tidings.”

Verse 28. Among them “Among the idols”— For ומאלה umeelleh, I read ומאלים umeellim, with the Septuagint, και απο των ειδωλων, “and from or among the idols. “ See Exodus 15:11; Isaiah 57:5.

R. D. Kimchi has many good observations on this chapter. Bishop Lowth follows him in applying it to Abraham, and not to Cyrus; the whole being spoken in the past tense, which is not used, or rarely, in such a case for the future. Almost the whole of the rabbins understand it of Abraham. On Kimchi’s plan, the following is a paraphrase.

The righteous man-Abram, from the eastthe land of his nativity, called the

land of the children of the east, Genesis 29:1.

Brought him to his feet-Whithersoever his feet went, he preached righteousness and truth; as it is written, “There he proclaimed in the name of JEHOVAH, “Genesis 21:31. And he called it וַיִּקְרָאֵהוּ vaiyikraehu-that is, צֶדֶק tsedek, righteousness, to his feet, enabled him to hold it forth wherever he went.

He called the nations-To leave their idols and worship him who made the universe. He taught them the way of righteousness, truth, and faith. Was there ever a prodigy like to this? A man who had been an idolater, rising up against all the nations of the earth, reproving their faith, and not fearing before them nor their kings! Who stirred up his heart to do this? Was it not the Lord?

Gave the nations before him-And made him rule over kings-Chedorlaomer, and the kings which were with him: whom the Lord gave as dust to his sword, and stubble to his bow.

He pursued them-He and his three hundred and eighteen servants.

He passed safely-שָׁלוֹם shalom for בְּשָׁלוֹם beshalom, in safety; so said, because he lost not one of his men in this expedition. See Kimchi.

CHAPTER 42

The prophet sets forth the meekness of Messiah's character, and the extent and blessings of his kingdom, particularly among the Gentiles, 1-9. In consequence of this he calls on the whole creation to join him in one song of praise to God, 10-12. After which he seems again to glance at the deliverance from the captivity; although the words may full as well apply to the deliverance vouchsafed to the Church; to the overthrow of her most powerful enemies; and to the prevalency of true religion over idolatry and error, 13-17. The prophet then reproves the Jews for their blindness and infidelity in rejecting the Messiah, and gives intimations of these judgments which their guilt would draw on them, 18-25.

The prophet, having opened his subject with the preparation for the return from captivity at Babylon, and intimated that a much greater deliverance was covered under the veil of that event, proceeded to vindicate the power of God, as Creator and disposer of all things; and his infinite knowledge, from his prediction of future events, and in particular of that deliverance. He went still farther, and pointed out the instrument by which he should effect the redemption of his people the Jews from slavery; namely, a great conqueror, whom he would call forth from the north and the east to execute his orders. In this chapter he proceeds to the greater deliverance; and at once brings forth into full view, without throwing any veil of allegory over the subject, the Messiah. "Behold my servant, Messiah, "says the Chaldee. St. Matthew has applied it directly to Christ; nor can it with any justice or propriety be applied to any other person or character whatever. — L

NOTES ON CHAP. 42

Verse 1. *Behold my servant, whom I uphold*— אֶתְמַךְ בּוֹ ethmach bo, on whom I lean. Alluding to the custom of kings leaning on the arm of their most beloved and faithful servant. All, both Jews and Christians, agree, that the seven first verses of this chapter belong to Christ. Now, as they

are evidently a continuation of the prophecy in the preceding chapter, that prophecy cannot belong to Cyrus, but to Christ.

He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles “He shall publish judgment to the nations”— Four MSS. two ancient, add the conjunction **וּמִשְׁפָּט** vemishpat. See Matthew 12:18.

The word **מִשְׁפָּט** mishpat, judgment, like **צְדָקָה** tzedakah, righteousness, is taken in a great latitude of signification. It means rule, form, order, model, plan; rule of right, or of religion; an ordinance, institution; judicial process, cause, trial, sentence, condemnation, acquittal, deliverance, mercy, etc. It certainly means in this place the law to be published by Messiah, the institution of the Gospel.

Verse 4. *He shall not fail nor be discouraged “His force shall not be abated nor broken”*— Rabbi Meir ita citat locum istum, ut post **יְרוּץ** yaruts, addat **כּוֹחוֹ** cocho, robur ejus, quod hodie Ilon comparet in textu Hebraeo, sed addendum videtur, ut sensus fiat planior. “Rabbi Meir cites this passage so as to add after **יְרוּץ** yarats **כּוֹחוֹ** cocho, his force, which word is not found in the present Hebrew text, but seems necessary to be added to make the sense more distinct. “Capell. Crit. Sac. p. 382. For which reason I had added it in the translation, before I observed this remark of Capellus. — L.

Verse 6. *A covenant of the people “A covenant to the people”*— For **עֵם** am, two MSS. of Dr. Kennicott’s, and of my own, read **עוֹלָם** olam, the covenant of the age to come, or the everlasting covenant; which seems to give a clearer and better sense. But I think the word **בְּרִית** berith, here, should not be translated covenant, but covenant sacrifice, which meaning it often has; and undoubtedly in this place. This gives a still stronger and clearer sense.

Verse 7. *To open the blind eyes*— In this verse the prophet seems to set forth the spiritual redemption, under images borrowed from the temporal deliverance.

Out of the prison house “And from the dungeon.”— The Septuagint, Syriac, and four MSS., one ancient, add the conjunction וּ vau, מִבֵּית umibbeith, and from the house.

Verse 8. *I am the Lord*— אֲנִי יְהוָה ani Yehovah. This is the famous tetragrammaton, or name of four letters, which we write Jehovah Yehovah, Yehveh, Yeveh, Jhuh, Javah, etc. The letters are Y H U H. The Jews never pronounce it, and the true pronunciation is utterly unknown.

That is my name— A name peculiar to myself.

Verse 10. *Ye that go down to the sea*— This seems not to belong to this place; it does not well consist with what follows, “and the fullness thereof. “ They that go down upon the sea means navigators, sailors, traders, such as do business in great waters; an idea much too confined for the prophet, who means the sea in general, as it is used by the Hebrews, for the distant nations, the islands, the dwellers on the sea-coasts all over the world. I suspect that some transcriber had the 23d verse of Psalm cvii. running in his head, יוֹרְדֵי הַיָּם בְּאֲנִיּוֹת yoredey haiyam booniyoth, and wrote in this place יוֹרְדֵי הַיָּם yoredey haiyam instead of יִרְעֵם הַיָּם yiram haiyam, or יָרִיעַ yari, or יָרַן yaran; “let the sea roar, or shout, or exult. “ But as this is so different in appearance from the present reading, I do not take the liberty of introducing it into the translation. Conjeceram legendum גִּידוּ yegidu, ut ver. 12; sed non favent Versiones. “I would propose to read גִּידוּ yegidu, as in ver. 12; but this is not supported by the Versions .” —Secker.

Verse 11. *Let the wilderness*— The most uncultivated countries, and the most rude and uncivilized people, shall confess and celebrate with thanksgiving the blessing of the knowledge of God graciously imparted to them. By the desert is meant Arabia Deserta; by the rocky country, Arabia Petraea; by the mountains, probably those celebrated ones, Paran, Horeb, Sinai, in the same country; to which also belonged Kedar, a clan of Arabians, dwelling for the most part in tents; but there were others of them who inhabited or frequented cities and villages, as may be collected from this place of the prophet. Pietro della Valle, speaking of the people

of Arabia Deserta, says: “There is a sort of Arabs of that country called Maedi, who with their herds, of buffaloes for the most part, sometimes live in the deserts, and sometimes in cities; from whence they have their name, which signifies wandering, going from place to place. They have no professed houses; nor are they properly Bedau, or Beduui, that is, Deserticoli, who are the most noble among them, and never abide within walls, but always go wandering through the open country with their black tents; nor are they properly called Hhadesi, as they call those who dwell in cities, and lands with fixed houses. These by the latter are esteemed ignoble and base; but both are considered as of low condition. “ Viaggi, Parte 3:lett. ii.

The villages that Kedar doth inhabit— The Arabs, according to the Targum.

The inhabitants of the rock— They who dwell on fortified places. The Vulgate has habitatores Petraeae, “the inhabitants of Arabia Petraea. “ Those who make the rock Jesus Christ, the inhabitants of the rock, true believers in him; the singing, rejoicing for the salvation they have received; abuse and disgrace the passage and the pulpit. I have heard a clergyman, a magistrate, a justice of the quorum, spend an hour in showing from these words, 1. That they meant Jesus Christ, and none other. 2. That he might be fully compared to a rock, as the foundation on which his Church was built, and on which all true believers rested for their salvation. 3. A rock, because of his strength and might in destroying his enemies, and supporting his friends. 4. A refreshing rock, like that in the wilderness; and that rock was Christ. 5. A perspective rock, from which true believers could discover their heavenly inheritance: “When my heart is overwhelmed, lead me to the rock that is higher than I, “etc. Now all this is true in itself; but false in respect to the words on which it was professedly built, for they have no such meaning.

Verse 14. *I have been still “Shall I keep silence for ever”*— After **מעולם** meolam, in the copy which the Septuagint had before them, followed the word **הלעולם**, heleolam, **εσιωπησα απ’ αιωνος μη και αιεσιωπησομαι** according to MSS. Pachom. and 50:D. 2:and Edit.

Complut., which word, **הלעולם** haleolam, has been omitted in the text by an easy mistake of a transcriber, because of the similitude of the word preceding. Shall I always keep silences like that of Juvenal: Semper ego auditor tantum? Shall I always be a hearer only?

Verse 15. *I wilt make the rivers islands* “*I will make the rivers dry deserts*”— Instead of **איים** iyim, islands, read **ציים** tsiim; a very probable conjecture of Houbigant.

Verse 16. *In paths*— The Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate, and nine MSS., (two ancient,) read **ובנתיבות** ubenotiboth.

Will I do unto them— **עשיתם** asitem. This word, so written as it is in the text, means “thou wilt do, “in the second person. The Masoretes have indeed pointed it for the first person; but the ך yod in the last syllable is absolutely necessary to distinguish the first person; and so it is written in forty MSS., **עשיתים** asithim.

Jarchi, Kimchi, Sal. ben Melec, etc., agree that the past time is here put for the future, **עשיתי** asithi for **אעשה**; and indeed the context necessarily requires that interpretation. Farther it is to be observed that **עשיתים** asithim is put for **עשיתי להם** asithi lahem, “I have done them, “for “I have done for them; “ as **עשיתני** asitheni is for **עשיתי לי** asithi li, “I have made myself, “for “I have made for myself, “Ezekiel 29:2; and in the celebrated passage of Jephthah’s vow, Judges 11:31, **והעליתיהו עולה** veheelitihu olah for **העליתי לו עולה** heelithi lo olah, “I will offer him a burnt-offering, “for “I will offer unto him (that is, unto JEHOVAH) a burnt-offering; “ by an ellipsis of the preposition of which Buxtorf gives many other examples, Thes. Grammat. lib. 2:17. See also note on chap. 65:5. A late happy application of this grammatical remark to that much disputed passage has perfectly cleared up a difficulty which for two thousand years had puzzled all the translators and expositors, had given occasion to dissertations without number, and caused endless disputes among the learned on the question, whether Jephthah sacrificed his daughter or not; in which both parties have been equally ignorant of the

meaning of the place, of the state of the fact, and of the very terms of the vow; which now at last has been cleared up beyond all doubt by my learned friend Dr. Randolph, Margaret Professor of Divinity in the University of Oxford, in his Sermon on Jephthah's Vow, Oxford, 1766. — L.

Verse 19. *As my messenger that I sent* “*As he to whom I have sent my messengers*”— כמלכי אשלח kemalachey eshlach, ut ad quem nuncios meos misi. The Vulgate and Chaldee are almost the only interpreters who render it rightly, in consistence with the rest of the sentence, and in perfect agreement with the Hebrew idiom; according to which the ellipsis is to be thus supplied: כלאשר מלאכי אשלח kelaasher malachey eshlach; “As he to whom I have sent my messengers.”

As he that is perfect “*As he who is perfectly instructed*”— See note on chap. 44:2.

And blind as the Lord's servant “*And deaf, as the servant of JEHOVAH*”— For ועור veivver, and blind, we must read וחרש vecheresh, and deaf: κωφός, Symmachus, and so a MS. The mistake is palpable, and the correction self-evident, and admissible though there had been no authority for it.

Verse 20. *Seeing many things* “*Thou hast seen indeed*”— The text has ראית רבית raith rabith, which the Masoretes in the marginal Keri have corrected to ראות רבות reoth rabboth; as indeed one hundred and seven MSS., and five editions, now have it in the text. This was probably the reading of most of the MSS. of their time; which, though they approved of it, out of some superstition they would not admit into their standard text. But these wretched critics, though they perceived there was some fault, yet did not know where the fault lay, nor consequently how to amend it; and yet it was open enough to a judicious eye: רבות רבות, sic veteres; et tamen forte legendum, ראות reoth, vide cap. 6:9.” —Secker. That is, ראית רבות raith, reoth, seeing, thou shalt see. I believe no one will doubt of admitting this as the true reading.

But he heareth not “*Yet thou wilt not hear*”— For **שמע** yishma, read **תשמע** tishma, in the second person; so all the ancient Versions and forty MSS. of Kennicott’s, (four of them ancient,) and seventeen of De Rossi’s, and perhaps five more. Two others have **תשמעו** tishmeu, second person plural.

Verse 21. He will magnify the law “*He hath exalted his own praise*”— For **תורה** torah, the law, the Septuagint read **תודה** todah, praise.

Verse 22. They are all of them snared in holes “*All their chosen youths are taken in the toils*”— For **הפח** hapheach read **הופחו** huphachu, in the plural number, hophal; as **החבאו** hochbau, which answers to it in the following member of the sentence. Le Clerc, Houbigant. **הפח** huppach, Secker.

Verse 24. We have sinned “*They have sinned*”— For **חטאנו** chatanu, “we have sinned, “first person; the Septuagint and Chaldee read **חטאו** chateu, “they have sinned, “in the third person.

Verse 25. The fury of his anger “*The heat of his wrath*”— For **חמה** chammah, the Bodl. MS. has **חמת** chammath, in regimine, more regularly.

It hath set him on fire round about— So thoroughly hardened are the Jewish people, that they are represented as being in a house on fire, and even scorched with the flames, without perceiving their danger, or feeling that they are hurt! What a picture of mental induration! and this is their state to the present day. But by whom shall Jacob arise? for in this sense he is small indeed. Many efforts have been made to Christianize them, but without effect; and is this to be wondered at, while we tell them how great they are, how learned, how wise, how much we owe to them, that they are still the peculiar people of God, etc., etc.? If all this be true, what can they gain by becoming Christians? Whereas a more stupid, proud, hardened, ignorant people can scarcely be found in the civilized world, and they are most grossly ignorant of their own Scriptures.

CHAPTER 43

Prediction of that blessed period when God should gather the posterity of Abraham, with tender care, from their several dispersions in every quarter under heaven, and bring them safely to their own land, 1-7. Struck with astonishment at so clear a display of an event so very remote, the prophet again challenges all the blended nations and their idols to produce an instance of such foreknowledge, 8, 9; and intimates that the Jews should remain (as at this day,) a singular monument to witness the truth of the prediction, till it should at length be fulfilled by the irresistible power of God, 10-13. He then returns to the nearer deliverance—that from the captivity of Babylon, 14, 15; with which, however, he immediately connects another deliverance described by allusions to that from Egypt, but represented as much more wonderful than that; a character which will not at all apply to the deliverance from Babylon, and must therefore be understood of the restoration from the mystical Babylon, 16-18. On this occasion the prophet, with peculiar elegance, and by a very strong poetic figure, represents the tender care of God in comforting and refreshing his people on their way through the desert, to be so great as to make even the wild beasts haunting those parched places so sensible of the blessing of those copious streams then provided by him, as to join their hissing and howling notes with one consent to praise God, 19-21. This leads to a beautiful contrast of the ingratitude of the Jews, and a vindication of God's dealings with regard to them, 22-28.

NOTES ON CHAP. 43

Verse 1. *I have called thee by thy name*— “קראתי בשמך karathi beshimcha. So all the versions. But it seems from the seventh verse, and from the thing itself, that we should read קראתיך בשמי karathicha bishmi, ‘I have called thee by my name;’ for this form of speech often occurs—the other never. For chap. 45:24, concerning Cyrus, is another matter; but when God calls Jacob Israel, he calls him by the name of God.

See Exodus 31:2.” —Secker.

Verse 3. *I gave Egypt for thy ransom*— This is commonly supposed to refer to the time of Sennacherib’s invasion; who, when he was just ready to fall upon Jerusalem, soon after his entering Judea, was providentially diverted from that design, and turned his arms against the Egyptians, and their allies the Cushean Arabians, with their neighbors the Sabeans, probably joined with them under Tirhakah. See chap. 20:and chap. 37:9. Or as there are some reasonable objections to this opinion, perhaps it may mean more generally that God has often saved his people at the expense of other nations, whom he had, as it were in their stead, given up to destruction. Vitringa explains this of Shalmaneser’s designs upon the kingdom of Judea after he had destroyed that of Samaria, from which he was diverted by carrying the war against the Egyptians, Cusheans, and Sabeans; but of this I think he has no clear proof in history. It is not to be wondered at that many things of this kind should remain very obscure for the want of the light of history, which in regard to these times is extremely deficient.

“Did not Cyrus overcome these nations? and might they not be given for releasing the Jews? It seems to have been so from chap. 45:14.” —Secker.

Kimchi refers all this to the deliverance of Jerusalem from the invasion of Sennacherib. Tirhakah, king of Ethiopia, had come out to war against the king of Assyria, who was there-upon obliged to raise the siege of Jerusalem. Thus the Ethiopians, Egyptians, and Sabeans were delivered into the hands of the Assyrians as a ransom for Israel. — Kimchi. I cannot help thinking this to be a very rational solution of the text.

Verse 7. *Every one that is called by my name*— All who worship the true God, and are obedient to his laws.

I have created him— בראתיו berathiv. I have produced him out of nothing.

For my glory— Ten MSS., three ancient, and the Syriac and Vulgate, read לכבודי licabodi, without the conjunction ו vau, and.

I have formed him— **יצרתיו** yetsartiv. I have given him that particular form and shape which are best suited to his station in life.

I have made him— **עשיתיו** asithiv. I have adapted him to the accomplishment of my counsels and designs.

Verse 8. *Bring forth the blind people that have eyes “Bring forth the people, blind, although they have eyes”*— I understand this of the Gentiles, as the verse following, not of the Jews. Their natural faculties, if they had made a proper use of them, must have led them to the knowledge of the being and attributes of the one true God; “for his eternal power and Godhead, “if well attended to, are clearly seen in his works, (Romans 1:20,) and would have preserved them from running into the folly and absurdity of worshipping idols. They are here challenged to produce the evidence of the power and foreknowledge of their idol gods; and the Jews are just afterwards, ver. 10, appealed to as witnesses for God in this cause, therefore these latter cannot here be meant by the people blind with eyes and deaf with ears.

Verse 9. *Who among them*— Seven MSS., three ancient, and the first edition, 1486, with the Syriac and Vulgate, read **בכם** bechem, who among you, the present reading is preferable.

Verse 10. Ye (the Israelites) are my witnesses-and my servant (the prophet) whom I have chosen, that whatever has been said before concerning Sennacherib has been literally fulfilled. The prophet had predicted it; the Israelites saw it accomplished.

Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me.— This is a most difficult place. Was there a time when God was not? No! Yet he says, before me. Will there be a time in which God will not exist? No! Yet he says, after me. Are not all these words to be referred to his creation? Before me, no god created any thing, nor was there any thing pre-existent but myself. And after me, i.e., after my creation, such as now exists, there shall be no other class of beings formed. This mode of

interpretation frees the passage from all embarrassment, and the context perfectly agrees with it. The words my servant, in this verse, the Targum understands of the Messiah.

Verse 12. *I have declared, and have saved*— My prophets have always predicted your deliverances before they took place; and I have fulfilled their words to the uttermost.

Verse 14. *The Chaldeans, whose cry is on the ships “The Chaldeans exulting in their ships.”*— Babylon was very advantageously situated both in respect to commerce, and as a naval power. It was open to the Persian Gulf by the Euphrates, which was navigable by large vessels; and being joined to the Tigris above Babylon by the canal called Naharmalca or the Royal River, supplied the city with the produce of the whole country to the north of it, as far as the Euxine and Caspian seas, Herod. 1:194. Semiramis was the foundress of this part also of the Babylonian greatness. She improved the navigation of the Euphrates, Herod. 1:184; Strabo, lib. xvi.; and is said to have had a fleet of three thousand galleys, Huet, Hist. du Commerce, chap. 11: We are not to wonder that in later times we hear little of the commerce and naval power of Babylon; for, after the taking of the city by Cyrus, the Euphrates was not only rendered less fit for navigation by being on that occasion diverted from its course and left to spread over the whole country; but the Persian monarchs, residing in their own country, to prevent any invasion by sea on that part of their empire, purposely obstructed the navigation of both the rivers by making cataracts in them, Strabo, *ib.*, that is, by raising dams across the channel, and making artificial falls in them, that no vessel of any size or force could possibly come up. Alexander began to restore the navigation of the rivers by demolishing the cataracts upon the Tigris as far up as Seleucia, Arrian, lib. vii., but he did not live to finish his great designs; those upon the Euphrates still continued. Ammianus, 24:1, mentions them as subsisting in his time.

The prophet therefore might very justly speak of the Chaldeans as glorying in their naval power in his time; though afterwards they had no foundation for making any such boast.

Verse 15. *The Creator*— For בורא bore, “Creator,” six MSS. (two ancient) have אלהי Elohey, “God.”

Verse 19. *Behold, I will do a new thing*— At ver. 16, the prophet had referred to the deliverance from Egypt and the passage through the Red Sea; here he promises that the same power shall be employed in their redemption and return from the Babylonish captivity. This was to be a new prodigy.

Verse 20. *The beast of the field shall honor me “The wild beast of the field shall glorify me”*— The image is elegant and highly poetical. God will give such an abundant miraculous supply of water to his people traversing the dry desert in their return to their country, that even the wild beasts, the serpents, the ostriches, and other animals that haunt those arid regions, shall be sensible of the blessing, and shall break forth into thanksgiving and praises to him for the unusual refreshment which they receive from his so plentifully watering the sandy wastes of Arabia Deserta, for the benefit of his people passing through them.

Verse 22. *But thou hast not called upon me*— The connection is: But thou, Israel, whom I have chosen, whom I have formed for myself to be my witness against the false gods of the nations; even thou hast revolted from me, hast neglected my worship, and hast been perpetually running after strange gods. The emphasis of this and the following parts of the sentence, on which the sense depends, is laid on the words ME, on MY ACCOUNT, etc. The Jews were diligent in performing the external services of religion; in offering prayers, incense, sacrifices, oblations; but their prayers were not offered with faith; and their oblations were made more frequently to their idols than to the God of their fathers. The Hebrew idiom excludes with a general negative, in a comparative sense, one of two objects opposed to one another: thus, “I will have mercy, and not sacrifice,” Hosea 6:6. “For I spoke not to your fathers, nor commanded them, concerning burnt-offerings or sacrifices; but this thing I commanded them, saying, Obey my voice,” Jeremiah 7:22, 23. And the meaning of this place of Isaiah seems to be much the same with that of Amos; who however has explained at large both parts of the comparison, and specified the false service opposed to the true:—

*“Have ye offered unto me sacrifices and offerings,
In the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel?
Nay, but you have borne the tabernacle of your Moloch,
And Chiun, your images;
The star of your god, which you made to yourselves.”*

Amos 5:25, 26.

But thou hast been weary of me, O Israel “Neither on my account hast thou laboured, O Israel.”— For **כִּי יַגַּתָּ** ki yagata, the Septuagint and Vulgate read **וַיַּגַּתָּ** veyagata. — Houbigant. The negative is repeated or referred to by the conjunction **ו** vau, as in many other places. See note on chap. 23:4.

Verse 25. I, even I, am he— The original is extremely abrupt: **אֲנֹכִי הוּא אֲנֹכִי** anochi anochi hu, “I, I, He. “Is there any mystery in this form? Does it refer to a plurality of persons in the Godhead?”

For mine own sake— In the pardon of sin God can draw no reason but from his own infinite goodness.

Verse 27. Thy first father hath sinned— On this Kimchi speaks well: “How can ye say that ye have not sinned, seeing your first father, Adam, sinned; and man hath sin impressed on him through natural generation?”

Verse 28. I have profaned the princes of the sanctuary “Thy princes have profaned my sanctuary”— Instead of **וַאֲחַלֵּל שְׂרִי** vaachallel sarey, read **וַיַּחַלְלוּ שְׂרִיךְ** vayechalelu sareycha. So the Syriac and Septuagint, **καὶ ἐμίαναν οἱ ἀρχόντες τὰ ἁγία μου**, “the rulers have defiled my holy things. “**קֹדְשֵׁי** kodshi, Houbigant. **οἱ ἀρχόντες σου**, “thy rulers, “MSS. Pachom. and 1:D. 2:and Marchal.

To reproaches “*To reproach*”— **לִגְדוּפָה** ligedupah, in the singular number; so an ancient MS. and the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate. And, alas! what a curse do they still bear, and what reproach do they still

suffer! No national crimes have ever equalled those of the Jewish nation, for no nation ever had such privileges to neglect, despise, sin against. When shall this severity of God towards this people have an end? Answ. Whenever, with one heart, they turn to him, and receive the doctrine of the Lord Jesus; and not till then.

CHAPTER 44

This chapter, besides promises of redemption, of the effusion of the Spirit, and success of the Gospel, 1-5, sets forth, in a very sublime manner, the supreme power and foreknowledge, and absolute eternity, of the one true God; and exposes the folly and absurdity of idolatry with admirable force and elegance, 6-20. And to show that the knowledge of future events belongs only to Jehovah, whom all creation is again called to adore for the deliverance and reconciliation granted to his people, 21-23, the prophet concludes with setting in a very strong point of view the absolute impotence of every thing considered great and insurmountable in the sight of men, when standing in the way of the Divine counsel; and mentions the future deliverer of the Jewish nation expressly by name, nearly two hundred years before his birth, 24-28.

NOTES ON CHAP. 44

Verse 2. Jesurun—Jeshurun means Israel. This name was given to that people by Moses, Deuteronomy 32:15; 33:5, 26. The most probable account of it seems to be that in which the Jewish commentators agree; namely, that it is derived from **יָשָׁר** yashar, and signifies upright. In the same manner, Israel, as a people, is called **מְשֻׁלָּם** meshullam, perfect, chap. 42:19, They were taught of God, and abundantly furnished with the means of rectitude and perfection in his service and worship. Grotius thinks that **יֵשׁוּרֻן** yeshurun is a diminutive of **יִשְׂרָאֵל** yishrael, Israel; expressing peculiar fondness and affection; **Ἰσραηλιδιον**, O little Israel.

Verse 4. They shall spring up as among the grass “*They shall spring up as the grass among the waters*”—**בְּבֵי חֲצִיר** bebeyn chatsir, “They shall spring up to the midst of, or rather, in among, the grass. “This cannot be right: eleven MSS., and thirteen editions, have **כְּבֵי** kebeyn, or **כֵּבֵן** keben. Twenty-four MSS. read it without the **י** yod, **כֵּבֵן** beben, in the son of the grass; and so reads the Chaldee; **כֵּבֵן** beben, in the son of the grass.

Twenty-four MSS. of Dr. Kennicott's, thirty-three of De Rossi's, and one of my own, with six editions, have this reading. The Syriac, מִבְּיֵן mibbeyn. The true reading is in all probability כִּבְיֵן kebeyn; and the word מַיִם mayim, which should have followed it, is lost out of the text: but it is happily supplied by the Septuagint, ὡς ἀνα μέσον ὑδάτος, as among the water "In every place where there is water, there is always grass; for water makes every thing grow in the east. " Sir John Chardin's note on 1 Kings 17:5. Harmer's Observations 1:64.

Verse 5. Shall call himself "Shall be called"— Passive, יִקָּרֵא yikkare; κληθησεται, Symmachus.

Another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord "This shall inscribe his hand to JEHOVAH"— και ετερος επιγραψει χειρι (χειρα, Ag., Sym.) αυτου, του θεου ειμι "And another shall write upon his hand, I belong to God." —Sept. They seem to have read here, as before, אֲנִי לַיהוָה laihovah ani, I belong to JEHOVAH. But the repetition of the same phrase without any variation is not elegant. However, they seem to have understood it rightly, as an allusion to the marks, which were made by punctures rendered indelible, by fire or by staining, upon the hand or some other part of the body, signifying the state or character of the person, and to whom he belonged. The slave was marked with the name of his master, the soldier, of his commander; the idolater, with the name or ensign of his god: στιγματα επιγραφομενα δια των στρατευομενων εν ταις χερσιν "Punctural inscriptions made by the soldiers on their hands. " Aetius apud Turnebum Advers. 24:12. Victuris in cute punctis milites scripti et matriculis inserti jurare solent. "The soldiers having indelible inscriptions on their skin, and inserted in the muster-rolls, are accustomed to make oath. " Vigetius, 2:6. And the Christians seem to have imitated this practice, by what Procopius says on this place of Isaiah: το δε τη χειρι, δια το στιζειν ισως πολλους επι καρπων, η βραχιωνων, η του σταυρου σημειον, η την χριστου προσηγοριαν. "Because many marked their wrists, or their arms, with the sign of the cross, or with the name of Christ. " See Revelation 20:4; Spencer, De Leg. Hebr. lib. ii., cap. 20.

Verse 7. *Let them show unto them* “*Let them declare unto us.*”— For לָמוּ lamo, unto them, the Chaldee reads לָנוּ lanu, unto us The Septuagint read לָכֶם lachem, unto you; which is preferable to the reading of the text. But לָמוּ lamo, and לָנוּ lanu, are frequently mistaken one for the other, see chap. 10:29; Psalm 80:7; 64:6.

Verse 8. *Fear ye not*— תִּרְהוּ tirehu never occurs. Perhaps it should be תִּירְאוּ tireu, fear ye. Two MSS. read תִּירְהוּ tirehu, and one of mine תַּהֲרוּ taharu.

Verses 9, 10. *That they may be ashamed. Who hath formed a god* “*That every one may be ashamed, that he hath formed a god*”— The Bodleian MS., one of the first extant for its antiquity and authority, instead of מִי mi, at the beginning of the tenth verse, has כִּי ki, which greatly clears up the construction of a very obscure passage. Doederlein approves of this reading. The Septuagint likewise closely connect in construction the end of ver. 9 with the beginning of ver. 10; and wholly omit the interrogative מִי mi, which embarrasses the sentence: *αἰσχυνθησονται οἱ πλασσοῦντες θεον, καὶ γλυφοντες παντες ἀνωφελη* “But they shall be confounded that make a god; and they who engrave unprofitable things;” agreeably to the reading of the MS. above mentioned.

Verse 11. *His fellows*— חֲבֵרָיו chaberaiv: but עֲבָדָיו abadaiv, his servants or worshippers, is the reading of one of De Rossi’s MSS., and of the Chaldee.

***And the workmen, they are of men* “*Even the workmen themselves shall blush*”**— I do not know that any one has ever yet interpreted these words to any tolerably good sense: וְחֲרָשִׁים הֵמָּה מְאָדָּם vecharashim hemmah meadam. The Vulgate and our translators, have rendered them very fairly, as they are written and pointed in the text: Fabri enim sunt ex hominibus. “And the workmen they are of men. “ Out of which the commentators have not been able to extract any thing worthy of the prophet. I have given another explanation of the place; agreeable enough to the context, if it can be deduced from the words themselves. I presume that אָדָם adam, rubuit,

may signify erubuit, to be red through shame, as well as from any other cause; though I cannot produce any example of it in that particular sense; and the word in the text I would point **מֵאֲדָם** meoddam; or if any one should object to the irregularity of the number, I would read **מֵאֲדָמִים** meoddamim. But I rather think that the irregularity of the construction has been the cause of the obscurity, and has given occasion to the mistaken punctuation. The singular is sometimes put for the plural. See Psalm 68:31; and the participle for the future tense, see Isaiah 40:11. — L.

Verse 12. *The smith with the tongs, etc. “The smith cutteth off a portion of iron”*— **מֵעֶצֶד** meatstsed, Participium Pihel of **עָצַד** atsad, to cut; still used in that sense in the Arabic. See Simonis Lex. Hebrews The Septuagint and Syriac take the word in this form: but they render it sharpeneth the iron. See Castell. Lex. in voce.

The sacred writers are generally large and eloquent upon the subject of idolatry; they treat it with great severity, and set forth the absurdity of it in the strongest light. But this passage of Isaiah, ver. 12-20, far exceeds any thing that ever was written upon the subject, in force of argument, energy of expression, and elegance of composition. One or two of the apocryphal writers have attempted to imitate the prophet, but with very ill success; Wisd. 13:11-19; 15:7, etc.; Baruch vi., especially the latter, who, injudiciously dilating his matter, and introducing a number of minute circumstances, has very much weakened the force and effect of his invective. On the contrary a heathen author, in the ludicrous way, has, in a line or two, given idolatry one of the severest strokes it ever received:—

*Olim truncus eram ficulnus, inutile lignum,
Cum faber incertus, scamnum faceretne Priapum,
Maluit esse Deum. Deus inde ego.*

HORAT. Satyr, lib. 1. sat. viii.

“Formerly I was the stump of a fig tree, a useless log; when the carpenter, after hesitating whether to make me a god or a stool, at last determined to make me a god. Thus I became a god!”

From the tenth to the seventeenth verse, a most beautiful strain of irony is carried on against idolatry. And we may naturally think that every idolater, who either read or heard it, must have been for ever ashamed of his own devices. — L.

Verse 14. *He heweth him down* “*He heweth down*”— For לִכְרֹת *lichroth*, the Septuagint and Vulgate read כָּרַת *carath* or כְּרֹת *yichroth*.

Verse 16. *With part* “*AND with part*”— Twenty-three MSS., the Septuagint, and Vulgate add the conjunction ו *vau*, and וְעֵל *veal*.

Verse 17. *He falleth down unto it*— There were four forms of adoration used among the Hebrews: 1. הִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה *HISHTACHAVAH*, The prostration of the whole body. 2. קָדַד *KADAD*, The bowing of the head. 3. כָּרַע *CARA*, The bending of the upper part of the body down to the knees. 4. בָּרַךְ *BARACH*, Bowing the knee, or kneeling. See on chap. 49:23.

Verse 18. *He hath shut their eyes* “*Their eyes are closed up*”— The Septuagint, Chaldee, and Vulyate, for טַח *tach*, read טָחוּ *tachu*. See note on chap. 6:10.

Verse 20. *He feedeth on ashes*— He feedeth on that which affordeth no nourishment; a proverbial expression for using ineffectual means, and bestowing labor to no purpose. In the same sense Hosea says, “Ephraim feedeth on wind.” Chap. 12:1.

Verse 22. *I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins* “*I have made thy transgressions vanish away like a cloud, and thy sins like a vapor*”— Longinus admired the sublimity of the sentiment, as well as the harmony of the numbers, in the following sentence of Demosthenes: *τοῦτο τὸ ψηφισμα τὸν τότε τῆ πόλει περιστάντα κινδύνον παρελθεῖν ἐποίησεν ὡσπερ νεφός*. “This decree made the danger then hanging over the city pass away like a cloud. “ Probably Isaiah alludes here to the smoke rising up from the sin-offering, dispersed speedily by the wind. and rendered invisible. He who offered his

sacrifice aright was as sure that the sin for which he offered it was blotted out, as that the smoke of the sacrifice was dispersed by the wind, and was no longer discernible.

Verse 24. *By myself*—Thirteen MSS., six ancient, confirm the reading of the Keri, מֵאִתִּי meittai.

Verse 27. *That saith to the deep, Be dry* “*Who saith to the deep, Be thou wasted*”—Cyrus took Babylon by laying the bed of the Euphrates dry, and leading his army into the city by night through the empty channel of the river. This remarkable circumstance, in which the event so exactly corresponded with the prophecy, was also noted by Jeremiah, chap. 50:38; 51:36.

*“A drought shall be upon her waters,
and they shall be dried up:—
I will lay her sea dry
And I will scorch up her springs.”*

It is proper here to give some account of the means and method lay which the stratagem of Cyrus was effected.

The Euphrates in the middle of the summer, from the melting of the snows on the mountains of Armenia, like the Nile, overflows the country. In order to diminish the inundation, and to carry off the waters, two canals were made by Nebuchadnezzar a hundred miles above the city; the first on the eastern side called Naharmalca, or the Royal River, by which the Euphrates was let into the Tigris; the other on the western side, called Pallacopas, or Naharaga, (נַהַר אֲגָם nahar agam, The river of the pool,) by which the redundant waters were carried into a vast lake, forty miles square, contrived, not only to lessen the inundation, but for a reservoir, with sluices, to water the barren country on the Arabian side. Cyrus, by turning the whole river into the lake by the Pallacopas, laid the channel, where it ran through the city, almost dry; so that his army entered it, both above and below, by the bed of the river, the water not reaching above the middle of the thigh. By the great quantity-of water let into the lake, the sluices and dams were destroyed; and being never repaired afterwards, the

waters spread over the whole country below, and reduced it to a morass, in which the river is lost. *Ingens modo et navigabilis, inde tenuis rivus, despectus emoritur; et nusquam manifesto exitit effluit, ut alii omnes, sed deficit.* “And thus a navigable river has been totally lost, it having no exit from this morass. No wonder then that the geographical face of this country is completely changed;” *MELA 3:8; HEROD. 1:186, 190; XENOPHON, Cyrop. vii.; ARRIAN vii.*

Verse 28. *That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd* “*Who saith to Cyrus, Thou art my shepherd*”—*Pastor meus es; Vulg.* The true reading seems to be **אתה רעי** *roi atah*; the word **אתה** *atah*, has probably been dropped out of the text. The same word is lost out of the text, Psalm cxix. 57. It is supplied in the Septuagint by the word **εἰ**, thou art.

Saying to Jerusalem—For **ולאמר** *velemor*, the Septuagint and Vulgate read **האומר** *haomer*.

And to the temple—**ולהיכל** *uleheychal*, as **לירושלם** *lirushalayim*, before; the preposition is necessary, and the Vulgate seems to read so. — Houbigant.

That saith of **CYRUS**, He is, or thou art, my shepherd—Saving to **JERUSALEM**, “Thou shalt be built;” and to the **TEMPLE**, “Thy foundation shall be laid.” —There is a remarkable beauty and propriety in this verse.

1. Cyrus is called God’s shepherd. Shepherd was an epithet which Cyrus took to himself; and what he gave to all good kings.

2. This Cyrus should say to the temple: “Thy foundation shall be laid.” Not-thou shalt be built. The fact is, only the foundation was laid in the days of Cyrus, the Ammonites having prevented the building; nor was it resumed till the second year of Darius, one of his successors. There is often a precision in the expressions of the prophets which is as honorable to truth, as it is unnoticed by careless readers.

CHAPTER 45

Prophecy concerning Cyrus, the first king of the Persians. Every obstruction shall be removed out of his way, and the treasures taken from his enemies shall be immense, 1-3, To whom, and on what account, Cyrus was indebted for his wonderful success, 4-6. The prophet refutes the absurd opinion of the Persians, that there were two supreme beings, an evil and a good one, represented by light and darkness, here declared to be only the operation of the ONE true God, 7; and makes a transition to the still greater work of God displayed in the dispensation of the Gospel, 8. Great impiety of those who call in question the mysterious providence of God towards his children, 9-12. The remaining part of this chapter, interspersed with strictures on the absurdity of idolatry and some allusions to the dark lying oracles of the heathens, may partly refer to the deliverance begun by Cyrus, but chiefly to the salvation by the Messiah, which, it is declared, shall be of universal extent and everlasting duration, 13-25.

NOTES ON CHAP. 45

Verse 1. *Loose the loins of kings “ungird the loins of kings”*— See the note on chap. 5:27. Xenophon gives the following list of the nations conquered by Cyrus: the Syrians, Assyrians, Arabians, Cappadocians, both the Phrygians, Lydians, Carians, Phoenicians, Babylonians. He moreover reigned over the Bactrians, Indians, Cilicians, the Sacae Paphlagonians, and Idariandyni. — Cyrop., lib. 1:p. 4, Edit. Hutchinson, Quarto. All these kingdoms he acknowledges, in his decree for the restoration of the Jews, to have been given to him by JEHOVAH, the God of heaven. Ezra 1:2.

To open before him the two leaved gates, etc. “That I may open before him the valves; and the gates shall not be shut”— The gates of Babylon within the city leading from the streets to the river, were providentially left open, when Cyrus’s forces entered the city in the night through the

channel of the river, in the general disorder occasioned by the great feast which was then celebrated; otherwise, says Herodotus, 1:191, the Persians would have been shut up in the bed of the river, and taken as in a net, and all destroyed. And the gates of the palace were opened imprudently by the king's orders, to inquire what was the cause of the tumult without; when the two parties under Gobrias and Gadatas rushed in, got possession of the palace, and slew the king. — XENOPH., *Cyrop.* 7:p. 528.

Verse 2. *The crooked places* “*The mountains*”— For הַדּוּרִים *hodurim*, crooked places, a word not easily accounted for in this place, the Septuagint read הַרְרִים *hararim*, τὰ ὄρη, the mountains. Two MSS. have הַדְרִים *hadarim*, without the ו *vau*, which is hardly distinguishable from the reading of the Septuagint. The Divine protection that attended Cyrus, and rendered his expedition against Babylon easy and prosperous is finely expressed by God's going before him, and making the mountains level. The image is highly poetical:—

*At vos, qua veniet, tumidi subsidite montes,
Et faciles curvis vallibus este viae.*

OVID, Amor. 2:16.

*“Let the lofty mountains fall down,
and make level paths in the crooked valleys.”*

***The gates of brass* “*The valves of brass*”**— Abydenus, apud, Euseb. *Praep. Evang.* 9:41, says, that the wall of Babylon had brazen gates. And Herodotus, i, 179. more particularly: “In the wall all round there are a hundred gates, all of brass; and so in like manner are the sides and the lintels. “The gates likewise within the city, opening to the river from the several streets, were of brass; as were those also of the temple of Belus. — Herod. i., 180, 181.

Verse 3. *I will gave thee the treasures of darkness*— Sardes and Babylon, when taken by Cyrus, were the wealthiest cities in the world. Croesus, celebrated beyond all the kings of that age for his riches, gave up his

treasures to Cyrus, with an exact account in writing of the whole, containing the particulars with which each wagon was loaded when they were carried away; and they were delivered to Cyrus at the palace of Babylon. — Xenoph. Cyrop. lib. 7:p. 503, 515, 540.

Pliny gives the following account of the wealth taken by Cyrus in Asia. Jam Cyrus devicta Asia, pondo 34:millia auri invenerat; praeter vasa aurea, aurumque factum, et in eo folia, ac platanum, vitemque. Qua victoria argenti quingenta millia talentorum reportavit; et craterem Semiramidis, cuius pondus quindecim talents colligebat. Talentum autem Aegyptium pondo lxxx. patere 50:capere Varro tradit. — Nat. Hist. 33:15. “When Cyrus conquered Asia, he found thirty-four thousand pounds weight of gold, besides golden vessels and articles in gold; and leaves, (folia, perhaps solia, bathing vessels, Hol.,) a plane, and vine tree, (of gold.) By which victory he carried away fifteen thousand talents of silver; and the cup of Semiramis, the weight of which was fifteen talents. The Egyptian talent, according to Varro, was eighty pounds. “ This cup was the crater, or large vessel, out of which they filled the drinking cups at great entertainments. Evidently it could not be a drinking vessel, which, according to what Varro and Pliny say, must have weighed 1, 200 pounds!

The gold and silver estimated by weight in this account, being converted into pounds sterling, amount to one hundred and twenty-six millions two hundred and twenty-four thousand pounds. — Brerewood, De Ponderibus, cap. x.

Treasures of darkness may refer to the custom of burying their jewels and money under the ground in their house floors, fearing robbers.

Verse 7. *I form the light, and create darkness*— It was the great principle of the Magian religion, which prevailed in Persia in the time of Cyrus, and in which probably he was educated, that there are two supreme, co-eternal, and independent causes always acting in opposition one to the other; one the author of all good, the other of all evil. The good being they called LIGHT; the evil being, DARKNESS. That when LIGHT had the ascendant, then good and happiness prevailed among men; when DARKNESS had the superiority, then evil and misery abounded. An

opinion that contradicts the clearest evidence of our reason, which plainly leads us to the acknowledgment of one only Supreme Being, infinitely good as well as powerful. With reference to this absurd opinion, held by the person to whom this prophecy is addressed, God, by his prophet, in the most significant terms, asserts his omnipotence and absolute supremacy:—

*“I am JEHOVAH, and none else;
Forming light, and creating darkness,
Making peace, and creating evil:
I JEHOVAH am the author of all these things.”*

Declaring that those powers whom the Persians held to be the original authors of good and evil to mankind, representing them by light and darkness, as their proper emblems, are no other than creatures of God, the instruments which he employs in his government of the world, ordained or permitted by him in order to execute his wise and just decrees; and that there is no power, either of good or evil, independent of the one supreme God, infinite in power and in goodness.

There were, however, some among the Persians whose sentiments were more moderate as to this matter; who held the evil principle to be in some measure subordinate to the good; and that the former would at length be wholly subdued by the latter. See Hyde, *De Relig. Vet. Pers.* cap. xxii.

That this opinion prevailed among the Persians as early as the time of Cyrus we may, I think, infer not only from this passage of Isaiah, which has a manifest reference to it, but likewise from a passage in Xenophon’s *Cyropaedia*, where the same doctrine is applied to the human mind. Araspes, a noble young Persian, had fallen in love with the fair captive Panthea, committed to his charge by Cyrus. After all his boasting that he was superior to the assaults of that passion, he yielded so far to it as even to threaten violence if she would not comply with his desires. Awed by the reproof of Cyrus, fearing his displeasure, and having by cool reflection recovered his reason; in his discourse with him on this subject he says: “O Cyrus, I have certainly two souls; all this piece of philosophy I have learned from that wicked sophist, Love. For if I had but one soul, it would

not be at the same time good and evil, it would not at the same time approve of honorable and base actions; and at once desire to do, and refuse to do, the very same things. But it is plain that I am animated by two souls, and when the good soul prevails, I do what is virtuous; and when the evil one prevails, I attempt what is vicious. But now the good soul prevails, having gotten you for her assistant, and has clearly gained the superiority. “ Lib. 6:p. 424.

I make peace, and create evil— Evil is here evidently put for war and its attendant miseries. I will procure peace for the Israelites, and destroy Babylon by war. I form light, and create darkness. Now, as darkness is only the privation of light, so the evil of war is the privation of peace.

Verse 8. *Drop down, ye heavens*— The eighty-fifth psalm is a very elegant ode on the same subject with this part of Isaiah’s prophecies, the restoration of Judah from captivity; and is, in the most beautiful part of it, a manifest imitation of this passage of the prophet:—

*“Verily his salvation is nigh unto them that fear him,
That glory may dwell in our land.
Mercy and truth have met together;
Righteousness and peace have kissed each other.
Truth shall spring from the earth,
And righteousness shall look down from heaven.
Even JEHOVAH: will give that which is good,
And our land shall yield her produce.
Righteousness shall go before him,
And shall direct his footsteps in the way.”*

Psalm 85:10-14.

See the notes on these verses.

These images of the dew and the rain descending from heaven and making the earth fruitful, employed by the prophet, and some of those nearly of the same kind which are used by the psalmist, may perhaps be primarily understood as designed to set forth in a splendid manner the happy state

of God's people restored to their country, and flourishing in peace and plenty, in piety and virtue; but justice and salvation, mercy and truth, righteousness and peace, and glory dwelling in the land, cannot with any sort of propriety, in the one or the other, be interpreted as the consequences of that event; they must mean the blessings of the great redemption by Messiah.

Let the earth open, etc.— Jonathan, in his Targum, refers this to the resurrection of the dead; the earth shall be opened, **וַיַּחַו מֵיֵתִיא** veyechon meiteiya, and the dead shall revive. A plain proof that the ancient Jews believed in a future state, and acknowledged the resurrection of the dead.

Let them bring forth salvation “*Let salvation produce her fruit*”— For **וַיִּפְרֹו** vaiyiphru, the Septuagint, Vulgate, and Syriac read **וַיִּפְרָה** vaiyiphrah; and one MS. has a rasure close after the latter **ו** vau, which probably was **ה** he at first.

Verse 9. *Wo unto him that striveth with his Maker* “*To unto him that contendeth with the power that formed him*”— The prophet answers or prevents the objections and cavils of the unbelieving Jews, disposed to murmur against God, and to arraign the wisdom and justice of his dispensations in regard to them; in permitting them to be oppressed by their enemies, and in promising them deliverance instead of preventing their captivity. St. Paul has borrowed the image, and has applied it to the like purpose with equal force and elegance: “Nay, but, O man! who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, out of the same lump to make one vessel to honor, and another to dishonor?” Romans 9:20, 21. This is spoken says Kimchi, against the king of Babylon, who insulted the Most High, bringing forth the sacred vessels, drinking out of them, and magnifying himself against God.

Or thy work, He hath no hands “*And to the workman, Thou hast no hands*”— The Syriac renders, as if he had read, **וְלֹא הִיְתִי פִעַל יְדֶיךָ** velo hayithi pheal yadeycha, “neither am I the work of thy hands;” the Septuagint, as if they had reads **וְלֹא פִעַלְתָּ וְאִי וְדִים לְךָ** velo phaalta

veeyn yaadim lecha, “neither hast thou made me; and thou hast no hands. “ But the fault seems to be in the transposition of the two pronouns; for **ופעלך** uphoolcha, read **ופעלו** uphoolo: and for **לו** lo, read **לך** lecha. So Houbigant corrects it; reading also **ופעלו** uphoolo; which last correction seems not altogether necessary. The Septuagint, in MSS. Pachom. and 1:D. 2:have it thus, **καὶ τὸ ἔργον οὐκ ἔχεις χεῖρας**, which favors the reading here proposed.

Verse 11. Ask me of things to come “*And he that formeth the things which are to come*”— I read **ויוצר** veyotser, without the **ו** vau suffixed; from the Septuagint, who join it in construction with the following word, **οποίησας τὰ ἐπερχόμενα**.

“Do ye question me.” — **תשאלוני** tishaluni, Chald. recte; praecedit **ת** tau; et sic forte legerunt reliqui Intt. — Secker. “The Chaldee has, more properly, **תשאלוני** tishaluni, with a **ת** tau pre ceding; and thus the other interpreters probably read. “ The learned bishop therefore reads the passage thus:—

*“Thus saith Jehovah, the Holy One of Israel;
And he that formeth the things which are to come;
Do ye question me concerning my children?
And do ye give me directions concerning the work of my
hands?”*

Verse 13. I have raised him up— This evidently refers to Cyrus, and to what he did for the Jews; and informs us by whom he was excited to do it.

Verse 14. The labor of Egypt “*The wealth of Egypt*”— This seems to relate to the future admission of the Gentiles into the Church of God. Compare Psa 68:32; 72:10; chap. 60:6-9. And perhaps these particular nations may be named, by a metonymy common in all poetry, for powerful and wealthy nations in general. See note on chap. 60:1.

The Sabeans, men of stature “*The Sabeans, tall of stature*”— That the Sabeans were of a more majestic appearance than common, is particularly

remarked by Agatharchides, an ancient Greek historian quoted by Bochart, Phaleg, 2:26, **τα σωματα εστι των κατοικουντων αξιολογωτερα**. So also the Septuagint understand it, rendering it **ανδρες υψηλοι**, “tall men. “ And the same phrase, **אֲנָשֵׁי מִדָּה** anshey middah, is used for persons of extraordinary stature, Numbers 13:32, and 1 Chronicles 20:6.

They shall make supplication unto thee “They shall in suppliant guise address thee”— The conjunction וּ vau is supplied by the ancient Versions, and confirmed by fifteen MSS. of Kennicott’s, (seven ancient,) thirteen of De Rossi’s, and six editions, **וְאֵלֶיךָ** veelayich. Three MSS. (two ancient) omit the וּ vau before **אֵלֶיךָ** elaylch at the beginning of the line.

Verse 15. *Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself*— At present, from the nations of the world.

O God of Israel, the Savior— While thou revealest thyself to the Israelites and savest them.

Verse 16. *They shall be ashamed “They are ashamed”*— The reader cannot but observe the sudden transition from the solemn adoration of the secret and mysterious nature of God’s counsels in regard to his people, to the spirited denunciation of the confusion of idolaters, and the final destruction of idolatry; contrasted with the salvation of Israel, not from temporal captivity, but the eternal salvation by the Messiah, strongly marked by the repetition and augmentation of the phrase, to the ages of eternity. But there is not only a sudden change in the sentiment, the change is equally observable in the construction of the sentences; which from the usual short measure, runs out at once into two distichs of the longer sort of verse. See Prelim. Dissert. p. 66, etc. There is another instance of the same kind and very like to this, of a sudden transition in regard both to the sentiment and construction in chap. 42:17.

“His adversaries”— This line, to the great diminution of the beauty of the distich, is imperfect in the present text: the subject of the proposition is not particularly expressed, as it is in the line following. The version of the Septuagint happily supplies the word that is lost: **οι αντικειμενοι**

αυτω, “his adversaries, “the original word was צַרַיִם tsaraiv. — L.

Verse 18. *He formed it to be inhabited* “*For he formed it to be inhabited*” — An ancient MS. has כִּי ki before לַשֶּׁבֶת lashebeth; and so the ancient Versions.

Verse 19. *I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth*— In opposition to the manner in which the heathen oracles gave their answers, which were generally delivered from some deep and obscure cavern. Such was the seat of the Cumean Sybil:—

Excisum Euboicae latus ingens rupis in antrum.

VIRG. AEn. 6:42.

“A cave cut in the side of a huge rock.”

Such was that of the famous oracle at Delphi; of which, says Strabo, lib. ix., φασι δ’ ειναι το μαντειον αντρον κοιλον μετα βαθους, ου μαλα ευρυστομον. “The oracle is said to be a hollow cavern of considerable depth, with an opening not very wide. “ And Diodorus, giving an account of the origin of this oracle, says “that there was in that place a great chasm or cleft in the earth; in which very place is now situated what is called the Adytum of the temple. “ αδυτον σπηλαιον, η το αποκρυφον μερος του ιερου. Mesych. “Adytum means a cavern, or the hidden part of the temple.”

I the Lord speak righteousness, I declare things that are right “***I am JEHOVAH, who speak truth, who give direct answers.***” — This also is said in opposition to the false and ambiguous answers given by the heathen oracles, of which there are many noted examples; none more so than that of the answer given to Croesus when he marched against Cyrus, which piece of history has some connection with this part of Isaiah’s prophecies. Let us hear Cicero’s account of the Delphic answers in general, and of this in particular: Sed jam ad te venio,

O sancte Apollo, qui umbilicum certum terrarum obsides,

Unde superstitiosa primum saeva evasit vox fera.

Tuis enim oraculis Chrysippus totum volumen implevit, partim falsis, ut ego opinor; partim casu veris, ut fit in omni oratione saepissime; partim flexiloquis et obscuris, ut interpretes egeant interprete, et sors ipsa ad sortes referenda sit; partim ambiguis, et quae ad dialecticum deferenda sint. Nam cum sors illa edita est opulentissimo regi Asiae,

understood it; see Romans 14:11; Philippians 2:10. The reading of the Targum is remarkable, viz., **אתפנו למימרי** ithpeno lemeymri, look to my WORD, **ο λογος**, the Lord Jesus.

Verse 23. I have sworn by myself— **במימרי** bemeymri, by my WORD: and the word-**פתגם** pithyam, or saying, to distinguish it from the personal substantial WORD meymra, mentioned before. See the Targum.

The word is gone out of my mouth “Truth is gone forth from my mouth; the word”— So the Septuagint distinguish the members of the sentence, preserving the elegance of the construction and the clearness of the sense.

Verse 24. Surely, shall one say, In the Lord have I righteousness and strength “Saying, Only to JEHOVAH belongeth salvation and power”— A MS. omits **לי** li, unto me; and instead of **לי אמר** li amar, he said or shall say unto me, the Septuagint read, in the copy which they used, **לאמר** lemor, saying. For **בא** yabo, HE shall come, in the singular, twelve MSS. (three ancient) read **באו** yabeu, plural; and a letter is erased at the end of the word in two others: and so the Alexandrine copy of the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate read it. For **צדקות** tsedakoth plural, two MSS. read **צדקת** tsidkath, singular; and so the Septuagint, Syriac, and Chaldee.

Probably these are the words of Cyrus, who acknowledged that all his success came from Jehovah. And this sentiment is in effect contained in his decree or proclamation, Ezra 1:2: “Thus saith Cyrus, king of Persia, The Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth, “etc.

CHAPTER 46

The idols of Babylon represented as so far from being able to bear the burden of their votaries, that they themselves are borne by beasts of burden into captivity, 1, 2. This beautifully contrasted with the tender care of God, in bearing his people from first to last in his arms, and delivering them from their distress, 3, 4. The prophet, then, with his usual force and elegance, goes on to show the folly of idolatry, and the utter inability of idols, 5-7. From which he passes with great ease to the contemplation of the attributes and perfections of the true God, 8-10. Particularly that prescience which foretold the deliverance of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, with all its leading circumstances; and also that very remote event of which it is the type in the days of the Messiah, 11-13.

NOTES ON CHAP. 46

Verse 1. *Their carriages were heavy laden* “*Their burdens are heavy*”— For נשאתיכם nesuotheychem, your burdens, the Septuagint had in their copy נשאתיהם nesuotheyhem, their burdens.

Verse 2. *They could not deliver the burden* “*They could not deliver their own charge*”— That is, their worshippers, who ought to have been borne by them. See the two next verses. The Chaldee and Syriac Versions render it in effect to the same purpose, those that bear them, meaning their worshippers; but how they can render משה massa in an active sense, I do not understand.

For לו lo, not, ולו velo, and they could not, is the reading of twenty-four of Kennicott’s, sixteen of De Rossi’s, and two of my own MSS. The added ו vau gives more elegance to the passage.

But themselves “*Even they themselves*”— For ונפשם venaphsham, an

ancient MS. has **כִּי נִפְשָׁם** ki naphsham, with more force.

Verse 3. Which are borne by me from the belly “*Ye that have been borne by me from the birth*”— The prophet very ingeniously, and with great force, contrasts the power of God, and his tender goodness effectually exerted towards his people, with the inability of the false gods of the heathen. He like an indulgent father had carried his people in his arms, “as a man carrieth his son, “Deuteronomy 1:31. He had protected them, and delivered them from their distresses: whereas the idols of the heathen are forced to be carried about themselves and removed from place to place, with great labor and fatigue, by their worshippers; nor can they answer, or deliver their votaries, when they cry unto them.

Moses, expostulating with God on the weight of the charge laid upon him as leader of his people, expresses that charge under the same image of a parent’s carrying his children, in very strong terms: “Have I conceived all this people? have I begotten them? that thou shouldest say unto me, Carry them in thy bosom, as a nursing father beareth the sucking child, unto the land which thou swarest unto their fathers; “Numbers 11:12.

Verse 7. They bear him upon the shoulder-and set him in his place— This is the way in which the Hindoos carry their gods; and indeed so exact a picture is this of the idolatrous procession of this people, that the prophet might almost be supposed to have been sitting among the Hindoos when he delivered this prophecy. — WARD’S CUSTOMS.

Pindar has treated with a just and very elegant ridicule the work of the statuary even in comparison with his own poetry, from this circumstance of its being fixed to a certain station. “The friends of Pytheas, “says the Scholiast, “came to the poet, desiring him to write an ode on his victory. Pindar demanded three drachms, (minae, I suppose it should be,) for the ode. No, say they, we can have a brazen statue for that money, which will be better than a poem. However, changing their minds afterwards, they came and offered him what he had demanded. “ This gave him the hint of the following ingenious esordium of his ode:—

οὐκ ἀνδριαντοποιός εἰμι’

᾿ωστ' ελινυσσοντα μ' εργαζε
 σθαι αγαλματ' επ' αυτας βαθμιδος
 ᾿εσταοθ'. αλλ' επι πασας
 ᾿οκαδος εν τ' ακατω γλυκει' αοιδα
 στειχ' απ' αυγινας διαγγελ
 λοιστ' οτι λαμπωνος υιος
 πυθεας ευρυσθενης
 νικη νεμειοις παγκρατιου στεφανον. Nem. v.

Thus elegantly translated by Mr. Francis in a note to Hor. Carm. 4:2. 19.

*“It is not mine with forming hand
 To bid a lifeless image stand
 For ever on its base:
 But fly, my verses, and proclaim
 To distant realms, with deathless fame,
 That Pytheas conquered in the rapid race.”*

Jeremiah, chap. 10:3-5, seems to be indebted to Isaiah for most of the following passage:—

*“The practices of the people are altogether vanity:
 For they cut down a tree from the forest;
 The work of the artificer’s hand with the axe;
 With silver and with gold it is adorned;
 With nails and with hammers it is fastened, that it may
 not totter.
 Like the palm-tree they stand stiff, and cannot speak;
 They are carried about, for they cannot go:
 Fear them not, for they cannot do harm;
 Neither is it in them to do good.”*

Verse 8. Show yourselves men— **התששו** hithoshashu. This word is rather of doubtful derivation and signification. It occurs only in this place: and some of the ancient interpreters seem to have had something different in their copies. The Vulgate read **התבששו** hithbosheshu, take shame to yourselves; the Syriac **התבוננו** hithbonenu, consider with yourselves; the

Septuagint στεναξετε perhaps התאבלו hithabbelu, groan or mourn, within yourselves. Several MSS. read התאוששו hithosheshu, but without any help to the sense.

Verse 11. *Calling a ravenous bird from the east* “*Calling from the east the eagle*”— A very proper emblem for Cyrus, as in other respects, so particularly because the ensign of Cyrus was a golden eagle, αετος χρυσεος, the very word עֵיט ayit, which the prophet uses here, expressed as near as may be in Greek letters. XENOPH. Cyrop. lib. 7:sub. init. Kimchi says his father understood this, not of Cyrus, but of the Messiah.

From a far country “*From a land far distant*”— Two MSS. add the conjunction ו vau, ומארץ umeerets; and so the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate.

Verse 12. Hearken unto me, ye stout-hearted—This is an address to the Babylonians, stubbornly bent on the practice of injustice towards the Israelites.

CHAPTER 47

The destruction of Babylon is denounced by a beautiful selection of circumstances, in which her prosperous is contrasted with her adverse condition. She is represented as a tender and delicate female reduced to the work and abject condition of a slave, and bereaved of every consolation, 1-4. And that on account of her cruelty, particularly to God's people, her pride, voluptuousness, sorceries, and incantations, 5-11. The folly of these last practices elegantly exposed by the prophet, 12-15. It is worthy of observation that almost all the imagery of this chapter is applied in the book of the Revelation, (in nearly the same words,) to the antitype of the illustrious capital of the Chaldean empire, viz., Babylon the GREAT.

NOTES ON CHAP. 47

Verse 1. *Come down, and set in the dust* “*Descend, and sit on the dust*”— See note on chap. 3:26, and on chap. 52:2.

Verse 2. *Take the millstones, and grind meal* “*Take the mill, and grind corn*”— It was the work of slaves to grind the corn. They used hand-raills: water-mills were not invented till a little before the time of Augustus, (see the Greek epigram of Antipater, which seems to celebrate it as a new invention, Anthol. Cephalae, 653;) wind-mills, not until long after. It was not only the work of slaves, but the hardest work; and often inflicted upon them as a severe punishment:—

Molendum in pistrino; vapulandum; habendae compedes.

TERENT. Phorm. 2:1. 19.

Hominem pistrino dignum.

Id. Heaut. 3:2. 19.

To grind in the mill, to be scourged, to be put in the stocks, were punishments for slaves. Hence a delinquent was said to be a man worthy of the mill. The tread-mill, now in use in England, is a revival of this ancient usage. But in the east grinding was the work of the female slaves. See Exodus 11:5; 12:29, (in the version of the Septuagint; } Matthew 24:41; Homer, Odyss. 20:105-108. And it is the same to this day. “Women alone are employed to grind their corn; “ Shaw’s Algiers and Tunis, p. 287. “They are the female slaves, that are generally employed in the east at those hand-mills for grinding corn; it is extremely laborious, and esteemed the lowest employment in the house; “ Sir J. Chardin, Harmer’s Observ. i., p. 153. The words denote that state of captivity to which the Babylonians should be reduced.

Make bare the leg, uncover the thigh— This is repeatedly seen in Bengal, where the *le* are few bridges, and both sexes, having neither shoes nor stockings, truss up their loose garments, and walk across, where the waters are not deep. In the deeper water they are obliged to truss very high, to which there seems a reference in the third verse: Thy nakedness shall be uncovered.

Verse 3. *I will not meet thee as a man* “Neither will I suffer man to intercede with me.”— The verb should be pointed, or written, אִפְגִּיָּע *aphgia*, in Hiphil.

Verse 4. *Our Redeemer* “*Our Avenger*”— Here a chorus breaks in upon the midst of the subject, with a change of construction, as well as sentiment, from the longer to the shorter kind of verse, for one distich only; after which the former subject and style are resumed. See note on chap. 45:16.

Verse 6. *I was wroth with my people*— God, in the course of his providence, makes use of great conquerors and tyrants as his instruments to execute his judgments in the earth; he employs one wicked nation to

scourge another. The inflicter of the punishment may perhaps be as culpable as the sufferer; and may add to his guilt by indulging his cruelty in executing God's justice. When he has fulfilled the work to which the Divine vengeance has ordained him, he will become himself the object of it; see chap. 10:5-12. God charges the Babylonians, though employed by himself to chastise his people, with cruelty in regard to them. They exceeded the bounds of justice and humanity in oppressing and destroying them; and though they were really executing the righteous decree of God, yet, as far as it regarded themselves, they were only indulging their own ambition and violence. The Prophet Zechariah sets this matter in the same light: "I was but a little angry and they helped forward the affliction;" chap. 1:15. — L.

Verse 7. *So that thou didst not* "Because thou didst not"— For עַד ad, read עַל al; so two MSS., and one edition. And for, אַחַר־יְתֵה, acharithah, "the latter end of it," read אַחַר־יְתֵךְ acharithecha, "thy latter end;" so thirteen MSS., and two editions, and the Vulgate. Both the sixth and seventh verses are wanting in one of my oldest MSS.

Verse 9. *These two things shall come to thee in . a moment*— That is, suddenly. Belshazzar was slain; thus the city became metaphorically a widow, the husband—the governor of it, being slain. In the time in which the king was slain, the Medes and Persians took the city, and slew many of its inhabitants, see Daniel 5:30, 31. When Darius took the city, he is said to have crucified three thousand of its principal inhabitants.

***In their perfection* "On a sudden"**— Instead of בְּתַמָּם bethummam, "in their perfection," as our translation renders it, the Septuagint and Syriac read, in the copies from which they translated, פִּתּוֹם pithom, suddenly; parallel to רְגַע rega, in a moment, in the preceding alternate member of the sentence. The concurrent testimony of the Septuagint and Syriac, favored by the context, may be safely opposed to the authority of the present text.

***For the multitude* "Notwithstanding the multitude"**— בְּרֹב berob. For this sense of the particle בְּ beth, see Numbers 14:11.

Verse 11. *Thou shalt not know from whence it riseth* “*Thou shalt not know how to deprecate*”— שַׁחְרָה shachrah; so the Chaldee renders it, which is approved by Jarchi on the place; and Michaelis Epim. in Praelect. xix.; see Psalm 78:34.

Videtur in fine hujus commatis deesse verbum, ut hoc membrum prioribus respondeat. “A roord appears to be wanting at the end of this clause to connect it properly with the two preceding. — SECKER.

In order to set in a proper light this judicious remark, it is necessary to give the reader an exact verbal translation of the whole verse:—

*“And evil shall come upon thee, thou shalt not know how to deprecate it;
And mischief shall fall upon thee, thou shalt not be able to expiate it;
And destruction shall come suddenly upon thee, thou shalt not know “—*

What? how to escape, to avoid it, to be delivered from it? perhaps מִמְנָה תֵצֵאת tseth mimmennah, “they could not go out from it, “Jeremiah 11:11. I am persuaded that a phrase is here lost out of the text. But as the ancient versions retain no traces of it, and a wide field lies open to uncertain conjecture, I have not attempted to fill up the chasm, but have in the translation, as others have done before me, palliated and disguised the defect, which I cannot with any assurance pretend to supply. — L.

Verse 13. *From these things* “*What are the events*”— For מֵאֲשֶׁר measher, read מֵאֲשֶׁר mah asher, so the Septuagint, “what is to happen to thee.”

Verse 15. *To his quarter* “*To his own business*”— לְעִבְרוֹ leebro. Expositors give no very good account of this word in this place. In a MS. it was at first לְעִבְדוֹ leebdo, to his servant or work, which is probably the true reading. The sense however is pretty much the same with the

common interpretation: “Every one shall turn aside to his own business; none shall deliver thee.”

CHAPTER 48

The Jews reproved for their obstinate attachment to idols, notwithstanding their experience of the Divine providence over them; and of the Divine prescience that revealed by the prophets the most remarkable events which concerned them, that they should not have the least pretext for ascribing any portion of their success to their idols, 1-8. The Almighty, after bringing them to the furnace for their perverseness, asserts his glorious sovereignty, and repeats his gracious promises of deliverance and consolation, 9-11. Prophecy concerning that individual (Cyrus) who shall be an instrument in the hand of God of executing his will on Babylon, and his power on the Chaldeans; and the idols of the people are again challenged to give a like proof of their foreknowledge, 12-16. Tender and passionate exclamation of Jehovah respecting the hardened condition of the Jewish nation, to which the very pathetic exclamation of the Divine Savior when he wept over Jerusalem may be considered a striking parallel, 17-19. Notwithstanding the repeated provocations of the house of Israel, Jehovah will again be merciful to them. They are commanded to escape from Babylon; and God's gracious favor towards them is beautifully represented by images borrowed from the exodus from Egypt, 20, 21. Certain perdition of the finally impenitent, 22. It will be proper here to remark that many passages in this chapter, and indeed the general strain of these prophecies, have a plain aspect to a restoration of the Church in the latter days upon a scale much greater than the world has yet witnessed, when the very violent fall of Babylon the Great, mentioned in the Revelation, of which the Chaldean capital was an expressive type, shall introduce by a most tremendous political convulsion, (Revelation 16:17-21,) that glorious epoch of the Gospel, which forms so conspicuous a part of the prophecies of the Old Testament, and has been a subject of the prayers of all saints in all ages.

NOTES ON CHAP. 48

Verse 1. *Are come forth out of the waters of Judah* “*Ye that flow from the fountain of Judah*”— מַמִּי mimmey, “from the waters.” Perhaps מִמְעֵי mimmeey, “from the bowels,” SO many others have conjectured, or מִנִּי יְהוּדָה meni yehudah, or מִיְהוּדָה meyhudah, “from Judah.” — Secker. But see Michaelis in Praelect, not. 22. And we have עַי יַעֲקֹב eyn yaakob, “the fountain of Jacob,” Deuteronomy 33:28, and יִשְׂרָאֵל ממקור mimmekor yishrael, “from the fountain of Israel,” Psalm lxxviii. 27. Twenty-seven MSS. of Kennicott’s, six of De Rossi’s and two of my own, with six editions, have מֵימֵי meymey, “from the days;” which makes no good sense.

Verse 6. *Thou hast heard, see all this* “*Thou didst hear it beforehand, behold, the whole is accomplished*”— For חָזַה chazeh, see, a MS. has חָזַז hazzeh, this; thou hast heard the whole of this: the Syriac has וְחָזִיתָ vechazith, “thou hast heard, and thou hast seen, the whole.” Perhaps it should be הִנֵּה hinneh, behold. In order to express the full sense, I have rendered it somewhat paraphrastically.

Verse 9. *And for my praise* “*And for the sake of my praise*”— I read וְלִמְעַ תְּהִלָּתִי ulemaan tehillathi. The word לִמְעַ lemaan, though not absolutely necessary here, for it may be understood as supplied from the preceding member, yet seems to have been removed from hence to ver. 11; where it is redundant, and where it is not repeated in the Septuagint, Syriac, and a MS. I have therefore omitted it in the latter place, and added it here.

Verse 10. *I have chosen thee* “*I have tried thee*”— For בְּחַרְתִּיךָ becharticha, “I have chosen thee,” a MS. has בְּחַנְתִּיךָ bechanticha, “I have tried thee.” And so perhaps read the Syriac and Chaldee interpreters; they retain the same word בְּחַרְתִּיךָ bechartach; but in those languages it signifies, I have tried thee. כְּכֶסֶף kecheseeph, quasi argentum, “as silver.” Vulgate.

I cannot think ככסף becheseph, WITH silver, is the true reading. ככספ kecheseph, LIKE silver, as the Vulgate evidently read it, I suppose to have been the original reading, though no MS. yet found supports this word; the similarity of the two letters, כ beth and כ caph, might have easily led to the mistake in the first instance; and it has been but too faithfully copied ever since. כור cur, which we translate furnace, should be rendered crucible, the vessel in which the silver is melted. The meaning of the verse seems to be this: I have purified you, but not as silver is purified; for when it is purified, no dross of any kind is left behind. Had I done this with you, I should have consumed you altogether; but I have put you in the crucible of affliction, in captivity, that you may acknowledge your sins, and turn unto me.

Verse 11. *For how should my name be polluted “For how would my name be blasphemed”*— The word שמי shemi, my name, is dropped out of the text; it is supplied by a MS. which has שמי shemi; and by the Septuagint, *οτι το εμον ονομα βεβηλουται*. The Syriac and Vulgate get over the difficulty, by making the verb in the first person; that I may not be blasphemed.

Verse 12. *O Jacob “O Jacob, my servant”*— After יעקב yaakob, a MS. of Kennicott’s, two of De Rossi’s, and the two old editions of 1486 and 1488, add the word עבדי abdi, “my servant, “which is lost out of the present text; and there is a rasure in its place in another ancient MS. The Jerusalem Talmud has the same word.

I also am the last “I am the last”— For אפ אני aph ani, “even I,” two ancient MSS. and the ancient Versions, read ואני veani, “and I; “ more properly.

Verse 14. *Which among them hath declared these things “Who among you hath predicted these things”*— For בהם bahem, “among them, “twenty-one MSS., nine ancient, and two editions, one of them that of the year 1488, fourteen of De Rossi’s, and one ancient of my own, have בככ

bachem, “among you; “ and so the Syriac.

The Lord hath loved him: he will do his pleasure on Babylon “*He, whom JEHOVAH hath loved, will execute his will on Babylon*”— That is, Cyrus; so Symmachus has well rendered it: ὃν ο κύριος ηγαπησε ποιησει το θελημα αυτου, “He whom the Lord hath loved will perform his will.”

On the Chaldeans.— The preposition is lost; it is supplied in the edition of 1486, which has כבשדים bechadim, and so the Chaldee and Vulgate.

Verse 16. Come ye near unto me— After the word קרבו kirbu, “draw near, “a MS. adds גוים goyim, “O ye nations; “ which, as this and the two preceding verses are plainly addressed to the idolatrous nations, reproaching their gods as unable to predict future events, is probably genuine.

Hear ye this “And hear ye this”— A MS. adds the conjunction, ושמעו vashimu; and so the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate.

I have not spoken in secret— The Alexandrine copy of the Septuagint adds here, ουδε εν τοπω γης σκοτεινω, “nor in a dark place of the earth, “as in chap. 45:19. That it stands rightly, or at least stood very early, in this place of the Version of the Septuagint, is highly probable, because it is acknowledged by the Arabic Version, and by the Coptic MS. St. Germain de Prez, Paris, translated likewise from the Septuagint. But whether it should be inserted, as of right belonging to the Hebrew text, may be doubted; for a transcriber of the Greek Version might easily add it by memory from the parallel place; and it is not necessary to the sense.

From the time that it was “Before the time when it began to exist”— An ancient MS. has היותם heyotham, “they began to exist; “ and so another had it at first. From the time that the expedition of Cyrus was planned, there was God managing the whole by the economy of his providence.

Verse 16. There am I “I had decreed it”— I take שם sham for a verb, not

an adverb.

And now the Lord God, and his Spirit, hath sent me “*And now the Lord JEHOVAH hath sent me, and his Spirit*”— *τις εστιν ο εν τω ησαιω λεγων, και νυν κυριος απεστειλε με και το πνευμα αυτου; εν ω, αμφιβολου οντος του ρητου, ποτερον ο πατηρ και το ἅγιον πνευμα απεστειλαν του ιησουν, η ο πατηρ απεστειλε τον τε χριστον και το ἅγιον πνευμα το δευτερον εστιν αληθες.* “Who is it that saith in Isaiah, And now the Lord hath sent me and his Spirit? in which, as the expression is ambiguous, is it the Father and the Holy Spirit who have sent Jesus; or the Father, who hath sent both Christ and the Holy Spirit. The latter is the true interpretation.” —Origen cont. Cels. lib. 1: I have kept to the order of the words of the original, on purpose that the ambiguity, which Origen remarks in the Version of the Septuagint, and which is the same in the Hebrew might still remain; and the sense which he gives to it, be offered to the reader’s judgment, which is wholly excluded in our translation.

Verse 18. *As a river* “*Like the river*”— That is, the Euphrates.

Verse 19. *Like the gravel thereof* “*Like that of the bowels thereof*”— *בצאצאי מעי הים והם הדגים* betseetsaey meey haiyam vehem haddagim; “As the issue of the bowels of the sea; that is, fishes.” —Salom. ben Melec. And so likewise Aben Ezra, Jarchi Kimchi, etc.

His name “*Thy name*”— For *שמו* shemo, “his name, “the Septuagint had in the copy from which they translated *שמך* shimcha, “thy name.”

Verse 20. *Tell this* “*Make it heard*”— Twenty-seven MSS. of Kennicott’s, (ten ancient,) many of De Rossi’s, and two ancient, of my own, with the Septuagint, Syriac, Chaldee, and Arabic, and one edition, prefix to the verb the conjunction *ו* vau, *והשמיעו* vehashmiu.

Verse 21. *They thirsted not-through the deserts*— Kimchi has a surprising observation upon this place: “If the prophecy,” says he, “relates to the return from the Babylonish captivity, as it seems to do, it is to be wondered how it comes to pass, that in the Book of Ezra, in which he

gives an account of their return, no mention is made that such miracles were wrought for them; as, for instance, that God clave the rock for them in the desert. “ It is really much to be wondered, that one of the most learned and judicious of the Jewish expositors of the Old Testament, having advanced so far in a large Comment on Isaiah, should appear to be totally ignorant of the prophet’s manner of writing; of the parabolic style, which prevails in the writings of all the prophets, and more particularly in the prophecy of Isaiah, which abounds throughout in parabolical images from the beginning to the end; from “Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth, “to “the worm and the fire “ in the last verse. And how came he to keep his wonderment to himself so long? Why did he not expect that the historian should have related how, as they passed through the desert, cedars, pines, and olive-trees shot up at once on the side of the way to shade them; and that instead of briers and brambles the acacia and the myrtle sprung up under their feet, according to God’s promises, chap. 41:19 and 55:13? These and a multitude of the like parabolical or poetical images, were never intended to be understood literally. All that the prophet designed in this place, and which he has executed in the most elegant manner, was an amplification and illustration of the gracious care and protection of God vouchsafed to his people in their return from Babylon, by an allusion to the miraculous exodus from Egypt. See De S. Poesi, Hebr. Prael. ix.

Verse 22. *There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked.*— See below, note on chap. 57:21. As the destruction of Babylon was determined, God commands his people to hasten out of it; for, saith the Lord, there is no peace (prosperity) to the wicked; **οὐκ ἐστὶ χαίρειν τοῖς ἀσεβέσιν, λέγει κύριος.** — Sept. “There is no rejoicing or prosperity to the wicked saith the Lord. “ Their is not pese to unrytous men seith the Lord. — Old MS. Bible.

CHAPTER 49

In this chapter the Messiah is introduced, declaring the full extent of his commission, which is not only to be Savior to the Jews, but also to the Gentiles. The power and efficacy of his word is reprehended by apt images; the ill success of his ministry among the Jews is intimated, and the great success of the Gospel among the Gentiles, 1-12. But the prophet, then casting his eye on the happy, though distant, period of Israel's restoration, makes a beautiful apostrophe to the whole creation to shout forth the praises of God on the prospect of this remarkable favor, 13. The tender mercies of God to his people, with the prosperity of the Church in general, and the final overthrow of all its enemies, make the subject of the remaining verses, 14-26.

NOTES ON CHAP. 49

Verse 1. *Listen, O isles, unto me* “*Hearken unto me, O ye distant lands*”— Hitherto the subject of the prophecy has been chiefly confined to the redemption from the captivity of Babylon; with strong intimations of a more important deliverance sometimes thrown in, to the refutation of idolatry, and the demonstration of the infinite power, wisdom, and foreknowledge of God. The character and office of the Messiah was exhibited in general terms at the beginning of chap. 42.; but here he is introduced in person, declaring the full extent of his commission, which is not only to restore the Israelites, and reconcile them to their Lord and Father, from whom they had so often revolted, but to be a light to lighten the Gentiles, to call them to the knowledge and obedience of the true God, and to bring them to be one Church together with the Israelites, and to partake with them of the same common salvation procured for all by the great Redeemer and Reconciler of man to God.

Verse 2. *And he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword* “*And he hath made my mouth a sharp sword*”— The servant of God, who speaks in the former part of this chapter, must be the Messiah. If any part of this

character can in any sense belong to the prophet, yet in some parts it must belong exclusively to Christ; and in all parts to him in a much fuller and more proper sense. Isaiah's mission was to the Jews, not to the distant nations, to whom the speaker in this place addresses himself. "He hath made my mouth a sharp sword; " "to reprove the wicked, and to denounce unto them punishment, " says Jarchi, understanding it of Isaiah. But how much better does it suit him who is represented as having "a sharp two-edged sword going out of his mouth, " Revelation 1:16; who is himself the Word of God; which word is "quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart; " Hebrews 4:12. This mighty Agent and Instrument of God, "long laid up in store with him, and sealed up among his treasures, "is at last revealed and produced by his power, and under his protection, to execute his great and holy purposes. He is compared to a polished shaft stored in his quiver for use in his due time. The polished shaft denotes the same efficacious word which is before represented by the sharp sword. The doctrine of the Gospel pierced the hearts of its hearers, "bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. " The metaphor of the sword and the arrow, applied to powerful speech, is bold, yet just. It has been employed by the most ingenious heathen writers, if with equal elegance, not with equal force. It is said of Pericles by Aristophanes, (see Cicero, Epist. ad Atticum, 12:6:)—

οὕτως ἐκῆλει, καὶ μονοῦ τῶν ῥητορῶν
τὸ κεντρὸν ἐγκατελείπε τοῖς ἀκρωμένοις.

Apud. Diod. lib. xii.

*His powerful speech
Pierced the hearer's soul, and left behind
Deep in his bosom its keen point infix'd.*

Pindar is particularly fond of this metaphor, and frequently applies it to his own poetry:—

επεχε νυν σκοπω τοξον,
 αγε, θυμε. τινα βαλλομεν
 εκ μαλθακας αυτε φρε
 νος ευκλεας οιστους
 ιεντες;

Olymp. 2:160.

*“Come on! thy brightest shafts prepare,
 And bend, O Muse, thy sounding bow;
 Say, through what paths of liquid air
 Our arrows shall we throw?”*

WEST.

See also ver. 149 of the same ode, and Olymp. 9:17, on the former of which places the Scholiast says, *τροπικος ο λογος βελη δε τους λογους εορηκε, δια το οξυ και καιριον των εγκωμιων*. “He calls his verses shafts, by a metaphor, signifying the acuteness and the apposite application of his panegyric.”

This person, who is (ver. 3) called Israel, cannot in any sense be Isaiah. That name, in its original design and full import, can only belong to him who contended powerfully with God in behalf of mankind, and prevailed, Genesis 32:28. After all that Vitringa, Bp. Lowth, and others have said in proof of this chapter speaking of the Messiah, and of him alone, I have my doubts whether sometimes Isaiah, sometimes Cyrus, and sometimes the Messiah, be not intended; the former shadowing out the latter, of whom, in certain respects, they may be considered the types. The literal sense should be sought out first; this is of the utmost importance both in reading and interpreting the oracles of God.

Verse 5. *And now, saith the Lord* “*And now, thus saith JEHOVAH*”— The word **כה** coh, before **אמר** amar, is dropped out of the text: it is supplied by eight MSS. (two ancient) of Dr. Kennicott’s, two of De Rossi’s, and the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate.

Though Israel be not gathered “*And that Israel unto him might be gathered*”— Five MSS. (two ancient) confirm the Keri, or marginal correction of the Masorettes, לוּ lo, unto him, instead of לוֹ lo, not, in the text; and so read Aquila; and the Chaldee, Septuagint, and Arabic omit the negative. But the Septuagint, MSS. Pachom, and 1:D. 2:express also the Keri לוּ lo by πρὸς αὐτόν, to him.

Verse 6. And to restore the preserved of Irsrae “*And to restore the branches of Israel*”— נְצִירֵי netsirey, or נְצוּרֵי netsurey, as the Masorettes correct it in the marginal reading. This word has been matter of great doubt with interpreters: the Syriac renders it the branch, taking it for the same with נְצַר netser, chap. 11:1. See Michaelis Epim. in Praelect. xix.

Verse 7. The Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One “*The Redeemer of Israel, his Holy One*”— “Perhaps we should read לְקִדּוּשׁוֹ likdosho, “SECKER: that is, to his Holy One. The preceding word ends with a ל lamed, which might occasion that letter’s being lost here. The Talmud of Babylon has וְקִדּוּשׁוֹ ukedosho, and his Holy One.

To him whom man despiseth “*To him whose person is despised*”— “Perhaps we should read נִבְזָה nibzeh, “SECKER; or בְּזוּי bazui, Le Clerc; that is, instead of the active, the passive form, which seems here to be required.

Verse 9. To them that are in darkness “*And to those that are in darkness*”— Fifteen MSS. (five ancient) of Dr. Kennicott’s, eleven of De

The land of Sinim.— Prof. Doederlein thought of Syene, the southern limit of Egypt, but does not abide by it. Michaelis thinks it is right, and promises to give his reasons for so thinking in the second part of his *Spicilegium Geographiae Hebraeorum Exterae*. See *Biblioth. Oriental.* Part 11:p. 176.

סין sin signifies a bush, and סִינִים sinim, bushes, woods, etc. Probably this means that the land where several of the lost Jews dwell is a woodland. The ten tribes are gone, no one knows whither. On the slave coast in Africa, some Jewish rites appear among the people, and all the males are circumcised. The whole of this land, as it appears from the coast, may be emphatically called אֶרֶץ סִינִים *erets sinim*, the land of bushes, as it is all covered with woods as far as the eye can reach. Many of the Indians in North America, which is also a woodland, have a great profusion of rites, apparently in their basis Jewish. Is it not possible that the descendants of the ten lost tribes are among those in America, or among those in Africa, whom European nations think they have a right to enslave? It is of those lost tribes that the twenty-first verse speaks: “And these, where had they been?”

Verse 13. *Break forth into singing, O mountains “Ye mountains, burst forth into song”*— Three ancient MSS. are without the ך yod or the conjunction ך vau before the verb: and so the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate.

Verse 14. *The Lord (יהוה׳ Yehovah) hath forsaken me, and my Lord (אדני׳ Adonai) hath forgotten me.*— But a multitude of MSS. and several ancient editions read יהוה׳ Yehovah in both places.

Verse 16. *Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands “Behold, on the palms of my hands have I delineated thee”*— This is certainly an allusion to some practice, common among the Jews at that time, of making marks on their hands or arms by punctures on the skin, with some sort of sign or representation of the city or temple, to show their affection and zeal for it. They had a method of making such punctures indelible by fire, or by staining. See note on chap. 44:6. It is

well known, that the pilgrims at the holy sepulcher get themselves marked in this manner with what are called the ensigns of Jerusalem. See Maundrell, p. 75, where he tells us how it is performed: and this art is practiced by travelling Jews all over the world at this day.

Verse 17. Thy children shall make haste “*They that destroyed thee shall soon become thy builders*”— Auctor Vulgatae pro בניך banayich, videtur legisse בניך bonayich, unde vertit, structores tui; cui et Septuaginta fere consentiunt, qui verterunt οικοδομηθης, aedificata es, prout in Plantiniana editione habetur; in Vaticana sive Romana legitur, οικοδομηθηση, aedificaberis. Hisce etiam Targum Jonathanis aliquatenus consentit, ubi, et aedificabunt. Confer infra Esai. 54:13, ad quem locum rabbini quoque notarunt en tractatu Talmudico Berachot, c. ix., quod non legendum sit בניך banayich, id est. filii tui; sed בניך bonayich, aedificatores tui. Confer not. ad librum Prec. Jud. part ii., p. 226, ut et D Wagenseil Sot. p. 253, n. 9. “The author of the Vulgate appears to have read בניך bonayich for בניך banayich, as he translates it by structures tui, ‘thy builders.’ The Septuagint is almost the same with the Vulgate, having οικοδομηθης, art built, as in the Plantin edition: but the Vatican or Roman copy reads οικοδομηθηση, those shalt be built. To these readings the Targum of Jonathan has some sort of correspondence, translating et aedificabunt, ‘and they shall build.’ See chap. 54:13; on which place the rabbins also remark, in the Talmudic tract Berachoth, c. 9, that we should not read בניך banayich, thy sons, but בניך bonayich, thy builders. See the note in Prae. Jud. part ii., p. 226, and also D. Wagenseil, Sot. p. 253, n. 9. “ See also Breithaupt. not. ad Jarchi in loc.; and the note on this place in De Sac. Poes. Hebr. Praelect. 31: Instead of בניך or בניך bonayich, thy builders, several MSS. read בניך baneycha, thy sons. So also the Syriac: see the above note.

Shall go forth of thee “*Shall become thine offspring.*”— ממך יצאו mimmech yetseu, shall proceed, spring, issue, from thee, as thy children. The phrase is frequently used in this sense: see chap. 11:1; Micah 5:2; Nahum 1:11. The accession of the Gentiles to the Church of God is considered as an addition made to the number of the family and children of Sion: see ver. 21, 22, and chap. 60:4. The common rendering, “shall go

forth of thee, or depart from thee, “is very flat, after their zeal had been expressed by “shall become thy builders: “ and as the opposition is kept up in one part of the sentence, one has reason to expect it in the other, which should be parallel to it.

Verse 18. Bind them on thee, as a bride doeth “Bind them about thee, as a bride her jewels.”— The end of the sentence is manifestly imperfect.

Does a bride bind her children, or her new subjects, about her? Sion clothes herself with her children, as a bride clothes herself, — with what? some other thing certainly. The Septuagint help us out in this difficulty, and supply the lost word: **ως κασμοσ ττμμη** as a bride her ornaments. **כלה ככליה** kichleyha callah, or **ככלה כליה** kecallah keleyha. The great similitude of the two words has occasioned the omission of one of them. See chap. 61:10.

Verse 21. These, where had they been “These then, where were they?”—

The conjunction is added before **אלה** elleh, that is, **ואלה** veelleh. in thirty-two MSS. (nine ancient) of Kennicott’s, and fifty-four of De Rossi’s, and so the Septuagint, Chaldee, and Vulgate. See on ver. 12.

Verse 22. Thus saith the Lord God **אדני יהוה** Adonai Yehovah. Adonai is wanting in one MS., in the Alexandrine copy of the Septuagint, and in the Arabic.

Verse 23. With their face toward the earth “With their faces to the earth”—

It is well known that expressions of submission, homage, and reverence always have been and are still carried to a great degree of extravagance in the eastern countries. When Joseph’s brethren were introduced to him, “they bowed down themselves before him with their faces to the earth, “Genesis 42:6. The kings of Persia never admitted any one to their presence without exacting this act of adoration; for that was the proper term for it. *Necesse est, says the Persian courtier to Conon, si in conspectum veneris, venerari te regem; quod* **προσκυουσιν** illi vocant. “It is necessary, if thou shouldest come in sight, to venerate thee as king; which they call worshipping.” —NEPOS in Conone. Alexander, intoxicated with success, affected this piece of oriental pride: *Itaque more Persarum*

Macedonas venerabundos ipsum salutare, prosternentes humi corpora.
 “The Macedonians after the manner of the Persians, saluted their monarch with the ceremony of prostration.” —CURTIUS, lib. 8: The insolence of eastern monarchs to conquered princes, and the submission of the latter, is astonishing. Mr. Warmer, *Observ.* 2:43, gives the following instance of it from D’Herbelot: “This prince threw himself one day on the ground, and kissed the prints that his victorious enemy’s horse had made there; reciting some verses in Persian, which he had composed, to this effect:—

“The mark that the foot of your horse has left upon the dust, serves me now for a crown.

“The ring which I wear as the badge of my slavery, is become my richest ornament.

“While I shall have the happiness to kiss the dust of your feet, I shall think that fortune favors me with its tenderest caresses, and its sweetest kisses.”

These expressions therefore of the prophet are only general poetical images, taken from the manners of the country, to denote great respect and reverence: and such splendid poetical images, which frequently occur in the prophetic writings, were intended only as general amplifications of the subject, not as predictions to be understood and fulfilled precisely according to the letter. For the different kinds of adoration in the east, see the note on chap. 44:17.

Verse 24. *Shall the prey be taken from the mighty “Shall the prey seized by the terrible be rescued”*— For צַדִּיק tsaddik, read עֲרִיץ arits. A palpable mistake, like that in chap. 42:19. The correction is self-evident from the very terms of the sentence; from the necessity of the strict correspondence in the expressions between the question and the answer made to it, -and it is apparent to the blindest and most prejudiced eye. However, if authority is also necessary, there is that of the Syriac and Vulgate for it; who plainly read עֲרִיץ arits, in ver. 24 as well as in ver. 25, rendering it in the former place by the same word as in the latter. — L.

These two last verses contain a glorious promise of deliverance to the persecuted Church of Christ from the terrible one-Satan, and all his representatives and vicegerents, persecuting antichristian rulers. They shall at last cease from destroying the Church of God, and destroy one another.

CHAPTER 50

In this chapter God vindicates his dealings unth his people, whose alienation is owing to themselves, 1. And, by allusion to the temporal deliverances connected with the drying up of the Red Sea and the Euphrates, asserts his power to save, 2, 3; namely, by the obedience and sufferings of the Messiah, 4-6; who was at length to prove victorious over all his enemies, 7-9. The two last verses exhort to faith and trust in God in the most disconsolate circumstances; with a denunciation of vengeance on those who should trust to their own devices, 10, 11.

NOTES ON CHAP. 50

Verse 1. Thus saith the Lord— This chapter has been understood of the prophet himself; but it certainly speaks more clearly about Jesus of Nazareth than of Isaiah, the son of Amos.

Where is the bill “*Where is this bill*”— Husbands, through moroseness or levity of temper, often sent bills of divorcement to their wives on slight occasions, as they were permitted to do by the law of Moses, Deuteronomy 24:1. And fathers, being oppressed with debt, often sold their children, which they might do for a time, till the year of release, Exodus 21:7. That this was frequently practiced, appears from many passages of Scripture, and that the persons and the liberty of the children were answerable for the debts of the father. The widow, 2 Kings 4:1, complains “that the creditor is come to take unto him her two sons to be bondmen. “ And in the parable, Matt 18:25: “The lord, forasmuch as his servant had not to pay, commands him to be sold, and his wife and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. “ Sir John Chardin’s MS. note on this place of Isaiah is as follows: En Orient on paye ses dettes avec ses esclaves, car ils sont des principaux meubles; et en plusieurs lieux on les paye aussi de ses enfans. “In the east they pay their debts by giving up their slaves, for these are their chief property of a

disposable kind; and in many places they give their children to their creditors. “But this, saith God, cannot be my case, I am not governed by any such motives, neither am I urged by any such necessity. Your captivity therefore and your afflictions are to be imputed to yourselves, and to your own folly and wickedness.

Verse 2. *Their fish stinketh* “*Their fish is dried up*”—For תבאש tibaosh, stinketh, read תיבש tibash, is dried up; so it stands in the Bodl. MS., and it is confirmed by the Septuagint, ξηρανθησονται, they shall be dried up.

Verse 5. *Neither turned away back* “*Neither did I withdraw myself backward*”—Eleven MSS. and the oldest edition prefix the conjunction ך vau; and so also the Septuagint and Syriac.

Verse 6. *And my cheeks to them that plunked off the hair*—The greatest indignity that could possibly be offered. See the note on chap. 7:20.

I hid not my face from shame and spitting.—Another instance of the utmost contempt and detestation. It was ordered by the law of Moses as a severe punishment, carrying with it a lasting disgrace; Deuteronomy 25:9. Among the Medes it was highly offensive to spit in any one’s presence, Herod. 1:99; and so likewise among the Persians, Xenophon, Cyrop. Lib. i., p. 18.

*“They abhor me; they flee far from me;
They forbear not to spit in my face.”*

Job 30:10.

“And JEHOVAH said unto Moses, If her father had but spit in her face, should she not be ashamed seven days?” Numbers 22:14. On which place Sir John Chardin remarks, that “spitting before any one, or spitting upon the ground in speaking of any one’s actions, is through the east an expression of extreme detestation.” —Harmer’s Observ. 2:509. See also, of the same notions of the Arabs in this respect, Niebuhr, Description de

l'Arabie, p. 26. It so evidently appears that in those countries spitting has ever been an expression of the utmost detestation, that the learned doubt whether in the passages of Scripture above quoted any thing more is meant than spitting, — not in the face, which perhaps the words do not necessarily imply, — but only in the presence of the person affronted. But in this place it certainly means spitting in the face; so it is understood in St. Luke, where our Lord plainly refers to this prophecy: “All things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished; for he shall be delivered to the Gentiles, and shall be mocked and spitefully entreated, and spitted on, **εμπυσθησεται**, “18:31, 32, which was in fact fulfilled; **και ηρξαντο τινες εμπυειν αυτω**, “and some began to spit on him, “Mark 14:65, 15:19. If spitting in a person’s presence was such an indignity, how much more spitting in his face?

Verse 7. *Therefore have I set my face like a flint*— The Prophet Ezekiel, chap. 2:8, 9, has expressed this with great force in his bold and vehement manner:

*“Behold, I have made thy face strong against their faces,
And thy forehead strong against their foreheads:
As an adamant, harder than a rock, have I made thy
forehead;
Fear them not, neither be dismayed at their looks,
Though they be a rebellious house.”*

Verse 8. *Who will contend with me*— The Bodleian MS. and another add the word **הוא hu**; **מי הוא יריב mi ho yarib**, as in the like phrase in the next verse; and in the very same phrase Job 13:19, and so likewise in many other places, Job 17:3; 41:1. Sometimes on the like occasions it is **מי זה mi zeh**, and **מי הוא זה mi ho zeh**, “Who is this one?” The word has probably been lost out of the present text; and the reading of the MSS. above mentioned seems to be genuine.

Verse 10. *Who is among you that feareth the Lord*— I believe this passage has been generally, if not dangerously, misunderstood. It has been

quoted, and preached upon, to prove that “a man might conscientiously fear God, and be obedient to the words of the law and the prophets; obey the voice of his servant-of Jesus Christ himself, that is, be sincerely and regularly obedient to the moral law and the commands of our blessed Lord, and yet walk in darkness and have no light, no sense of God’s approbation, and no evidence of the safety of his state. “ This is utterly impossible; for Jesus hath said, “He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. “ If there be some religious persons who, under the influence of morbid melancholy, are continually writing bitter things against themselves, the word of God should not be bent down to their state. There are other modes of spiritual and Scriptural comfort. But does not the text speak of such a case? And are not the words precise in reference to it? I think not: and Bishop Lowth’s translation has set the whole in the clearest light, though he does not appear to have been apprehensive that the bad use I mention had been made of the text as it stands in our common Version. The text contains two questions, to each of which a particular answer is given:—

Q. 1. “Who is there among you that feareth JEHOVAH? Ans. Let him hearken unto the voice of his servant.

Q. 2. Who that walketh in darkness and hath no light? Ans. Let him trust in the name of Jehovah;

And lean himself (prop himself) upon his God.”

Now, a man awakened to a sense of his sin and misery, may have a dread of JEHOVAH, and tremble at his word, and what should such a person do? Why he should hear what God’s servant saith: “Come unto me, all ye who labor and are heavy laden; and I will give you rest. “ There may be a sincere penitent, walking in darkness, having no light of salvation; for this is the case of all when they first begin to turn to God. What should such do? They should trust, believe on, the Lord Jesus, who died for them, and lean upon his all-sufficient merits for the light of salvation which God has promised. Thus acting, they will soon have a sure trust and confidence that God for Christ’s sake has forgiven them their sin, and thus they shall have the light of life.

Verse 10. *That obeyeth the voice of his servant* “*Let him hearken unto the voice of his servant*”— For שמע shomea, pointed as the participle, the Septuagint and Syriac read שמע yishma, future or imperative. This gives a much more elegant turn and distribution to the sentence.

Verse 11. *Ye that kindle a fire*— The fire of their own kindling, by the light of which they walk with security and satisfaction, is an image designed to express, in general, human devices and mere worldly policy, exclusive of faith, and trust in God; which, though they flatter themselves for a while with pleasing expectations and some appearance of success, shall in the end turn to the confusion of the authors. Or more particularly, as Vitranga explains it, it may mean the designs of the turbulent and factious Jews in the times succeeding those of Christ, who, in pursuit of their own desperate schemes, stirred up the war against the Romans, and kindled a fire which consumed their city and nation.

That compass yourselves about with sparks “*Who heap the fuel round about*”— מגוזלי megozeley, accendentes, Syr.; forte leperunt pro מאזרי meazzerey מאירי meirey; nam sequitur אור ur.” —Secker. Lud. Capellus, in his criticism on this place, thinks it should be מאזרי meazzerey, from the Septuagint, κατισχυοντες.

There are others who are widely different from those already described. Without faith, repentance, or a holy life, they are bold in their professed confidence in God-presumptuous in their trust in the mercy of God; and, while destitute of all preparation for and right to the kingdom of heaven, would think it criminal to doubt their final salvation! Living in this way, what can they have at the hand of God but an endless bed of sorrow! Ye shall lie down in sorrow.

But there is a general sense, and accordant to the design of the prophecy, in which these words may be understood and paraphrased: Behold, all ye that kindle a fire-provoke war and contention; compass yourselves about with sparks-stirring up seditions and rebellions: walk in the light of your fire-go on in your lust of power and restless ambition. Ye shall lie down in

sorrow-it will turn to your own perdition. See the Targum. This seems to refer to the restless spirit of the Jews, always stirring up confusion and strife; rebelling against and provoking the Romans, till at last their city was taken, their temple burnt to the ground, and upwards of a million of themselves destroyed, and the rest led into captivity!

CHAPTER 51

The prophet exhorts the children of Abraham to trust in the Lord; and briefly, but beautifully, describes the great blessedness which should be the consequence, 1-3. Then, turning to the Gentiles, encourages them to look for a portion in the same salvation, 4, 5; the everlasting duration of which is majestically described, 6. And as it is everlasting, so is it sure to the righteous, notwithstanding all the machinations of their enemies, 7, 8. The faithful, then, with exultation and joy, lift their voices, reminding God of his wondrous works of old, which encourage them to look now for the like glorious accomplishment of these promises, 9-11. In answer to this the Divinity is introduced comforting them under their trials, and telling them that the deliverer was already on his way to save and to establish them, 12-16. On this the prophet turns to Jerusalem to comfort and congratulate her on so joyful a prospect. She is represented, by a bold image, as a person lying in the streets, under the intoxicating effects of the cup of the Divine wrath, without a single person from among her own people appointed to give her consolation, and trodden under the feet of her enemies; but, in the time allotted by the Divine providence, the cup of trembling shall be taken out of her hand, and put into that of her oppressors; and she shall drink it no more again for ever, 17-22.

NOTES ON CHAP. 51

Verse 1. *Ye that follow after righteousness*— The people who, feeling the want of salvation, seek the Lord in order to be justified.

The rock— Abraham.

The hole of the pit— Sarah; as explained in ver. 2.

Verse 2. *I called him alone*— As I have made out of one a great nation; so, although ye are brought low and minished, yet I can restore you to happiness, and greatly multiply your number.

Verse 4. *By people—O my nation “O ye peoples—O ye nations”*— For עמי ammi, my people, the Bodleian MS. and another read עמים ammim, ye peoples; and for לאומי leumi, my nation, the Bodleian MS. and eight others, (two of them ancient,) and four of De Rossi’s, read לאמים leummim, ye nations; and so the Syriac in both words. The difference is very material; for in this case the address is made not to the Jews, but to the Gentiles, as in all reason it ought to be; for this and the two following verses express the call of the Gentiles, the islands, or the distant lands on the coasts of the Mediterranean and other seas. It is also to be observed that God in no other place calls his people לאומי leummi, my nation. It has been before remarked that transcribers frequently omitted the final מ mem of nouns plural, and supplied it, for brevity’s sake, and sometimes for want of room at the end of a line, by a small stroke thus עמיו; which mark, being effaced or overlooked, has been the occasion of many mistakes of this kind.

A law shall proceed from me— The new law, the Gospel of our Lord Jesus. Kimchi says, “After the war with Gog and Magog the King Messiah will teach the people to walk in the ways of the Lord.”

Verse 5. *My righteousness is near*— The word צדק tsedek, righteousness, is used in such a great latitude of signification, for justice, truth, faithfulness, goodness, mercy, deliverance, salvation, etc., that it is not easy sometimes to give the precise meaning of it without much circumlocution; it means here the faithful completion of God’s promises to deliver his people.

Verse 6. *My salvation shall be for ever*— Aben Ezra says, From this verse divines have learnt the immortality of the soul. Men shall perish as the earth does, because they are formed from it; but they who are filled with the salvation of God shall remain for ever. See Kimchi.

Verse 11. *They shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and mourning shall flee away.*— Nineteen MSS. and the two oldest editions have ישגו yasigu; and forty-six MSS. of Kennicott’s and ten of De Rossi’s, and the

same two editions, and agreeably to them the Chaldee and Syriac, have **ונסו** venasu; and so both words are expressed, chap. 35:10, of which place this is a repetition. And from comparing both together it appears that the **ו** vau in this place is become by mistake in the present text final, nun of the preceding word.

Verse 13. *Of the oppressor, as if he*, etc.— “The **כ** caph in **כאשר** keasher seems clearly to have changed its situation from the end of the preceding word to the beginning of this; or rather, to have been omitted by mistake there, because it was here. That it was there the Septuagint show by rendering **המציקך** hammetsikech **θλιβοντος**, of him, that oppressed thee. And so they render this word in both its places in this verse. The Vulgate also has the pronoun in the first instance; furoris ejus qui te tribulabat. “Dr. Jubb. The correction seems well founded; I have not conformed the translation to it, because it makes little difference in the sense.

Verse 14. *The captive exile hasteneth that he may be loosed* “*He marcheth on with speed, who cometh to set free the captive*”— Cyrus, if understood of the temporal redemption from the captivity of Babylon; in the spiritual sense, the Messiah, who comes to open the prison to them that are bound.

Verse 16. *That I may plant the heavens* “*To stretch out the heavens*”— In the present text it is **לנתע** lintoa, “to plant the heavens: “ the phrase is certainly very obscure, and in all probability is a mistake for **לנטות** lintoth. This latter is the word used in ver. 13 just before, in the very same sentence; and this phrase occurs very frequently in Isaiah, chap. 40:22, 42:5, 44:24, 45:12; the former in no other place. It is also very remarkable, that in the Samaritan text, Numbers 24:6, these two words are twice changed by mistake, one for the other, in the same verse.

Verse 17. *The cup of trembling*— **כוס התרעלה** cos hattarelah, “the cup of mortal poison, “veneni mortiferi. — MONTAN. This may also allude to the ancient custom of taking off criminals by a cup of poison. Socrates is well known to have been sentenced by the Areopagus to drink a cup of the juice of hemlock, which occasioned his death. See the note on

Hebrews 2:9, and see also Bishop Lowth's note on ver. 21.

Verse 19. *These two things—desolation, and destruction, and the famine, and the sword*— That is, desolation by famine, and destruction by the sword, taking the terms alternately: of which form of construction see other examples. De S. Poesi, Hebrews Prael. xix., and Prelim. Dissert. p. 30: The Chaldee paraphrast, not rightly understanding this, has had recourse to the following expedient: “Two afflictions are come upon thee, and when four shall come upon thee, depredation, and destruction, and the famine, and the sword “ Five MSS. הרעב *haraab*, without the conjunction ו *vau*; and so the Septuagint and Syriac.

By whom shall I comfort thee “Who shall comfort thee”— A MS., the Septuagint, Syriac, Chaldee, and Vulgate have it in the third person, ינחמד *yenachamech*, which is evidently right.

Verse 20. *As a wild bull in a net: they are full*, etc. “*Like the oryx taken in the toils; drenched to the full*”— “Perhaps מכמרה מלאים *michmerah meleim*. “SECKER. The demonstrative ה *he*, prefixed to מלאים *meleim*, full, seems improper in this place.

Verse 21. *Drunken, but not with wine*— AEschylus has the same expression:—

αοινοις εμμανεις θυμωμασι

Eumen. 863.

Intoxicated with passion, not with wine.

Schultens thinks that this circumlocution, as he calls it, gradum adfert incomparabiliter majorem; and that it means, not simply without wine, but much more than with wine. Gram. Hebrews p. 182. See his note on Job 30:38.

The bold image of the cup of God's wrath, often employed by the sacred

writers, (see note on chap. 1:22,) is nowhere handled with greater force and sublimity than in this passage of Isaiah, ver. 17-23. Jerusalem is represented in person as staggering under the effects of it, destitute of that assistance which she might expect from her children; not one of them being able to support or to lead her. They, abject and amazed, lie at the head of every street, overwhelmed with the greatness of their distress; like the oryx entangled in a net, in vain struggling to rend it, and extricate himself. This is poetry of the first order, sublimity of the highest character.

Plato had an idea something like this: “Suppose, “says he, “God had given to men a medicating potion inducing fear, so that the more any one should drink of it, so much the more miserable he should find himself at every draught, and become fearful of every thing both present and future; and at last, though the most courageous of men, should be totally possessed by fear: and afterwards, having slept off the effects of it, should become himself again. “ De Leg. i., near the end. He pursues at large this hypothesis, applying it to his own purpose, which has no relation to the present subject. Homer places two vessels at the disposal of Jupiter, one of good, the other of evil. He gives to some a potion mixed of both; to others from the evil vessel only: these are completely miserable. Iliad 24:527-533.

δοιοι γαρ τε πιθοι κατακειονται εν διοσ ουδει
 δωρων, οια διδωσι, κακων, ετερος δε εαων,
 ’ω μεν καμμιξας δωη ζευς τερπικεραυνος,
 αλλοτε μεν τε κακω ογε κυρεται, αλλοτε δ’ εσθλω
 ’ω δε κε των λυγρων, λωβητον εθηκε.
 και ε κακη βουβρωστις επι χθονα διαν ελανυει
 φοιτα δ’ ουτε θεοισι θεοισι τετιμενος, ουτι
 βροτοισιν.

*“Two urns by Jove’s high throne have ever stood,
The source of evil one, and one of good;
From thence the cup of mortal man he fills,
Blessings to these, to those distributes ills;
To most he mingles both: the wretch decreed
To taste the bad unmixed, is cursed indeed:
Pursued by wrongs, by meagre famine driven,
He wanders outcast both of earth and heaven.”*

Pope

Verse 23. *Them that afflict thee* “*Them who oppress thee*”— The Septuagint, Chaldee, Syriac, and Vulgate appear to have read מוֹנִיךְ monayich, as in chap. 40:26.” —SECKER.

Which have said to thy soul, Bow down “*Who say to thee, Bow down thy body*”— A very strong and most expressive description of the insolent pride of eastern conquerors; which, though it may seem greatly exaggerated, yet hardly exceeds the strict truth. An example has already been given of it in the note to chap. 49:23. I will here add one or two more. “Joshua called for all the men of Israel; and said unto the captains of the men of war that went with him, Come near, put your feet upon the necks of these kings, “Joshua 10:24. “Adonibezek said, Threescore and ten kings, having their thumbs and their great toes cut off, gathered their meat under my table: As I have done, so hath God requited me, “Judges 1:7. The Emperor Valerianus, being through treachery taken prisoner by Sapor king of Persia, was treated by him as the basest and most abject slave: for the Persian monarch commanded the unhappy Roman to bow himself down, and offer him his back, on which he set his foot, in order to mount his chariot or horse whenever he had occasion. — LACTANTIUS, De Mort. Persec. cap. 5:AUREL. VICTOR. Epitome, cap. xxxii. — L.

CHAPTER 52

Jerusalem, in manifest allusion to the strong figure employed in the close of the preceding chapter, is represented as fallen asleep in the dust, and in that helpless state bound by her enemies. The prophet, with all the ardor natural to one who had such joyful news to communicate, bids her awake, arise, put on her best attire, (holiness to the Lord,) and ascend her lofty seat; and then he delivers the message he had in charge, a very consolatory part of which was, that “no more should enter into her the uncircumcised and the polluted, “1-6. Awaking from her stupefaction, Jerusalem sees the messenger of such joyful tidings on the eminence from which he spied the coming deliverance. She expresses, in beautiful terms, her joy at the news, repeating with peculiar elegance the words of the crier, 7. The rapturous intelligence, that Jehovah was returning to resume his residence on his holy mountain, immediately spreads to others on the watch, who all join in the glad acclamation, 8; and, in the ardor of their joy, they call to the very ruins of Jerusalem to sing along with them, because Jehovah maketh bare his holy arm in the sight of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth are about to see the salvation of Israel’s God, 9, 10. To complete the deliverance, they are commanded to march in triumph out of Babylon, earnestly exhorted to have nothing to do with any of her abominations, and assured that Jehovah will guide them in all their way, 11, 12. The prophet then passes to the procuring cause of this great blessedness to the house of Israel in particular, and to the world in general, viz., the humiliation, sufferings, death, burial, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ; a very celebrated and clear prophet which takes up the remainder of this and the whole of the following chapter.

NOTES ON CHAP. 52

Verse 1. There shall no more come into thee-For **בָּא**’ yabo, “shall come, “**לָבֵא** lebo, “to come, “is the reading of five of Kennicott’s and two of De

Rossi's MSS. This is the better reading, **כִּי לֹא יוֹסִיף לָבֵא** ki lo yosiph lebo, "There shall not add to come."

The uncircumcised and the unclean.— Christians have turned many passages of the prophets against the Jews; and it is not to be wondered at, that in support of their obstinate and hopeless cause, they should press a prophecy into their service, and make it speak against the Christians. This Kimchi does in this place; for he says, by the uncircumcised, the Christians are meant; and by the unclean the Turks. The Christians are uncircumcised and the Turks, though circumcised, and using many ablutions, are unclean in their works.

Verse 2. *Sit down, O Jerusalem "Ascend thy lofty seat, O Jerusalem"*— The literal rendering here is, according to our English translation, "arise, sit; " on which a very learned person remarks: "So the old versions. But sitting is an expression of mourning in Scripture and the ancients; and doth not well agree with the rising just before. " It does not indeed agree, according to our ideas; but, considered in an oriental light, it is perfectly consistent. The common manner of sitting in the eastern countries is upon the ground or the floor with the legs crossed. The people of better condition have the floors of their chambers or divans covered with carpets for this purpose; and round the chamber broad couches, raised a little above the floor, spread with mattresses handsomely covered, which are called sofas. When sitting is spoken of as a posture of more than ordinary state, it is quite of a different kind; and means sitting on high, on a chair of state or throne called the musnud; for which a footstool was necessary, both in order that the person might raise himself up to it, and for supporting the legs when he was placed in it. "Chairs, "says Sir John Chardin, "are never used in Persia, but at the coronation of their kings. The king is seated in a chair of gold set with jewels, three feet high. The chairs which are used by the people in the east are always so high as to make a footstool necessary. And this proves the propriety of the style of Scripture, which always joins the footstool to the throne. " (Isaiah 66:1; Psalm 105:1.) Voyages, tom. 9:p. 85, 12mo. Besides the six steps to Solomon's throne, there was a footstool of gold fastened to the seat,² Chronicles 9:18, which would otherwise have been too high for the king to reach, or to sit on conveniently.

When Thetis comes to wait on Vulcan to request armor for her son, she is received with great respect, and seated on a silver-studded throne, a chair of ceremony, with a footstool:—

την μεν επειτα καθεισεν επι θρονου αργυροηλου,
καλου, δαιδαλεου υπο δε θρηνης ποσιν ηεν.

Iliad 18:389.

*“High on a throne, with stars of silver graced,
And various artifice, the queen she placed;
A footstool at her feet.”*

POPE

ὁ γὰρ θρονος αὐτος μόνον ἐλευθεριος ἐστὶ καθέδρα συν
υποποδιῳ. Athenaeus, 5:4. “A throne is nothing more than a handsome
sort of chair with a footstool.” —L.

Verse 4. Thus saith the Lord God— אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה Adonai Jehovah; but Adonai is wanting in twelve of Kennicott’s, five of De Rossi’s, and two of my own MSS.; and by the Septuagint and Arabic. Some MSS. have יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת Jehovah tsebaoth, “Lord of hosts;” and others have יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים Yehovah Elohim, “Lord God.”

Verse 5. They that rule over them “*They that are lords over them*”— For מִשְׁלֹו moshelo, singular, in the text, more than a hundred and twenty MSS. (De Rossi says, codices innumeri, “numberless copies”) have מִשְׁלַיִו moshelaiiv plural, according to the Masoretical correction in the margin; which shows that the Masoretes often superstitiously retained apparent mistakes in the text, even when they had sufficient evidence to authorize the introduction of the true reading.

Make them to howl “*Make their boast of it*”— For יְהִילִילוּ yeheililu, “make them to howl,” five MSS., (two ancient,) have יְהַלְלוּ yehalelu, “make their boast;” which is confirmed by the Chaldee paraphrast, who

renders it מִשְׁתַּבְּחִי mishtabbechin. Ulaloo is not only the cry itself, but also the name of the funeral song of the Irish. The Arabs have a cry very much resembling this.

Verse 6. *Therefore my people shall know*— The word לָחֵן lachen, occurring the second time in this verse, seems to be repeated by mistake. It has no force nor emphasis as a repetition; it only embarrasses the construction and the sense. It was not in the copies from which the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate were translated; it was not in the copy of the Septuagint from which the Arabic was translated; but in the Aldine and Complutensian editions ΔΙΑ ΤΟΥΤΟ is repeated; probably so corrected, in order to make it conformable with the Hebrew text.

I am he that Moth speak “I am he, JEHOVAH, that promised”— For הוּא hu, the Bodleian MS. and another have הוּוָה, Jehovah; “For I am JEHOVAH that promised; “ and another ancient MS. adds הוּוָה Jehovah after הוּא hu. The addition of JEHOVAH seems to be right in consequence of what was said in the preceding line, “My people shall know my name.”

Verse 7. *How beautiful*— The watchmen discover afar off, on the mountains, the messenger bringing the expected and much-wished-for news of the deliverance from the Babylonish captivity. They immediately spread the joyful tidings, ver. 8, and with a loud voice proclaim that JEHOVAH is returning to Zion, to resume his residence on his holy mountain, which for some time he seemed to have deserted. This is the literal sense of the place.

“How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of the joyful messenger, “is an expression highly poetical: for, how welcome is his arrival! how agreeable are the tidings which he brings!

Nahum, chap. 1:15, who is generally supposed to have lived after Isaiah, has manifestly taken from him this very pleasing image; but the imitation does not equal the beauty of the original:—

“Behold upon the mountain the feet of the joyful

*messenger,
Of him that announceth peace!
Celebrate, O Judah, thy festivals; perform thy vows:
For no more shall pass through thee the wicked one;
He is utterly cut off.”*

But it must at the same time be observed that Isaiah's subject is infinitely more interesting and more sublime than that of Nahum; the latter denounces the destruction of the capital of the Assyrian empire, the most formidable enemy of Judah; the ideas of the former are in their full extent evangelical; and accordingly St. Paul has, with the utmost propriety, applied this passage to the preaching of the Gospel, Romans 10:15. The joyful tidings here to be proclaimed, "Thy God, O Zion, reigneth, "are the same that John the Baptist, the messenger of Christ, and Christ himself, published: "The kingdom of heaven is at hand."

From the use made of this by our Lord and the apostles, we may rest assured that the preachers of the Gospel are particularly intended. Mountains are put for the whole land of Judea, where the Gospel was first preached. There seems to be an allusion to a battle fought, and the messengers coming to announce the victory, which was so decisive that a peace was the consequence, and the king's throne established in the land.

There appear to have been two sorts of messengers among the Jews: one sort always employed to bring evil tidings; the other to bring good. The names also and persons of these different messengers appear to have been well known; so that at a distance they could tell, from seeing the messenger, what sort of tidings he was bringing. See a case in point, 2 Samuel 18:19-27. Ahimaaz and Cushie running to bring tidings of the defeat of Absalom and his rebel army. Ahimaaz is a GOOD man and bringeth GOOD tidings.

Verse 8. *Thy watchmen lift up the voice* "*All thy watchmen lift up their voice*"— There is a difficulty in the construction of this place which, I think, none of the ancient versions or modern interpreters have cleared up satisfactorily. Rendered word for word it stands thus: "The voice of thy watchmen: they lift up their voice. " The sense of the first member,

considered as elliptical, is variously supplied by various expositors; by none, as it seems to me, in any way that is easy and natural. I am persuaded there is a mistake in the present text, and that the true reading is **קול צפיד כל** col tsophayich, all thy watchmen, instead of **קול צפיד** kol tsophayich, the voice of thy watchmen. The mistake was easy from the similitude in sound of the two letters **כ** caph and **ק** koph. And in one MS. the **ק** koph is upon a rasure. This correction perfectly rectifies the sense and the construction. — L.

They shall see eye to eye— May not this be applied to the prophets and apostles; the one predicting, and the other discovering in the prediction the truth of the prophecy. The meaning of both Testaments is best understood by bringing them face to face.

When the Lord shall bring again Zion “*When JEHOVAH returneth to Zion*”— So the Chaldee: **כד יתיב שכנתיה לציו** cad yethib shechinteh letsiyon, “when he shall place the shechinah in Zion. “ God is considered as having deserted his people during the captivity; and at the restoration, as returning himself with them to Zion, his former habitation. See Psalm 60:1; Isaiah 40:9, and note.

Verse 9. *He hath redeemed Jerusalem* “*He hath redeemed Israel.*”— For the word **ירושלם** yerushalaim, which occurs the second time in this verse, MS. Bodleian and another read **ישראל** yisrael. It is upon a rasure in a third; and left unpointed at first, as suspected, in a fourth. It was an easy mistake, by the transcriber casting his eye on the line above: and the propriety of the correction, both in regard to sense and elegance, is evident.

Verse 11. *Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence*— The Prophet Jeremiah seems to have had his eye on this passage of Isaiah, and to have applied it to a subject directly opposite. It is here addressed by the prophet in a way of encouragement and exhortation to the Jews coming out of Babylon. Jeremiah has given it a different turn, and has thrown it out, as a reproach of the heathen upon the Jews when they were driven from Jerusalem into captivity:—

“Depart; ye are polluted, depart; depart ye, forbear to touch.

Yea, they are fled, they are removed: they shall dwell here no more.”

Lamentations 4:15.

Of the metrical distribution of these lines, see the Prelim. Dissert., p. 58:note.

Verse 13. *My servant shall deal prudently*— **יִשְׂכִּיל** yaskil, shall prosper, or act prosperously. The subject of Isaiah’s prophecy, from the fortieth chapter inclusive, has hitherto been, in general, the deliverance of the people of God. This includes in it three distinct parts; which, however, have a close connection with one another; that is, 1. The deliverance of the Jews from the captivity of Babylon; 2. The deliverance of the Gentiles from their miserable state of ignorance and idolatry; and, 3. The deliverance of mankind from the captivity of sin and death. These three subjects are subordinate to one another; and the two latter are shadowed out under the image of the former. They are covered by it as by a veil; which however is transparent, and suffers them to appear through it. Cyrus is expressly named as the immediate agent of God in effecting the first deliverance. A greater person is spoken of as the Agent who is to effect the two latter deliverances, called the servant, the elect, of God, in whom his soul delighteth; Israel, in whom God will be glorified. Now these three subjects have a very near relation to one another; for as the Agent who was to effect the two latter deliverances, — that is, the Messiah, — was to be born a Jew, with particular limitations of time, family, and other circumstances; the first deliverance was necessary in the order of providence, and according to the determinate counsel of God, to the accomplishment of the two latter deliverances; and the second deliverance was necessary to the third, or rather was involved in it, and made an essential part of it. This being the case, Isaiah has not treated the three subjects as quite distinct and separate in a methodical and orderly manner, like a philosopher or a logician, but has taken them in their connective view. He has handled them as a prophet and a poet; he has allegorized the former, and under the image of it has shadowed out the two latter: he has

thrown them all together, has mixed one with another, has passed from this to that with rapid transitions, and has painted the whole with the strongest and boldest imagery. The restoration of the Jews from captivity, the call of the Gentiles, the redemption by Messiah, have hitherto been handled interchangeably and alternately. Babylon has hitherto been kept pretty much in sight; at the same time, that strong intimations of something much greater have frequently been thrown in. But here Babylon is at once dropped, and I think hardly ever comes in sight again; unless perhaps in chap. 55:12, and 57:14. The prophet's views are almost wholly engrossed by the superior part of his subject. He introduces the Messiah as appearing at first in the lowest state of humiliation, which he had just touched upon before, (chap. 50:5, 6,) and obviates the offense which would be occasioned by it, by declaring the important and necessary cause of it, and foreshowing the glory which should follow it.

This seems to me to be the nature and the true design of this part of Isaiah's prophecies; and this view of them seems to afford the best method of resolving difficulties, in which expositors are frequently engaged, being much divided between what is called the literal and the mystical sense, not very properly; for the mystical or spiritual sense is very often the most literal sense of all.

Abarbanel seems to have had an idea of this kind, as he is quoted by Vitringa on chap. 49:1, who thus represents his sentiments: Censet Abarbanel prophetam hic transitum facere a liberatione ex exilio Babylonico ad liberationem ex exilio Romano; et, quod hic animadversu dignum est, observat liberationem ex exilio Babylonico esse **אות וראיה** oth veraayah, signum et argumentum liberationis futurae; atque adeo orationem prophetae de duabus hisce liberationibus in superioribus concionibus saepe inter se permisceri. Verba ejus: "Et propterea verba, sive res, in prophetic superiore inter se permixtae occurrunt; modo de liberatione Babylonica, modo de liberatione extrema accipiendae, ut orationis necessitas exigit. " Nullum hic vitium, nisi quod redemptionem veram et spiritualem a Messia vero Jesu adductam, non agnoscat. "Abarbanel supposes that the prophet here makes a transition from the deliverance from the Babylonish captivity to the deliverance from the Roman captivity; and (which is worthy of particular note) he observes

that the deliverance from the Babylonish captivity is a sign and pledge of the future redemption; and that on this account it is we find in the preceding prophecies the circumstances of the two captivities intimately blended together. His words are the following: ‘And, therefore, the words or subjects in the foregoing prophecy are very much intermixed; in one passage the redemption from the Babylonish captivity being treated of, in another the redemption from the general dispersion, as may be collected from the obvious import of the words.’ No fault can be found with the above remark, except that the true and spiritual redemption procured by Jesus the Messiah is not acknowledged.” — L.

Verse 14. As many were astonished at thee “*As many were astonished at him*”— For עליך aleicha read עליו again. So the Syriac, Chaldee, and Vulgate in a MS.; and so likewise two ancient MSS.

His visage was so marred more than any man— Most interpreters understand this of the indignities offered to our blessed Lord: but Kimchi gives it another turn, and says, “It means the Jewish people, whom are considered by most nations as having an appearance different from all the people of the earth. “Poor Jews! they have in general a very disagreeable look, partly affected, and partly through neglect of neatness and cleanliness. Most Christians think they carry the impress of their reprobation on every feature of their face. However this may be, it should never be forgotten that the greatest men that ever flourished as kings, judges, magistrates, lawgivers, heroes, and poets, were of Jewish extraction. Isaiah was a Jew; so was Paul, and so was JESUS of Nazareth.

Verse 15. So shall he sprinkle many nations— I retain the common rendering, though I am by no means satisfied with it. “זָזַח yazzeh, frequent in the law, means only to sprinkle: but the water sprinkled is the accusative case; the thing on which has על al or אל el. θαυμασονται, ο, makes the best apodosis. יְנַהֵג yenahag would do. יִנְהַרְוּ yinharu is used chap. 2:2; Jeremiah 31:12; chap. 51:14, but is unlike. ‘Kings shall shut,’ etc., is good, but seems to want a first part.” —SECKER. Munster translates it, faciet loqui, (de se;); and in his note thus explains it: זָזַח yazzeh proprie significat spargere et stillas disseminare; hic hero capitur

pro loqui, et verbum disseminare. “יָזַח” yazzeh properly signifies to sprinkle, and to scatter about drops; but it here means to speak, and to disseminate the word. “ This is pretty much as the Rabbins Kimchi and Sal. ben Belec explain it, referring to the expression of “dropping the word. “ But the same objection lies to this as to the common rendering; it ought to be **עַל גּוֹיִם יִזַּח דְּבַר** yazzeh (debar) al goyim. Bishop Chandler, Defence, p. 148, says, “that to sprinkle is used for to surprise and astonish, as people are that have much water thrown upon them. And this sense is followed by the Septuagint. “ This is ingenious, but rather too refined. Dr. Duress conjectures that the true reading may be **יַעֲחִזוּ** yechezu, they shall regard, which comes near to the **θαυμασονται** of the Septuagint, who seem to give the best sense of any to this place.

“I find in my papers the same conjecture which Dr. Durell made from **θαυμασονται** in the Septuagint. And it may be added that **חָזַח** chazah is used to express ‘looking on any thing with admiration,’ Psalm 11:7; 17:15; 27:4; 63:2; Cant. 6:13. It is particularly applied to ‘looking on God,’ Exodus 24:11, and Job 19:26. Gisbert Cuper, in Observ. lib. 2:1, though treating on another subject, has some observations which show how nearly **οραω** and **θαυμαζω** are allied, which, with the peculiar sense of the verb **חָזַח** chazah above noted, add to the probability of **θαυμασονται** being the version of **יַעֲחִזוּ** yechezu in the text: **οι δε νυ λαοι παντες ες αυτον ορωσι**. Hesiod., id est. cum veneratione quadam adminantur. Hinc **οραω** et **θαυμαζω** junxit Themistius Or. 1: **ειτα παυσονται οι ανθρωποι προς σε μονον ορωνες, και σε μονον θαυμαζοντες**. Theophrastus in Charact. c. 3. **ενθυμη ως αποβλεπουσιν εις σε οι ανθρωποι**. Hence the rendering of this verse seems to be—

“So many nations shall look on him with admiration
Kings shall stop their mouths.” DR. JUBB.

Does not sprinkling the nations refer to the conversion and baptism of the Gentiles? Many nations shall become proselytes to his religion.

Kings shall shut their mouths at him— His Gospel shall so prevail that all opposition shall be finally overcome; and kings and potentates shall be

overwhelmed with confusion, and become speechless before the doctrines of his truth. When they hear these declared they shall attentively consider them, and their conviction of their truth shall be the consequence.

For that which had not been told them— The mystery of the Gospel so long concealed. See Romans 15:21; 16:25.

Shall they see— With the eyes of their faith; God enlightening both organ and object.

And that which they had not heard— The redemption of the world by Jesus Christ; the conversion of the Gentiles, and making them one flock with the converted Jews. — TRAPP

CHAPTER 53

This chapter foretells the sufferings of the Messiah, the end for which he was to die, and the advantages resulting to mankind from that illustrious event. It begins with a complaint of the infidelity of the Jews, 1; the offense they took at his mean and humble appearance, 2; and the contempt with which they treated him, 3. The prophet then shows that the Messiah was to suffer for sins not his own; but that our iniquities were laid on him, and the punishment of them exacted of him, which is the meritorious cause of our obtaining pardon and salvation, 4-6. He shows the meekness and placid submission with which he suffered a violent and unjust death, with the circumstances of his dying with the wicked, and being buried with the great, 7-9; and that, in consequence of his atonement, death, resurrection, and intercession, he should procure pardon and salvation to the multitudes, insure increasing prosperity to his Church, and ultimately triumph over all his foes, 10, 11. This chapter contains a beautiful summary of the most peculiar and distinguishing doctrines of Christianity.

NOTES ON CHAP. 53

That this chapter speaks of none but JESUS must be evident to every unprejudiced reader who has ever heard the history of his sufferings and death. The Jews have endeavored to apply it to their sufferings in captivity; but, alas for their cause! they can make nothing out in this way. Allowing that it belongs to our blessed Lord, (and the best men and the best scholars agree in this,) then who can read verses 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, without being convinced that his death was a vicarious sacrifice for the sins of mankind? On the first and second verses of this chapter I have received the following remarks from an unknown hand.

“Verse 1. *Who hath believed our report?*— The report of the prophets, of John the Baptist, and Christ’s own report of himself. The Jews did not receive the report, and for this reason he was not manifested to them as

the promised Messiah. 'He came unto his own, but his own received him not.' Before the FATHER he grew up as a tender plant: but to the JEWS he was as a root out of a dry ground. 'He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.'

“Verse 2. *For he shall grow up*— Supposes something to have preceded; as it might be asked, what or who shall ‘grow up before him,’ etc. As the translation now stands, no correct answer can be given to this question. The translation then is wrong, the connection broken, and the sense obscured. זרע zeroa, translated the arm, from the root zara. 1. To sow, or plant; also seed, etc. 2. The limb which reaches from the shoulder to the hand, called the arm; or more properly beginning at the shoulder and ending at the elbow. The translator has given the wrong sense of the word. It would be very improper to say, the arm of the Lord should grow up before him; but by taking the word in its former sense, the connection and metaphor would be restored, and the true sense given to the text. זרע zera signifies, not only the seed of herbs, but children, offspring, or posterity. The same word we find Genesis 3:15, where CHRIST is the Seed promised.

ὄνα ἐπιθυμῶμεν αὐτόν. He hath no form, nor any beauty, that we should regard him; nor is his countenance such that we should desire him. “ Symmachus; the only one of the ancients that has translated it rightly.

Verse 3. Acquainted with grief— For וידוע vidua, familiar with grief, eight MSS. and one edition have וירע veyada, and knowing grief; the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate read it ויודע veyodea.

We hid as it were our faces from him “As one that hideth his face from us”— For וכמסתר uchemaster, four MSS. (two ancient) have וכמסתיר uchemastir, one MS. ומסתיר umastir. For פנים panim, two MSS. have פניו paniau; so likewise the Septuagint and Vulgate. Mourners covered up the lower part of their faces, and their heads, 2 Samuel 15:30; Ezekiel 29:17; and lepers were commanded by the law, Leviticus 12:45, to cover their upper lip. From which circumstance it seems that the Vulgate, Aquila, Symmachus, and the Jewish commentators have taken the word נגוע nagua, stricken, in the next verse, as meaning stricken with the leprosy: ἐναφῆ οὐτά, Sym.; ἀφημενον, Aq.; leprosum, Vulg. So my old MS. Bible. I will insert the whole passage as curious:—

*There is not schap to him, ne fairnesse,
And we seegen him, and he was not of sigte,
And we desiriden him dispisid; and the last of men:
Man of souaris and witing infirmitie;
And he hid his cheer and despisid;
Wherfor ne we settiden bi him:
Verili our seeknesse he toke and our sorewis he bair,
And we helden him as leprous and smyten of God, and
meekid;
He forsoth wounded is for our wickednesse,
Defoulid is for our hidous giltis
The discipline of our pese upon him,
And with his wanne wound we ben helid.*

Verse 4. Surely he Bath borne our griefs “Surely our infirmities he hath borne”— Seven MSS. (two ancient) and three editions have חליינו

cholayeynu in the plural number.

And carried our sorrows “*And our sorrows, he hath carried them*”— Seventeen MSS. (two ancient) of Dr. Kennicott’s, two of De Rossi’s, and two editions have the word **הוא** hu, he, before **סבלם** sebalam, “carrieth them, “in the text; four other MSS. have it in the margin. This adds force to the sense, and elegance to the construction.

Verse 5. The chastisement of our peace “*The chastisement by which our peace is effected*”— Twenty-one MSS. and six editions have the word fully and regularly expressed, **שלמינו** shelomeynu; pacificationum nostrarum, “our pacification; “ that by which we are brought into a state of peace and favor with God. Ar. Montan.

Verse 6. The Iniquity of us all.— For **עו** avon, “iniquity, “the ancient interpreters read **עונות** avonoth, “iniquities, “plural; and so the Vulgate in MS. Blanchini. And the Lord hath **הפניע בו** hiphgia bo, caused to meet in him the iniquities of us all. He was the subject on which all the rays collected on the focal point fell. These fiery rays, which should have fallen on all mankind, diverged from Divine justice to the east, west, north, and south, were deflected from them, and converged in him. So the Lord hath caused to meet in him the punishment due to the iniquities of ALL.

Verse 8. And who shall declare his generation “*And his manner of life who would declare*”— A learned friend has communicated to me the following passages from the Mishna, and the Gemara of Babylon, as leading to a satisfactory explication of this difficult place. It is said in the former, that before any one was punished for a capital crime, proclamation was made before the prisoner by the public crier, in these words: **עליו** **כל מי שיודע לו זכות יבא וילמד** col mi shioda lo zachoth yabo vayilmad alaiv, “whosoever knows any thing of this man’s innocence, let him come and declare it. “ Tract. Sandhedrim. Surenhus. Part 4:p. 233. On which passage the Gemara of Babylon adds, that “before the death of Jesus this proclamation was made for forty days; but no defense could be found. “ On which words Lardner observes: “It is truly surprising to see such falsities, contrary to well-known facts. “ Testimonies, Vol. 1:p. 198.

The report is certainly false; but this false report is founded on the supposition that there was such a custom, and so far confirms the account given from the Mishna. The Mishna was composed in the middle of the second century according to Prideaux; Lardner ascribes it to the year of Christ 180.

Casaubon has a quotation from Maimonides which farther confirms this account: — Exercitat. in Baronii Annales, Art. lxxvi. Ann. 34. Numbers 119. Auctor est Maimonides in Perek 13: ejus libri ex opere Jad, solitum fieri, ut cum reus, sententiam mortis passus, a loco judicii exhibat ducendus ad supplicium, praecederet ipsum **הכרוז הקטן**, praeco; et haec verba diceret: Ille exit occidendus morte illa, quia transgressus est transgressione illa, in loco illo, tempore illo, et sunt ejus ret testes ille et ille. Qui noverit aliquid ad ejus innoentiam probandam, veniat, et loquatur pro eo. “It was customary when sentence of death was passed upon a criminal, and he was led out from the seat of judgment to the place of punishment, a crier went before, and spoke as follows: — ‘This man is going out to suffer death by — because he has transgressed by — such a transgression, in such a place, in such a time; and the witnesses against him are —. He who may know any thing relative to his innocence let him come and speak in his behalf.’”

Now it is plain from the history of the four Evangelists, that in the trial and condemnation of Jesus no such rule was observed; though, according to the account of the Mishna, it must have been in practice at that time, no proclamation was made for any person to bear witness to the innocence and character of Jesus; nor did any one voluntarily step forth to give his attestation to it. And our Savior seems to refer to such a custom, and to claim the benefit of it, by his answer to the high priest, when he asked him of his disciples and of his doctrine: “I spoke openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing. Why askest thou me? ask them who heard me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said, “John 18:20, 21. This, therefore, was one remarkable instance of hardship and injustice, among others predicted by the prophet, which our Savior underwent in his trial and sufferings.

St. Paul likewise, in similar circumstances, standing before the judgment seat of Festus, seems to complain of the same unjust treatment; that no one was called, or would appear, to vindicate his character. “My manner of life (την βιωσιν μου, דורי dori, ‘my generation’) from my youth, which was at the first among my own nation at Jerusalem, know all the Jews, who knew me from the beginning, if they would testify; that after the straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee; “ Acts 26:4, 5.

דור dor signifies age, duration, the time which one man or many together pass in this world, in this place; the course, tenor, or manner of life. The verb דור dor signifies, according to Castell, ordinatam vitam sive aetatem egit, ordinavit, ordine constituit. “He passed a certain course of life, he ordained, “etc. In Arabic, curavit, administravit, “he took care of, administered to.”

Was he stricken “He was smitten to death”— The Septuagint read למות lelaveth, εις θανατον, “to death. “ And so the Coptic and Saidic Versions, from the Septuagint; MSS. St. Germain de Prez.

“Origen, “(Contra Celsum, lib. 1:p. 370, edit. 1733,) after having quoted at large this prophecy concerning the Messiah, “tells us, that having once made use of this passage in a dispute against some that were accounted wise among the Jews, one of them replied, that the words did not mean one man, but one people, the Jews, who were smitten of God and dispersed among the Gentiles for their conversion; that he then urged many parts of this prophecy to show the absurdity of this interpretation, and that he seemed to press them the hardest by this sentence, απο των ανομιων του λαου μου ηχθη εις θανατον, ‘for the iniquity of my people was he smitten to death.’ “ Now as Origen, the author of the Hexapla, must have understood Hebrew, we cannot suppose that he would have urged this last quotation as so decisive if the Greek Version had not agreed here with the Hebrew text; nor that these wise Jews would have been at all distressed by this quotation, unless their Hebrew text had read agreeably to εις θανατον, “to death, “on which the argument principally depended; for, by quoting it immediately, they would have triumphed over him, and reprobated his Greek version. This, whenever

they could do it, was their constant practice in their disputes with the Christians. Jerome, in his Preface to the Psalms, says, *Nuper cum Hebraeo disputans, quaedam pro Domino Salvatore de Psalmis testimonia protulisti: volensque ille te illudere, per sermones fere singulos asserebat, non ita haberi in Hebraeo, ut tu de LXX. opponerbas.* “Lately disputing with a Hebrew, — thou advancedst certain passages out of the Psalms which bear testimony to the Lord the Savior; but he, to elude thy reasoning, asserted that almost all thy quotations have an import in the Hebrew text different from what they had in the Greek. “And Origen himself, who laboriously compared the Hebrew text with the Septuagint, has recorded the necessity of arguing with the Jews from such passages only as were in the Septuagint agreeable to the Hebrew: *ἵνα πρὸς ἰουδαίοις διαλεγόμενοι μὴ προφέρωμεν αὐτοὶ τὰ μὴ κείμενα ἐν τοῖς ἀντιγραφοῖς αὐτῶν, καὶ ἵνα συγχρησώμεθα τοῖς φερομένοις παρ’ ἐκείνοις.* See Epist. ad African. p. 15, 17. Wherefore as Origen had carefully compared the Greek version of the Septuagint with the Hebrew text, and speaks of the contempt with which the Jews treated all appeals to the Greek version where it differed from their Hebrew text; and as he puzzled and confounded the learned Jews by urging upon them the reading *εἰς θάνατον*, “unto death, “in this place; it seems almost impossible not to conclude, both from Origen’s argument and the silence of his Jewish adversaries, that the Hebrew text at that time actually had *למות* *lemaveth*, “to death, “agreeably to the version of the Septuagint. — Dr. Kennicott.

Verse 9. *With the rich in his death* “*With the rich man was his tomb*”—
It may be necessary to introduce Bishop Lowth’s translation of this verse before we come to his very satisfactory criticisms:—

*And his grave was appointed with the wicked;
But with the rich man was his tomb:
Although he had done no wrong,
Neither was there any guile in his mouth.*

Among the various opinions which have been given on this passage, I have no doubt in giving my assent to that which makes the *ב* beth in *במותיו* *bemothaiv* radical, and renders it *excelsa sua*. This is mentioned by Aben Ezra as received by some in his time; and has been long since approved by

Schindler, Drusius, and many other learned Christian interpreters.

The most simple tombs or monuments of old consisted of hillocks of earth heaped up over the grave; of which we have numerous examples in our own country, generally allowed to be of very high antiquity. The Romans called a monument of this sort very properly tumulus; and the Hebrews as properly **במות**

from **במות** bamoth, the plural of **במה** bamah, the feminine noun, but from **במותים** bamothim, the plural of a masculine noun, **במות** bamoth. This is noted because these two nouns have been negligently confounded with one another, and absurdly reduced to one by very learned men. So Buxtorf, lex. in voc. **במה** bamah, represents **במותי** bamotey, though plainly without any pronoun suffixed, as it governs the word **ארץ** arets following it, as only another form of **במות** bamoth; whereas the truth is, that **במות** bamoth and **במותים** bamothim are different words, and have through the whole Bible very different significations; **במה** bamah, whether occurring in the singular or plural number, always signifying a place or places of worship; and **במותים** bamothim always signifying heights. Thus in Deuteronomy 32:13; Isaiah 58:14; Amos 4:13; and Micah 1:3, **במותי ארץ** bamothey arets signifies ‘the heights of the earth;’ Isaiah 14:14, **במותי עב** bamothey ab, ‘the heights of the clouds;’ and in Job 9:8, **במותי ים** bamothey yam, ‘the heights of the sea,’ i.e., the high waves of the sea, as Virgil calls a wave praeruptus aqua mons, ‘a broken mountain of water.’ These being all the places where this word occurs without a suffix, the sense of it seems nearly determined by them. It occurs in other instances with a pronoun suffixed, which confirm this signification. Unluckily, our English Bible has not distinguished the feminine noun **במה** bamah from the masculine singular noun **במות** bamoth; and has consequently always given the signification of the latter to the former, always rendering it a high place; whereas the true sense of the word appears plainly to be, in the very numerous passages in which it occurs, ‘a place of worship,’ or ‘a sacred court,’ or ‘a sacred inclosure;’ whether appropriated to the worship of idols or to that of the true God, for it is used of both, passive. Now as the Jewish graves are shown, from 2 Chronicles 32:33, and Isaiah 22:16, to have been in high situations, to which may be added the custom of another eastern nation from Osbeck’s Travels, who says, vol. 1:p. 339, ‘the Chinese graves are made on the side of hills;’ ‘his heights’ becomes a very easy metaphor to express ‘his sepulcher.’ “-JUBB.

The exact completion of this prophecy will be fully shown by adding here the several circumstances of the burial of Jesus, collected from the

accounts of the evangelists:—

“There was a rich man of Arimathea, named Joseph, a member of the sanhedrin, and of a respectable character, who had not consented to their counsel and act; he went to Pilate and begged the body of Jesus: and he laid it in his own new tomb, which had been hewn out of the rock, near to the place where Jesus was crucified; having first wound it in fine linen with spices, as the manner of the Jews was to bury the rich and great.”

It has been supposed that **קברו** kibro, his grave, and **במתיו** bemothaiv, in his death, may have been transposed, as also the prefix **ב** be originally placed before **רשעים** reshaim, the wicked. Thus:—

וית ברשעים את מתיו

mothaiv eth bireshayim vaiyitten

ואת עשיר קברו

kibro ashir veeth

Yea, his death was appointed among the wicked,
And with a rich man, his tomb.

By these alterations it is supposed the text would be freed from all embarrassment. But see the preceding notes of Bishop Lowth, and the various readings of De Rossi, in loc.

Verse 10. To grief “With affliction”— For **החלי** hecheli, the verb, the construction of which seems to be hard and inelegant in this place, the Vulgate reads **בחלי** bocholi, in infirmity, “with infirmity.”

When thou shalt make his soul “If his soul shall make”— For **תשים** tasim, a MS. has **תשם** tasem, which may be taken passively, “If his soul shall be made “agreeably to some copies of the Septuagint, which have **δωτα**. See likewise the Syriac.

When thou shalt make his soul an offering— The word **נפש** nephesh,

soul, is frequently used in Hebrew to signify life. Throughout the New Testament the salvation of men is uniformly attributed to the death of Christ.

He shall see his seed— True converts, genuine Christians.

He shall prolong his days— Or this spiritual progeny shall prolong their days, i.e., Christianity shall endure to the end of time.

And the pleasure of the Lord— To have all men saved and brought to the knowledge of the truth.

Shall prosper in his hand.— Shall go on in a state of progressive prosperity; and so completely has this been thus far accomplished, that every succeeding century has witnessed more Christianity in the world than the preceding, or any former one.

Verse 11. *Shall be satisfied* “***And be satisfied***”— The Septuagint, Vulgate, Sryiac, and a MS. add the conjunction to the verb, **וַיִּשְׁבַּע** vaigisba.

Shall my righteous servant justify “***Shall my servant justify***”— Three MSS., (two of them ancient,) omit the word **צַדִּיק** tsaddik; it seems to be only an imperfect repetition, by mistake, of the preceding word. It makes a solecism in this place; for according to the constant usage of the Hebrew language, the adjective, in a phrase of this kind, ought to follow the substantive; and **צַדִּיק עַבְדִּי** tsaddik abdi, in Hebrew, would be as absurd as “shall my servant righteous justify, “in English. Add to this, that it makes the hemistich too long.

Verse 12. *He bare the sin of many*— **רַבִּים** rabbim, the multitudes, the many that were made sinners by the offenses of one; i.e., the whole human race; for all have sinned—all have fallen; and for all that have sinned, and for all that have fallen, Jesus Christ died. The **רַבִּים** rabbim of the prophet answers to the **οἱ πολλοί**, of the apostle, Romans 5:15, 19. As the **πολλοί** of the apostle means all that have sinned; so the **רַבִּים** rabbim of

the prophet means those for whom Christ died; i.e., all that have sinned.

And made intercession for the transgressors.— For **יפגיע** yaphgia, in the future, a MS. has **הפגיע** hiphgia, preterite, rather better, as agreeable with the other verbs immediately preceding in the sentence.

He made intercession for the transgressors. — This was literally fulfilled at his death, “Father, forgive them; they know not what they do! “ Luke 23:34. And to make intercession for transgressors is one part of his mediatorial office. Hebrews 7:25, and 9:24.

IN this chapter the incarnation, preaching, humiliation, rejection, sufferings, death, atonement, resurrection, and mediation of Jesus Christ are all predicted, together with the prevalence of his Gospel, and the extension of his kingdom through all ages.

CHAPTER 54

Some suppose this chapter to have been addressed to the Gentiles; some, to the Jewish Church; and some, to the Christian, in its first stage. On comparing the different parts of it, particularly the seventh and eighth verses, with the remainder, the most obvious import of the prophecy will be that which refers it to the future conversion of the Jews, and to the increase and prosperity of that nation, when reconciled to God after their long rejection, when their glory and security will far surpass what they were formerly in their most favored state, 1-17.

NOTES ON CHAP. 54

Verse 1. *Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear* “*Shout for joy, O thou barren, that didst not bear*”— The Church of God under the Old Testament, confined within the narrow bounds of the Jewish nation, and still more so in respect of the very small number of true believers, and which sometimes seemed to be deserted of God her husband, is the barren woman, that did not bear, and was desolate. She is exhorted to rejoice, and to express her joy in the strongest manner, on the reconciliation of her husband, (see ver. 6,) and on the accession of the Gentiles to her family. The converted Gentiles are all along considered by the prophet as a new accession of adopted children, admitted into the original Church of God, and united with it. See chap. 49:20, 21.

Verse 4. *For thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth*— That is, “The bondage of Egypt: widowhood, the captivity of Babylon.” —Secker.

Verse 7. *For a small moment* “*In a little anger*”— So the Chaldee and Syriac, either reading רגז regaz, for רגע rega; or understanding the latter word as meaning the same with the former, which they both make use of. See Psalm 30:5; 35:20, in the Septuagint, where they render רגע rega by ὀργη, anger.

Verse 8. *I hid my face from thee for a moment*— The word רגע *rega* is omitted by the Septuagint, Syriac, and two MSS. of Kennicott’s, and two of De Rossi’s. It seems to embarrass rather than to help the sentence. Forte reponi debet pro שצפ *shetseph*, quod potest a קצפ *ketseph* errore scribae originem duxisse. “Perhaps it ought to be substituted for שצפ *shetseph*, an error probably made by some scribe from its similarity to קצפ *ketseph*.” —Secker

Thy Redeemer-גאלך *goalech*: but for this word three of De Rossi’s MSS. have מרחמך *mnerachamech*, thy commiserator.

Verse 9. *For this is as the waters of Noah unto me “The same will I do now, as in the days of Noah”*— כִּימִי *kimey*, in one word, in a MS., and some editions; and so the Syriac, Chaldee, Vulgate, Symmachus, Theodotion, Abarbanel, Sal. ben Melec, and Kimchi acknowledge that their copies vary in this place.

It is certain that these two words כִּי מִי *ki mey*, were written formerly as one. Taken as two כִּי מִי *ki mey*, they signify for as the waters-when as one, כִּימִי *kimey*, they signify as the days. This latter reading is found in about four of Kennicott’s and De Rossi’s MSS. In one of my own it appears to have been intended as one word: but he who added the points, which are by a much later hand than the MS. itself, has pointed the letters so as to make the two words which are commonly found in the text. For the waters, Symmachus, Theodotion, the Syriac, Vulgate, and Arabic have days. The former seems to make the best sense; and the ancient Versions, except the Septuagint, support it.

Verse 11. *Behold, I will lay thy stones “Behold, I lay thy stones”*— These seem to be general images to express beauty, magnificence, purity, strength, and solidity, agreeably to the ideas of the eastern nations; and to have never been intended to be strictly scrutinized, or minutely and particularly explained, as if they had each of them some precise, moral, or spiritual meaning. Tobit, in his prophecy of the final restoration of Israel, describes the New Jerusalem in the same oriental manner: “For Jerusalem

shall be built up with sapphires, and emeralds, and precious stones; thy walls, and towers, and battlements, with pure gold. And the streets of Jerusalem shall be paved with beryl, and carbuncle, and stones of ophir. “Tob. 13:16, 17. Compare also Revelation 21:18-21.

Verse 15. *Shall fall for thy sake* “*Shall come over to thy side.*”— For **יפול** yippol, twenty-eight MSS. (eight ancient) have **יפל** yipal, in its more common form. For the meaning of the word in this place, see Jeremiah 37:13.

CHAPTER 55

This chapter first displays the fullness, freeness, excellence, and everlasting nature of the blessings of the Gospel, and foretells again the enlargement of Messiah's kingdom, 1-5. This view leads the prophet to exhort all to seize the precious opportunity of sharing in such blessings, which were not, however, to be expected without repentance and reformation, 6, 7. And as the things now and formerly predicted were so great as to appear incredible, the prophet points to the omnipotence of God, who would infallibly accomplish his word, and bring about those glorious deliverances which he had promised; the happy effects of which are again set forth by images beautiful and poetical in the highest degree, 8-13.

NOTES ON CHAP. 55

Verse 1. *Ho, every one that thirsteth*—“Water, “says Zimchi, “is a metaphor for the law and wisdom: as the world cannot subsist without water, so it is impossible that it can subsist without wisdom. The law is also compared to wine and milk: to wine because wine rejoiceth the heart, as it is written: ‘The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart,’ Psalm 19:8. It is compared also to milk, because milk is the subsistence of the child; so are the words of the law the nourishment of his soul who walks in the Divine teaching, and grows up under it.”

Come, buy wine and milk— In ancient times our forefathers used what is now called the old third person singular, ending in eth, for the imperative mood. We have a fine example of His in the first verses of this chapter. I shall present them as they stand in my old MS. Bible: — Alle gee thirstinge cummeth to wateris: and gee that han not sylver, goth forth and bieth, and etith. Cummeth, bieth without silver, and without eny chaungyng, wyn and mylc. Heerith gee, heering me and etith gode thinge, and deliten schal in fattnesse your soule. Bowith in your eie and cummeth to mee, heerith and liven schal your soule. And I shall smyten with gou,

everlastynge covenant, the faithful mercies of David.

Verse 2. *Wherefore do ye spend*— Why should ye be so zealously attached to a doctrine from which your souls derive neither comfort nor nourishment?

Verse 3. *I will make an everlasting covenant*— Hebrews ברית עולם אכרתה לכם echrethah lachem berith olam, “I will cut the old or everlasting covenant sacrifice with you. “ That covenant sacrifice which was pointed out of old from the very beginning; and which is to last to the consummation of ages; viz., the Lamb of God that was slain from the foundation of the world.

The sure mercies of David— That is, says Kimchi, “The MESSIAH, “called here David; as it is written, “David my servant shall be a prince over you.”

Verse 6. *Seek ye the Lord while he may be found*— Rab. David Kimchi gives the true sense of this passage: “Seek ye the Lord, because he may be found: call upon him, because he is near. Repent before ye die, for after death there is no conversion of the soul.”

Verse 9. *For as the heavens are higher*— I am persuaded that כ caph, the particle of comparison, is lost in this place, from the likeness of the particle כִּי ki, immediately preceding it. So Houbigant and Secker. And their remark is confirmed by all the ancient Versions, which express it; and by the following passage of Psalm ciii. 11, which is almost the same:—

כִּי כִגְבַה שָׁמַיִם עַל הָאָרֶץ
haarets al shamayim chigboah ki

גַּבַר חֲסֵדוֹ עַל יִרְאָיו
yereaiv al chasdo gabar

***“For as the heavens are high above the earth,
So high is his goodness over them that fear him.”***

Where, by the nature of the sentence, the verb in the second line ought to be the same with that in the first; גָּבַהַּ gabah, not גָּבַר gabar: so Archbishop Secker conjectured; referring however to Psalm 117:2.

Verse 12. *The mountains and the hills*— These are highly poetical images to express a happy state attended with joy and exultation.

*Ipsi laetitia voces ad sidera jactant
Intonsi montes: ipsae jam carmina rupes,
Ipsa sonant arbusta.*

VIRG. Ecl. 5:61.

*“The mountain tops unshorn, the rocks rejoice;
The lowly shrubs partake of human voice.”*

DRYDEN.

Verse 13. *Instead of the thorn “Instead of the thorny bushes”*— These likewise (see note on the preceding verse, and on chap. 54:11) are general poetical images, expressing a great and happy change for the better. The wilderness turned into a paradise, Lebanon into Carmel: the desert of the Gentiles watered with the heavenly snow and rain, which fail not to have their due effect, and becoming fruitful in piety and righteousness: or, as the Chaldee gives the moral sense of the emblem, “instead of the wicked shall arise the just; and instead of sinners, such as fear to sin. “ (compare chap. 35:1, 2; 41:19).

And instead of— The conjunction וּ vau is added, וְתַחַתּוֹ vetachath, in forty-five MSS. of Kennicott’s several of De Rossi’s, and five editions; and it is acknowledged by all the ancient Versions. The Masorettes therefore might have safely received it into the text, and not have referred us for it to the margin. But this is no uncommon case with them. Even in our own Version the best reading is very often found in the margin.

CHAPTER 56

Whoever would partake of the blessings of the Gospel is required to be holy in all manner of life and conversation. And he that will be so is declared to be accepted according to this gracious dispensation, the blessings of which are large as the human race, without any respect to persons or to nations, 1-8. At the ninth verse begins a different subject, or new section of prophecy. It opens with calling on the enemies of the Jews, (the Chaldeans, or perhaps the Romans,) as beasts of prey against them, for the sins of their rulers, teachers, and other profane people among them, whose guilt drew down judgments on the nation, 9-12.

NOTES ON CHAP. 56

Verse 2. *That keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it*— Kimchi has an excellent note here. “The Sabbath is sanctified when it is distinguished in dignity; and separated from other days. 1. As to the body, in meat, drink, and clean clothing. 2. As to the soul, that it be empty of worldly occupations, and be busily employed in the words of the law and wisdom, and in meditation on the works of the Lord. “The rabbins say, “Jerusalem had never been destroyed, had not the Sabbaths been profaned in it.”

Verse 5. *I will give them an everlasting name*— For לוּ lo, him, in the singular, it is evident that we ought to read לָמוּ lamo, them, in the plural: so read the Septuagint, Syriac, Chaldee, and Vulgate.

Verse 6. *The sons of the stranger*— The Gentiles.

That join themselves to the Lord— Who shall enter into the Christian covenant by baptism and faith in Christ, as the Jews and proselytes did by circumcision.

To serve him— To live according to the Gospel, and ever do that which is

right in the sight of the Lord.

To love the name of the Lord— The name of JESUS, the Christ, the Savior of sinners, the Anointed of God, and the Giver of the Holy Spirit to his followers.

To be his servants— To worship no other God but JEHOVAH, and to trust in none for salvation but his CHRIST.

That keepeth the Sabbath— That observes it as a type of the rest that remains for the people of God.

And taketh hold of my covenant— בְּבֵרִיתִי biberithi, “of my covenant sacrifice; “ as without this he can do nothing good; and without it nothing can be acceptable to the infinite majesty of the Most High.

Verse 7. Shall be accepted— A word is here lost out of the text: it is supplied from the Septuagint, יִהְיוּ yihyu, εἰσονται, “they shall be.” — Houbigant.

Verse 9. All ye beasts of the field— Here manifestly begins a new section. The prophet in the foregoing chapters, having comforted the faithful Jews with many great promises of God’s favor to be extended to them, in the restoration of their ruined state, and in the enlargement of his Church by the admission of the Gentiles; here on a sudden makes a transition to the more disagreeable part of the prospect, and to a sharp reproof of the wicked and unbelievers; and especially of the negligent and faithless governors and teachers, of the idolaters and hypocrites, who would still draw down his judgments upon the nation. Probably having in view the destruction of their city and polity by the Chaldeans, and perhaps by the Romans. The same subject is continued in the next chapter; in which the charge of corruption and apostasy becomes more general against the whole Jewish Church. Some expositors have made great difficulties in the 9th verse of this chapter, where there seems to be none. It is perfectly well explained by Jeremiah, chap. 12:7, 9, where, having introduced God declaring his purpose of punishing his people, by giving them up as a prey to their enemies the Chaldeans, a charge to these his agents is given in

words very nearly the same with those of Isaiah in this place:—

*“I have forsaken my house; I have deserted my heritage;
I have given up the beloved of my soul into the hands of
her enemies.—*

*Come away, be gathered together, all ye beasts of the field;
Come away to devour.”*

All ye beasts in the forest “*All ye beasts of the forest.*” — Instead of ביער **ביער** baiyaar, three MSS. have ער **ער** yaar, without the preposition; which seems to be right, and is confirmed by all the ancient Versions.

Verse 10. His watchmen are blind— Kimchi observes, “The flock is intrusted to the care of these watchmen. The wild beasts come; these dogs bark not; and the wild beasts devour the flock. Thus they do not profit the flock. Yea, they injure it; for the owner trusts in them, that they will watch and be faithful; but they are not. These are the false teachers and careless shepherds.”

Dumb dogs, they cannot bark— See note on chap. 62:6.

Sleeping “Dreamers”— הזים **הזים** hozim, εὐπνίαζομενοι, Septuagint. This seems to be the best authority for the meaning of this word, which occurs only in this place: but it is to be observed, that eleven MSS. of Kennicott’s and De Rossi’s, and four editions, have חזים **חזים** chazim, seers, or those who see; and so the Vulgate seems to have read, videntes vana, “seeing vain things.”

Loving to slumber.— לנום **לנום** lanum: but six of Kennicott’s and seven of De Rossi’s MSS. read לנוס **לנוס** lanus, to fly, “to change their residence: “ but what connection such reading can have with the sense of the passage, I cannot discern. What is taken for ס **ס** samech here is, I have no doubt, a narrow formed final ס **ס** mem, which has been mistaken for the above. Many instances occur in my own MSS., where the final ס **ס** mem is similar to the samech; and yet no such change was intended by the scribe.

Verse 11. Greedy dogs— Insatiably feeding themselves with the fat, and clothing themselves with the wool, while the flock is scattered, ravaged, and starved! O what an abundance of these dumb and greedy dogs are there found hanging on and prowling about the flock of Christ! How can any careless, avaricious, hireling minister read this without agitation and dismay?

Verse 12. I will fetch wine “*Let us provide wine*”— For ܐܟܚܐ ekchah, first person singular, an ancient MS. has ܢܟܚܐ nikchah, first person plural; and another ancient MS. has ܐܟܐ ak upon a rasure. So the Syriac, a7valdee, and Vulgate render it. The spirit of this epicurean sentiment is this: Let us indulge ourselves in the present time to the utmost, and instead of any gloomy forebodings of the future, let us expect nothing but increasing hilarity for every day we shall live. Thus they,

*“Counting on long years of pleasure here,
Are quite unfurnished for the world to come.”*

CHAPTER 57

After mentioning the removal of righteous persons as an awful symptom of the approach of Divine judgments, 1, 2, the prophet goes on to charge the nation in general with idolatry, and with courting the unprofitable alliance of idolatrous kings, 3-12. In opposition to such vain confidence, the prophet enjoins trust in God, with whom the penitent and humble are sure to find acceptance, and from whom they should obtain temporal and spiritual deliverances, 13-19. Awful condition of the wicked and finally impenitent, 20, 21.

NOTES ON CHAP. 57

I shall give Bishop Lowth's translation of the two first verses, and give the substance of his criticisms with additional evidence.

Ver. 1. The righteous man perisheth, and no one considereth; And pious men are taken away, and no one understandeth, That the righteous man is taken away because of the evil. 2. He shall go in peace: he shall rest in his bed; Even the perfect man: he that walketh in the straight path.

Verse 1. The righteous perisheth-הַצַּדִּיק אָבָד hatstsadik abad. There is an emphasis here which seems intended to point out a particular person. See below. Perisheth-As the root אָבָד abad signifies the straying of cattle, their passing away from one pasture to another, I feel inclined to follow the grammatical meaning of the word "perish, "pereo. So the Vulgate, justus periit, from per, BY or THROUGH, and eo, to GO. In his death the righteous man may be said to have passed through life, and to have passed by men, i.e., gone or passed before them into the eternal world. A similar mode of speech is used by our Saxon ancestors to express death: [AS], he went out of sight; and [A.S.], he went away; and [A.S.], to fare forth, to die.

There are very few places in Isaiah where Jesus Christ is not intended; and I am inclined to think that He is intended here, THAT Just One; and perhaps Stephen had this place in view, when he thus charged the Jews, “Ye denied **τον αγιον και δικαιον**, that HOLY and JUST One, “Acts 3:14. That his death was not laid to heart by the wicked Jewish people, needs no proof.

Merciful men— If the first refers to Christ, this may well refer to the apostles. and to others of the primitive Christians, who were taken away, some by death and martyrdom, and others by a providential escape from the city that they knew was devoted to destruction.

The evil to come.— That destruction which was to come upon this disobedient people by the Romans.

Verse 2. He shalt enter into peace “He shall go in peace”— **יבוא שלום** yabo shalom; the expression is elliptical, such as the prophet frequently uses. The same sense is expressed at large and in full terms, Genesis 15:15: **וַאֲתָה תָבֵא אֶל אֲבוֹתֶיךָ בְּשָׁלוֹם** veattah libbo al abotheycha beshalom, “and thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace.”

They shall rest in their beds, each one walking in his uprightness “He shall rest in his bed; even the perfect man.”— This obscure sentence is reduced to a perfectly good sense, and easy construction by an ingenious remark of Dr. Durell. He reads **יָנוּחַ עַל מִשְׁכְּבוֹ תָם** yanuach al mishcabo tam, “the perfect man shall rest in his bed. “ Two MSS. (one of them ancient) have **יָנוּחַ** yanuach, singular; and so the Vulgate renders it, requiescat, “he shall rest. “ The verb was probably altered to make it plural, and so consistent with what follows after the mistake had been made in the following words, by uniting **מִשְׁכְּבוֹ** mishcabo and **תָם** tam into one word. See Merrick’s Annotations on the Psalms, Addenda; where the reader will find that J. S. Moerlius, by the same sort of correction, and by rescuing the adjective **תָם** tam, which had been swallowed up in another word in the same manner, has restored to a clear sense a passage before absolutely unintelligible:—

כי אי חרצבות למו

lemo chartsubboth ein ki

תם ובריא אולם

ulam ubari tham

*“For no distresses happen to them;
Perfect and firm is their strength.”
Psalm 73:4.*

To follow on my application of this to our Lord: — HE, the JUST ONE, shall enter into peace—the peaceable, prosperous possession of the glorious mediatorial kingdom. They shall rest upon their beds—the hand of wrong and oppression can reach these persecuted followers of Christ no more. (But see below.) The perfect man walking in his uprightness. This may be considered as a general declaration. The separated spirit, though disunited from its body walking in conscious existence in the paradise of God, reaping the fruit of righteousness. The word which we render their beds, **משכבותם** Dmishkebotham, the learned bishop supposes to be two words; and to be compounded of **משכבו** mishkabo, his bed, and **תם** tam, the upright or perfect man. This is the reading both of the Syriac and Vulgate, and it is favored by the Chaldee: and one of De Rossi’s MS. has **משכבו** mishkabo, his bed, without the word **תם** tam, which has been added by a later hand. Bishop Lowth, as we have seen, adopts this separation of the word and for **ינוחו** yanuchu, they shall rest, reads **ינוח** yanuach, he shall rest, which is supported by two of Dr. Kennicott’s MSS., and by the Vulgate, Septuagint, and Arabic. The word **תם** tam, taken from **משכבותם** mishkebotham, should begin the latter clause of the verse; and then the interpolated words, each one, which our translators supplied, may be very well spared. The verse may be then read and paraphrased thus;—

*He shall enter into peace: he shall rest upon his bed;
The perfect man walking in his uprightness.*

The bed must signify the grave; the walking in uprightness after death, the

conscious existence of the happy spirit, and its eternal progression in happiness and perfection: נִכְחֹל nechochol straight before him; proceeding into the unlimited extent of eternal glory, increasing in happiness, and increasing in perfection.

My old MS. Bible translates very nervously:—

*The rigtwise man perishith,
And there is not that bethinke in his herte.t.
And men of mercy ben gedrid,
For there is not that understonde:
From the face of malice,
Gedreid is the rigtwise.
Cumm pese: reste it in his bed
That geede in his rigt rewlinge.*

It has been often remarked that, previously to the execution of God's judgments upon a wicked place, he has removed good men from it, that they might not suffer with the wicked. When great and good men are removed by death, or otherwise, from any place, the remaining inhabitants have much cause to tremble.

Verse 6. Among the smooth stones of the stream “Among the smooth stones of the valley”— The Jews were extremely addicted to the practice of many superstitious and idolatrous rites, which the prophet here inveighs against with great vehemence. Of the worship of rude stones consecrated, there are many testimonials of the ancients. They were called βαιτυλοι and βαιτυλια probably from the stone which Jacob erected at Beth-el, pouring oil upon the top of it. This practice was very common in different ages and places. Arnobius, lib. i., gives an account of his own practice in this respect before he became a Christian: Si quando conspexeram lubricatum lapidem, et ex olivi unguine sordidatum; tanquam inesset vis praesens, adulabar, affabar, et beneficia poscebam nihil sentiente de trunco. “When I have met with a smooth stone, smeared with oil, supposing a spiritual power to be connected with it, I worshipped it, paid my addresses to it, and requested blessings, “etc. Clemens Alex., Strom. lib. vii., speaks of a worshipper of every smooth stone in a

proverbial way, to denote one given up to superstition. And accordingly Theophrastus has marked this as one strong feature in the character of the superstitious man: *και των λιπαρων λιθων των εν ταις τριοδοις παριων, εκ της ληκυθου ελαιου καταχειν, και επι γονατα πεσων και προσκυνησας απαλλαττεσθαι*. “Passing by the anointed stones in the streets, he takes out his phial of oil, and pours it on them; and having fallen on his knees, and made his adorations, he departs. “ Kimchi says: “When they found a beautiful polished stone in a brook or river, they paid Divine adoration to it. “ This idolatry is still prevalent among the Hindoos. The stone which is the object of their adoration is called salgram. They are found about eighty miles from the source of the river Sown, in the viceroyalty of Bahar, on the coast of Bengal. Ayeen Akbery vol. 2:p. 29.

Verse 8. *Behind the doors also and the posts hast thou set up thy remembrance “Behind the door, and the door-posts, hast thou set up thy memorial”*— That is, the image of their tutelary gods, or something dedicated to them; in direct opposition to the law of God, which commanded them to write upon the door-posts of their house, and upon their gates, the words of God’s law; Deuteronomy 6:9; 11:20. If they chose for them such a situation as more private, it was in defiance of a particular curse denounced in the law against the man who should make a graven or a molten image, and put it in a secret place; Deuteronomy 27:15. An ancient MS., with another, has אָחַר achar, without the conjunction וּ vau, and.

Verse 9. *And thou wentest to the king with ointment “And thou hast visited the king with a present of oil”*— That is, the king of Assyria, or Egypt. Hosea, chap, 12:1, reproaches the Israelites for the same practice:—

***“They make a covenant with Assyria,
And oil is carried to Egypt.”***

It is well known, that in all parts of the east, whoever visits a great person must carry him a present. “It is counted uncivil, “says Maundreg, p. 26, “to visit in this country without an offering in hand. All great men expect

it as a tribute due to their character and authority; and look upon themselves as affronted, and indeed defrauded, when the compliment is omitted. “Hence שׁוּר shur, to visit a person, is equivalent to making him a present; and תְּשׁוּרָה teshurah signifies a present made on such occasions; as our translators have rightly rendered it, 1 Samuel 9:7; on which Jarchi says Menachem exponit תְּשׁוּרָה teshurah, quod significat oblationem sive manus, ut aliquis aspiciat faciem regis, aut alicuius magnatis. “Menachem expounds תְּשׁוּרָה teshurah of an offering or gift which is presented in order to be admitted into the presence of the king or some great man.”

Verse 10. *Yet saidst thou not, There is no hope* “*Thou hast said, There is hope*”— In one of the MSS. at Koningsberg, collated by Lilienthal, the words לֹא אָמַרְתָּ lo amarta, are left in the text unpointed, as suspected; and in the margin the corrector has written וַתֹּאמַרִי vattomari. Now if we compare Jeremiah 2:25 and 18:12, we shall find that the subject is in both places quite the same with this of Isaiah; and the sentiment expressed, that of a desperate resolution to continue at all hazards in their idolatrous practices; the very thing that in all reason we might expect here. Probably, therefore, the latter is the true reading in this place. — L.

Verse 11. *For laid it to thy heart* “*Nor revolved it in thy hand*”— Eight MSS., (four ancient,) and the two oldest editions, with another, add the conjunction וּ vau, וְלוֹ velo: which is confirmed by all the ancient Versions.

***Even of old* “*And winked*”**— For וּמַעֲלָם umeolam, which makes no good sense or construction in this place, twenty-three MSS. (seven ancient) and three editions have מַעֲלָם, (to be thus pointed מַעֲלָם malim;) $\pi\alpha\rho\rho\pi\omega$, Septuagint; quasi non videns, “as if not seeing,” Vulgate. See Psalm 10:1. The truth of this reading, so confirmed, admits of no doubt. In one of my own MSS. the וּ vau has been written, but afterwards struck out. Is it not because I was silent, and winked?

Verse 12. *Thy righteousness* “*My righteousness*”— For צְדָקָתְךָ tsidkathach, THY righteousness, the Syriac, Septuagint, MSS. Alex. and

Pachom., and 1:D. II., and Marchal. and $\text{ou } \gamma$, and the Arabics read צדקי' tsidki, MY righteousness.

Verse 13. *Let thy companies deliver thee* “*Let thine associates deliver thee*”— Thirty-nine MSS. (ten ancient) of Dr. Kennicott's, and two of my own, and the two oldest editions have יצילכו' yatstsiluchu, plural.

Verse 14. *And shall say* “*Then will I say*”— ואמר vaomer, to be pointed as the first person future. They are the words of God, as it is plain from the conclusion of the verse; my people, עמי ammi.

Verse 15. *For thus saith the high and lofty One* “*For thus saith JEHOVAH, the high and the lofty*”— A MS. adds יהוה Yehovah, after אמר amar, and edition Prag. 1518. So the Septuagint, Alex., and Arabic. An ancient MS. adds יה Yah.

With him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit— Twelve MSS. have את eth, without the conjunction ו vau. Pro ואת veeth, forte legendum ואתה veerah: confer Psalm 113:5, et 138:6. — SECKER. “We should perhaps read ואתה veerah, instead of ואת veeth. See Psalm 113:5, and 138:6.”

Verse 16. *For I will not contend for ever*— The learned have taken a great deal of pains to little purpose on the latter part of this verses which they suppose to be very obscure. After all their labors upon it, I think the best and easiest explication of it is given in the two following elegant passages of the Psalms, which I presume are exactly parallel to it, and very clearly express the same sentiment.

*“But he in his tender mercy will forgive their sin
And will not destroy them;
Yea, oftentimes will he turn away his wrath,
And will not rouse up his indignation:
For he remembereth that they are but flesh,
A breath that passeth, and returneth not.”*

Psalm 78:38, 39.

*“He will not always contend
Neither will he for ever hold his wrath:
As a father yearneth towards his children,
So is JEHOVAH tenderly compassionate towards them
that fear him For he knoweth our frame;
He remembereth that we are but dust.”*

Psalm 113:9, 13, 14.

In the former of these two passages the second line seems to be defective both in measure and sense. I suppose the word **אוֹתָם** otham, then is lost at the end; which seems to be acknowledged by the Chaldee and Vulgate, who render as if they had read **וְלֹא יִשְׁחִית אוֹתָם** velo yaschith otham. — L.

For the spirit—**רוּחַ** ruach, the animal life.

And the souls—**נְשָׁמוֹת** neshamoth, the immortal spirits. The Targum understands this of the resurrection. I will restore the souls of the dead, i.e., to their bodies.

Verse 17. For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth “Because of his iniquity for a short time was I wroth”— For **בַּצֵּעוּ** bitso, I read **בַּצֵּעַ** betsa, a little while, from **בַּצַּע** batsa, he cut of, as the Septuagint read and render it, **βραχυ τι**, “a certain short space. “ Propter iniquitatem avaritiae ejus, “because of the iniquity of his avarice, “the rendering of the Vulgate,

which our translators and I believe all others follow, is surely quite beside the purpose.

Verse 18. *I have seen his ways*— Probably these verses refer to the restoration of the Jews from captivity.

Verse 19. *I create the fruit of the lips*— “The sacrifice of praise, “saith St. Paul, Hebrews 13:15, “is the fruit of the lips. “ God creates this fruit of the lips, by giving new subject and cause of thanksgiving by his mercies conferred on those among his people, who acknowledge and bewail their transgressions, and return to him. The great subject of thanksgiving is peace-reconciliation and pardon, offered to them that are nigh, and to them that are afar off, not only to the Jew, but also to the Gentile, as St. Paul more than once applies those terms, Ephesians 2:13, 17. See also Acts 2:39.

Peace to him that is far off “That is, to the penitent; and to him that is near, i.e., the righteous.” —Kimchi.

Verse 21. *There is no peace, saith my God*— For אֱלֹהֵי Elohai, twenty-two MSS. (five ancient) of Kennicott’s, thirty of De Rossi’s, and one ancient of my own, read יְהוָה Yehovah; the Vulgate, Septuagint, Alex., and Arabic, and three MSS. have both. This verse has reference to the nineteenth. The perseveringly wicked and impenitent are excluded from all share in that peace above mentioned, that reconcilment and pardon which is promised to the penitent only. The forty-eighth chapter ends with the same declaration, to express the exclusion of the unbelievers and impenitent from the benefit of the foregoing promises. — L.

CHAPTER 58

This elegant chapter contains a severe reproof of the Jews on account of their vices, particularly their hypocrisy in practising and relying on outward ceremonies, such as fasting and bodily humiliation, without true repentance, 1-5. It then lays down a clear and comprehenswe summary of the duties they owed to their fellow creatures, 6, 7. Large promises of happiness and prosperity are likewise annexed to the performance of these duties in a variety of the most beautiful and striking images, 8-12. Great temporal and spiritual blessedness of those who keep holy the Sabbath day, 13, 14.

NOTES ON CHAP. 58

Verse 1. Cry aloud, spare not— Never was a louder cry against the hypocrisy, nor a more cutting reproof of the wickedness, of a people professing a national established religion, having all the forms of godliness without a particle of its power. This chapter has been often appointed to be read on political fast days for the success of wars carried on for-God knows what purposes, and originating in-God knows what motives. Politically speaking, was ever any thing more injudicious?

Verse 3. Have we adopted our soul “*Have we afflicted our souls*”— Twenty-seven MSS. (six ancient) of Dr. Kennicott’s, thirty-six of De Rossi’s, and two of my own, and the old edition of 1488 have the noun in the plural number, נַפְשֵׁינוּ naphsheynu, our souls; and so the Septuagint, Chaldee, and Vulgate. This reading is undoubtedly genuine.

In the day of your fast ye find pleasure— Fast days are generally called holidays, and holidays are days of idleness and pleasure. In numberless cases the fast is turned into a feast.

And exact all your labors.— Some disregard the most sacred fast, and will oblige their servant to work all day long; others use fast days for the

purpose of settling their accounts, posting up their books, and drawing out their bills to be ready to collect their debts. These are sneaking hypocrites; the others are daringly irreligious.

Verse 4. *Ye fast for strife and debate*— How often is this the case! A whole nation are called to fast to implore God's blessing on wars carried on for the purposes of wrath and ambition.

To smite with the fist of wickedness: ye shall not fast as ye do this day "To smite with the fist the poor. Wherefore fast ye unto me in this manner"— I follow the version of the Septuagint, which gives a much better sense than the present reading of the Hebrew. Instead of רשע לא resha lo, they seem to have read in their copy רש על מה לי rash al mah lli. The four first letters are the same, but otherwise divided in regard to the words; the four last are lost, and א aleph added in their place, in order to make some sort of sense with רשע ל. The version of the Septuagint is, **και τυπτετε τυγμαις ταπεινον ινα τι μοι νηστευετε**--as above.

Verse 6. *Let the oppressed go free*— How can any nation pretend to fast or worship God at all, or dare to profess that they believe in the existence of such a Being, while they carry on the slave trade, and traffic in the souls, blood, and bodies, of men! O ye most flagitious of knaves, and worst of hypocrites, cast off at once the mask of religion; and deepen not your endless perdition by professing the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, while ye continue in this traffic!

Verse 7. *Deal thy bread to the hungry*— But this thou canst not do, if thou eat it thyself. When a man fasts, suppose he do it through a religious motive, he should give the food of that day, from which he abstains, to the poor and hungry, who, in the course of providence, are called to sustain many involuntary fasts, besides suffering general privations. Wo to him who saves a day's victuals by his religious fast! He should either give them or their value in money to the poor. See ver. 6.

That thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house "To bring the wandering poor into thy house"— **πτωχους αστεγους**, Septuagint;

egenos vagosque, Vulgate; and **ממלטלי** metaltelin, Chaldee. They read, instead of **מרודים** merudim, **הנודים** hanudim. **מר** mer is upon a rasure in the Bodleian MS. The same MS. reads **ביתה** bayethah, in domum, “into the house.” —L.

Verse 8. And thine health shall spring forth speedily “*And thy wounds shall speedily be healed over*”— Et cicatrix vulneris tui cito obducetur “And the scar of thy wounds shall be speedily removed. “Aquila’s Version, as reported by Jerome, with which agrees that of the Chaldee.

The glory “*And the glory*”— Sixteen MSS. (five ancient) of Dr. Kennicott’s, and the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate add the conjunction **ו** vau, **וכבוד** vechabod.

Verse 10. And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry “*If thou bring forth thy bread to the hungry*”— “To draw out thy soul to the hungry, “as our translators rightly enough express the present Hebrew text, is an obscure phrase, and without example in any other place. But instead of **נפשך** naphshecha, thy soul, eight MSS. (three ancient) of Kennicott’s and three of De Rossi’s read **לחמך** lachmecha, thy bread; and so the Syriac renders it. The Septuagint express both words, **τον αρτον εκ της ψυχης σου**, “thy bread from thy soul. “I cannot help thinking, however, that this reading is a gloss, and should not be adopted. To draw out the soul in relieving the poor, is to do it, not of constraint or necessity, but cheerfully, and is both nervous and elegant. His soul pities and his hand gives.

Verse 11. And make fat thy bones “*And he shall renew thy strength*”— Chaldaeus forte legit **יחליפ עצמתך** yachaliph otsmathecha; confer cap. 40:29, 31, et 41:1. — SECEER. “The Chaldee perhaps read **יחליפ עצמתך** yachaliph otsmathecha. “The Chaldee has **וגופך יחיי בחיי עלמא** veguphach vechaiyey bechaiyey alma, “and he will vivify thy body in life eternal. “The rest of the ancients seem not to know what to make of **יחליץ** yachalits; and the rendering of the Vulgate, which seems to be the only proper one, ossa tua liberabit, “he will deliver thy bones, “makes no sense. I follow this excellent emendation; to favor which it is still farther to

be observed that three MSS., instead of **עצמתוך** atsmotheycha, have **עצמתך** otsmathecha, singular. — L.

Verse 12. *The restorer of paths to dwell in* “*The restorer of paths to be frequented by inhabitants.*” — To this purpose it is rendered by the Syriac, Symmachus, and Theodotion.

Verse 13. *If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath* — The meaning of this seems to be, that they should be careful not to take their pleasure on the Sabbath day, by paying visits, and taking country jaunts; not going, as Kimchi interprets it, more than a Sabbath day’s journey, which was only two thousand cubits beyond the city’s suburbs. How vilely is this rule transgressed by the inhabitants of this land! They seem to think that the Sabbath was made only for their recreation!

From doing thy pleasure — The Septuagint, Syriac, and Chaldee, for **עשות** asoth, manifestly express **מעשות** measoth. So likewise a MS. has it, but with the omission of the words **שבת רגלך** shabbath raglecha. — L.

The holy of the Lord “*And the holy feast of JEHOVAH*” — Twenty-eight MSS. (seven ancient) add the conjunction **ו** vau, **ולקדוש** velikedosh; and so the Syriac, Chaldee, and Vulgate. One of my own has the same reading.

Nor speaking thine own words “*From speaking vain words.*” — It is necessary to add some epithet to make out the sense; the Septuagint say, angry words; the Chaldee, words of violence. If any such epithet is lost here, the safest way is to supply it by the prophet’s own expression, ver. 9, **ודבר או** vedabar aven, vain words; that is, profane, impious, injurious, etc.

“The additional epithet seems unnecessary; the Vulgate and Syriac have it not; and the sense is good without it; two ways, first by taking **דבר** vedabar for a noun, and **דבר** dabur for the participle pahul, and rendering,—

‘From pursuing thy pleasure, and the thing resolved on.’

Or, secondly, by supposing the force of the preposition מ mem to have been continued from the verb ממצוא mimmetso to the verb ודבר vedabber immediately following; and rendering,—

‘From executing thy pleasure, and from speaking words concerning it.’

But the first seems the easier rendering.”

—Dr. JUBB.

Verse 14. *Then shalt thou delight thyself*— If all fasts and religious observances be carried on in the spirit and manner recommended above, God’s blessing will attend every ordinance. But in public fasts, prescribed not in the Book of God, but by the rulers of nations in general (very unfit persons) care should be taken that the cause is good, and that God’s blessing may be safely implored in it.

France has lately fasted and prayed that they might be able to subjugate Spain, restore and establish the horrible inquisition, and utterly destroy all the liberties of the people! Is this such a fast as God hath chosen?—A.D. 1823.

CHAPTER 59

Thy chapter contains a more general reproof of the wickedness of the Jews, 1-8. After this they are represented confessing their sins, and deploring the unhappy consequences of them, 9-15. On this act of humiliation God, ever ready to pardon the penitent, promises that he will have mercy on them; that the Redeemer will come, mighty to save; and that he will deliver his people, subdue his enemies and establish a new and everlasting covenant, 16-21.

The foregoing elegant chapter contained a severe reproof of the Jews, in particular for their hypocrisy in pretending to make themselves accepted with God by fasting and outward humiliation without true repentance; while they still continued to oppress the poor, and indulge their own passions and vices; with great promises however of God's favor on condition of their reformation. This chapter contains a more general reproof of their wickedness, bloodshed, violence, falsehood, injustice. At ver. 9 they are introduced as making, themselves, an ample confession of their sins, and deploring their wretched state in consequence of them. On this act of humiliation a promise is given that God, in his mercy and zeal for his people, will rescue them from this miserable condition, that the Redeemer will come like a mighty hero to deliver them; he will destroy his enemies, convert both Jews and Gentiles to himself, and give them a new covenant, and a law which shall never be abolished.

As this chapter is remarkable for the beauty, strength, and variety of the images with which it abounds; so is it peculiarly distinguished by the elegance of the composition, and the exact construction of the sentences. From the first verse to the two last it falls regularly into stanzas of four lines, (see Prelim. Dissert. p. xxi.) which I have endeavored to express as nearly as possible in the form of the original. — L.

NOTES ON CHAP. 59

Verse 2. *His face*— For פָּנִים panim, faces, I read panaiv, his face. So the Syriac, Septuagint, Alexandrian, Arabic, and Vulgate. פָּנִי panai, MS. Forte legendum פָּנִי panai, nam מֶ mem, sequitur, et loquitur Deus; confer cap. 58:14. “We should perhaps read פָּנִי panai; for מֶ mem follows, and God is the speaker.” —SECKER. I rather think that the speech of God was closed with the last chapter, and that this chapter is delivered in the person of the prophet. — L.

Verse 3. *Your tongue “And your tongue”*— An ancient MS., and the Septuagint and Vulgate, add the conjunction.

Verse 4. *They conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity.*— There is a curious propriety in this mode of expression; a thought or purpose is compared to conception; a word or act, which is the consequence of it, to the birth of a child. From the third to the fifteenth verse inclusive may be considered a true statement of the then moral state of the Jewish people; and that they were, in the most proper sense of the word, guilty of the iniquities with which they are charged.

Verse 8. *Whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace “Whoever goeth in them knoweth not peace”*— For בָּהּ bah, singular, read בָּם bam, plural, with the Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate, and Chaldee. The הֵ he is upon a rasure in one MS. Or, for נְתִיבוֹתֵיהֶם nethibotheyhem, plural, we must read נְתִיבָתָם nethibatham, singular, as it is in an ancient MS., to preserve the grammatical concord. — L.

Verse 10. *We stumble at noon day as in the night “We stumble at mid-day, as in the twilight”*— I adopt here an emendation of Houbigant, נִשְׁגָּה nishgegah, instead of the second, נִגְשָׁה negasheshah, the repetition of which has a poverty and inelegance extremely unworthy of the prophet, and unlike his manner. The mistake is of long standing, being prior to all the ancient versions. It was a very easy and obvious mistake, and I have little doubt of our having recovered the true reading in this

ingenious correction.

Verse 11. *But it is far off from us* “*And it is far distant from us.*”— The conjunction וּ vau must necessarily be prefixed to the verb, as the Syriac, Chaldee, and Vulgate found it in their copies; וּרְחַקָּה verachakah, “and far off.”

Verse 14. *Justice standeth afar off*— צְדָקָה tsedakah, righteousness, put here, says Kimchi, for alms to the poor. This casts some light on Matthew 6:1: “Take heed that you do not your alms, “ἐλεημοσύνην. But the best copies have δικαιοσύνην, righteousness; the former having been inserted in the text at first merely as the explanation of the genuine and original word.

Verse 15. *And the Lord saw it* “*And JEHOVAH saw it*”— This third line of the stanza appears manifestly to me to be imperfect by the loss of a phrase. The reader will perhaps more perfectly conceive my idea of the matter if I endeavor to supply the supposed defect, I imagine it might have stood originally in this manner:—

וַיַּרְא יְהוָה וַיַּחַר לוֹ

lo veyachar Yehovah vaiyar

וַיִּרְעַב בְּעֵינָיו כִּי אֵי מִשְׁפָּט

mishpat ein ki beeyinaiv veyera

*“And JEHOVAH saw it, and he was wroth;
And it displeased him, that there was no judgment.”*

We have had already many examples of mistakes of omission; this, if it be such, is very ancient, being prior to all the versions. — L.

Verse 16. *And wondered that there was no intercessor*— This and the following verses some of the most eminent rabbins understand as spoken of the Messiah. Kimchi says that Rabbi Joshua ben Levi proposes this objection: “It is written, ‘Behold, he will come in the clouds of heaven as

the son of man,' Daniel 7:13; and elsewhere it is written, 'He cometh lowly, and riding upon an ass,' Zechariah 9:9. How can these texts be reconciled? Thus: If the Jews have merit, he will come unto them in the clouds of heaven; but if they be destitute of merit, he will come unto them riding upon an ass. "Now out of their own mouth they may be condemned. They were truly destitute of all merit when Jesus Christ came into Jerusalem riding upon an ass, according to the letter of the above prophecy; and they neither acknowledged nor received him. And that they were destitute of merit their destruction by the Romans, which shortly followed their rejection of him, sufficiently proves.

Verse 17. For clothing "For his clothing"—תִּלְבוֹשֶׁת *tilbosheth*. "I cannot but think that this word, תִּלְבוֹשֶׁת *tilbosheth*, is an interpolation. 1. It is in no one ancient version. 2. It is redundant in the sense, as it is before expressed in בְּגָדִי *bigdey*. 3. It makes the hemistich just so much longer than it ought to be, if it is compared with the others adjoining. 4. It makes a form of construction in this clause less elegant than that in the others. 5. It might probably be in some margin a various reading for בְּגָדִי *bigdey*, and thence taken into the text. This is more probable, as its form is such as it would be if it were in regimine, as it must be before נָקָם *nakam*." —Dr. JUBB. Two sorts of armor are mentioned: a breast-plate and a helmet, to bring righteousness and salvation to those who fear him; and the garments of vengeance and the cloak of zeal for the destruction of all those who finally oppose him, and reject his Gospel.

Verse 18. According to their deeds, accordingly he will repay "He is mighty to recompense; he that is mighty to recompense will requite"—The former part of this verse, as it stands at present in the Hebrew text, seems to me to be very imperfect, and absolutely unintelligible. The learned Vitranga has taken a great deal of pains upon it after Cocceius, who he says is the only one of all the interpreters, ancient or modern, who has at all understood it, and has opened the way for him. He thinks that both of them together have clearly made out the sense; I do not expect that any third person will ever be of that opinion. He says, Videtur sententia ad verbum sonare: quasi propter facta [adversariorum] quasi propter rependet; excandescantiam, etc., et sic reddidit Pagnimus. "According to

the height of their demerits, he will repay them to the height: fury to his adversaries, recompense to his enemies, “etc. — Waterland. This he converts, by a process which will not much edify my reader, into *Secundum summe merita, secundum summe (merita) rependet*; which is his translation. They that hold the present Hebrew text to be absolutely infallible must make their way through it as they can; but they ought surely to give us somewhat that has at least the appearance of sense. However, I hope the case here is not quite desperate; the Chaldee leads us very fairly to the correction of the text, which is both corrupted and defective. The paraphrase runs thus: **מרי גמליא הוא גמלא ישלם** marey gumlaiya hu simla yeshallem, “The Lord of retribution, he will render recompense. “ He manifestly read **בעל** baal instead of **כעל** keal. **מרי גמליא** marey gumlaiya is **בעי גמלות** baal gemuloth; as **מרירותא** marey merirutha is **בעל אפ** baal aph. Proverbs 22:24. And so in the Chaldee paraphrase on Isaiah 35:4: **מרי גמליא יי הוא יתגלי** marey gamlaiya yeya hu yithgeley, “The Lord of retribution, Jehovah himself, shall be revealed; “ words very near to those of the prophet in this place. The second **כעל** keal, which the Chaldee has omitted, must be read **בעל** baal likewise. With this only addition to the Chaldee, which the Hebrew text justifies, we are supplied with the following clear reading of the passage:—

בעל גמלות הוא

hu gemuloth baal

בעל גמלות ישלם

yeshallem gemuloth baal

The Lord of retributions he
The Lord of retributions, shall repay.

The **כ** caph in **כעל** keal twice seems to have been at first **ב** beth, in MS. This verse in the Septuagint is very imperfect. In the first part of it they give us no assistance: the latter part is wholly omitted in the printed copies; but it is thus supplied by MSS. Pachom. and 1:D. II: **τοις υπεναντιοις αυτου αμυναν τοις εχθροις αυτου ταις νησοις**

αποδομα αποτισει.. — L.

Verse 19. When the enemy shall come in like a flood— This all the rabbins refer to the coming of the Messiah. If ye see a generation which endures much tribulation, then (say they) expect him, according to what is written: “When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.”

Kimchi says, he that was the standard-bearer always began the battle by first smiting at the enemy. Here then the Spirit of the Lord is the standard-bearer, and strikes the first blow. They who go against sin and Satan with the Holy Spirit at their head, are sure to win the day.

The Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard ayainst him “Which a strong wind driveth along.”— Quam spiritus Domini cogit, “Which the Spirit of the Lord drives on.”—Vulg. נוססה nosesah, pihel a נוס nus fugit. Kimchi says his father thus explained this word: נוססה nosesah interpretatur in significatione fugae, et ait, spiritus Domini fugabit hostem;-nam secundum eum נוססה nosesah est ex conjugatione quadrata, ejusque radix est נוס nus: “nosesah he interpreted in the signification of flight, — The Spirit of the Lord shall put the enemy to flight; for according to him the root of the word is נוס nus, he put to flight. “The object of this action I explain otherwise. The conjunction ו vau, prefixed to רוּח ruach, seems necessary to the sense, it is added by the corrector in one of the Koningsberg MSS., collated by Lilienthal. It is added also in one of my own.

Verse 20. Unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob “And shall turn away iniquity from Jacob”— So the Septuagint and St. Paul, Romans 11:26, reading instead of לשבי leshabey and ביעקב beyaacob, והשיב veheshib and מיעקב meyaacob. The Syriac likewise reads והשיב veheshib; and the Chaldee, to the same sense, ולהשיב ulehashib. Our translators have expressed the sense of the present reading of the Hebrew text: “And unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob.”

Verse 21. This is my covenant with them “This is the covenant which I

make with them” — For אֹתָם otham, them, twenty-four MSS., (four ancient,) and nine editions have אִתָּם ittam, with them.

My Spirit that is upon thee— This seems to be an address to the Messiah; Kimchi says it is to the prophet, informing him that the spirit of prophecy should be given to all Israelites in the days of the Messiah, as it was then given to him, i.e., to the prophet.

And my words which I have put in thy mouth— Whatsoever Jesus spoke was the word and mind of God himself; and must, as such, be implicitly received.

Nor out of the mouth of thy seed— The same doctrines which Jesus preached, all his faithful ministers preach; and his seed-genuine Christians, who are all born of God, believe; and they shall continue, and the doctrines remain in the seed’s seed through all generations-for ever and ever. This is God’s covenant, ordered in all things and sure.

CHAPTER 60

The glorious prospect displayed in this chapter seems to have elevated the prophet even above his usual majesty. The subject is the very flourishing condition of the Church of Jesus Christ at that period of the Gospel dispensation when both Jews and Gentiles shall become one fold under one Shepherd. The imagery employed is of the most consolatory and magnificent description. This blessed state of the world shall follow a time of gross darkness, 1, 2. The universal diffusion of vital godliness beautifully set forth by a great variety of images, 3-14. The everlasting duration and spotless purity of this kingdom of Christ, 15-21. A time appointed in the counsels of Jehovah for the commencement of this happy period; and when this time arrives, the particulars of the prophecy shall have a speedy accomplishment, 22.

The subject of this chapter is the great increase and flourishing state of the Church of God by the conversion and accession of the heathen nations to it, which is set forth in such ample and exalted terms, as plainly show that the full completion of this prophecy is reserved for future times. This subject is displayed in the most splendid colors under a great variety of images highly poetical, designed to give a general idea of the glories of that perfect state of the Church of God which we are taught to expect in the latter times; when the fullness of the Gentiles shall come in, and the Jews shall be converted and gathered from their dispersions, and the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ.

Of the use in prophecy of general or common poetical images, in setting forth the greatness and importance of a future event universally, without descending to particulars, or too minutely explaining circumstances, I have already pretty largely treated in the twentieth prelection on the Hebrew poetry; and have more than once observed in these notes that such images are not always to be applied particularly to persons and things, and were never intended to be minutely explained. I shall add here the opinion of a very learned and judicious person upon this subject: "It is, I think, a mark of right understanding in the language of prophecy, and in the design of

prophecy too, to keep to what appears the design and meaning of the prophecy in general, and what the whole of it laid together points out to us, and not to suffer a warm imagination to mislead us from the real intention of the spirit of prophecy, by following uncertain applications of the parts of it. “ Bowman on the Revelation, note on chap. 19:21. — L. To this testimony I must add my own. This is one of the most glorious chapters in the whole of the Old Testament. The splendor, glory, and

both כתפ catheph and צד tsad. Another MS. has it thus: תאמנה, תנשאנה tinnaselah: teamanah, with a line drawn over the first word. Sir John Chardin says that it is the general custom in the east to carry their children astride upon the hip with the arm round their body. His MS. note on this place is as follows: — Coutume en Orient de porter les enfans sur le coste a; califourchon sur la hanche: cette facon est generale aux Indes; les enfans se tiennent comme cela, et la personne qui les porte les embrasse et serre par le corps; parceque sont (ni) emmaillottes, ni en robes qui les embrassent. “In the east it is the custom to carry the children on the haunch, with the legs astride. This is the general custom in India. The children support themselves in this way, and the arm of the nurse goes round the body and presses the child close to the side; and this they can easily do, as the children are not swathed, nor encumbered with clothes. “ Non brachiis occidentalium more, sed humeris, divaricatis tibiis, impositos circumferunt. “They carry them about, not in their arms after the manner

*And they shall fear, and they shall tremble, at all the
goodness
And at all the prosperity that I procure unto her.”*

And David:—

*“I will praise thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully
made.”*

Psalm 139:14

*His tibi me rebus quaedam divina voluptas
Percipit atque horror.*

LUCRET. 3:28.

*Recenti mens trepidat metu,
Plenoque Bacchi pectore turbidum
Laetatur.*

HOR. Carm. 2:19. 50:5.

Verse 6. *The praises of the Lord* “*And the praise of JEHOVAH.*”—
Thirty-three MSS. and three editions have וְתִהְיֶה לְךָ uthehillath, in the
singular number; and so read the ancient versions, and one of my own
MSS.

Verse 7. *The rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee*— Vitringa on the
place understands their ministering, and ascending or going up on the altar,
as offering themselves voluntarily: ipsi se, non expectato sacerdote alto,
gloriae et sanctificationi divini nominis ultro ac libenter oblaturi. “They,
waiting for no priest, go and freely offer themselves to the glory and
sanctification of the sacred name. “ This gives a very elegant and poetical
turn to the image. It was a general notion that prevailed with sacrificers
among the heathen, that the victim’s being brought without reluctance to
the altar was a good omen; and the contrary a bad one. Sabinos petit
aliquanto tristior; quod sacrificanti hostia aufugerat. Sueton. Titus, cap.
10: Accessit dirum omen, profugus altaribus tauris. “It was an omen of
dreadful portent when the victim fled away from the altar. “ Tacit. Hist.
3:56. — L.

Verse 8. *And as the doves to their windows* “*And like doves upon the wing?*” — Instead of אֵל el, to, forty-two MSS. of Kennicott’s, and one of mine, have by עַל, upon. For אַרְבַּתֵּיהֶם arubboteyhem, their windows, read אַבְרַתֵּיהֶם ebrotheyhem, their wings, transposing a letter. — Houbigant. The Septuagint render it σὺν νεοσσῶς, “with their young;” they read אֶפְרוֹחֵיהֶם ephrocheyhem, nearer to the latter than to the present reading. — L.

Verse 9. *The ships of Tarshish first* “*The ships of Tarshish among the first*” — For בְּרֵאשִׁיטָה barishonah twenty-five MSS. and the Syriac read כְּבֵרֵאשִׁיטָה kebarishonah, “as at the first.” The ships of Tarshish AS at the first; that is, as they brought gold and silver in the days of Solomon.

Verse 13. *And I will make the place of my feet glorious* “*And that I may glorify the place whereon I rest my feet*” — The temple of Jerusalem was called the house of God, and the place of his rest or residence. The visible symbolical appearance of God, called by the Jews the schechinah, was in the most holy place, between the wings of the cherubim, above the ark. This is considered as the throne of God, presiding as King over the Jewish state; and as a footstool is a necessary appendage to a throne, (see note on chap. 52:2,) the ark is considered as the footstool of God, and is so called, Psalm xcix. 6; 1 Chronicles 28:2.

The glory of Lebanon — That is, the cedar.

Verse 19. *Neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee* “*Nor by night shall the brightness of the moon enlighten thee*” — This line, as it stands in the present text, seems to be defective. The Septuagint and Chaldee both express the night, which is almost necessary to answer to day in the preceding line, as well as to perfect the sense here. I therefore think that we ought, upon the authority of the Septuagint and Chaldee, to read either וּלְיַלַּיִל velailah, and by night, instead of וּלְנֹגַח ulenogah, and for brightness; or וּלְנֹגַח בְּלַיְלָה ulenogah ballailah, adding the word בְּלַיְלָה ballailah, by night. — L.

Verse 21. *Of my planting*— מַטַּעַי mattai; so, with the Keri, read forty-four MSS. (seven ancient) and six editions; with which agree the Syriac, Chaldee, and Vulgate.

Verse 22. *I the Lord will hasten it in his time*— There is a time set for the fulfillment of this prophecy: that time must come before it begins to take place; but when it does begin, the whole will be performed in a short space. It is not, therefore, the time determined for the event that shall be hastened, but all the circumstances of the event; all the parts of the prediction shall be speedily completed. I the Lorde in hys tyme sodeynly schal boun thys. — Old MS. Bible. And because it is the LORD, therefore it will be done: for although it be difficult, he is almighty.

CHAPTER 61

The subject of the preceding chapter is continued in this; and to give it the greater solemnity, the Messiah is introduced describing his character and office, and confirming the large promises made before, 1-9. In consequence of this the Jewish Church is introduced, praising God for the honor done her by her restoration to favor, and by to accession of the Gentiles, which is beautifully described by allusions to the rich pontifical dress of the high priest; a happy similitude to express the ornaments of a restored nation and of a renewed mind. 10. Certainty of the prophecy illustrated by a figure drawn from the vegetable kingdom, 11.

NOTES ON CHAP. 61

Verse 1. *The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me* “*The Spirit of JEHOVAH is upon me*”— The Septuagint, Vulgate, and St. Luke, (chap. 4:18,) and a MS., and two old editions omit the word אֲדֹנָי Adonai, the Lord; which was probably added to the text through the superstition of the Jews, to prevent the pronunciation of the word יְהוָה Jehovah following. See Kennicott on the state of the printed Hebrew text, vol. i., p. 610.

In most of Isaiah’s prophecies there is a primary and secondary sense, or a remote subject illustrated by one that is near. The deliverance of the Jews from their captivity in Babylon is constantly used to shadow forth the salvation of men by Jesus Christ. Even the prophet himself is a typical person, and is sometimes intended to represent the great Savior. It is evident from Luke 4:18 that this is a prophecy of our blessed Lord and his preaching; and yet it is as evident that it primarily refers to Isaiah preaching the glad tidings of deliverance to the Jews.

The opening of the prison “*Perfect liberty*”— פֶּקַח קוֹחַ pekach koach. Ten MSS. of Kennicott’s, several of De Rossi’s, and one of my own, with

the Complutensian, have פִּקְחָקוּחַ pekachkoach in one word; and so the Septuagint and Vulgate appear to have taken it: not merely opening of prisons, but every kind of liberty-complete redemption.

The proclaiming of perfect liberty to the bound, and the year of acceptance with JEHOVAH. is a manifest allusion to the proclaiming of the year of jubilee by sound of trumpet. See Leviticus 25:9, etc. This was a year of general release of debts and obligations, of bondmen and bondwomen, of lands and possessions which had been sold from the families and tribes to which they belonged. Our Savior, by applying this text to himself, (Luke 4:18, 19,) a text so manifestly relating to the institution above mentioned, plainly declares the typical design of that institution.

Verse 3. To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion “To impart gladness to the mourners of Zion “— A word necessary to the sense is certainly lost in this place, of which the ancient Versions have preserved no traces. Houbigant, by conjecture, inserts the word שֶׂשׂוּר sason, gladness, taken from the line next but one below, where it stands opposed to אֵבֶל ebel, sorrow or mourning, as the word lost here was to אֵבֶלִי abeley, mourners: I follow him. — L.

Beauty for ashes “A beautiful crown instead of ashes”— In times of mourning the Jews put on sackcloth, or coarse and sordid raiment, and spread dust and ashes on their heads; on the contrary, splendid clothing and ointment poured on the head were the signs of joy. “Feign thyself to be a mourner, “says Joab to the woman of Tekoah, “and put on now mourning apparel, and anoint not thyself with oil, “2 Samuel 14:2. These customs are at large expressed in the Book of Judith: “She pulled off the sackcloth which she had on, and put off the garments of her widowhood, and washed her body all over with water and anointed herself with precious ointment, and braided the hair of her head, and put on a tire [mitre, marg.] upon it; and put on her garments of gladness; “ chap. 10:3. — L.

פֶּאֶר תַּחַת אֶפֶר peer tachath ephar, glory for ashes; a paronomasia which

the prophet often uses: a chaplet, crown, or other ornament of the head (for so the Vulgate renders the word here and in the both verse; in which last place the Septuagint agree in the same rendering,) instead of dust and ashes, which before covered it; and the costly ointments used on occasions of festivity, instead of the ensigns of sorrow. — L.

Trees of righteousness “**Trees approved**”— Hebrews oaks of righteousness or truth; that is, such as by their flourishing condition should show that they were indeed “the scion of God’s planting, and the work of his hands; “under which images, in the preceding chapter, ver. 21, the true servants of God, in a highly improved state of the Church, were represented; that is, says Vitranga on that place, “commendable for the strength of their faith, their durability, and firmness.”

Verse 4. “**And they that spring from thee**”— A word is lost here likewise. After **ובנו** ubanu, “they shall build, “add **ממד** mimmecha, they that spring from thee. Four MSS. have it so, (two of them ancient,) and one of mine has it in the margin, and it is confirmed by chap. 58:12, where the sentence is the very same, this word being here added. Kimchi makes the same remark: “the word **ממד** mimmecha is omitted here; but is found in chap. 58:12.”

The desolations of many generations— It seems that these words cannot refer to the Jews in the Balbylonish captivity, for they were not there many generations; but it may refer to their dispersions and state of ruin since the advent of our Lord; and consequently this may be a promise of the restoration of the Jewish people.

Verse 5. Strangers shall-feed your flocks— Gentiles shall first preach to you the salvation of Christ, and feed with Divine knowledge the Jewish congregations.

Verse 7. For your shame “**Instead of your shame**”— The translation of this verse, which is very confused, and probably corrupted in the Hebrew, is taken from the Syriac Version; except that the latter has not expressed the word **משנה** mishneh, double, in the first place. Five MSS. add the

conjunction וּ vau to שמחה simchath. The Syriac reads תרנו taronnu, and תירשו tirashu, in the second person, “ye shall rejoice, ye shall inherit. “ And for להם lahem, to them, two MSS., (one of them ancient,) three of De Rossi’s, and the Syriac, read לכם lachem, to you, in the second person likewise.

The Version of the Septuagint is imperfect in this place; the first half of the verse is entirely omitted in all the printed copies. It is supplied by MSS. Pachom. and 1:D. 2:in the following manner:—

αντι της αισχυνης υμων της διπλης,
και αντι της εντροπης αγαλλιασεται η μερις αυτων
δια τουτο την γην αυτων εκ δευτερου

*“Instead of your shame ye shall have double,
And instead of your confusion their portion shall rejoice;
Therefore, they shall possess their land a second time.”*

In which the two MSS. agree, except that 1:D. 2:has by mistake ημερας, day, for η μερις

speedily amalgamated, as to lose their peculiar cast of features, and other national distinctions.

Verse 10. *I will greatly rejoice in the Lord*— These may be the words of the Jews now converted, and brought into the Church of Christ, and with the Gentiles made fellow heirs of the blessings of the new covenant.

As a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments “*As the bridegroom decketh himself with a priestly crown*”— An allusion to the magnificent dress of the high priest, when performing his functions; and particularly to the mitre, and crown or plate of gold on the front of it, Exodus 29:6. The bonnet or mitre of the priests also was made, as Moses expresses it, “for glory and for beauty,” Exodus 28:40. It is difficult to give its full force to the prophet’s metaphor in another language. The version of Aquila and Symmachus comes nearest to it: **ὡς νυμφιον ιερατευομενον στεφανω** “as a bridegroom decked with a priestly crown.” —L.

Verse 11. *The Lord God* “*The Lord JEHOVAH*”— “**אֲדֹנָי** Adonai, the Lord, makes the line longer than the preceding and following; and the Septuagint, Alexandrian, (and MSS. Pachom. and 1:D. II.,) and Arabic, do not so render it. Hence it seems to be interpolated.” —Dr. JUBB. Three MSS. have it not. See on ver. 1 of this chapter. Both words **אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה** Adonai Jehovah, are wanting in one of my MSS.; but are supplied in the margin by a later hand.

CHAPTER 62

The prophet opens this chapter with ardent prayers that the happy period of reconciliation just now promised, and here again foretold, may be hastened, 1-5. He then calls upon the faithful, particularly the priests and Levites, to join him, urging the promises, and even the oath, of Jehovah, as the foundation of their request, 6-9. And, relying on this oath, he goes on to speak of the general restoration promised, as already performing; and calls to the people to march forth, and to the various nations among whom they are dispersed to prepare the way for them, as God had caused the order for their return to be universally proclaimed, 10-12.

NOTES ON CHAP. 62

Verse 1. *For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace*— These are the words of JEHOVAH declaring his purpose relative to the events predicted in the preceding chapter.

Thou shalt be called by a new name— VIZ., CHRISTIAN-OR, as in the fourth verse, **הפצ'י בה** chephtsi bah, “my delight is in her “-because she has now received that command, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; HEAR HIM.”

Verse 4. *Thy land Beulah*— **בעולה** beulah, married. In the prophets, a desolate land is represented under the notion of a widow; an inhabited land, under that of a married woman, who has both a husband and children.

Verse 5. *For as a young man-so*— The particles of comparison are not at present in the Hebrew Text: but the Septuagint, Syriac, and Chaldee seem to have read in their copies **כ** caph prefixed to the verb, **כי כיבעל** ki keyibal which seems to have been omitted by mistake of a transcriber, occasioned by the repetition of the same two letters. And before the verb

in the second line a MS. adds כן ken, so; which the Septuagint, Syriac, and Chaldee seem also to have had in their copies. In the third line of this verse the same MS. has in like manner וכמשוש vechimsos, and two MSS. and the Babylonish Talmud כמשוש kimsos, adding the כ caph; and in the fourth line, the Babylonish Talmud likewise adds כן ken, so, before the verb.

Sir John Chardin, in his note on this place, tells us, “that it is the custom in the east for youths, that were never married, always to marry virgins; and widowers, however young, to marry widows.” —HARMER, *Observ.* 2:p. 482.

So shall thy sons marry thee.— For בניך banayich, thy sons, Bishop Lowth reads, restorer or builder, as he does not consider the word as the plural of בן ben, a son, but the participle benoni of the verb בנה banah, he built. I do not see that we gain much by this translation. Thy sons shall dwell in thee, Vulgate; and so the Septuagint and Chaldee.

Verse 6. *Ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence*— The faithful, and in particular the priests and Levites, are exhorted by the prophet to beseech God with unremitted importunity (compare Luke 18:1, etc.) to hasten the redemption of Sion. The image in this place is taken from the temple service; in which there was appointed a constant watch, day and night, by the Levites: and among them this seems to have belonged particularly to the singers, see 1 Chronicles 9:33. Now the watches in the east, even to this day, are performed by a loud cry from time to time of the watchmen, to mark the time, and that very frequently, and in order to show that they themselves are constantly attentive to their duty. Hence the watchmen are said by the prophet, chap. 52:8, to lift up their voice; and here they are commanded, not to keep silence; and the greatest reproach to them is, that they are dumb dogs; they cannot bark; dreamers; sluggards, loving to slumber, chap. 56:10. “The watchmen in the camp of the caravans go their rounds crying one after another, ‘God is one, he is merciful:’ and often add, ‘Take heed to yourselves.’” —TAVERNIER, *Voyage de Perse*, 54:1:chap. 10: The hundred and thirty-fourth Psalm gives us an example of the temple watch. The whole Psalm is nothing more than

the alternate cry of two different divisions of the watch. The first watch addresses the second, reminding them of their duty; the second answers by a solemn blessing. The address and the answer seem both to be a set form, which each division proclaimed, or sung aloud, at stated intervals, to notify the time of the night:—

FIRST CHORUS

“Come on now, bless ye JEHOVAH, all ye servants of JEHOVAH;
Ye that stand in the house of JEHOVAH in the nights;
Lift up your hands towards the sanctuary,
And bless ye JEHOVAH.”

SECOND CHORUS

“JEHOVAH bless thee out of Sion;
He that made heaven and earth.”

“Ye who stand in the place of the watch, in the house of the sanctuary of the Lord; and ye praise through the nights; “-says the Chaldee paraphrase on the second line. And this explains what is here particularly meant by proclaiming, or making remembrance of, the name of JEHOVAH: the form, which the watch made use of on these occasions, was always a short sentence, expressing some pious sentiment, of which JEHOVAH was the subject; and it is remarkable, that the custom in the east in this respect also still continues the very same; as appears by the example above given from Tavernier.

And this observation leads to the explanation of an obscure passage in the Prophet Malachi, chap. 2:12.

“JEHOVAH will cut off the man that doeth this;
The watchman and the answerer, from the tabernacles of Jacob;
And him that presenteth an offering to JEHOVAH God of hosts.”

ער וענה er veoneh, the master and the scholar, says our translation, after the Vulgate: the son and the grandson, says the Syriac and Chaldee, as

little to the purpose: Arias Montanus has given it *vigilantem et respondentem*, “the watchman and the answerer; “ that is, the Levite and “him that presenteth an offering to JEHOVAH, “that is, the priest. — L. Ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence. Is not this clause an address to the ministers of Christ, to continue in supplication for the conversion of the Jewish people? Kimchi seems to think that the watchmen are the interceding angels!

Verse 9. *But they that have gathered it shall eat it, and praise the Lord*— This and the following line have reference to the law of Moses: “Thou mayest not eat within thy gates the tithe of thy corn, or of thy wine, or of thy oil; but thou must eat them before the Lord thy God, in the place which the Lord thy God shall choose, “Deuteronomy 12:17, 18. “And when ye shall come into the land, and shall have planted all manner of trees for food, then ye shall count the fruit thereof as uncircumcised: three years it shall be as uncircumcised unto you; it shall not be eaten of. But in the fourth year all the fruit thereof shall be holy to praise the Lord withal. And in the fifth year ye shall eat the fruit thereof, “Leviticus 19:23-25. This clearly explains the force of the expressions, “shall praise JEHOVAH, “and “shall drink it in my sacred courts.”

Five MSS., one ancient, have **אכלוהו** *yocheluhu*, they shall eat it, fully expressed: and so likewise **ישתוהו** *yishtuhu*, they shall drink it, is found in nineteen MSS., three of them ancient. — L.

Verse 10. *Of the people “For the people”*— Before the word **העם** *haam*, the people, two MSS. insert **יהוה** *Yehovah*; one MS. adds the same word after; and eight MSS., three ancient, instead of **העם** *haam*, have **יהוה** *Yehovvah*, and so likewise one edition. But though it makes a good sense either way, I believe it to be an interpolation, as the ancient Versions do not favor it. The Septuagint indeed read **עמי** *ammi*, my people. — L.

Verse 11. Unto the end of the world-**אל קצה הארץ** *el ketseh haarets*-Instead of **אל** *el*, to, **עד** *ad*, UNTO, is the reading of two of Kennicott’s MSS.; and one of mine has **מקצה** *mikketseh*, “FROM the end of the earth.”

Behold, thy salvation cometh “*Lo, thy Savior cometh*”— So all the ancient Versions render the word **ישוע** yishech.

Behold, his reward— See note on chap. 40:10, 11. This reward he carries as it were in his hand. His work is before him—he perfectly knows what is to be done; and is perfectly able to do it. He will do what God should do, and what man cannot do; and men should be workers with him. Let no man fear that the promise shall not be fulfilled on account of its difficulty, its greatness, the hinderances in the way, or the unworthiness of the person to whom it is made. It is God’s work; he is able to do it, and as willing as he is able.

Verse 12. They shall call them—These characteristics seem to be put in their inverted order. — 1. God will not forsake them. 2. They shall be sought out. 3. They shall be redeemed. And, 4. Be in consequence a holy people. 1. When God calls, it is a proof that he has not forsaken. 2. When he seeks, it is a proof he is waiting to be gracious. 3. When the atonement is exhibited, all things are then ready. 4. And when that is received, holiness of heart and life is then to be kept continually in view, as this is the genuine work of God’s Spirit; and without holiness none shall see the Lord.

CHAPTER 63

The prophet, (or rather the Church he represents,) sees the great Deliverer, long promised and expected, making his appearance, after having crushed his enemies, like grapes in the wine-vat. The comparison suggests a lively idea of the wrath of Omnipotence, which its unhappy objects can no more resist than the grapes can resist the treader. Indeed, there is so much pathos, energy, and sublimity in this remarkable passage, as hardly any thing can be conceived to exceed. The period to which it refers must be the same with that predicted in the nineteenth chapter of the Revelation, some parts of which are expressed in the same terms with this, and plainly enough refer to the very sudden and total overthrow of Antichrist, and of all his adherents and auxiliaries, of which the destruction of Babylon, the capital of Chaldea, and of Bozra, the chief city of the Edomites, was the prototype, 1-6. At the seventh verse commences a penitential confession and supplication of the Jews, as uttered in their present dispersion, 7-19.

The very remarkable passage with which this chapter begins seems to me to be, in a manner, detached from the rest, and to stand singly by itself; having no immediate connection with what goes before, or with what follows, otherwise than as it may pursue the general design, and stand in its proper place in the order of prophecy. It is by many learned interpreters supposed that Judas Maccabeus and his victories make the subject of it. What claim Judas can have to so great an honor will, I think, be very difficult to make out; or how the attributes of the great person introduced can possibly suit him. Could Judas call himself the announcer of righteousness, mighty to save? Could he talk of the day of vengeance being in his heart, and the year of his redeemed being come? or that his own arm wrought salvation for him? Besides, what were the great exploits of Judas in regard to the Idumeans? He overcame them in battle, and slew twenty thousand of them. And John Hyrcanus, his brother Simon's son and successor, who is called in to help out the accomplishment of the prophecy, gave them another defeat some time afterward, and compelled them by force to become proselytes to the Jewish religion, and to submit

to circumcision: after which they were incorporated with the Jews, and became one people with them. Are these events adequate to the prophet's lofty prediction? Was it so great an action to win a battle with considerable slaughter of the enemy or to force a whole nation by dint of the sword into Judaism? or was the conversion of the Idumeans, however effected, and their admission into the Church of God, equivalent to a most grievous judgment and destruction, threatened in the severest terms? But here is another very material circumstance to be considered, which, I presume, entirely excludes Judas Maccabeus, and even the Idumeans, properly so called. For the Idumea of the prophet's time was quite a different country from that which Judas conquered. For during the Babylonish captivity the Nabatheans had driven the Edomites out of their country; who upon that took possession of the southern parts of Judea, and settled themselves there; that is, in the country of the whole tribe of Simeon and in half of that of Judah. See Prideaux, ad. an. 740 and 165. And the metropolis of the Edomites, and of the country thence called Idumea, which Judas took, was Hebron 1 Macc. 5:65, not Bozrah.

I conclude, therefore, that this prophecy has not the least relation to Judas Maccabeus. It may be asked, to whom, and to what event does it relate? I can only answer, that I know of no event in history to which, from its importance and circumstances, it can be applied: unless, perhaps, to the destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish polity; which in the Gospel is called the coming of Christ and the days of vengeance, Matthew 16:28; Luke 21:22. But though this prophecy must have its accomplishment, there is no necessity for supposing that it has been already accomplished. There are prophecies, which intimate a great slaughter of the enemies of God and his people, which remain to be fulfilled; these in Ezekiel, chap. 38., and in the Revelation of St. John, chap. 20., are called Gog and Magog. This prophecy of Isaiah may possibly refer to the same or the like event. We need not be at a loss to determine the person who is here introduced, as stained with treading the wine-press, if we consider how St. John in the Revelation has applied this image of the prophet, Revelation 19:13, 15, 16. Compare chap. 34. — L.

NOTES ON CHAP. 63

Verse 1. *Who is this that cometh from Edom*— Probably both Edom and Bozrah are only figurative expressions, to point out the place in which God should discomfit his enemies. Edom signifies red, and Bozrah, a vintage. Kimchi interprets the whole of the destruction of Rome.

I that speak in righteousness “I who publish righteousness”— A MS. has **המדבר** hammedabber, with the demonstrative article added with greater force and emphasis: The announcer of righteousness. A MS. has **צדקה** tzedakah, without **ב** be prefixed; and so the Septuagint and Vulgate. And thirty-eight MSS. (seven ancient) of Dr. Kennicott’s, and many of De Rossi’s, and one of my own, add the conjunction **ו** vau to **רב** rab, and mighty; which the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate confirm. — L.

Verse 2. *Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel*— For **לבושך** lilebushecha, twenty-nine MSS. (nine ancient) of Kennicott’s, and thirty of De Rossi’s, and one edition, have **לבושך** lilebusheycha in the plural; so the Septuagint and Syriac. And all the ancient Versions read it with **מ** mem, instead of the first **ל** lamed. But the true reading is probably **מלבושך** malbushecha in the singular, as in ver. 3. — L.

Verse 3. *And of the people there was none with me*— I was wholly abandoned by them: but a good meaning is, No man has had any part in making the atonement; it is entirely the work of the Messiah alone. No created being could have any part in a sacrifice that was to be of infinite merit.

And I will stain “And I have stained”— For **אגאלתי** egalti, a verb of very irregular formation, compounded, as they say, of the two forms of the preterite and future, a MS. has **אגאלהו** egalehu, the regular future with a pleonastic pronoun added to it, according to the Hebrew idiom: “And all my raiment, I have stained it. “ The necessity of the verb’s being in the past tense seems to have given occasion to the alteration made in the end of the word. The conversive **ו** vau at the beginning of the sentence

affects the verb, though not joined to it; of which there are many examples:—

anithani remim umikkarney
 ומקרני רמים עניתני

“And thou wilt hear me (or hear thou me) from among the horns of the unicorns, “Psalm 22:22. — L.

Instead of **על בגדי** al begadai, upon my garments, one of my ancient MSS. has **לארץ בגדי** larets begadai, to the earth: but this word is partly effaced, and **על** al written in the margin by a later hand.

Verse 5. And my fury “*And mine indignation*”— For **והמת** vachamathi, nineteen MSS. (three ancient) of Kennicott’s, nine of De Rossi’s, and one of mine, and four editions, have **וצדקתי** vetsidkathi, and my righteousness; from chap. 59:16, which I suppose the transcriber retained in his memory. It is true that the Versions are in favor of the common reading; but that noticed above seems to stand on good authority, and is a reading both pleasing and impressive. Opposite, in the margin, my MS. has the common reading by a later hand.

Verse 6. And make them drunk in my fury “*And I crushed them in mine indignation*”— For **ואשכרם** vaashkerem, and I made them drunken, twenty-seven MSS., (three ancient,) twelve of De Rossi’s, and the old edition of 1488, have **ואשברם** vaashabberem, and I crushed them: and so the Syriac and Chaldee. The Septuagint have omitted this whole line.

Verse 7. I will mention the loving-kindnesses of the Lord— The prophet connects the preceding mercies of God to the Jews with the present prospect he has of their redemption by the Messiah; thus making a circle in which eternal goodness revolves. The remaining part of this chapter, with the whole chapter following, contains a penitential confession and supplication of the Israelites in their present state of dispersion, in which they have so long marvellously subsisted, and still continue to subsist, as a people; cast out of their country; without any proper form of civil polity

or religious worship, their temple destroyed, their city desolated and lost to them, and their whole nation scattered over the face of the earth, apparently deserted and cast off by the God of their fathers, as no longer his peculiar people.

They begin with acknowledging God's great mercies and favors to their nation, and the ungrateful returns made to them on their part, that by their disobedience they had forfeited the protection of God, and had caused him to become their adversary. And now the prophet represents them, induced by the memory of the great things that God had done for them, as addressing their humble supplication for the renewal of his mercies. They beseech him to regard them in consideration of his former loving-kindness, they acknowledge him for their Father and Creator, they confess their wickedness and hardness of heart, they entreat his forgiveness, and deplore their present miserable condition under which they have so long suffered. It seems designed as a formulary of humiliation for the Israelites, in order to their conversion.

The whole passage is in the elegiac form, pathetic and elegant; but it has suffered much in our present copy by the mistakes of transcribers.

The praises of the Lord “*The praise of JEHOVAH*”— For תהלות *tehilloth*, plural, twenty-nine MSS. (three ancient) and two editions, have תהלת *tehillath*, in the singular number; and so the Vulgate renders it; and one of the Greek versions, in the margin of Cod. Marchal. and in the text of MSS. Pachom. and 1:D. 2: τὴν αἰνεσιν κυρίου, “the praise of the Lord.” —L.

Verses 8, 9. *So he was their Savior. In all their affliction* “*And he became their Savior in all their distress*”— I have followed the translation of the Septuagint in the latter part of the eighth, and the former part of the ninth verse; which agrees with the present text, a little differently divided as to three members of the sentence. They read מכל *miccol*, out of all, instead of בכל *bechol*, in all, which makes no difference in the sense; and צר *tsar* they understand as ציר *tsir*. και εγενετο αυτοις εις σωτηριαν εκ πασης θλιψεως αυτων ου πρεσβυς, ουδε αγγελος “And he was salvation to them in all their tribulation; neither an ambassador nor an

angel, but himself saved them. “An angel of his presence means an angel of superior order, in immediate attendance upon God. So the angel of the Lord says to Zacharias, “I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God, “Luke 1:19. The presence of JEHOVAH, Exodus 33:14, 15, and the angel, Exodus 33:20, 21, is JEHOVAH himself; here an angel of his presence is opposed to JEHOVAH himself, as an angel is in the following passages of the same book of Exodus. After their idolatrous worshipping of the golden calf, “when God had said to Moses, I will send an angel before thee-I will not go up in the midst of thee-the people mourned, “Exodus 33:2-4. God afterwards comforts Moses, by saying, “My presence (that is I myself in person, and not by an angel) will go with thee, “ver. 14. **αυτος προπορευσομαι σου**, “I myself will go before thee, “as the Septuagint render it.

The MSS. and editions are much divided between the two readings of the text and margin in the common copies, **לֹא** lo, not, and **לוֹ** lo, to him. All the ancient Versions express the chetib reading, **לֹא** lo, not.

And he bare then and carried them all the days of old “And he took them up, and he bore them, all the days of old.”— See the note on chap. 46:3. — L.

Verse 10. And he fought against them— Twenty-six MSS. (ten ancient) and the first edition, with another, add the conjunction **ו** vau, **והוא** vehu, and he.

Verse 11. Moses and his people “Moses his servant”— For **עמו** ammo, his people, two MSS. (one of them ancient) and one of my own, (ancient,) and one of De Rossi’s, and the old edition of 1488, and the Syriac, read **עבדו** abdo, his servant. These two words have been mistaken one for the other in other places; Psalm 78:71, and 80:5, for **עמו** ammo, his people, and **עמך** ammecha, thy people, the Septuagint read **עבדו** abdo, his servant, and **עבדך** abdecha, thy servant.

Where is he that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of his flock? where etc. “How he brought them up from the sea, with the

shepherd of his flock; how, “etc.— For אִיֶּה aiyeh, how, interrogative, twice, the Syriac Version reads אִיֶּיֶי eich, how, without interrogation, as that particle is used in the Syriac language, and sometimes in the Hebrew. See Ruth 3:18; Ecclesiastes 2:16.

The shepherd of his flock— That is, Moses. The MSS. and editions vary in this word; some have it רֹעֵה roeh, in the singular number; so the Septuagint, Syriac, and Chaldee. Others רֹעֵי roey, plural, the shepherds. — L.

Verses 13, 14. *That led them through the deep—As a beast goeth down into the valley*— In both these verses there is an allusion to the Israelites going through the Red Sea, in the bottom of which they found no more inconvenience than a horse would in running in the desert, where there was neither stone nor mud; nor a beast in the valley, where all was plain and smooth.

Verse 14. *The Spirit of the Lord caused him to rest “The Spirit of JEHOVAH conducted them.”*— For תְּנִיחֵנוּ tenichenu, caused him to rest, the Septuagint have ὠδηγησεν αὐτοὺς, conducted them; they read תַּנְחֵם tanchem. The Syriac, Chaldee, and Vulgate read תַּנְחֵנוּ tanchenu, conducted him. Two MSS. have the word without the ך yod in the middle.

Verse 15. *And thy strength “And thy mighty power”*— For גְּבוּרֹתֶיךָ geburotheycha, plural, thirty-two MSS. (seven ancient) and twenty-one of De Rossi’s, and seven editions, have גְּבוּרַתְּךָ geburathecha, singular.

Are they restrained?— For אֵלַי elai, from (or in regard to) me, the Septuagint and Syriac read אֵלֵינוּ eleynu, from us. — L.

Verse 16. *Our Redeemer; thy name is from everlasting “O deliver us for the sake of thy name.”*— The present text reads, as our translation has rendered it, “Our Redeemer, thy name is from everlasting. “ But instead of מְעוֹלָם meolam, from everlasting, an ancient MS. has לְמַעַל lemaan, for the sake of, which gives a much better sense. To show the impropriety of the

present reading, it is sufficient to observe, that the Septuagint and Syriac translators thought it necessary to add על־ינוּ aleynu, upon us, to make out the sense; That is, “Thy name is upon us, or we are called by thy name, from of old. “ And the Septuagint have rendered גאלנו goalenu, in the imperative mood, στσα ημας, deliver us. — L.

Verse 17. *Why hast thou made us to err*— A mere Hebraism, for why hast thou permitted us to err. So, Lead us not into temptation; do not suffer us to fall into that to which we are tempted.

Verse 18. *The people of thy holiness have possessed it but a little while “It is little that they have taken possession of thy holy mountain”*— The difficulty of the construction in this place is acknowledged on all hands. Vitringa prefers that sense as the least exceptionable which our translation has expressed; in which however there seems to be a great defect; that is, the want of that in the speaker’s view must have been the principal part of the proposition, the object of the verb, the land, or it, as our translators supply it, which surely ought to have been expressed, and not to have been left to be supplied by the reader. In a word, I believe there is some mistake in the text; and here the Septuagint help us out; they had in their copy הר har, mountain, instead of עם am, people, του ορους του αγιου σου, the mountain of thy Holy One. “Not only have our enemies taken possession of Mount Sion, and trodden down thy sanctuary; even far worse than this has befallen us; thou hast long since utterly cast us off, and dost not consider us as thy peculiar people.” -L.

CHAPTER 64

The whole of this chapter, which is very pathetic and tender, may be considered as a formulary of prayer and humiliation intended for the Jews in order to their conversion 1-12.

NOTES ON CHAP. 64

Verse 1. O that thou wouldest rend the heavens—This seems to allude to the wonderful manifestation of God upon Mount Sinai.

Verse 2. *As when the melting fire burneth “As the fire kindleth the dry fuel”*—הַמַּסִּים hatmasim. “It means dry stubble, and the root is הַמַּסִּים hamas, “says Rabbi Jonah, apud Sal ben Belec in loc. Which is approved by Schultens, Orig. Hebrews p. 30.

“The fire kindling the stubble does not seem like enough to the melting of the mountains to be brought as a simile to it. What if thus?—

*‘That the mountains might flow down at thy presence!
As the fire of things smelted burneth,
As the fire causeth the waters to boil-‘*

There is no doubt of the Hebrew words of the second line bearing that version.” —Dr. JUBB.

I submit these different interpretations to the reader’s judgment. For my own part I am inclined to think that the text is much corrupted in this place. The ancient Versions have not the least traces of either of the above interpretations. The Septuagint and Syriac agree exactly together in rendering this line by, “As the wax melted before the fire, “which can by

no means be reconciled with the present text. The Vulgate, for **המסים** hamasim, read **ימסו** yemasu.

That the nations— For **גוים** goyim, the nations, four MSS. (one of them ancient) have **הרים** harim, the mountains. — L.

Verse 4. For since the beginning of the world men have not heard “*For never have men heard*”— St. Paul is generally supposed to have quoted this passage of Isaiah, 1 Corinthians 2:9; and Clemens Romanus in his first epistle has made the same quotation, very nearly in the same words with the apostle. But the citation is so very different both from the Hebrew text and the version of the Septuagint, that it seems very difficult, if not impossible, to reconcile them by any literal emendation, without going beyond the bounds of temperate criticism. One clause, “neither hath it entered into the heart of man, “(which, by the way, is a phrase purely Hebrew, **עלה על לב** alah al leb, and should seem to belong to the prophet,) is wholly left out; and another is repeated without force or propriety; viz., “nor perceived by the ear, “after, “never have heard: “ and the sense and expression of the apostle is far preferable to that of the Hebrew text. Under these difficulties I am at a loss what to do better, than to offer to the reader this, perhaps disagreeable, alternative: either to consider the Hebrew text and Septuagint in this place as wilfully disguised and corrupted by the Jews; of which practice in regard to other quotations in the New Testament from the Old, they lie under strong suspicions, (see Dr. Owen on the version of the Septuagint, sect. vi. — ix. ;) or to look upon St. Paul’s quotation as not made from Isaiah, but from one or other of the two apocryphal books, entitled, The Ascension of Esaiah, and the Apocalypse of Elias, in both of which this passage was found; and the apostle is by some supposed in other places to have quoted such apocryphal writings. As the first of these conclusions will perhaps not easily be admitted by many, so I must fairly warn my readers that the second is treated by Jerome as little better than heresy. See his comment on this place of Isaiah. — L. I would read the whole verse thus; “Yea, from the time of old they have not heard, they have not hearkened to, an eye hath not seen a God besides thee. He shall work for that one that waiteth for him. “ This I really think on the whole to be the best

translation of the original.

The variations on this place are as follows: for שמעו shameu, they have heard, a MS. and the Septuagint read שמענו shamanu, we have heard: for the second לא lo, not, sixty-nine MSS. and four editions have ולא velo, and not, and the Syriac, Chaldee, and Vulgate. And so ועי veayin, and eye, Septuagint and Syriac. את eth, the, (emphatic,) is added before אלהים Elohim, God, in MS. Bodleian. למחכי limechakkey, to them that wait, plural, two MSS. and all the ancient Versions. — L.

Verse 5. *Thou meetest him that rejoyceth and worketh righteousness*
“Thou meetest with joy those who work righteousness”— The Syriac reads פוגע אתה שש בעשי poga attah shesh baashi, as above.

In those is continuance, and we shall be saved ***“Because of our deeds, for we have been rebellious”***— בהם עולם ונושע bahem olam venivvashea.

I am fully persuaded that these words as they stand in the present Hebrew text are utterly unintelligible; there is no doubt of the meaning of each word separately; but put together they make no sense at all. I conclude, therefore, that the copy has suffered by mistakes of transcribers in this place. The corruption is of long standing, for the ancient interpreters were as much at a loss for the meaning as the moderns, and give nothing satisfactory. The Septuagint render these words by δια τουτα επλανηθημεν, therefore we have erred: they seem to have read נפשע עליהם aleyhem niphsha, without helping the sense. In this difficulty what remains but to have recourse to conjecture? Archbishop Secker was dissatisfied with the present reading: he proposed הבט עלינו ונושע hebet aleynu venivvashea; “look upon us, and we shall, or that we may, be saved: “ which gives a very good sense, but seems to have no sufficient foundation. Besides, the word ונושע venivvashea, which is attended with great difficulties, seems to be corrupted as well as the two preceding; and the true reading of it is, I think, given by the Septuagint, ונפשע veniphsha, επλανηθημεν, we have erred, (so they render the verb פשע pasha, chap. 46:8, and Ezekiel 23:12,) parallel to ונחטא vannecheta, ημαρτομεν, we have sinned. For בהם עולם bahem olam, which means

nothing, I would propose **המעללינו** hammaaleynu, “because of our deeds; which I presume was first altered to **במעליהם** bemaaleylehem, an easy and common mistake of the third person plural of the pronoun for the first, (see note on chap. 33:2,) and then with some farther alteration to **בהם עולם** behem olam. The **עליהם** aleyhem, which the Septuagint probably found in their copy, seems to be a remnant of **במעלליהם** bemaaleylehem.

This, it may be said, is imposing your sense upon the prophet. It may be so; for perhaps these may not be the very words of the prophet: but however it is better than to impose upon him what makes no sense at all; as they generally do, who pretend to render such corrupted passages. For instance, our own translators: “in those is continuance, and we shall be saved: “ in those in whom, or what? There is no antecedent to the relative. “In the ways of God, “say some: “with our fathers, “says Vitranga, joining it in construction with the verb, **קעפּת** katsaphta, “thou hast been angry with them, our fathers; “ and putting **ונהטא** vannecheta, “for we have sinned, “in a parenthesis. But there has not been any mention of our fathers: and the whole sentence, thus disposed, is utterly discordant from the Hebrew idiom and construction. In those is continuance; **עולם** olam means a destined but hidden and unknown portion of time; but cannot mean continuation of time, or continuance, as it is here rendered. Such forced interpretations are equally conjectural with the boldest critical emendation; and generally have this farther disadvantage, that they are altogether unworthy of the sacred writers. — L.

Coverdale renders the passage thus: — But lo, thou art angrie, for we offende, and have been ever in synne; and there is not one whole. This is, I am afraid, making a sense.

After all that this very learned prelate has done to reduce these words to sense and meaning, I am afraid we are still far from the prophet’s mind. Probably **בהם** bahem, in them, refers to **דרכיך** deracheycha, thy ways, above. **עולם** olam may be rendered of old, or during the whole of the Jewish economy; and **ונושע** venivvashea, “and shall we be saved?” Thus: — Thou art wroth, for we have sinned in them (thy ways) of old; and can

we be saved? For we are all as an unclean thing, etc.

Verse 6. As filthy rags— עֲדִים iddim. Rab. Mosheh ben Maimon interpretatur עֲדִים iddim, vestes quibus mulier se abstergit post congressum cum marito suo. Alii pannus menstruatus. Alii panni mulieris parientis. — And we ben made as unclene alle we: and as the cloth of the woman rooten blode flowing, all our rigtwisnesses. — Old MS. Bible. If preachers knew properly the meaning of this word, would they make such a liberal use of it in their public ministry? And why should any use a word, the meaning of which he does not understand? How many in the congregation blush for the incautious man and his “filthy rags!”

Verse 7. There is none— Twelve MSS. have נִין ein, without the conjunction וְ vau prefixed; and so read the Chaldee and Vulgate.

And hast consumed us because of our iniquities “And hast delivered us up into the hands of our iniquities.”— For וְתַמּוּגֵנוּ vattemugenu, “hast dissolved us, “the Septuagint, Syriac, and Chaldee had in their copies תַּמְגֵּנוּ temaggenenu, “hast delivered us up. “ Houbigant. Secker.

Verse 8. But, now, O Lord, thou art our Father “But thou, O JEHOVAH, thou art our Father”— For וְעַתָּה veattah, and now, five MSS., one of them ancient, and the two oldest editions, 1486 and 1488, have וְאַתָּה veattah, and thou, and so the Chaldee seems to have read. The repetition has great force. The other word may be well spared. “But now, O Lord, thou art our Father. “ How very affectionate is the complaint in this and the following verses! But how does the distress increase, when they recollect the desolations of the temple, and ruin of public worship, ver. 11: “Our holy and beautiful house, where our fathers praised thee, is burnt up with fire, “etc.

We all are the work of thy hand— Three MSS. (two of them ancient) and the Septuagint read מַעֲשֵׂה maaseh, the work, without the conjunction וְ vau prefixed. And for יָדְךָ yadecha, thy hand, the Bodleian, and two others MSS., the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate read יָדְיָךָ yadeycha, thy

hands, in the plural number. — L.

Verse 9. *Neither remember iniquity*— For לעד תזכר laad tizcor, one of my MSS. has לעד תקצפ laad tiktsoph, “be not angry, “as in the preceding clause. This has been partially obliterated, and תזכר tizcor, written in the margin by a later hand: but this MS. abounds with words of this kind, all altered by later hands.

CHAPTER 65

We have here a vindication of God's dealings with the Jews, 1, 2. To this end the prophet points out their great hypocrisy, and gives a particular enumeration of their dreadful abominations, many of which were committed under the specious guise of sanctity, 3-5. For their horrid impieties, (recorded in writing before Jehovah,) the wrath of God shall certainly come upon them to the uttermost; a prediction which was exactly fulfilled in the first and second centuries in the reigns of the Roman emperors Vespasian, Titus, and Hadrian, when the whole Jewish polity was dissolved, and the people dispersed all over the world, 6, 7. Though God had rejected the Jews, and called the Gentiles, who sought him not, (Romans 9:24-26,) yet a remnant from among the former shall be preserved, to whom he will in due time make good all his promises, 8-10. Denunciation of Divine vengeance against those idolaters who set in order a table for Gad, and fill out a libation to Meni, ancient idolatries, which, from the context, and from the chronological order of the events predicted, have a plain reference to the idolatries practiced by Antichrist under the guise of Christianity, 11, 12. Dreadful fate which awaits these gross idolaters beautifully contrasted with the great blessedness reserved for the righteous, 13-16. Future restoration of the posterity of Jacob, and the happy state of the world in general from that most glorious epoch, represented by the strong figure of the creation of NEW heavens and a NEW earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, and into which no distress shall be permitted to enter, 17-19. In this new state of things the term of human life shall be greatly protracted, and shall possess none of that uncertainty which attaches to it in "the heavens and the earth which are now. " This is elegantly illustrated by the longevity of a tree; manifestly alluding to the oak or cedar of Lebanon, some individuals of which are known to have lived from seven to ten centuries, 20-23. Beautiful figures shadowing forth the profound peace and harmony of the Church of Jesus Christ, which shall immediately follow the total overthrow of Antichrist; with a most gracious promise that the great chain of Omnipotence shall be put upon every adversary, so that none will be able any longer to hurt and destroy in all God's holy

mountain, 24, 25.

This chapter contains a defense of God's proceedings in regard to the Jews, with reference to their complaint in the chapter preceding. God is introduced declaring that he had called the Gentiles, though they had not sought him; and had rejected his own people for their refusal to attend to his repeated call; for their obstinate disobedience, their idolatrous practices, and detestable hypocrisy. That nevertheless he would not destroy them all; but would preserve a remnant, to whom he would make good his ancient promises. Severe punishments are threatened to the apostates; and great rewards are promised to the obedient in a future flourishing state of the Church. — L.

NOTES ON CHAP. 65

Verse 1. *I am sought of them that asked not for me* “*I am made known to those that asked not for me*”— נדרשתי nidrashti, εμφανης εγενομην, the Septuagint, Alexandrian, and St. Paul, Romans 10:20; who has however inverted the order of the phrases, εμφανης εγεομην, “I was made manifest, “and ευρεδην, “I was found, “from that which they have in the Septuagint. נדרשתי nidrashti means, “I am sought so as to be found. “ Vitringa. If this be the true meaning of the word, then שאלו shaalu, “that asked, “which follows, should seem defective, the verb wanting its object: but two MSS., one of them ancient, have שאלוני shealuni, “asked me; “ and another MS. שאלו לי shealu li, “asked for me; “ one or other of which seems to be right. But Cocceius in Lex., and Vitringa in his translation, render נדרשתי nidrashti, by “I have answered; “ and so the verb is rendered by all the ancient Versions in Ezekiel 20:3, 31. If this be right, the translation will be, “I have answered those that asked not. “ I leave this to the reader's judgment; but have followed in my translation the Septuagint and St. Paul, and the MSS. above mentioned. בקשני bikeshuni is written regularly and fully in above a hundred MSS. and in the oldest edition, בקשוני bikeshuni. — L.

Verse 3. *That sacrificeth in gardens, and burneth incense upon altars of*

brick “Sacrificing in the gardens, and burning incense on the tiles”— These are instances of heathenish superstition, and idolatrous practices, to which the Jews were immoderately addicted before the Babylonish captivity. The heathen worshipped their idols in groves; whereas God, in opposition to this species of idolatry, commanded his people, when they should come into the promised land, to destroy all the places wherein the Canaanites had served their gods, and in particular to burn their groves with fire, Deuteronomy 12:2, 3. These apostate Jews sacrificed upon altars built of bricks; in opposition to the command of God in regard to his altar, which was to be of unhewn stone, Exodus 20:26. Et pro uno altari, quod impolitis lapidibus Dei erat lege constructum, coctos lateres et agrorum cespites hostiarum sanguine cruentabant. “And instead of one altar which, according to the law of God, was, to be constructed of unhewn stones, they stained the bricks and turfs of the fields with the blood of their victims. “ Hieron. in loc. Or it means, perhaps, that they sacrificed upon the roofs of their houses, which were always flat, and paved with brick, or tile, or plaster of terrace. An instance of this idolatrous practice we find in 2 Kings 23:12, where it is said that Josiah “beat down the altars that were on the top of the upper chamber of Ahaz, which the kings of Judah had made. “ See also Zephaniah 1:5. Sir John Chardin’s MS. note on this place of Isaiah is as follows: “Ainsi font tous les Gentiles, sur les lieux eleves, et sur les terrasses, appelez latcres, pareeque sont faits de briq. “ “Who dwell in the sepulchres, and lodge in the caverns, “for the purposes of necromancy and divination; to obtain dreams and revelations. Another instance of heathenish superstition: so Virgil:—

*Huc dona sacerdos
 Cum tulit, et caesarum ovium sub nocte silenti
 Pellibus incubuit stratis, somnosque petivit:
 Multa modis simulacra videt volitantia miris,
 Et varias audit voces, fruiturque deorum
 Colloquio, atque imis Acheronta affatur Avernis.*

AEn. 7:86. — L.

*“Here in distress the Italian nations come,
Anxious, to clear their doubts, and learn their doom.
First, on the fleeces of the slaughtered sheep,
By night the sacred priest dissolves in sleep:
When in a train, before his slumbering eye,
Thin airy forms and wondrous visions fly.
He calls the powers who guard the infernal floods,
And talks inspired, familiar with the gods.”*

PITT.

There was a practice exactly like this which prevailed among the Highlanders of Scotland; an authentic account of this is given by Sir Walter Scott, in a note on his poem called *The Lady of the Lake*. It is as follows:—

“The Highlanders, like all rude people, had various superstitious modes of inquiring into futurity. One of the most noted was the Taghairm, mentioned in the text. A person was wrapped up in the skin of a newly-slain bullock, and deposited beside a waterfall, or at the bottom of a precipice, or in some other strange, wild, and unusual situation, where the scenery around him suggested nothing but objects of horror. In this situation he revolved in his mind the question proposed; and whatever was impressed upon him by his exalted imagination passed for the inspiration of the disembodied spirits who haunt these desolate recesses. In some of the Hebrides, they attributed the same oracular power to a large black stone by the sea-shore, which they approached with certain solemnities; and considered the first fancy which came into their own minds after they did so, to be the undoubted dictate of the tutelary deity of the stone; and as such to be, if possible, punctually complied with. Martin has recorded the following curious modes of Highland augury, in which the Taghairm, and its effects upon the person who was subjected to it, may serve to illustrate the text.

“It was an ordinary thing among the over-curious to consult an invisible oracle concerning the fate of families and battles, etc. This was performed three different ways; the first was by a company of men, one of whom,

being detached by lot, was afterwards carried to a river, which was the boundary between two villages. Four of the company laid hold on him; and, having shut his eyes, they took him by the legs and arms, and then, tossing him to and again, struck his hips with force against the bank. One of them cried out, What is it you have got here? Another answers, A log of birch-wood. The other cries again, Let his invisible friends appear from all quarters, and let them relieve him by giving an answer to our present demands; and in a few minutes after, a number of little creatures came from the sea, who answered the question, and disappeared suddenly. The man was then set at liberty; and they all returned home, to take their measures according to the prediction of their false prophets; but the poor deluded fools were abused, for the answer was still ambiguous. This was always practiced in the night, and may literally be called the works of darkness.

“I had an account from the most intelligent and judicious men in the Isle of Skie, that, about sixty-two years ago, the oracle was thus consulted only once, and that was in the parish of Kilmartin, on the east side, by a wicked and mischievous race of people, who are now extinguished, both root and branch.

“The second way of consulting the oracle was by a party of men, who first retired to solitary places, remote from any house; and there they singled out one of their number, and wrapt him in a big cow’s hide, which they folded about him. His whole body was covered with it, except his head, and so left in this posture all night, until his invisible friends relieved him, by giving a proper answer to the question in hand; which he received, as he fancied, from several persons that he found about him all that time. His consorts returned to him at the break of day, and then he communicated his news to them; which often proved fatal to those concerned in such unwarrantable inquiries.

“There was a third way of consulting, which was a confirmation of the second above mentioned. The same company who put the man into the hide took a live cat, and put him on a spit. One of the number was employed to turn the spit, and one of his consorts inquired of him, What are you doing? He answered, I roast this cat until his friends answer the question; which must be the same that was proposed by the man shut up

in the hide. And afterwards, a very big cat (in allusion to the story of ‘the King of the Cats,’ in Lord Lyttleton’s Letters, and well known in the Highlands as a nursery tale) comes, attended by a number of lesser cats, desiring to relieve the cat turned upon the spit, and then answers the question. If this answer proved the same that was given to the man in the hide, then it was taken as a confirmation of the other, which, in this case, was believed infallible.

“Mr. Alexander Cooper, present minister of North-Vist, told me that one John Erach, in the Isle of Lewis, assured him it was his fate to have been led by his curiosity with some who consulted this oracle, and that he was a night within the hide, as above-mentioned; during which time he felt and heard such terrible things, that he could not express them. The impression it made on him was such as could never go off; and he said for a thousand worlds he would never again be concerned in the like performance, for this had disordered him to a high degree. He confessed it ingenuously, and with an air of great remorse; and seemed to be very penitent under a just sense of so great a crime. He declared this about five years since, and is still living in the Lewis for any thing I know.” —Description of the Western Isles p. 110. See also PENNANT’S Scottish Tour, vol. 2:p. 361.

Verse 4. Which remain among the graves— “For the purpose of evoking the dead. They lodged in desert places that demons might appear to them; for demons do appear in such places, to those who do believe in them.” —Kimchi.

In the monuments “In the caverns”— בַּנְצוּרִים bannetsurim, a word of doubtful signification. An ancient MS. has בַּצוּרִים batstsurim, another בַּצְרִים batstsurim, “in the rocks; “ and Le Clec thinks the Septuagint had it so in their copy. They render it by *εν τοις σπηλαισις*, “in the caves.”

Which eat swine’s flesh— This was expressly forbidden by the law, Leviticus 11:7, but among the heathen was in principal request in their sacrifices and feasts. Antiochus Epiphanes compelled the Jews to eat swine’s flesh, as a full proof of their renouncing their religion, 2 Mac. 6:18 and 7:1. “And the broth of abominable meats, “for lustrations, magical

arts, and other superstitious and abominable practices.

In their vessels— For כליהם keleyhem, a MS. had at first בכליהם bichleyhem. So the Vulgate and Chaldee, (and the preposition seems necessary to the sense,) “in their vessels.”

Verse 5. For I am holier than thou— So the Chaldee renders it. קדשתך kedashticha is the same with קדשתי ממך kadashti mimmecha. In the same manner חזקתני chazaktani, Jeremiah 20:7, is used for חזאקת ממני chazacta mimmenni, “thou art stronger than I.” —L.

Verse 6. Behold, it is written before me— Their sin is registered in heaven, calling aloud for the punishment due to it.

I will-recompense into their bosom— The bosom is the place where the Asiatics have their pockets, and not in their skirts like the inhabitants of the west. Their loose flowing garments have scarcely any thing analogous to skirts.

Into their bosom— For על al, ten MSS. and five editions have אל el. So again at the end of this verse, seventeen MSS. and four editions have אל al. — L.

Verse 7. Your iniquities, and the iniquities of your fathers “*Their iniquities, and the iniquities of their fathers*” — For the pronoun affixed of the second person חם chem, your, twice, read חם hem, their, in the third person; with the Septuagint and Houbigant. — L.

Verse 8. A blessing is in it— The Hebrews call all things which serve for food ברכה berachah, “a blessing.” On this verse Kimchi remarks: “As the cluster of grapes contains, besides the juice, the bark, and the kernels, so the Israelites have, besides the just, sinners among them. Now as the cluster must not be destroyed because there is a blessing, a nutritive part in it; so Israel shall not be destroyed, because there are righteous persons in it. But as the bark and kernels are thrown away, when the wine is pressed out, so shall the sinners be purged away from among the just, and

on their return from exile, shall not be permitted to enter into the land of Israel; “Ezekiel 20:38.

For my servant's sakes “*For the sake of my servant*”—It is to be observed that one of the Koningsburg MSS. collated by Lilienthal points the word עבדי abdi, singular; that is, “my servant,” meaning the Messiah; and so read the Septuagint, which gives a very good sense. In two of my old MSS. it is pointed עבדאי abadai, and עבדי abdi, “my servant,” “this confirms the above reading.

Verse 9. *An inheritor of my mountains* “*An inheritor of my mountain*”—הרי hari, in the singular number; so the Septuagint and Syriac; that is, of Mount Sion. See ver. 11 and chap. 56:7, to which Sion, the pronoun feminine singular, added to the verb in the next line, refers; ירשוה yereshuah, “shall inherit her.”—L.

Verse 10. *Sharon-and the valley of Achor*—Two of the most fertile parts of Judea; famous for their rich pastures; the former to the west, not far from Joppa; the latter north of Jericho, near Gilgal.

Verse 11. *That prepare a table for that troop* “*Who set in order a table for Gad*”—The disquisitions and conjectures of the learned concerning Gad and Meni are infinite and uncertain: perhaps the most probable may be, that Gad means good fortune, and Meni the moon. “But why should we be solicitous about it?” says Schmidius. “It appears sufficiently, from the circumstances, that they were false gods; either stars, or some natural objects; or a mere fiction. The Holy Scriptures did not deign to explain more clearly what these objects of idolatrous worship were; but chose rather, that the memory of the knowledge of them should be utterly abolished. And God be praised, that they are so totally abolished, that we are now quite at a loss to know what and what sort of things they were.”—Schmidius on the place, and on Jud. 2:13, Bibl. Hallensia.

Jerome, on the place, gives an account of this idolatrous practice of the apostate Jews, of making a feast, or a lectisternium, as the Romans called it, for these pretended deities. Est in cunctis urbibus, et maxime in

Ægypto, et in Alexandria, idololatriæ vetus consuetudo, ut ultimo die anni, et mensis ejus qui extremus est, ponant mensam refertam varii generis epulis, et poculum mulso mixtum; vel præteriti anni vel futuri fertilitatem auspicantes. Hoc autem faciebant et Israelitæ, omnium simulachrorum portenta venerantes; et nequaquam altari victimas, sed hujusmodi mensæ liba fundebant. “In all cities, and especially in Egypt and Alexandria, it was an ancient idolatrous custom on the last day of the year, to spread a table covered with various kinds of viands, and a goblet mixed with new wine, referring to the fertility either of the past or coming year. The Israelites did the same, worshipping all kinds of images, and pouring out libations on such tables, “etc. See also Le Clerc on the place; and on 66:17, and Dav. Millii Dissert. v.

The allusion to Meni, which signifies number, is obvious. If there had been the like allusion to Gad, which might have been expected, it might perhaps have helped to let us into the meaning of that word. It appears from Jerome’s version of this place, that the words **τω δαιμονιω**, to a demon, (or **δαιμονι**, as some copies have it,) and **τη τυχη**, to fortune, stood in his time in the Greek version in an inverted order from that which they have in the present copies; the latter then answering to **גַּד** gad, the former to **מְנִי** meni: by which some difficulty would be avoided; for it is commonly supposed that **גַּד** gad signifies **τυχη**, Fortune. See Genesis 30:11, apud Sept. This matter is so far well cleared up by MSS. Pachom. and 1:D. II., which agree in placing these two words in that order, which Jerome’s version supposes. — L.

My Old MS. Bible translates: That putten the borde of fortune; and offreden licours upon it; and so the Vulgate.

ἔτοιμαζοντες τω δαιμονιω τραπεζαν, και πληρουντες τη τυχη κερασμα. Preparing a table for the demon, and filling up, or pouring out, a libation to fortune.” —Septuagint.

*Ye have set up an aulter unto fortune
And geven rich drink offeringes unto treasure.*

Verse 12. *Therefore will I number you*— Referring to Meni, which signifies number “Rabbi Eliezar said to his disciples, Turn to God one day before you die. His disciples said, How can a man know the day of his death? He answered, Therefore it is necessary that you should turn to God to-day, for possibly ye may die to-morrow.”

Verse 13. *My servants shalt eat, but ye shall be hungry*— Rabbi Joachan ben Zachai said in a parable: There was a king who invited his servants, but set them no time to come to the feast. The prudent and wary who were among them adorned themselves; and, standing at the gate of the king’s house, said, Is there any thing lacking in the king’s house? i.e., Is there any work to be done in it? But the foolish which were among them went, and mocking said, When shall the feast be, in which there is no labor? Suddenly, the king sought out his servants: they who were adorned entered in, and they who were still polluted entered in also. The king was glad when he met the prudent, but he was angry when he met the foolish. Therefore he said, Let those sit down, and let them eat; but let these stand and look on.

This parable is very like that of the wise and foolish virgins, Matthew xxv., and that of the marriage of the king’s son, Matthew xxii.

Verse 15. *Shall slay thee “Shall slay you”*— For **והמיתך** vehemithecha, shall slay thee, the Septuagint and Chaldee read **והמיתכם** vehemithechem, shall slay you, plural.

Verse 17. *I create new heavens and a new earth*— This has been variously understood. Some Jews and some Christians understand it literally. God shall change the state of the atmosphere, and render the earth more fruitful. Some refer it to what they call the Millennium; others, to a glorious state of religion; others, to the re-creation of the earth after it shall have been destroyed by fire. I think it refers to the full conversion of the Jews ultimately; and primarily to the deliverance from the Babylonish captivity.

Verse 18. *Rejoice for ever in that which I create “Exult in the age to*

come which I create”— So in chap. 9:5 אָבִי אֲדֹנָי *abi ad*, πατήρ του μελλοντος αιωνος, “the father of the age to come,” Sept. See Bishop Chandler, *Defence of Christianity*, p. 136.

Verse 19. *The voice of weeping*, etc.— “Because of untimely deaths shall no more be heard in thee; for natural death shall not happen till men be full of days; as it is written, ver. 20: There shall be no more thence an infant of days, i.e., the people shall live to three or five hundred years of age, as in the days of the patriarchs; and if one die at one hundred years, it is because of his sin; and even at that age he shall be reputed an infant; and they shall say of him, An infant is dead. These things shall happen to Israel in the days of the Messiah.” —Kimchi.

Verse 20. *Thence “There”*— For מִשָּׁם *mishsham*, thence, the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate, read שָׁם *sham*, there.

Verse 22. *They shall not build, and another inhabit*— The reverse of the curse denounced on the disobedient, Deuteronomy 28:30: “Thou shalt build a house, and thou shalt not dwell therein; thou shalt plant a vineyard, and shalt not gather the grapes thereof.”

For as the days of a tree— It is commonly supposed that the oak, one of the most longlived of the trees, lasts about a thousand years; being five hundred years growing to full perfection, and as many decaying: which seems to be a moderate and probable computation. See Evelyn, *Sylva*, B. 3:chap. 3: The present emperor of China, in his very ingenious and sensible poem entitled *Eloge de Moukden*, a translation of which in French was published at Paris, 1770, speaks of a tree in his country which lives more than a hundred ages: and another, which after fourscore ages is only in its prime, pp. 37, 38. But his imperial majesty’s commentators, in their note on the place, carry the matter much farther; and quote authority, which affirms, that the tree last mentioned by the emperor, the immortal tree, after having lived ten thousand years, is still only in its prime. I suspect that the Chinese enlarge somewhat in their national chronology, as well as in that of their trees. See *Chou King*. Preface, by Mons. de Guignes. The prophet’s idea seems to be, that they shall live to the age of the

antediluvians; which seems to be very justly expressed by the days of a tree, according to our notions. The rabbins have said that this refers to the tree of life, which endures five hundred years. — L.

Verse 23. *They shall not labor in vain* “*My chosen shall not labor in vain*”— I remove בְּחִירַי bechirai, my elect, from the end of the twenty-second to the beginning of the twenty-third verse, on the authority of the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate, and a MS.; contrary to the division in the Masoretic text. — L. The Septuagint is beautiful: My chosen shall not labor in vain, neither shall they beget children for the curse; for the seed is blessed of the Lord, and their posterity with them.”

Nor bring forth for trouble “*Neither shall they generate a short-lived race*”— לַבְּהִלָּה labbehalah, in festinationem, “what shall soon hasten away.” εἰς καταραὴν for a curse, Sept. They seem to have read לְאֵלֶּה lealah. — Grotius. But Psalm lxxviii. 33 both justifies and explains the word here:—

וַיִּכַּל בַּהֲבֵל יְמֵיהֶם
yemeyhem bahebel vayechal

וּשְׁנוֹתָם בַּבְּהִלָּה
babbhehalah ushenotham

“And he consumed their days in vanity;
And their years in haste.”

μετὰ σπουδῆς, say the Septuagint. Jerome on this place of Isaiah explains it to the same purpose: “εἰς ἀνυπαρξίαν, hoc est, ut esse desistant.”

Verse 24. *Before they call, I will answer*— I will give them In all they crave for, and more than they can desire.

Verse 25. *The wolf and the lamb*, etc.— The glorious salvation which Jesus Christ procures is for men, and for men only: fallen spirits must still abide under the curse: “He took not on him the nature of angels, but the

seed of Abraham.”

Shall feed together— For כִּיעַחַד keechad, as one, an ancient MS. has יַחַדַּי yachday, together; the usual word, to the same sense, but very different in the letters. The Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate seem to agree with the MSS. — L.

CHAPTER 66

This chapter treats of the same subject with the foregoing. God, by his prophet, tells the Jews, who valued themselves much on their temple and pompous worship, that the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; and that no outward rites of worship, while the worshippers are idolatrous and impure, can please him who looketh at the heart, 1-3. This leads to a threatening of vengeance for their guilt, alluding to their making void the law of God by their abominable traditions, their rejection of Christ, persecution of his followers, and consequent destruction by the Romans. But as the Jewish ritual and people shadow forth the system of Christianity and its professors; so, in the prophetic writings, the idolatries of the Jews are frequently put for the idolatries afterwards practiced by those bearing the Christian name. Consequently, if we would have the plenitude of meaning in this section of prophecy, which the very content requires, we must look through the type into the antitype, viz., the very gross idolatries practiced by the members of Antichrist, the pompous heap of human intentions and traditions with which they have encumbered the Christian system, their most dreadful persecution of Christ's spiritual and true worshippers, and the awful judgments which shall overtake them in the great and terrible day of the Lord, 4-6. The mighty and sudden increase of the Church of Jesus Christ at the period of Antichrist's fall represented by the very strong figure of Sion being delivered of a man-child before the time of her travail, the meaning of which symbol the prophet immediately subjoins in a series of interrogations for the sake of greater force and emphasis, 7-9. Wonderful prosperity and unspeakable blessedness of the world when the posterity of Jacob, with the fullness of the Gentiles, shall be assembled to Messiah's standard, 10-14. All the wicked of the earth shall be gathered together to the battle of that great day of God Almighty, and the slain of Jehovah shall be many, 15-18. Manner of the future restoration of the Israelites from their several dispersions throughout the habitable globe, 19-21. Perpetuity of this new economy of grace to the house of Israel, 22. Righteousness shall be universally diffused in the earth; and the memory of those who have transgressed against the Lord shall be had in

continual abhorrence, 23, 24. Thus this great prophet, after tracing the principal events of time, seems at length to have terminated his views in eternity, where all revolutions cease, where the blessedness of the righteous shall be unchangeable as the new heavens, and the misery of the wicked as the fire that shall not be quenched.

NOTES ON CHAP. 66

This chapter is a continuation of the subject of the foregoing. The Jews valued themselves much upon their temple, and the pompous system of services performed in it, which they supposed were to be of perpetual duration; and they assumed great confidence and merit to themselves for their strict observance of all the externals of their religion. And at the very time when the judgments denounced in verses 6 and 12 of the preceding chapter were hanging over their heads, they were rebuilding, by Herod's munificence, the temple in a most magnificent manner. God admonishes them, that "the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; " and that a mere external worship, how diligently soever attended, when accompanied with wicked and idolatrous practices in the worshippers, would never be accepted by him. This their hypocrisy is set forth in strong colors, which brings the prophet again to the subject of the former chapter; and he pursues it in a different manner, with more express declaration of the new economy, and of the flourishing state of the Church under it. The increase of the Church is to be sudden and astonishing. They that escape of the Jews, that is, that become converts to the Christian faith, are to be employed in the Divine mission to the Gentiles, and are to act as priests in presenting the Gentiles as an offering to God; see Romans 15:16. And both, now collected into one body, shall be witnesses of the final perdition of the obstinate and irreclaimable.

These two chapters manifestly relate to the calling of the Gentiles, the establishment of the Christian dispensation, and the reprobation of the apostate Jews, and their destruction executed by the Romans. — L.

Verse 2. *And all those things have been "And all these things are mine"*— A word absolutely necessary to the sense is here lost out of the

text: לִי li, mine. It is preserved by the Septuagint and Syriac.

Verse 3. *He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man* “*He that slayeth an ox killeth a man*”— These are instances of wickedness joined with hypocrisy; of the most flagitious crimes committed by those who at the same time affected great strictness in the performance of all the external services of religion. God, by the Prophet Ezekiel, upbraids the Jews with the same practices: “When they had slain their children to their idols, then they came the same day into my sanctuary to profane it, “chap. 23:39. Of the same kind was the hypocrisy of the Pharisees in our Savior’s time: “who devoured widows’ houses, and for a pretense made long prayers, “Matthew 23:14.

The generality of interpreters, by departing from the literal rendering of the text, have totally lost the true sense of it, and have substituted in its place what makes no good sense at all; for it is not easy to show how, in any circumstances, sacrifice and murder, the presenting of legal offerings and idolatrous worship, can possibly be of the same account in the sight of God.

***He that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine’s blood* “*That maketh an oblation offereth swine’s blood*”**— A word here likewise, necessary to complete the sense, is perhaps irrecoverably lost out of the text. The Vulgate and Chaldee add the word offereth, to make out the sense; not, as I imagine, from any different reading, (for the word wanted seems to have been lost before the time of the oldest of them as the Septuagint had it not in their copy,; but from mere necessity.

Le Clerc thinks that מעלה maaleh is to be repeated from the beginning of this member; but that is not the case in the parallel members, which have another and a different verb in the second place, “דם dam, sic Versiones; putarem tamen legendum participium aliquod, et quidem זבח zabach, cum sequatur ח cheth, nisi jam praecesserat.” —SECKER. Houbigant supplies אכל achal, eateth. After all, I think the most probable word is that which the Chaldee and Vulgate seem to have designed to represent; that is, מקריב makrib, offereth.

In their abominations.— **ובשקוציהם** ubeshikkutseyhem, “and in their abominations; “ two copies of the Machazor, and one of Kennicott’s MSS. have **ובגלוליהם** ubegilluleyhem, “and in their idols. “ So the Vulgate and Syriac.

Verse 5. Your brethren that hated you— *Say ye to your brethren that hate you*— The Syriac reads **אמרו לאחיהכם** imru laacheychem; and so the Septuagint, Edit. Comp. **αδελφοις αδελφοις υμων** and MS. Marchal. has **αδελφοις** and so Cyril and Procopius read and explain it. It is not easy to make sense of the reading of the Septuagint in the other editions; **ειπατε αδελφοι ημων τοις μισουσιν υμας** but for **ημων**, our, MS. 1:D. 2:also has **υμων**, your.

Verse 6. A voice of noise from the city, a voice from the temple, a voice of the Lord— It is very remarkable that similar words were spoken by Jesus, son of Ananias, previously to the destruction of Jerusalem. See his very affecting history related by Josephus, WAR, B. vi., chap. v.

Verse 8. Who hath seen *“And who hath seen”*— Twenty MSS., (four ancient,) of Kennicott’s, and twenty-nine of De Rossi’s, and two ancient of my own, and the two oldest editions, with two others, have **ומי** umi, adding the conjunction **ו** vau; and so read all the ancient versions. **AND who hath seen?**

Verse 9. Shall I bring to the birth— **האני אשביר** haani ashbir, num ego matricem frangam; MONTANUS. The word means that which immediately precedes the appearance of the fetus—the breaking forth of the liquor amnii. This also is an expression that should be studiously avoided in prayers and sermons.

Verse 11. With the abundance of her glory *“From her abundant stores.”*— For **מזיו** mizziz, from the splendor, two MSS. and the old edition of 1488, have **מזיו** mizziv; and the latter **ז** zain is upon a rasure in three other MSS. It is remarkable that Kimchi and Sal. ben Melec, not being able to make any thing of the word as it stands in the text, say it

means the same with מִזִּיב׃ mizziv; that is, in effect, they admit of a various reading, or an error in the text. But as Vitringa observes, what sense is there in sucking nourishment from the splendor of her glory? He therefore endeavors to deduce another sense of the word זִיב׃ ziz; but, as far as it appears to me, without any authority. I am more inclined to accede to the opinion of those learned rabbins, and to think that there is some mistake in the word; for that in truth is their opinion, though they disguise it by saying that the corrupted word means the very same with that which they believe to be genuine. So in chap. 41:24 they say that אֶפֶס׃ apha, a viper, means the same with אֶפֶס׃ ephes, nothing; instead of acknowledging that one is written by mistake instead of the other. I would propose to read in this place מִזִּין׃ mizzin or מִזֶּן׃ mizzen, which is the reading of one of De Rossi's MS., (instead of מִזִּיב׃ meziz,) from the stores, from זֶן׃ zun, to nourish, to feed; see Genesis 45:23; 2 Chronicles 11:23; Psalm 144:13. And this perhaps may be meant by Aquila, who renders the word by ἀπο παντοδαπιας with which that of the Vulgate, ab omnimoda gloria, and of Symmachus and Theodotion, nearly agree. The Chaldee follows a different reading, without improving the sense; מֵי׃ meyin, from the wine. — L.

Verse 12. *Like a river, and-like a flowing stream* “*Like the great river, and like the overflowing stream*”— That is, the Euphrates, (it ought to have been pointed כַּנְהָר׃ cannahar, ut fluvius ille, as the river,) and the Nile.

Then shall ye suck “*And ye shall suck at the breast*”— These two words אֶל שָׂד׃ al shad, at the breast, seem to have been omitted in the present text, from their likeness to the two words following; אֶל צֶד׃ al tsad, at the side. A very probable conjecture of Houbigant. The Chaldee and Vulgate have omitted the two latter words instead of the two former. See note on chap. 60:4.

Verse 15. *The Lord will come with fire* “*JEHOVAH shall come as a fire*”— For בָּאֵשׁ׃ baesh, in fire, the Septuagint had in their copy קֵאֵשׁ׃ kaesh, as a fire; ὡς πῦρ.

To render his anger with fury “*To breathe forth his anger in a burning heat*”— Instead of לִהְשִׁיב lehashib, as pointed by the Masorettes, to render, I understand it as לִהְשִׁיב lehashshib, to breathe, from נָשַׁב nashab.

Verse 17. Behind one tree “*After the rites of Achad*”— The Syrians worshipped a god called Adad, Plin. Nat. Hist. 37:11; Macrobi. Sat. 1:23. They held him to be the highest and greatest of the gods, and to be the same with Jupiter and the sun; and the name Adad, says Macrobius, signifies one; as likewise does the word Achad in Isaiah. Many learned men therefore have supposed, and with some probability, that the prophet means the same pretended deity. אַחַד achad, in the Syrian and Chaldean dialects, is אַחַד chad; and perhaps by reduplication of the last letter to express perfect unity, it may have become אַחַדַּח chadad, not improperly expressed by Macrobius Adad, without the aspirate. It was also pronounced by the Syrians themselves, with a weaker aspirate, אַחַדַּח hadad, as in Benhadad, Hadadezer, names of their kings, which were certainly taken from their chief object of worship. This seems to me to be a probable account of this name.

But the Masorettes correct the text in this place. Their marginal reading is אַחַת achath which is the same word, only in the feminine form; and so read thirty MSS. (six ancient) and the two oldest editions. This Le Clerc approves, and supposes it to mean Hecate, or the moon; and he supports his hypothesis by arguments not at all improbable. See his note on the place.

Whatever the particular mode of idolatry which the prophet refers to might be, the general sense of the place is perfectly clear. But the Chaldee and Syriac, and after them Symmachus and Theodotion, cut off at once all these difficulties, by taking the word אַחַד achad in its common meaning, not as a proper name; the two latter rendering the sentence thus: **οπισω αλληλων εν μεσω εσθιοντων το κρεας το χοιρειον**; “One after another, in the midst of those that eat swine’s flesh. “ I suppose they all read in their copies אַחַד אַחַד achad achad, one by one, or perhaps אַחַד אַחַד אַחַד achad achar achad, one after another. See a large dissertation on

this subject in Davidis Millii Dissertationes Selectae, Dissert. vi. — L.

I know not what to make of this place; it is certain that our translation makes no sense, and that of the learned prelate seems to me too refined. Kimchi interprets this of the Turks, who are remarkable for ablutions. “Behind one in the midst “ he understands of a large fish-pond placed in the middle of their gardens. Others make אַחַד achad a deity, as above; and a deity of various names it is supposed to be, for it is Achad, and Chad, and Hadad, and Achath, and Hecat, an Assyrian idol. Behynd the fyrst tree or the gate withine forth. — Old MS. Bible.

Verse 18. *For I know their works*— A word is here lost out of the present text, leaving the text quite imperfect. The word is יודע yodea, knowing, supplied from the Syriac. The Chaldee had the same word in the copy before him, which he paraphrases by קדמי גל kedemi gelon, their deeds are manifest before me; and the Aldine and Complutensian editions of the Septuagint acknowledge the same word *ἐπισταμαται*, which is verified by MS. Pachom. and the Arabic version. I think there can be little doubt of its being genuine. The concluding verses of this chapter refer to the complete restoration of the Jews, and to the destruction of all the enemies of the Gospel of Christ, so that the earth shall be filled with the knowledge and glory of the Lord. Talia saecla currite! Lord, hasten the time!

It shall come “And I come”— For באה baah, which will not accord with any thing in the sentence, I read בא ba, with a MS.; the participle answering to יודע yodea, with which agree the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate. Perhaps it ought to be ובא veba, when I shall come, Syr.; and so the Septuagint, according to Edit. Ald. and Complut., and Cod. Marchal.

Verse 19. *That draw the bow*— I much suspect that the words קשת משכי moshechey kesheth, who draw the bow, are a corruption of the word משך meshek, Moschi, the name of a nation situated between the Euxine and Caspian seas; and properly joined with תבל tubal, the Tibareni. See Bochart, Phaleg. 3:12. The Septuagint have *μωσχο*, without

any thing of the drawers of the bow: the word being once taken for a participle, the bow was added to make sense of it קשת kesheth, the bow, is omitted in a MS. and by the Septuagint.

That have not heard my fame “*Who never heard my name*”— For שמעי shimi, my fame, I read, with the Septuagint and Syriac, שמי shemi, my name.

Verse 20. And in chariots “*And in couses*”— There is a sort of vehicle much used in the east, consisting of a pair of hampers or cradles, thrown across a camel’s back, one on each side; in each of which a person is carried. They have a covering to defend them from the rain and the sun. Thevenot calls them couses, 1:p. 356. Maillet describes them as covered cages hanging on both sides of a camel. “At Aleppo, “says Dr. Russell, “women of inferior condition in longer journeys are commonly stowed, one on each side of a mule, in a sort of covered cradles. “ Nat. Hist. of Aleppo, p. 89. These seem to be what the prophet means by the word צבִים tsabbim. Harmer’s Observations, 1:p. 445.

Verse 21. And for Levites— For ללויים laleviyim, fifty-nine MSS., (eight ancient,) have וללויים velaleviyim, adding the conjunction ו vau, which the sense seems necessarily to require: and so read all the ancient versions. See Joshua 3:3, and the various readings on that place in Kennicott’s Bible.

Verse 24. For their worm shall not die— These words of the prophet are applied by our blessed Savior, Mark 9:44, to express the everlasting punishment of the wicked in Gehenna, or in hell. Gehenna, or the valley of Hinnom, was very near to Jerusalem to the south-east: it was the place where the idolatrous Jews celebrated that horrible rite of making their children pass through the fire, that is, of burning them in sacrifice to Moloch. To put a stop to this abominable practice, Josiah defiled, or desecrated, the place, by filling it with human bones, 2 Kings 23:10, 14; and probably it was the custom afterwards to throw out the carcasses of animals there, when it also became the common burying place for the poorer people of Jerusalem. Our Savior expressed the state of the blessed by sensible images; such as paradise, Abraham’s bosom, or, which is the

same thing, a place to recline next to Abraham at table in the kingdom of heaven. See Matthew 8:11. *Coenabat Nerva cum paucis. Veiento proxies, atque etiam in sinu recumbemat.* “The Emperor Nerva supped with few. Veiento was the first in his estimation, and even reclined in his bosom.” Plin. Epist. 4:22. Compare John 13:23; for we could not possibly have any conception of it but by analogy from worldly objects. In like manner he expressed the place of torment under the image of Gehenna; and the punishment of the wicked by the worm which there preyed on the carcasses, and the fire that consumed the wretched victims. Marking however, in the strongest manner, the difference between Gehenna and the invisible place of torment; namely, that in the former the suffering is transient: — the worm itself which preys upon the body, dies; and the fire which totally consumes it, is soon extinguished: — whereas in the figurative Gehenna the instruments of punishment shall be everlasting, and the suffering without end; “for there the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.”

These emblematical images, expressing heaven and hell, were in use among the Jews before our Savior’s time; and in using them he complied with their notions. “Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God,” says the Jew to our Savior, Luke 14:15. And in regard to Gehenna, the Chaldee paraphrase as I observed before on chap. 30:33, renders everlasting or continual burnings by “the Gehenna of everlasting fire.” And before his time the son of Sirach, chap. 7:17, had said, “The vengeance of the ungodly is fire and worms.” So likewise the author of the book of Judith, chap. 16:17: “Wo to the nations rising up against my kindred: the Lord Almighty will take vengeance of them in the day of judgment, in putting fire and worms in their flesh;” manifestly referring to the same emblem. — L.

Kimchi’s conclusion of his notes on this book is remarkable:—

“Blessed be God who hath created the mountains and the hills,

And hath endued me with strength to finish the book of salvation:

He shall rejoice us with good tidings and reports;

He shall show us a token for good:—

And the end of his miracles he shall cause to approach us.”

Several of the Versions have a peculiarity in their terminations:—

And they shall be to a satiety of sight to all flesh.

VULGATE.

And thei schul ben into fyllyng of sigt to all fleshe.

Old MS. BIBLE.

And they shall be as a vision to all flesh.

SEPTUAGINT.

And the wicked shall be punished in hell till the righteous shall say, — It is enough.

CHALDEE.

They shall be an astonishment to all flesh; So that they shall be a spectacle to all beings.

SYRIAC.

The end of the prophecy of Isaiah the prophet. Praise to God who is truly praiseworthy.

ARABIC.

One of my old Hebrew MSS. after the twenty-first verse repeats the twenty-third: “And it shall come to pass that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord.”

MASORETIC NOTES

Number of verses in this book, 1295.

Middle verse, — Chap. 33:21.

Masoretic sections, 26.

חזק chazak, Be strong.

In the course of these notes the reader will have often observed two MSS. of the Septuagint referred to by Bp. Lowth, and marked 1:B. II., 1:D. 2: They are both in the British Museum. The former contains the prophets, and was written about the tenth or eleventh century; and because it once belonged to Pachomius, patriarch of Constantinople, in the beginning of the sixteenth century, the bishop often quotes it by the title MS. Pachom. The other contains many of the historical books, beginning with Ruth, and ending with Ezra; and has also the Prophet Isaiah. This MS. consists of two parts, — one apparently written in the eleventh or twelfth century; the other, in the beginning of the fourteenth. Dr. Grabe and Dr. Woide, as well as Bp. Lowth, considered these MSS. of great value and authority.

It may be necessary to say something of the Hebrew MSS. which I have also frequently quoted. The collations of Kennicott and De Rossi have been long before the public, and to describe them would be useless. The collections of the latter Bp. Lowth had never seen, else he could have strengthened his authorities: these, for the first time, I have in the preceding notes incorporated with Bishop Lowth's references, and thus added double strength to the learned prelate's authorities. But of my own I should say something, as they form no part of the above collections; and yet are among the oldest MSS. known to exist. Independently of rolls, which contain only the Megillah, Esther, and the Pentateuch, they are ten in number, and formerly belonged to the Revelation Cornelius Schulting, a Protestant minister of Amsterdam. After his death in 1726, they were sold by public auction, and came into the possession of the Revelation John Van der Hagen, a reformed minister of the same place.

In 1733, Jo. Christ. Wolf described these MSS. in the fourth volume of his *Bibliotheca Hebraea*, p. 79. A few years ago I had the singular good

fortune to purchase the whole of these at Utrecht; a collection of MSS., which Dr. Kennicott complains that he could not by any entreaties obtain the privilege of collating. These are his own words, “Wolfius, (Bib. Hebrews 4:79-82,) memorat codices 10. olim penes Schultingium; quorum plurimi postea erant penes Revelation Joh. Van der Hagen. Usum Codd. Hagenianorum obtinere nulla potuit a me precatio. “ Dissert. Gener. p. 78. sub Cod. 84. Dr. Kennicott supposed that three of those MSS. had been collated for him: but in this I believe he was mistaken; as he was also in supposing that only the greater part of the ten MSS. of Schulting had fallen into the hands of Mr. Van der Hagen; for the fact is, the whole ten were purchased by Van der Hagen, and the same ten are now in my library, being precisely those described by Wolfius, as above. I have collated the Prophet Isaiah throughout, in two of the most ancient of these MSS.; and have added their testimony in many places to the various readings collected by Kennicott and De Rossi. The very bad state of my health, and particularly of my eyes, prevented a more extensive collation

sense of the passage, just as the rendering of a translator into another language is his sense. The points have been considered as part of the Hebrew text, and as giving the meaning of it on no less than Divine authority. Accordingly our public translations in the modern tongues, for the use of the Church among Protestants, and so likewise the modern Latin translations, are for the most part close copies of the Hebrew pointed text, and are in reality only versions at second hand, translations of the Jews' interpretation of the Old Testament.

“To what a length an opinion lightly taken up, and embraced with a full assent without due examination, may be carried, we may see in another example of much the same kind. The learned of the Church of Rome, who have taken the liberty of giving translations of Scripture in the modern languages, have for the most part subjected and devoted themselves to a prejudice equally groundless and absurd. The Council of Trent declared the Latin translation of the Scriptures, called the Vulgate, which had been for many ages in use in their Church, to be authentic; a very ambiguous term, which ought to have been more precisely defined than the fathers of this council chose to define it. Upon this ground many contended that the Vulgate Version was dictated by the Holy Spirit; at least was providentially guarded against all error; was consequently of Divine authority, and more to be regarded than even the original Hebrew and Greek texts.

“But a very fruitful source of error proceeded from the Jewish copyists consulting more the fair appearance of their copy than the correctness of it, by wilfully leaving mistakes uncorrected, lest by erasing they should diminish the beauty and the value of the transcript, (for instance, when they had written a word or part of a word wrong, and immediately saw their mistake, they left the mistake uncorrected, and wrote the word anew after it;) their scrupulous regard to the evenness and fullness of their lines, which induced them to cut off from the ends of lines a letter or letters for which there was not sufficient room, (for they never divided a word, so that the parts of it should belong to two lines,) and to add to the ends of lines letters wholly insignificant, by way of expletives to fill up a vacant space: their custom of writing part of a word at the end of a line, where there was not room for the whole, and then giving the whole word at the

beginning of the next line.

“These circumstances considered, it would be the most astonishing of all miracles, if the Hebrew writings of the Old Testament had come down to us through their hands absolutely pure, and free from all mistakes whatsoever.

“The ancient VERSIONS, as the principal sources of emendation, and highly useful in rectifying as well as in explaining the Hebrew text, are contained in the London Polyglot.

“The Greek Version, commonly called the Septuagint, or of the seventy interpreters, probably made by different hands, (the number of them uncertain,) and at different times, as the exigence of the Jewish Church at Alexandria and in other parts of Egypt required, is of the first authority. and of the greatest use in correcting the Hebrew text, as being the most ancient of all; and as the copy from which it was translated appears to have been free from many errors which afterwards by degrees got into the text. But the Greek Version of Isaiah is not so old as that of the Pentateuch by a hundred years and more, having been made in all probability after the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, when the reading of the prophets in the Jewish synagogues began to be practiced; and even after the building of Onias’ temple to favor which there seems to have been some artifice employed in a certain passage of Isaiah (chap. 19:18) in this Version. And it unfortunately happens that Isaiah has had the hard fate to meet with a Greek translator very unworthy of him, there being hardly any book of the Old Testament so ill rendered in that Version as this of Isaiah.

“The Arabic Version is sometimes referred to as verifying the reading of the Septuagint, being, for the most part at least, taken from that Version.

“The Chaldee paraphrase of Jonathan ben Uzziel, made about or before the time of our Savior, though it often wanders from the text in a wordy allegorical explanation, yet very frequently adheres to it closely, and gives a verbal rendering of it; and accordingly is sometimes of great use in ascertaining the true reading of the Hebrew text.

“The Syriac Version stands next in order of time, but is superior to the Chaldee in usefulness and authority, as well in ascertaining as in explaining the Hebrew text. It is a close translation of the Hebrew language into one of near affinity to it. It is supposed to have been made as early as the first century.

“The fragments of the three Greek Versions of Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion, all made in the second century, which are collected in the Hexapla of Montfaucon, are of considerable use for the same purpose.

“The Vulgate, being for the most part the translation of Jerome, made in the fourth century, is of service in the same way, in proportion to its antiquity.

“In referring to Dr. Kennicott’s Collections, I have given the whole number of manuscripts or editions which concur in any particular reading; what proportion that number bears to the whole number of collated copies which contain the Book of Isaiah, may be seen by comparing it with the catalogue of copies collated, which is given at the end of that book in the doctor’s edition of the Hebrew Bible.

“Among the manuscripts which have been collated, I consider those of the tenth, eleventh and twelfth centuries as ancient, comparatively and in respect of the rest. Therefore in quoting a number of manuscripts, where the variation is of some importance, I have added, that so many of that number are ancient, that is, are of the centuries above mentioned.

“The design of the notes is to give the reasons and authorities on which the translation is founded; to rectify or to explain the words of the text; to illustrate the ideas, the images, and the allusions of the prophet, by referring to objects, notions, and customs which peculiarly belong to his age and his country; and to point out the beauties of particular passages. If the reader would go deeper into the mystical sense, into theological, historical, and chronological disquisitions, there are many learned expositors to whom he may have recourse, who have written full commentaries on this prophet to which title the present work has no

pretensions. The sublime and spiritual uses to be made of this peculiarly evangelical prophet, must be all founded on a faithful representation of the literal sense which his words contain. This is what I have endeavored closely and exactly to express.”

In conclusion, it may be necessary to give some account of what I have ventured to superadd to the labors of this very learned prelate. After consulting the various commentators, who have spent much time and labor in their endeavors to illustrate this prophet, I found their interpretations of many of the most important prophecies strangely different, and often at variance. Former commentators have taken especial care to bring forth in the most prominent point of view all those passages which have been generally understood to refer to our blessed Lord, and the Christian dispensation. Later critics, especially those on the continent, have adopted the Jewish plan of interpretation, referring the parts belonging to the Messiah in his sufferings, etc., to the prophet himself, or to the children of the captivity in their state of suffering; and those passages which speak of the redemption of the world, and the glorious state of the Christian Church, they apply to the deliverance of the Israelites from the Babylonish captivity. It is really painful to see what labor and learning these critics spend to rob the prophet of his title of evangelical; and to show that even the sacred writers of the New Testament, in their application of select passages to our Lord, only followed the popular custom of accommodating passages of the Sacred Writings to occurrences and events, to which their leading circumstances bore some kind of resemblance, the application being only intended to convey the idea of similitude, and not of identity.

While I have cautiously handled those passages, the application of which was dubious, I have taken care to give my opinion with firmness on those which seem to have no other meaning than what they derive from their application to the great work of redemption by Jesus Christ, and the glory that should follow the outpouring of his Spirit. Many readers will no doubt suppose that I should have dwelt more on the spiritual parts of this inimitable book; but to this there would be scarcely any end. Who could exhaust the stores of this prophet! and if any thing were left unsaid, some would still be unsatisfied, to say nothing of the volume being thereby

swollen beyond all reasonable bounds. I have marked enough for the reader's meditation; and have thrown out a sufficient number of hints to be improved by ministers of the word of God. To another class it may appear too critical; but this chiefly applies to the learned bishop, whose plan, as by far the best in my judgment, I have followed; and whose collection of various readings I felt it my duty to complete, a thing that none of his editors have attempted before. I have therefore added the various readings collected by De Rossi to those of Dr. Kennicott, which the bishop had cited as authorities, on which he built his alterations and critical conjectures.

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK

OF THE

PROPHET JEREMIAH

THE Prophet Jeremiah, son of Hilkiah, was of the sacerdotal race, and a native of Anathoth, a village in the tribe of Benjamin, within a few miles of Jerusalem, which had been appointed for the use of the priests, the descendants of Aaron, Joshua 21:18. He was called to the prophetic office when very young; probably when he was fourteen years of age, and in the thirteenth of the reign of Josiah, A.M. 3375, B.C. 629. He continued to prophesy till after the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, which took place A.M. 3416; and it is supposed that about two years after he died in Egypt. Thus it appears that he discharged the arduous duties of the prophetic office for upwards of forty years.

Being very young when called to the prophetic office, he endeavored to excuse himself on account of his youth and incapacity for the work; but, being overruled by the Divine authority, he undertook the task, and performed it with matchless zeal and fidelity in the midst of a most crooked and perverse people, by whom he was continually persecuted, and whom he boldly reprov'd, often at the hazard of his life.

His attachment to his country was strong and fervent; he foresaw by the light of prophecy the ruin that was coming upon it. He might have made terms with the enemy, and not only saved his life, but have gained ease and plenty; but he chose rather to continue with his people, and take his part in all the disasters that befell them.

After the destruction of Jerusalem, Nebuchadnezzar having made Gedaliah governor of Judea, the fractious Jews rose up against him, and put him to

death; they then escaped to Tahpanhes in Egypt, carrying Jeremiah with them; who, continuing to testify against their wickedness and idolatry, at length fell a victim to his faithfulness: they filled up the measure of their iniquity, as tradition reports, by stoning the prophet to death. God marked this murderous outrage by his peculiar displeasure; for in a few years after they were almost all miserably destroyed by the Chaldean armies which had invaded Egypt; and even this destruction had been foretold by the prophet himself, chap. 44: "They were consumed by the sword and by the famine until there was an end of them, a small remnant only escaping," ver. 14, 27, 28.

The pitch of desperate wickedness to which the Jews had arrived previously to their captivity was truly astonishing. They had exhausted all the means that infinite mercy, associated with infinite justice, could employ for the salvation of sinners; and they became in consequence desperately wicked; no wonder, therefore, that wrath fell upon them to the uttermost. It seems that their hardness and darkness had proceeded to such lengths that they abandoned themselves to all the abominations of idolatry to avenge themselves on God, because he would not bear with their continual profligacy. Were ever people more highly favored, more desperately ungrateful, or more signally punished! What a lesson is their history to the nations of the earth, and especially to those who have been favored with the light of revelation!

I should have entered into a particular discussion relative to the history of those times mentioned by this prophet, had they not passed already in review in the Books of Kings and Chronicles; in which much of the historical parts of this prophet has been anticipated; and to which, in order to avoid repetition, I must refer my readers. What is farther necessary to be added will be found in the following notes.

As a writer, the character of Jeremiah has been well drawn by Bishop Lowth. On comparing him with Isaiah, the learned prelate says: "Jeremiah is by no means wanting either in elegance or sublimity; although, generally speaking, inferior to Isaiah in both. St. Jerome has objected to him a certain rusticity in his diction; of which, I must confess, I do not discover the smallest trace. His thoughts, indeed, are somewhat less elevated, and he is

commonly more large and diffuse in his sentences; but the reason of this may be, that he is mostly taken up with the gentler passions of grief and pity, for the expressing of which he has a peculiar talent. This is most evident in the Lamentations, where those passions altogether predominate; but it is often visible also in his Prophecies; in the former part of the book more especially, which is principally poetical. The middle parts are for the most part historical; but the last part, consisting of six chapters, is entirely poetical; and contains several oracles distinctly marked, in which this prophet falls very little short of the loftiest style of Isaiah.”

It has often been remarked, that although several of the prophecies in this book have their dates distinctly noted, and most of the rest may be ascertained from collateral evidence; yet there is a strange disorder in the arrangement. “There is,” says Dr. Blayney, “a preposterous jumbling together of the prophecies of the reigns of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah in the seventeen chapters which follow the twentieth, according to the Hebrew copies; so that, without any apparent reason, many of the latter reigns precede those of the former; and in the same reign, the last delivered are put first, and the first, last.” In order to prevent the confusion arising from this, Dr. Blayney has transposed the chapters where he thought it needful, without altering the numerals as they stand in our common Bibles.

This defect has been noticed, and attempts made to remedy it, by others. Dr. John George Dahler, Professor of Theology in the Protestant seminary of Strasburg, has just now published the first volume of a work, entitled, *JEREMIE, traduit sur le Texte original, accompagne de Notes Explicatives, Historiques, et Critiques*, 8vo., (antedated) Strasboury, 1824. After a preface, and very judicious historical introduction, consisting, the first of twenty-two, the second of thirty-six pages, the text and notes follow. The poetical parts of the text are translated in the hemistich manner, as the original appears in the best copies; and the whole is divided into sections; each of which is introduced with judicious observations relative to time, place, circumstances, and the matter contained in that section. The discourses or prophecies delivered under a particular reign, are all produced under that reign in their chronological order. A table of this arrangement I shall here introduce, and refer to the use of it afterwards:

TABLE I

Prophecies under Josiah

Chap. 1:1-19.

4, 5, 6:30.

3:1-3:5.

3:6-4:4.

17:19-27.

47:1-7.

Under Jehoiakim

Chap. 7:1.-9:25.

26:1-24.

46:2-12.

10:1-16.

14:1.-15:21.

16:1.-17:18.

18:1-23.

19:1-20:13.

20:14-18.

23:9-40.

35:1-19.

25:1-38.

36:1-32.

45:1-5.

12:14-17.

10:17-25.

Under Jeconiah

Chap. 13:1-27.

Under Zedekiah

Chap. 23:1-22:8.

11:1-17.
 11:18-12:13.
 24:1-10.
 29:1-32.
 27:1-28:17.
 49:34-39.
 51:59-64.
 21:1-14.
 34:1-7.
 37:1-10.
 34:8-22.
 37:11-21.
 38:1-28.
 39:15-18.
 32:1-44.
 33:1-26.
 39:1-10.

After the destruction of Jerusalem

Chap. 39:11-14.
 40:1-41:18.
 42:1-43:7.
 30:1-31:40

Prophecies delivered in Egypt

Chap. 43:8-13.
 44:1-30.
 46:13-28.

Prophecies relative to strange nations

Chap. 46:1, and 49:14.
 48:1-47.
 49:7-22.
 49:23-27.

49:28-33.

50:1-51:58-64.

Historical Appendix

Chap. 52:1-34.

The kings under whom Jeremiah prophesied succeeded each other in the following order:

1. Josiah; 2. Jehoahaz; 3. Jehoiachin, or Jeconiah; 4. Jehoiakim; 5. Zedekiah.

38:1. Under Zedekiah.

39:15. Under Zedekiah while Jeremiah was in prison.

45:1. The fourth year of Jehoiakim.

46:2. The fourth year of Jehoiakim.

49:34. In the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah.

51:59. The fourth year of Zedekiah.

Taking into consideration the order of the reigns, a child may perceive that the above prophecies are not in the order of the times of their delivery; and that the sheets or skins on which the text of that MS. was written, from which the present copies have derived their origin, have been pitifully interchanged, huddled and tacked together, without connection or arrangement.

To remedy this defect, Dr. Blayney has arranged the chapters in the following order which he terms a new arrangement of the chapters in Jeremiah, from chap. 20, to chap. 46., inclusive: 20., 22., 23., 25., 26., 35., 36., 45., 24., 29., 30., 31., 27., 28., 21., 34., xxxvii., 32., 33., 38., 39:15-18, 39:1-14, 40., 41., 42., 43., 44., 46., etc.

The preceding and subsequent chapters Dr. Blayney thought sufficiently correct for all the general purposes of chronology; and it is according to this order that he prints the text in his edition and translation of this prophet.

Dr. Dahler, as we have seen, is more circumstantial. Where he has dates, as are shown in the preceding table, he produces the text in that order; where there are not positive dates, he ascertains several by circumstantial intimations, which bear great evidence of accuracy; but there is a numerous class of discourses which he is obliged to insert in this work by critical conjecture. In such a case as this, when the arrangement of the common text is so evidently defective, and in many respects absurd, this procedure is quite allowable; for although the present text as to its arrangement has the sanction of antiquity, yet when a remedy is found, it would be absurd, if not sinful, to follow an order which we may rest satisfied never did proceed from the inspired writer.

I hope none will suppose that these observations detract any thing from the Divine inspiration of the book. The prophet delivered his discourses at particular times in select portions, during forty or forty-three years; these were afterwards gathered together and stitched up without any attention to chronological arrangement. Though the Spirit of the Lord directed the prophet, yet it would be absurd to suppose that it guided the hand of every collector or scribe into whose custody these several parcels might come. Suppose a man buy a copy of the Bible in sheets, and not knowing how to collate them, stitches the whole confusedly together, so that in many places the sense cannot be made out from a preceding to a following sheet, would it not be singularly foolish for any person to say, "As God is the Fountain of wisdom and Author of reason, such incongruities cannot proceed from him, therefore this book was not given by Divine revelation." A child in a printer's office might reply, "Cut the stitching asunder, that is man's work; collate the sheets and put them in their proper order, and you will soon see that every paragraph is in harmony with the rest, and contains the words of Divine wisdom."

Many an ancient MS., which appeared mutilated and imperfect, I have restored to order and perfection by cutting the binding asunder, and restoring the sheets and leaves to those places from which the ignorance and unskilfulness of the binder had detached them. May we not be allowed to treat the dislocations in the writings of a prophet in the same way, when it is evident that in the lapse of time his work has suffered by the hand of the careless and ignorant.

But it may be asked, "After all the evidence I have, and the concessions I have made, why I have not transposed those disjointed chapters, and produced them in the order in which I think they should be read?" I answer, Were I to give a new translation with notes of this prophet separately, as Drs. Blayney and Dahler have done, I should feel it my duty to do what the objection states; but as my province as a general commentator requires me to take up all the books of the sacred volume in the order in which I find them in the present authorized version, though convinced that this arrangement is neither correct nor convenient; so I take up the parts of each, however transposed, in the same manner, directing the reader by tables and notes to regulate his use of the work so as to

produce general edification with as little embarrassment as possible.

For general purposes, Dr. Blayney's chronological arrangement may be sufficient; but for greater accuracy Table I. may be preferred. These may at least be considered in the light of helps to a better understanding of these several prophecies; but no man is bound to follow either, farther than he is convinced that it follows what is specifically set down by the prophet himself, or fairly deducible from strong circumstantial evidence.

In my notes on this prophet I have availed myself, as far as my plan would permit, of the best helps within my reach. The various readings of Kennicott and De Rossi I have carefully consulted, and occasionally strengthened the evidence in behalf of those readings, more particularly recommended by collations from my own M,SS. I regret that I have not been able, for the reasons mentioned at the conclusion of the notes on Isaiah, to produce all the various readings of importance found in these ancient MSS., and especially in the Book of Lamentations, which is contained in five of them; but like the woman in the Gospels, I have done what I could, and must leave the rest to those who, with better abilities, may possess the greater advantages of youth and strength, with unimpaired sight.

Reader! God designs thee a blessing by every portion of his word: in thy reading seek for this; and if these notes be helpful to thee, give Him the glory. A.C.

Eastcott, Nov. 1, 1824.

THE BOOK

OF THE

PROPHET JEREMIAH

Chronological notes relative to the commencement of Jeremiah's prophesying

- Year from the Creation, according to Archbishop Usher, 3375.
- Year from the Deluge, according to the generally received Hebrew text, conferred with Acts 7:4, 1719.
- Fourth year of the thirty-seventh Olympiad.
- Year from the building of Rome according to the Varronian account, 125.
- Year before the vulgar era of Christ's nativity, 629.
- Twelfth year of Ancus Martius, the fourth king of the Romans: this was the one hundred and twentieth year before the expulsion of the Tarquins.
- Nineteenth year of Phraortes, the second king of Media.
- Twenty-third year of Archidamus, king of Lacedaemon, of the family of the Proclidae.
- Sixteenth year of Eurycrates II., king of Lacedaemon, of the family of the Eurysthenidae.
- Third year of Sadyattes, king of Lydia, which was the eighty-second year before the conquest of this kingdom by Cyrus.
- Twelfth year of Philip, the sixth king of Macedon, or the two hundred and ninety-third before the commencement of the reign of Alexander the Great.
- Thirteenth year of Josiah, king of Judah.
- Epoch of the building of Cyrene by Battus, according to some chronologers.

CHAPTER 1.

General title to the whole Book, 1-3. Jeremiah receives a commission to prophesy concerning nations and kingdoms, a work to which in the Divine purpose he had been appointed before his birth, 4-10. The vision of the rod of an almond tree and of the seething pot, with their signification, 11-16. Promises of Divine protection to Jeremiah in the discharge of the arduous duties of his prophetic office, 17-19.

NOTES ON CHAP. 1.

Verse 1-3. *The words of Jeremiah*—

These three verses are the title of the Book; and were probably added by Ezra when he collected and arranged the sacred books, and put them in that order in which they are found in Hebrew Bibles in general. For particulars relative to this prophet, the times of his prophesying, and the arrangement of his discourses, see the introduction.

Eleventh year of Zedekiah— That is, the last year of his reign; for he was made prisoner by the Chaldeans in the fourth month of that year, and the carrying away of the inhabitants of Jerusalem was in the fifth month of the same year.

Verse 4. *The word of the Lord came unto me*— Then I first felt the inspiring influence of the Divine Spirit, not only revealing to me the subjects which he would have me to declare to the people, but also the words which I should use in these declarations.

Verse 5. *Before I formed thee*— I had destined thee to the prophetic office before thou wert born: I had formed my plan, and appointed thee to be my envoy to his people. St. Paul speaks of his own call to preach the

Gospel to the Gentiles in similar terms, Galatians 1:15, 16.

Verse 6. *I cannot speak*— Being very young, and wholly inexperienced, I am utterly incapable of conceiving aright, or of clothing these Divine subjects in suitable language. Those who are really called of God to the sacred ministry are such as have been brought to a deep acquaintance with themselves, feel their own ignorance, and know their own weakness. They know also the awful responsibility that attaches to the work; and nothing but the authority of God can induce such to undertake it. They whom God never called run, because of worldly honor and emolument: the others hear the call with fear and trembling, and can go only in the strength of Jehovah.

*“How ready is the man to go,
Whom God hath never sent!
How timorous, diffident, and slow,
God’s chosen instrument!”*

Verse 7. *Whatever I command thee*— It is my words and message, not thine own, that thou shalt deliver. I shall teach thee; therefore thy youth and inexperience can be no hinderance.

Verse 8. *Be not afraid of their faces*— That is, the Jews, whom he knew would persecute him because of the message which he brought. To be fore-warned is to be half armed. He knew what he was to expect from the disobedient and the rebellious, and must now be prepared to meet it.

Verse 10. *I have-set thee over the nations*— God represents his messengers the prophets as doing what he commanded them to declare should be done. In this sense they rooted up, pulled down, and destroyed-declared God’s judgments, they builder up and planted-declared the promises of his mercy. Thus God says to Isaiah, chap. 6:10: “Make the heart of this people fat-and shut their eyes.” Show them that they are stupid and blind; and that, because they have shut their eyes and hardened their hearts, God will in his judgments leave them to their hardness and darkness.

Verse 11. *A rod of an almond tree.*— שָׁקֵד shaken, from שָׁקַד shakad,

“to be ready,” “to hasten,” “to watch for an opportunity to do a thing,” to awake; because the almond tree is the first to flower and bring forth fruit. Pliny says, Floret prima omnium amygdala mense Januario; Martio vero pomum maturat. It blossoms in January, when other trees are locked up in their winter’s repose; and it bears fruit in March, just at the commencement of spring, when other trees only begin to bud. It was here the symbol of that promptitude with which God was about to fulfill his promises and threatening. As a rod, says Dahler, is an instrument of punishment, the rod of the almond may be intended here as the symbol of that punishment which the prophet was about to announce.

Verse 12. *I will hasten my word*— Here is a paronomasia. What dost thou see? I see שָׁקֵד shaken, “an almond,” the hastening tree: that which first awakes. Thou hast well seen, for (שָׁקֵד shoked) I will hasten my word. I will awake, or watch over my word for the first opportunity to inflict the judgments which I threaten. The judgment shall come speedily; it shall soon flourish, and come to maturity.

Verse 13. *A seething pot-toward the north*.— We find, from Ezekiel 24:3, etc., that a boiling pot was an emblem of war, and the desolations it produces. Some have thought that by the seething pot Judea is intended, agitated by the invasion of the Chaldeans, whose land lay north of Judea. But Dr. Blayney contends that מִפְּנֵי צַפּוֹנָה mippeney tsaphonah should be translated, From the face of the north, as it is in the margin; for, from the next verse, it appears that the evil was to come from the north; and therefore the steam, which was designed as an emblem of that evil, must have arisen from that quarter also. The pot denotes the empire of the Babylonians and Chaldeans lying to the north of Judea, and pouring forth its multitudes like a thick vapor, to overspread the land. Either of these interpretations will suit the text.

Verse 14. *Shall break forth*— תִּפְתָּח tippathach, shall be opened. The door shall be thrown abroad, that these calamities may pass out freely.

Verse 15. *Shall set every one his throne at the entering of the gates*— As the gates of the cities were the ordinary places where justice was

administered, so the enemies of Jerusalem are here represented as conquering the whole land, assuming the reins of government, and laying the whole country under their own laws; so that the Jews should no longer possess any political power: they should be wholly subjugated by their enemies.

Verse 16. *I will utter my judgments*— God denounced his judgments: the conquest of their cities, and the destruction of the realm, were the facts to which these judgments referred; and these facts prove that the threatening was fulfilled.

Worshipped the works of their own hands.— Idolatry was the source of all their wickedness and was the cause of their desolations. For למעשי lemaasey, the works, more than a hundred MSS. of Kennicott's and De Rossi's, with many editions, have למעשה lemaaseh, the work. Idolatry was their ONE great WORK, the business of their life, their trade.

Verse 17. *Gird up thy loins*— Take courage and be ready, lest I confound thee; take courage and be resolute, פן pen, lest by their opposition thou be terrified and confounded. God is often represented as doing or causing to be done, what he only permits or suffers to be done. Or, do not fear them, I will not suffer thee to be confounded. So Dahler, Ne crains pas que je te confonde a leurs yeux, "Do not fear that I shall confound thee before them." It is well known that the phrase, gird up thy reins, is a metaphor taken from the long robes of the Asiatics; which, on going a journey, or performing their ordinary work, they were obliged to truss up under their girdles, that the motions of the body might not be impeded.

Verse 18. *I have made thee this day a defenced city, and an iron pillar, and, brazen walls*— Though thou shalt be exposed to persecutions and various indignities, they shall not prevail against thee. To their attacks thou shalt be as an impregnable city; as unshaken as an iron pillar; and as imperishable as a wall of brass. None, therefore, can have less cause to apprehend danger than thou hast. The issue proved the truth of this promise: he outlived all their insults; and saw Jerusalem destroyed, and his enemies, and the enemies of his Lord, carried into captivity. Instead of

חֹמוֹת chomoth, walls, many MSS. and editions read חֹמַת chomath, a wall, which corresponds with the singular nouns preceding.

Verse 19. *They shall not prevail against thee*— Because I am determined to defend and support thee against all thy enemies. One of the ancients has said, θεου θελοντος, και επι ριπος πλεη σωζη Thestius, apud Theophil. ad Autolyc. lib. 2:” God protecting thee, though thou wert at sea upon a twig, thou shouldst be safe.”

CHAPTER 2

God expresses his continued regard for his people, long since chosen, 1-3. He then expostulates with them on their ungrateful and worse than heathen return to his regard, 4-11; at which even the inanimate creation must be astonished, 12, 13. After this their guilt is declared to be the sole cause of the calamities which their enemies had power to inflict on them, 14-17. They are upbraided for their alliances with idolatrous countries, 18, 19; and for their strong propensity to idolatry, notwithstanding all the care and tender mercy of God, 20-29. Even the chastenings of the Almighty have produced in this people no repentance, 30. The chapter concludes with compassionately remonstrating against their folly and ingratitude in revolting so deeply from God, and with warning them of the fearful consequences, 31, 37.

NOTES ON CHAP. 2

Verse 2. *I remember thee*— The youth here refers to their infant political state when they came out of Egypt; they just then began to be a people. Their espousals refer to their receiving the law at Mount Sinai, which they solemnly accepted, Exodus 24:6-8, and which acceptance was compared to a betrothing or espousal. Previously to this they were no people, for they had no constitution nor form of government. When they received the law, and an establishment in the Promised Land, then they became a people and a nation.

Wentest after me— Receivedst my law, and wert obedient to it; confiding thyself wholly to my guidance, and being conscientiously attached to my worship. The kindness was that which God showed them by taking them to be his people, not their kindness to him.

Verse 3. *Israel was holiness unto the Lord*— Fully consecrated to his service.

The first fruits of his increase— They were as wholly the Lord's, as the first fruits were the property of the priests according to the law Numbers 18:13. These the priests alone had a right to devote to their own use.

All that devour him shall offend— As they were betrothed to the Lord, they were considered his especial property; they therefore who injured them were considered as laying violent hands on the property of God. They who persecute God's children have a grievous burden to bear, an awful account to give.

Verse 5. *What iniquity have your fathers found in me*— Have they ever discovered any thing cruel, unjust, oppressive in my laws? Any thing unkind or tyrannical in my government? Why then have they become idolaters?

Verse 6. *Through the wilderness*— Egypt was the house of their bondage: the desert through which they passed after they came out of Egypt, was a place where the means of life were not to be found; where no one family could subsist, much less a company of 600, 000 men. God mentions these things to show that it was by the bounty of an especial providence that they were fed and preserved alive. Previously to this, it was a land through which no man passed, and in which no man dwelt. And why? because it did not produce the means of life; it was the shadow of death in its appearance, and the grave to those who committed themselves to it.

Verse 7. *And I brought you into a plentiful country*— The land of Canaan.

My land— The particular property of God, which he gave to them as an inheritance, they being his peculiar people.

Verse 8. *They that handle the law*— **וְהַפְּשֵׁי** vethophe shey, they that draw out the law; they whose office it is to explain it, draw out its spiritual meanings, and show to what its testimonies refer.

The pastors also— Kings, political and civil rulers.

Propheied by Baal— Became his prophets, and were inspired with the words of lying spirits.

Verse 9. *I will yet plead with you*— אָרִיב arib, I will maintain my process, vindicate my own conduct, and prove the wickedness of yours.

Verse 10. *The isles of Chittim*— This is the island of Cyprus, according to Josephus. In 1 Maccabees, chap. 8:5, it is taken for Macedonia. Besides this, how they (the Romans) had discomfited in battle Philip and Perseus, king of the ahittims. Chittim was the grandson of Japhet; and Bochart has made it appear that the countries inhabited by the Chittim were Italy and the adjacent provinces of Europe, lying along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea; and probably this is the prophet's meaning.

Send unto Kedar— The name of an Arabian tribe. See if nations either near or remote, cultivated or stupid, have acted with such fickleness and ingratitude as you have done! They have retained their gods to whom they had no obligation; ye have abandoned your God, to whom ye owe your life, breath, and all things!

Verse 12. *Be astonished, O ye heavens*— Or, the heavens are astonished. The original will admit either sense. The conduct of this people was so altogether bad, that among all the iniquities of mankind, neither heaven nor earth had witnessed any thing so excessively sinful and profligate.

Verse 13. *Two evils*— First, they forsook God, the Fountain of life, light, prosperity, and happiness. Secondly, they hewed out broken cisterns; they joined themselves to idols, from whom they could receive neither temporal nor spiritual good! Their conduct was the excess of folly and blindness. What we call here broken cisterns, means more properly such vessels as were ill made, not staunch, ill put together, so that the water leaked through them.

Verse 14. *Is Israel a servant?*— Is he a slave purchased with money, or a servant born in the family? He is a son himself. If so, then, why is he spoiled? Not because God has not shown him love and kindness; but

because he forsook God, turned to and is joined with idols.

Verse 15. *The young lions roared upon him*— The Assyrians, who have sacked and destroyed the kingdom of Israel, with a fierceness like that of pouncing upon their prey.

Verse 16. *The children of Noph and Tahapanes*— Noph and Tahapanes were two cities of Egypt, otherwise called Memphis and Daphni. It is well known that the good king was defeated by the Egyptians, and slain in battle. Thus was the crown of Judah's head broken.

Verse 18. *What hast thou to do in the way of Egypt*— Why dost thou make alliances with Egypt?

To drink the waters of Sihor?— This means the Nile. See on Isaiah 23:3.

The way of Assyria— Why make alliances with the Assyrians? All such connections will only expedite thy ruin.

To drink the waters of the river?— The Euphrates, as נַהַר nahar or הַנְּהַר hannahar always means Euphrates, the country between the Tigris and Euphrates, is termed to this day Maher alnahar, “the country beyond the river,” i.e., Mesopotamia.

Instead of cleaving to the Lord, they joined affinity and made alliances with those two nations, who were ever jealous of them, and sought their ruin. Egypt was to them a broken reed instead of a staff; Assyria was a leaky cistern, from which they could derive no help.

Verse 20. *Of old time I have broken thy yoke*— It is thought by able critics that the verbs should be read in the second person singular, THOU hast broken thy yoke, THOU hast burst thy bonds; and thus the Septuagint, **συνετριψας τον ζυγον σου**, “thou hast broken thy yoke.” And the Vulgate, Confregisti jugum meum, rupisti, vincula mea; “Thou hast broken my yoke; thou hast burst my bonds;” and so the Arabic. But the Chaldee gives it a meaning which removes the difficulty: “I have broken the yoke of the people from thy neck; I have cut your bonds

asunder.” And when this was done, they did promise fair: for “thou saidst, I will not transgress;” but still they played the harlot-committed idolatrous acts in the high places, where the heathen had built their altars, pretending that elevation of this kind assisted their devotion.

Verse 21. *I had planted thee a noble vine*— I gave thee the fullest instruction, the purest ordinances, the highest privileges; and reason would that I should expect thee to live suitably to such advantages; but instead of this thou art become degenerate; the tree is deteriorated, and the fruit is bad. Instead of being true worshippers, and of a holy life and conversation, ye are become idolaters of the most corrupt and profligate kind. See Isaiah 5:1, etc., where the same image is used.

Verse 22. *For though thou wash thee with nitre*— It should be rendered natar or natron, a substance totally different from our nitre. It comes from the root נָתַר nathar, to dissolve, loosen, because a solution of it in water is abstersive, taking out spots, etc., from clothes. It is still used in the east for the purpose of washing. If vinegar be poured on it, Dr. Shaw says, a strong effervescence is the immediate consequence, which illustrates Proverbs 25:20: “The singing of songs to a heavy heart is like vinegar upon natron;” that is, there is no affinity between them; opposition and strife are occasioned by any attempt to unite them.

Thine iniquity is marked before me— No washing will take out thy spots; the marks of thy idolatry and corruption are too deeply rooted to be extracted by any human means.

Verse 23. *See thy way in the valley*— The valley of Hinnom, where they offered their own children to Moloch, an idol of the Ammonites.

A swift dromedary traversing her ways— Dr. Blayney translates, “A fleet dromedary that hath taken to company with her.”

Dr. Dahler rather paraphrases, thus:—

*Semblable a une dromedaire en chaleur,
Qui court d'une tote a l'autre.*

***“Like to a dromedary in her desire for the male,
Which runs hither and thither.”***

This is an energetic comparison; and shows the unbridled attachment of those bad people to idolatry, and the abominable practices by which it was usually accompanied.

Verse 24. *A wild ass used to the wilderness*— Another comparison to express the same thing.

Snuffeth up the wind— In a high fever from the inward heat felt at such times, these animals open their mouths and nostrils as wide as possible, to take in large draughts of fresh air, in order to cool them.

In her mouth they shall find her.— The meaning is, that although such animals are exceedingly fierce and dangerous when they are in this state; yet, as soon as they have found the male, the desire is satisfied, and they become quiet and governable as before. But it was not so with this idolatrous people: their desires were ever fierce and furious; they were never satiated, one indulgence always leading to an other. The brute beasts had only a short season in which this appetite prevailed; but they acted without restraint or limit.

Verse 25. *Withhold thy foot from being unshod*— When it was said to them, “Cease from discovering thy feet; prostitute thyself no more to thy idols.”

And thy throat from thirst— Drink no more of their libations, nor use those potions which tend only to increase thy appetite for pollution. Thou didst say, There is no hope: it is useless to advise me thus; I am determined; I have loved these strange pods, and to them will I cleave.

Verse 26. *As the thief is ashamed*— As the pilferer is confounded when he is caught in the fact; so shalt thou, thy kings, princes, priests, and prophets, be confounded, when God shall arrest thee in thy idolatries, and deliver thee into the hands of thine enemies.

Verse 27. *Thou art my father*— By thee we have been produced, and by thee we are sustained. This was the property of the true God; for he is the Author and Supporter of being. How deeply fallen and brutishly ignorant must they be when they could attribute this to the stock of a tree!

Verse 28. *According to the number of thy cities are thy gods*— Among heathen nations every city had its tutelary deity. Judah, far sunk in idolatry, had adopted this custom. The Church of Rome has refined it a little: every city has its tutelary saint, and this saint has a procession and worship peculiar to himself. So here; not much of the old idolatry is lost.

Verse 31. *Have I been a wilderness unto Israel?*— Have I ever withheld from you any of the blessings necessary for your support?

A land of darkness— Have you, since you passed through the wilderness, and came out of the darkness of Egypt, ever been brought into similar circumstances? You have had food and all the necessaries of life for your bodies; and my ordinances and word to enlighten and cheer your souls. I have neither been a wilderness nor a land of darkness to you.

We are lords— We wish to be our own masters; we will neither brook religious nor civil restraint; we will regard no laws, human or Divine. It was this disposition that caused them to fall in so fully with the whole system of idolatry.

Verse 32. *Can a maid forget her ornaments*— This people has not so much attachment to me as young females have to their dress and ornaments. They never forget them and even when arrived at old age, look with pleasure on the dress and ornaments which they have worn in their youth.

Days without number.— That is, for many years; during the whole reign of Manasses, which was fifty-five years, the land was deluged with idolatry, from which the reform by good King Josiah his grandson had not yet purified it.

Verse 33. *Why trimmest thou thy way*— Ye have used a multitude of artifices to gain alliances with the neighboring idolatrous nations.

Hast thou also taught the wicked ones thy ways.— Ye have made even these idolaters worse than they were before. Dr. Blayney translates, “Therefore have I taught calamity thy ways.” A prosopopoeia: “I have instructed calamity where to find thee.” Thou shalt not escape punishment.

Verse 34. *The blood of the souls of the poor innocents*— We find from the sacred history that Manasseh had filled Jerusalem with innocent blood; see 2 Kings 21:16, and Ezekiel 34:10.

I have not found it by secret search, but upon all these.— Such deeds of darkness and profligacy are found only in Israel. Dr. Blayney translates, “I have not found it in a digged hole, but upon every oak.” Others cover the blood that it may not appear; but ye have shed it openly, and sprinkled it upon your consecrated oaks, and gloried in it.

Verse 35. *Because I am innocent*— They continued to assert their innocence, and therefore expected that God’s judgments would be speedily removed!

I will plead with thee— I will maintain my process, follow it up to conviction, and inflict the deserved punishment.

Verse 36. *Why gaddest thou about*— When they had departed from the Lord, they sought foreign alliances for support. 1. The Assyrians 2 Chronicles 28:13-21; but they injured instead of helping them. 2. The Egyptians: but in this they were utterly disappointed, and were ashamed of their confidence. See chap. 37:7, 8, for the fulfillment of this prediction.

Verse 37. *Thou shalt go forth from him, and thine hands upon thine head*— Thou shalt find all thy confidence in vain, — thy hope disappointed;—and thy state reduced to desperation. The hand being placed on the head was the evidence of deep sorrow, occasioned by utter desolation. See the case of Tamar, when ruined and abandoned by her

brother Amnon, 2 Samuel 13:19.

Thou shalt not prosper in them.— They shall all turn to thy disadvantage; and this as we shall see in the history of this people, was literally fulfilled. O what a grievous and bitter thing it is to sin against the Lord, and have him for an enemy!

CHAPTER 3

The first five verses of this chapter allude to the subject of the last; and contain earnest exhortations to repentance, with gracious promises of pardon, notwithstanding every aggravation of guilt, 1-5. At the sixth verse a new section of prophecy commences, opening with a complaint against Judah for having exceeded in guilt her sister Israel, already cast off for her idolatry, 6-11. She is cast off, but not forever; for to this same Israel, whose place of captivity (Assyria) lay to the north of Judea, pardon is promised on her repentance, together with a restoration to the Church of God, along with her sister Judah, in the latter days, 12-20. The prophet foretells the sorrow and repentance of the children of Israel under the Gospel dispensation, 21. God renews his gracious promises, 22; and they again confess their sins. In this confession their not deigning to name the idol Baal, the source of their calamities, but calling him in the abstract shame, or a thing of shame, is a nice touch of the perusal extremely beautiful and natural, 22-25.

NOTES ON CHAP. 3

Verse 1. *If a man put away his wife*— It was ever understood, by the law and practice of the country, that if a woman were divorced by her husband, and became the wife of another man, the first husband could never take her again. Now Israel had been married unto the Lord; joined in solemn covenant to him to worship and serve him only. Israel turned from following him, and became idolatrous. On this ground, considering idolatry as a spiritual whoredom, and the precept and practice of the law to illustrate this case, Israel could never more be restored to the Divine favor: but God, this first husband, in the plenitude of his mercy, is willing to receive this adulterous spouse, if she will abandon her idolatries and return unto him. And this and the following chapters are spent in affectionate remonstrances and loving exhortations addressed to these sinful people, to make them sensible of their own sin, and God's tender mercy in offering to receive them again into favor.

Verse 2. *As the Arabian in the wilderness*— They were as fully intent on the practice of their idolatry as the Arab in the desert is in lying in wait to plunder the caravans. Where they have not cover to lie in ambush, they scatter themselves about, and run hither and thither, raising themselves up on their saddles to see if they can discover, by smoke, dust, or other token, the approach of any travelers.

Verse 3. *There hath been no latter rain*— The former rain, which prepared the earth for tillage, fell in the beginning of November, or a little sooner; and the latter rain fell in the middle of April, after which there was scarcely any rain during the summer.

Verse 4. *Wilt thou not-cry unto me, My father*— Wilt thou not allow me to be thy Creator and Preserver, and cease thus to acknowledge idols? See on chap. 2:27.

Verse 5. *Will he reserve his anger for ever?*— Why should not wrath be continued against thee, as thou continuest transgression against the Lord?

Verse 6. *The Lord said also unto me in the days of Josiah the king*— This is a new discourse, and is supposed to have been delivered after the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah. Here the prophet shows the people of Judah the transgressions, idolatry, obstinacy, and punishment of their brethren, the ten tribes, whom he calls to return to the Lord, with the most gracious promises of restoration to their own country, their reunion with their brethren of Judah, and every degree of prosperity in consequence. He takes occasion also to show the Jews how much more culpable they were than the Israelites, because they practiced the same iniquities while they had the punishment and ruin of the others before their eyes. He therefore exhorts them to return to God with all their hearts, that they might not fall into the same condemnation. See the following verses.

Verse 7. *And I said*— By the prophets Elijah, Elisha, Hosea, Amos, etc.; for all these prophesied to that rebellious people, and exhorted them to return to the Lord.

Verse 8. *I had put her away*— Given them up into the hands of the Assyrians.

Verse 9. *The lightness of her whoredom*— The grossness of her idolatry: worshipping objects the most degrading, with rites the most impure.

Verse 11. *Backsliding Israel hath justified herself more*— She was less offensive in my eyes, and more excusable, than treacherous Judah. So it is said, Luke 18:14, the humbled publican went down to his house justified rather than the boasting Pharisee. The one was more to be pitied than the other, and more likely to receive the mercy of God.

Verse 12. *Proclaim these words toward the north*— The countries where the ten tribes were then in captivity, Mesopotamia, Assyria, Media, etc., see 2 Kings 17:6; these lay north of Judea. How tender and compassionate are the exhortations in this and the following verses! Could these people believe that God had sent the prophet and yet prefer the land of their bondage to the blessings of freedom in their own country, and the approbation of their God?

Verse 14. *I will take you one of a city, and two of a family*— If there should be but one of a city left, or one willing to return, and two only of a whole tribe, yet will I receive these, and bring them back from captivity into their own land. I have heard these words most sinfully applied to show the nature of a fancied eternal decree of election, that has appointed in several cases one only out of a whole city, and two out of a whole family, to be eternally saved, leaving the rest, according to the decree of reprobation, to perish everlastingly! And yet these persons, who spoke thus of the Fountain of eternal goodness and mercy, professed to believe in Him who by the grace of God tasted death for every man.

Verse 15. *I will give you pastors according to mine heart*— The pastor means either the king or the prophet; and the pastors here promised may be either kings or prophets, or both. These shall be according to God's own heart; they shall be of his own choosing and shall be qualified by himself: and in consequence they shall feed the people with knowledge, **דעה** deah that Divine truth concerning the true God and the best interests

of man, which was essentially necessary to their salvation; and understanding **השכיל** haskeil, the full interpretation of every point, that in receiving the truth they might become wise, holy, and happy.

Verse 16. *The ark of the covenant of the Lord*— This symbol of the Divine presence, given to the Jews as a token and pledge of God's dwelling among them, shall be no longer necessary, and shall no longer exist; for in the days of the Messiah, to which this promise seems to relate, God's worship shall not be confined either to one place or to one people. The temple of God shall be among men, and every where God be adored through Christ Jesus.

Neither shall that be done any more.— The ark shall be no more established, nor carried from place to place, nor shall men go to visit it. All its ceremonies and importance shall cease; and, if lost, shall never be rebuilt.

Verse 17. *They shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord*— The new Jerusalem, the universal Church of Christ, shall be God's throne: and wherever he is acknowledged as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, there God sits on his throne, and holds his court.

Verse 18. *The house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel*— That is, in those days in which the Jews shall be brought in with the fullness of the Gentiles.

Out of the land of the north— From Chaldea. This prophecy has two aspects: one refers to the return from the Babylonish captivity; the other, to the glorious days of Christianity. But the words may refer to that gathering together of the Jews, not only from Chaldea, but from the countries of their dispersion over the face of the whole earth, and uniting them in the Christian Church.

Verse 19. *How shalt I put thee among the children*— As if he had said, How can ye be accounted a holy seed, who are polluted? How can ye be united to the people of God, who walk in the path of sinners? How can ye be taken to heaven, who are unholy within, and unrighteous without?

And I said, Thou shalt call me, My father— This is the answer to the above question. They could not be put among the children unless they became legal members of the heavenly family: and they could not become members of this family unless they abandoned idolatry, and took the Lord for their portion. Nor could they be continued in the privileges of the heavenly family, unless they no more turned away from their heavenly Father.

Verse 21. *A voice was heard upon the high places*— Here the Israelites are represented as assembled together to bewail their idolatry and to implore mercy. While thus engaged, they hear the gracious call of Jehovah:—

Verse 22. *Return, ye backsliding children*— This they gladly receive, and with one voice make their confession to him: “Behold, we come unto thee, for thou art Jehovah our God;” and thence to the end of the chapter, show the reasons why they return unto God. 1. Because he is the true God. 2. Because the idols did not profit them: they could give no help in time of trouble. 3. Because it is the prerogative of God alone to give salvation. 4. Because they had no kind of prosperity since they had abandoned the worship of their Maker. And this was not only their case, but it was the case of their forefathers, who all suffered in consequence of their idolatry and disobedience. 5. These reasons are concluded with a hearty confession of sin, at the thought of which they are confounded; for the remembrance of their sin was grievous to them, and the burden was intolerable. This confession ended, God appears in the next chapter with gracious promises, and proper directions how they are to return, and how to conduct themselves in future.

Verse 24. *For shame hath devoured*— The word shame, here and in chap. 11:13; Hosea 9:10, is supposed to signify Baal, the idol which they worshipped. That thing or shame which has brought you into contempt, confusion, and ruin. Sooner or later every sinner must be ashamed of his conduct; next, confounded; and, lastly, ruined by it, unless by true faith and hearty repentance he returns to the Lord.

CHAPTER 4

Sequel of the exhortations and promises addressed to Israel in the preceding chapter, 1, 2. The prophet then addresses the people of Judah and Jerusalem, exhorting to repentance and reformation, that the dreadful visitation with which they were threatened might be averted, 3, 4. He then sounds the alarm of war, 5, 6. Nebuchadnezzar, like a fierce lion, is, from the certainty of the prophecy, represented to be on his march; and the disastrous event to have been already declared, 7-9. And as the lying prophets had flattered the people with the hopes of peace and safety, they are now introduced, (when their predictions are falsified by the event,) excusing themselves; and, with matchless effrontery, laying the blame of the deception upon God, ("And they said," etc., so the text is corrected by Kennicott,) 10. The prophet immediately resumes his subject; and, in the person of God, denounces again those judgments which were shortly to be inflicted by Nebuchadnezzar, 11-18. The approaching desolation of Jerusalem lamented in language amazingly energetic and exquisitely tender, 19-21. The incorrigible wickedness of the people the sole cause of these calamities, 22. In the remaining verses the prophet describes the sad catastrophe of Jerusalem by such a beautiful assemblage of the most striking and afflictive circumstances as form a picture of a land "swept with the besom of destruction." The earth seems ready to return to its original chaos; every ray of light is extinguished, and succeeded by a frightful gloom; the mountains tremble, and the hills shake, under the dreadful apprehension of the wrath of Jehovah; all is one awful solitude, where not a vestige of the human race is to be seen. Even the fowls of heaven, finding no longer whereon to subsist, are compelled to migrate; the most fruitful places are become a dark and dreary desert, and every city is a ruinous heap. To complete the whole, the dolorous shrieks of Jerusalem, as of a woman in peculiar agony, break through the frightful gloom; and the appalled prophet pauses, leaving the reader to reflect on the dreadful effects of apostasy and idolatry, 23-31.

NOTES ON CHAP. 4

Verse 1. *Shalt thou not remove.*— This was spoken before the Babylonish captivity; and here is a promise that if they will return from their idolatry, they shall not be led into captivity. So, even that positively threatened judgment would have been averted had they returned to the Lord.

Verse 2. *Thou shalt swear, The Lord liveth*— Thou shalt not bind thyself by any false god; thou shalt acknowledge ME as the Supreme. Bind thyself BY me, and TO me; and do this in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness.

The nations shall bless themselves in him— They shall be so fully convinced of the power and goodness of Jehovah in seeing the change wrought on thee, and the mercies heaped upon thee, that their usual mode of benediction shall be, May the God of Israel bless thee!

Verse 3. *Break up your fallow ground*— Fallow ground is either that which, having been once tilled, has lain long uncultivated; or, ground slightly ploughed, in order to be ploughed again previously to its being sown. Ye have been long uncultivated in righteousness; let true repentance break up your fruitless and hardened hearts; and when the seed of the word of life is sown in them, take heed that worldly cares and concerns do not arise, and, like thorns, choke the good seed.

Verse 4. *Circumcise yourselves*— Put away every thing that has a tendency to grieve the Spirit of God, or to render your present holy resolutions unfruitful.

Verse 5. *Blow ye the trumpet*— Give full information to all parts of the land, that the people may assemble together and defend themselves against their invaders.

Verse 6. I will bring evil from the north. From the land of Chaldea.

Verse 7. *The lion is come up*— Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. “The

king (Nebuchadnezzar) is come up from his tower.”-Targum.

The destroyer of the Gentiles— Of the nations: of all the people who resisted his authority. He destroyed them all.

Verse 8. Lament and howl— הֵילִילוּ heililu. The aboriginal Irish had a funeral song called the Caoinian, still continued among their descendants, one part of which is termed the ulaloo: this is sung responsively or alternately, and is accompanied with a full chorus of sighs and groans. It has been thought that Ireland was originally peopled by the Phoenicians: if so, this will account for the similarity of many words and customs among both these people.

Verse 9. The heart of the king shall perish— Shall lose all courage.

Verse 10. Ah, Lord God! surely thou hast greatly deceived this people— The Targum paraphrases this verse thus: “And I said, Receive my supplication, O Lord God; for, behold, the false prophets deceive this people and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying, Ye shall have peace.” The prophet could not reconcile this devastation of the country with the promises already made; and he appears to ask the question, Hast thou not then deceived this people in saying there shall be peace, i.e., prosperity?

Whereas the sword reacheth unto the soul.— That is, the life; the people being generally destroyed.

Verses 11-13. A dry wind-a fall wind-as clouds-as a whirlwind— All these expressions appear to refer to the pestilential winds, suffocating vapors, and clouds and pillars of sand collected by whirlwinds, which are so common and destructive in the east, (see on Isaiah 21:1;) and these images are employed here to show the overwhelming effect of the invasion of the land by the Chaldeans.

Verse 13. Wo unto us!— The people, deeply affected with these threatened judgments, interrupt the prophet with the lamentation-Wo unto us, for we are spoiled! The prophet then resumes:—

Verse 14. *O Jerusalem, wash thine heart*— Why do ye not put away your wickedness, that ye may be saved from these tremendous judgments? How long shall thy vain thoughts of safety and prosperity lodge within thee? Whilst thou continuest a rebel against God, and provokest him daily by thy abominations!

Verse 15. *For a voice declareth from Dan*— Dan was a city in the tribe of Dan, north of Jerusalem; the first city in Palestine, which occurs in the way from Babylon to Jerusalem.

Affliction from Mount Ephraim.— Between Dan and Jerusalem are the mountains of Ephraim. These would be the first places attacked by the Chaldeans; and the rumor from thence would show that the land was invaded.

Verse 16. *Watchers come from a far country*— Persons to besiege fortified places.

Verse 17. *As keepers of a field*— In the eastern countries grain is often sown in the open country; and, when nearly ripe, guards are placed at different distances round about it to preserve it from being plundered. Jerusalem was watched, like one of these fields, by guards all round about it; so that none could enter to give assistance, and none who wished to escape were permitted to go out.

Verse 19. *My bowels*— From this to the twenty-ninth verse the prophet describes the ruin of Jerusalem and the desolation of Judea by the Chaldeans in language and imagery scarcely paralleled in the whole Bible. At the sight of misery the bowels are first affected; pain is next felt by a sort of stricture in the pericardium; and then, the heart becoming strongly affected by irregular palpitations, a gush of tears, accompanied with wailings, is the issue. — “My bowels, my bowels! I am pained at my very heart, (the walls of my heart;) my heart maketh a noise in me; I cannot hold my peace.” Here is nature, and fact also.

Verse 20. *Destruction upon destruction*— Cities burnt, and their inhabitants destroyed.

My tents spoiled— Even the solitary dwellings in the fields and open country do not escape.

Verse 23. I beheld the earth, (the land,) and lo it was without form and void— **תהו ובהו** *tohu vabohu*; the very words used in Genesis to denote the formless state of the chaotic mass before God had brought it into order.

Verse 24. The mountains-hills— Princes, rulers, etc., were astonished and fled.

Verse 25. The birds of the heavens were fled.— The land was so desolated that even the fowls of heaven could not find meat, and therefore fled away to another region. How powerfully energetic is this description! See Zephaniah 1:3.

Verse 30. Though thou rentest thy face with painting— This probably refers to the custom of introducing stibium a preparation of antimony, between the eye and the lids, in order to produce a fine lustre, which occasions a distension of the eye-lid in the time of the operation. In order to heighten the effect from this some may have introduced a more than ordinary quantity, so as nearly to rend the eye-lid itself. Though thou make use of every means of address, of cunning, and of solicitation, to get assistance from the neighboring states, it will be all in vain. Reference is here particularly made to the practice of harlots to allure men.

Verse 31. Bringeth forth her first child— In such a case the fear, danger, and pain were naturally the greatest.

Spreadeth her hands— The gesture indicated by nature to signify distress, and implore help. We have met with this figure in other parts, and among the classic writers it is frequent.

CHAPTER 5

The prophet, having described the judgments impending over his countrymen, enlarges on the corruptions which prevailed among them. Their profession of religion was all false and hypocritical, 1, 2. Though corrected, they were not amended, but persisted in their guilt, 3. This was not the case with the low and ignorant only, 4; but more egregiously so with those of the higher order, from whose knowledge and opportunities better things might have been expected, 5. God therefore threatens them with the most cruel enemies, 6; and appeals to themselves if they should be permitted to practice such sins unpunished, 7-9. He then commands their enemies to raze the walls of Jerusalem, 10; that devoted city whose inhabitants added to all their other sins the highest contempt of God's word and prophets, 11-13. Wherefore his word, in the mouth of his prophet, shall be as fire to consume them, 14; the Chaldean forces shall cruelly addict them, 15-17; and farther judgments await then as the consequence of their apostasy and idolatry, 18, 19. The chapter closes with a most melancholy picture of the moral condition of the Jewish people at that period which immediately preceded the Babylonish captivity, 20-31.

NOTES ON CHAP. 5

Verse 1. *Broad places*— Market-places, and those where there was most public resort.

If ye can find a man— A certain philosopher went through the streets of Athens with a lighted lamp in his hand; and being asked what he sought, answered, "I am seeking to find a MAN." So in Jerusalem none was found, on the most diligent search, who acted worthy the character of a rational being.

I will pardon it.— I will spare the city for the sake of one righteous person. So at the intercession of Abraham, God would have spared Sodom

if there had been ten righteous persons found in it; Genesis 18:26.

Verse 2. *The Lord liveth*— Though they profess to bind themselves by Jehovah, as if they acknowledged him their God and only Lord, yet they swore falsely; for not believing in him, they took a false oath; one by which they did not believe themselves bound, not acknowledging him as their Lord. See on chap. 4:2.

Verse 4. *These are poor*— They are ignorant; they have no education; they know no better.

Verse 5. *I will get me unto the great men*— Those whose circumstances and rank in life gave them opportunities of information which the others could not have, for the reasons already given.

These have altogether broken the yoke— These have cast aside all restraint, have acted above law, and have trampled all moral obligations under their feet, and into their vortex the lower classes of the people have been swept away. Solon said, “The laws are like cobwebs; they entangle the small fry, but the great ones go through them, and carry all away with them.”

Verse 6. *Wherefore a lion*— Nebuchadnezzar, according to the general opinion; who is called here a lion for his courage and violence, a bear for his rapaciousness, and a leopard for his activity. Dahler supposes the Scythians to be intended, both here and in chap. 4:7.

Verse 7. *In the harlots' houses*.— In places consecrated to idolatry. In the language of the prophets, adultery generally signifies idolatry. This we have often seen.

Verse 8. *After his neighbor's wife*.— This may have been literally true, as the abominations of idolatry, in which they were so deeply practiced, would necessarily produce such a state of things as that here mentioned.

Verse 10. *Go ye up upon her walls*— This is the permission and authority given to the Chaldeans to pillage Jerusalem.

Take away her battlements— Some translate נְטִישׁוֹת netishoth, branches; others, vines. Destroy the branches, cut down the stem; but do not damage the root. Leave so many of the people that the state may be regenerated. The Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic, read, “Leave her foundations, for they are the Lord’s;” and this agrees with “Destroy, but make not a full end.”

Verse 12. They have belied the Lord— כִּחָשׁוּ kichashu. They have denied or disavowed the Lord.

It is not he— לֹא הוּא lo hu, he is not; there is no such being; therefore this evil shall not come upon us. On their premises, this conclusion was just. There is no judge; therefore there shall be no judgment. Thus they denied the Lord. They were atheists at heart.

Verse 13. And the prophets shall become wind— What are the prophets? Empty persons. Their words are wind; we hear the sound of their threatening but of the matter of the threatenings we shall hear no more.

And the word is not in them— There is no inspirer, but may their own predictions fall on their own heads! This seems the natural sense of this passage.

Verse 14. Because ye speak this word— Because ye thus treat my message, “I will make my words in thy mouth fire.” They have said they are but air; but I will make them fire, and a fire too that shall devour them. And how this was to be done, and by whom, is mentioned in the next verse.

Verse 15. I will bring a nation— The Scythians, says Dahler; the Babylonians, whose antiquity was great, that empire being founded by Nimrod.

Whose language thou knowest not— The Chaldee, which, though a dialect of the Hebrew, is so very different in its words and construction that in hearing it spoken they could not possibly collect the meaning of

what was said.

Verse 16. *Their quiver is an open sepulcher*— They are such exact archers as never to miss their mark; every arrow is sure to slay one man.

Verse 18. *I will not make a full end*— There are more evils in store for you. You shall not only be spoiled, and all your property destroyed, but ye shall be carried into captivity; and ye shall serve strangers in a land that is not yours, ver. 19.

Verse 22. *Which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea*— What can I not do, who confine the sea, that enormous mass of waters, and prevent it from overflowing the earth; not by immense mountains and rocks, but by the sand, no particle of which is in cohesion with another? The most tremendous waves cannot displace nor pass over this simple barrier.

Verse 23. *They are revolted and gone*.— They have abandoned me, and are gone farther and farther into transgression. They are gone entirely away from truth and righteousness.

Verse 24. *Giveth rain, both the former and the latter*— See the note on chap. 3:3.

The appointed weeks of the harvest.— As the early rains fell in the northern parts of Judea about the end of September, in the civil year of the Hebrews, so the latter rains fell before harvest, in the months of March and April. The appointed weeks of the harvest were those which fell between the passover and pentecost. In the southern parts the harvest was earlier than in the northern. Dr. Blayney translates, “A sufficiency of the appointed things of harvest he secureth to us.”

If the word **שבעת** weeks, be read with a **ש** sin instead of a **ש** shin, it will signify fullness or sufficiency; and thus the Septuagint and Vulgate have read it. I think the present reading is much to be preferred. God appoints a harvest time, and in his good providence he generally gives harvest weather.

Verse 25. *Your iniquities have turned away these things*— When these appointed weeks of harvest do not come, should we not examine and see whether this be not in God’s judgments? Have not our iniquities turned away these good things from us?

Verse 26. *They lay wait, as he that setteth snares*— A metaphor taken from fowlers, who, having fixed their nets, lie down and keep out of sight, that when birds come, they may be ready to draw and entangle them.

Verse 27. *As a cage is full of birds*— There is no doubt that the reference here is to a decoy or trap-cage, as Dr. Blayney has rendered it; in these the fowlers put several tame birds, which when the wild ones see, they come and light on the cage, and fall into the snare.

Verse 28. *They judge not the cause, yet they prosper*— Perhaps we might be justified in translating, “And shall they prosper?”

Verse 30. *A wonderful and horrible thing is committed on the land*— Dahler translates: “Strange crimes and horrible trespasses have been committed in the land.” These have been already detailed; but this may refer to what follows.

Verse 31. *The prophets prophesy falsely*— The false prophets predict favorable things, that they may please both the princes and the people.

The priests bear rule by their means— The false prophets affording them all that their influence and power can procure, to enable them to keep their places, and feed on the riches of the Lord’s house.

And my people love to have it so— Are perfectly satisfied with this state of things, because they are permitted to continue in their sins without reproof or restraint. The prophets and the priests united to deceive and ruin the people. The prophets gave out false predictions; by their means the priests got the government of the people into their own hands; and so infatuated were the people that they willingly abandoned themselves to those blind guides, and would not hearken to the voice of any reformer. In

my Old Bible the words stand thus: — Stonyng and mervailis ben made in the erthe, prophets prophecieden lesing; and prestis flappiden with joye with ther bondes, and my peple lovid siche thingis. False prophets and worldly priests have been in all ages the bane of religion, and the ruin of many souls. When profligate people stand up on behalf of profligate priests, corruption must then be at its height.

CHAPTER 6

Jeremiah, in the spirit of prophecy, seeing the Chaldeans on their march, bids his people set up the usual signals of distress, and spread the general alarm to betake themselves to flight, 1. Then, by a beautiful allusion to the custom of shepherds moving their flocks to the richest pastures, Jerusalem is singled out as a place devoted to be eaten up or trodden down by the armies of the Chaldeans, who are called up against her, and whose ardor and impatience are so great that the soldiers, when they arrive in the evening, regret they have no more day, and desire to begin the attack without waiting for the light of the morning, 2-5. God is then represented as animating and directing the besiegers against this guilty city, which sinned as incessantly as a fountain flows, 6, 7, although warned of the fatal consequence, 8. He intimates also, by the gleaning of the grapes, that one invasion should carry away the remains of another, till their disobedience, hypocrisy, and other sins should end in their total overthrow, 9-15. And to show that God is clear when he judgeth, he mentions his having in vain admonished and warned them, and calls upon the whole world to witness the equity of his proceedings, 16-18, in punishing this perverse and hypocritical people, 19, 20, by the ministry of the cruel Chaldeans, 21-23. Upon this a chorus of Jews is introduced expressing their fears and alarm, 24, 25; to which the prophet echoes a response full of sympathy and tenderness, 26. The concluding verses, by metaphors taken from the process of refining gold and silver, represent all the methods hitherto used to amend them as wholly ineffectual, 27-30.

NOTES ON CHAP. 6

Verse 1. *O ye children of Benjamin, gather yourselves to flee*— As the invading armies are fast approaching, the prophet calls on the inhabitants of Jerusalem to sound an alarm, and collect all the people to arm themselves and go against the invaders. They are called the children of Benjamin, because Jerusalem was in the tribe of Benjamin.

Tekoa— Was a city about twelve miles to the south of Jerusalem.

Beth-haccerem— Was the name of a small village situated on an eminence between Jerusalem and Tekoa. On this they were ordered to set up a beacon, or kindle a large fire, which might be seen at a distance, and give the people to understand that an enemy was entering the land.

Out of the north— From Babylon. The Scythians. — Dahler.

Verse 3. *The shepherds with their flocks*— The chiefs and their battalions. The invading army is about to spoil and waste all the fertile fields round about the city, while engaged in the siege.

Verse 4. *Prepare ye war against her*— The words of the invaders exciting each other to the assault, and impatient lest any time should be lost; lest the besieged should have time to strengthen themselves, or get in supplies.

Verse 5. *Arise, and let us go by night*— Since we have lost the day, let us not lose the night; but, taking advantage of the darkness, let us make a powerful assault while they are under the impression of terror.

Verse 6. *Hew ye down trees*— To form machines.

And cast a mount— That may overlook the city, on which to place our engines.

This is the city to be visited— We are sure of success, for their God will deliver it into our hands, for it is full of oppression, and he has consigned it to destruction.

Verse 7. *As a fountain casteth out her waters*— The inhabitants are incessant in their acts of iniquity; they do nothing but sin.

Verse 8. *Be thou instructed*— Still there is respite: if they would even now return unto the Lord with all their heart, the advancing Chaldeans would be arrested on their march and turned back.

Verse 9. *They shall thoroughly glean the remnant of Israel as a vine: turn back thine hand*— The Chaldeans are here exhorted to turn back and glean up the remnant of the inhabitants that were left after the capture of Jerusalem; for even that remnant did not profit by the Divine judgments that fell on the inhabitants at large.

Verse 10. *The word of the Lord is unto them a reproach*— It is an object of derision; they despise it.

Verse 11. *I am full of the fury of the Lord*— God has given me a dreadful revelation of the judgments he intends to inflict: my soul is burdened with this prophecy. I have endeavored to suppress it; but I must pour it forth upon the children, on the young people, on husbands and wives, on the old and the super-annuated. All must partake in these judgments.

Verse 14. *They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly*— Of the daughter is not in the text, and is here improperly added: it is, however, in some MSS.

Peace, peace— Ye shall have prosperity-when there was none, and when God had determined that there should be none. Here the prophets prophesied falsely; and the people continued in sin, being deceived by the priests and the prophets.

Verse 16. *Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see*— Let us observe the metaphor. A traveler is going to a particular city; he comes to a place where the road divides into several paths, he is afraid of going astray; he stops short, — endeavors to find out the right path: he cannot fix his choice. At last he sees another traveler; he inquires of him, gets proper directions-proceeds on his journey-arrives at the desired place-and reposes after his fatigue. There is an excellent sermon on these words in the works of our first poet, Geoffrey Chaucer; it is among the Canterbury Tales, and is called Chaucer's Tale. The text, I find, was read by him as it appears in my old MS. Bible: — Standith upon weies and seeth, and asketh of the olde pathes; What is the good weie? and goth in it, and gee schul fynden refreschimg to your soulis. The soul needs rest; it can only

find this by walking in the good way. The good way is that which has been trodden by the saints from the beginning: it is the old way, the way of faith and holiness. BELIEVE, LOVE, OBEY; be holy, and be happy. This is the way; let us inquire for it, and walk in it. But these bad people said, We will not walk in it. Then they took another way, walked over the precipice, and fell into the bottomless pit; where, instead of rest, they find:—

— *a fiery deluge, fed*
With ever-burning sulfur, unconsumed.

Verse 17. *I set watchmen*— I have sent prophets to warn you.

Verse 20. *Incense frown Sheba*— Sheba was in Arabian famous for the best incense. It was situated towards the southern extremity of the peninsula of Arabia; and was, in respect of Judea, a far country.

And the sweet cane from a far country— The calamus aromaticus, which, when dried and pulverized, yields a very fine aromatic smell; see on Isaiah 43:24. This was employed in making the holy anointing oil. See Exodus 30:23.

Verse 23. *They shall lay hold on bow and spear*— Still pointing out the Chaldeans: or according to Dahler, the Scythians, who had before their invasion of Palestine overrun many parts of Asia, and had spread consternation wherever their name was heard.

Verse 27. *I have set thee for a tower and a fortress*— Dr. Blayney translates, I have appointed thee to make an assay among my people. The words refer to the office of an assayer of silver and gold; and the manner of assaying here intended is by the cupel, a flat broad iron ring filled with the ashes of burnt bones. To separate the alloy from the silver they add a portion of lead; and when all is fused together, and brought into a state of ebullition, the cupel absorbs the lead, and with it the dross or alloy, and the silver is left pure and motionless on the top of the cupel. The people are here represented under the notion of alloyed silver. They are full of impurities; and they are put into the hands of the prophet, the assayer, to

be purified. The bellows are placed, the fire is lighted up, but all to no purpose: so intensely commixed is the alloy with the silver, that it can not be separated. The nozzle of the bellows is even melted with the intensity of the fire used to effect the refinement; and the lead is carried off by the action of the heat; and the assayer melteth in vain, for the alloy still continues in union with the metal. The assayer gives up the process, — will not institute one more expensive or tedious—pronounces the mass unfit to be coined, and denominates it reprobate silver, ver. 30. Thus, the evil habits and dispositions of the Israelites were so ingrained that they would not yield to either the ordinary or extraordinary means of salvation. God pronounces them reprobate silver, — not sterling, — full of alloy;-having neither the image nor the superscription of the Great King either on their hearts or on their conduct. Thus he gave them up as incorrigible, and their adversaries prevailed against them. This should be a warning to other nations, and indeed to the Christian Church; for if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare these.

CHAPTER 7

Mere begins another section of prophecy, ending with the ninth chapter. It opens with exhorting to amendment of life, without which the confidence of the Jews in their temple is declared vain, 1-11. God bids them take warning from the fate of their brethren the Israelites, who had been carried away captive on account of their sins without any regard to that sacred place, (Shiloh,) where the ark of God once resided, 12-15. The iniquities of Judah are so great in the sight of God that the prophet is commanded not to intercede for the people, 16; the more especially as they persisted in provoking God by their idolatrous practices, 17-20. The Jewish sacrifices, if not accompanied with obedience to the moral law, are of no avail, 21-24. Notwithstanding the numerous messages of mercy from the time of the exodus, the people revolted more and more; and have added to their other sins this horrible evil, the setting up of their abominations in the temple of Jehovah; or, in other words, they have encumbered the Mosaic economy, which shadowed forth the glorious

Verse 4. *The temple of the Lord*— In the Chaldee the passage stands thus: — “Do not trust in the words of lying prophets, which say, Before the temple of the Lord ye shall worship; Before the temple of the Lord ye shall sacrifice; Before the temple of the Lord ye shall adore; thrice in the year ye shall appear before it.”

This the Targumist supposes to have been the reason why the words are here thrice repeated. They rather seem to express the conviction which the people had, that they should be safe while their temple service continued; for they supposed that God would not give it up into profane hands. But sacred places and sacred symbols are nothing in the sight of God when the heart is not right with him.

Verse 5. *If ye thoroughly amend your ways*— Literally, If in making good ye fully make good your ways. God will no longer admit of half-hearted work. Semblances of piety cannot deceive him; he will not accept partial reformation; there must be a thorough amendment.

Verse 9. *Will ye steal, murder*— Will you continue to commit such abominations, and pretend to worship me; and thus defile the place that is called by my name; and so make my house a den of robbers? I have seen this, — and can you expect to escape condign punishment? Ye shall not escape.

Verse 12. *But go ye now unto my place which was in Shiloh*— See what I did to my tabernacle and ark formerly: after a long residence at Shiloh, for the iniquity of the priests and the people, I suffered it to fall into the hands of the Philistines, and to be carried captive into their land, and to be set up in the house of their idols. And because of your iniquities, I will deal with you and this temple in the same way; for as I spared not Shiloh, though my ark was there, but made it a victim of my wrath, so will I do to Jerusalem and her temple.

Verse 15. *The whole seed of Ephraim*.— Taken here for all the ten tribes, that of Ephraim being the principal.

Verse 16. *Therefore pray not thou for this people*— They have filled up the measure of their iniquity, and they must become examples of my justice. How terrible must the state of that place be, where God refuses to pour out the spirit of supplication on his ministers and people in its behalf!

Verse 18. *The children gather wood*— Here is a description of a whole family gathered together, and acting unitedly in idolatrous worship. 1. The children go and collect wood, and bring it to the place of sacrifice. 2. The fathers lay it in order, and kindle a fire. 3. The mother and her maids knead dough, make their batch, and out of it form cakes, and bake them for the honor of the queen of heaven; most probably the moon, though perhaps not exclusive of the sun and planets, generally called the host of heaven. Family worship is a most amiable and becoming thing when performed according to truth. What a pity that so few families show such zeal for the worship of God as those apostate Israelites did for that of their idols!

Verse 21. *Put your burnt-offerings unto your sacrifices, and eat flesh.*— I will receive neither sacrifice nor oblation from you; therefore you may take the beasts intended for sacrifice, and slay and eat them for your common nourishment. See on ver. 29.

Verse 23. *This thing commanded I them-Obey my voice*— It was not sacrifices and oblations which I required of your fathers in the wilderness, but obedience; it was to walk in that way of righteousness which I have commanded; then I should have acknowledged them for my people, and I should have been their God, and then it would have been well with them. But to my commands, 1. They hearkened not—paid no regard to my word. 2. They inclined not the ear—showed no disposition to attend to my counsels. 3. They walked in the imaginations of their evil heart—followed its irregular and impure motions, rather than the holy dictates of my Spirit. 4. They went backward and not forward. Instead of becoming more wise, obedient, and holy, they grew more corrupt; so that they became more profligate than their fathers.

Verse 28. *Nor receiveth correction*— They have profited neither by mercies nor by judgments: blessings and corrections have been equally lost

upon them.

Verse 29. *Cut off thine hair*— גזי נזרך gozzi nizrech, shear thy nazarite. The Nazarite was one who took upon him a particular vow, and separated himself from all worldly connections for a certain time, that he might devote himself without interruption to the service of God; and during all this time no razor was to pass on his head, for none of his hair was to be taken off. After the vow was over, he shaved his head and beard, and returned to society. See Numbers 6:2, etc., and the notes there. Jerusalem is here considered under the notion of a Nazarite, by profession devoted to the service of God: but that profession was empty; it was not accompanied with any suitable practice. God tells them here to cut off their hair; to make no vain pretensions to holiness or religion; to throw off the mask, and attempt no longer to impose upon themselves and others by their hypocritical pretensions. On the same ground he orders them, ver. 21, to devote to common use the animals destined for sacrifice; and to make no more vain shows of religion while their hearts were not right with him. Dr. Blayney thinks the address is to the prophet, who was a Nazarite by virtue of his office, and who was called to cut off his hair as a token of mourning for the desolations which were coming upon his people. That cutting off the hair was a sign of distress and mourning may be seen, Ezra 9:3; Isaiah 15:2; Jeremiah 41:5, etc. But I think the other the more natural construction.

On high places— That the lamentation may be heard to the greater distance.

The generation of his wrath.— Persons exposed to punishment: used here as children of wrath, Ephesians 2:3.

Verse 31. *Tophet in the valley of the son of Hinnom*— Tophet was the place in that valley where the continual fires were kept up, in and through which they consecrated their children to Moloch.

Verse 32. *The valley of slaughter*— The place where the slaughtered thousands of this rebellious people shall be cast, in order to their being burnt, or becoming food for the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air,

ver. 33. These words are repeated, and their meaning more particularly explained, chap. 19:6-15.

Verse 34. *Then will I cause to cease-the voice of mirth*— There shall no longer be in Jerusalem any cause of joy; they shall neither marry nor be

CHAPTER 8

The judgments threatened in the last chapter are here declared to extend to the very dead, whose tombs should be opened, and the carcasses treated with every mark of indignity, 1-3. From this the prophet returns to reprove them for their perseverance in transgression, 4-6; and for their thoughtless stupidity, which even the instinct of the brute creation, by a beautiful contrast, is made to upbraid, 7-9. This leads to farther threatening expressed in a variety of striking terms, 10-13. Upon which a chorus of Jews is introduced, expressing their terror on the news of the invasion, 14, 15; which is greatly heightened in the neat verse by the prophet's hearing the snorting of Nebuchadnezzar's horses even from Dan, and then seeing the devastation made by his army, 16, whose cruelties God himself declares no entreaties will soften, 17. On this declaration the prophet laments most bitterly the fate of the daughter of his people, changing the scene unawares to the place of her captivity, where she is introduced answering in mournful responses to the prophet's dirge, 18-22. The variety of images and figures used to diversify the same subject is equally pleasing and astonishing. The dress is generally new, always elegant.

NOTES ON CHAP. 8

Verse 1. *They shall bring out the bones*— This and the two following verses are a continuation of the preceding prophecy, and should not have been separated from the foregoing chapter.

In order to pour the utmost contempt upon the land, the victorious enemies dragged out of their graves, caves, and sepulchers, the bones of kings, princes, prophets, priests, and the principal inhabitants, and exposed them in the open air; so that they became, in the order of God's judgments, a reproach to them in the vain confidence they had in the sun, moon, and the host of heaven—all the planets and stars, whose worship they had set up in opposition to that of Jehovah. This custom of raising

the bodies of the dead, and scattering their bones about, seems to have been general. It was the highest expression of hatred and contempt. Horace refers to it:—

*Barbarus, heu, cineres insistet victor, et urbem
Eques sonante verberabit ungula:
Quaeque carent ventis et solibus ossa Quirini
(Nefas videre) dissipabit insolens.*

Epod. 16:11.

*“Barbarians fell shall wanton with success,
Scatter the city’s flaming ruins wide;
Or through her streets in vengeful triumph ride,
And her great founder’s hallowed ashes spurn,
That slept uninjured in the sacred urn.”*

FRANCIS.

See this judgment referred to, Baruch 2:24, 25.

Verse 4. *Moreover thou shalt say*— Dr. Blayney very properly observes, “In that part of the prophecy which follows next, the difference of speakers requires to be attended to; the transition being quick and sudden, but full of life and energy. The prophet at first, in the name of God, reproves the people’s incorrigibility; he charges their wise ones with folly, and threatens them with grievous calamities, ver. 4-13. In the three next verses he seems to apostrophize his countrymen in his own person, and as one of the people that dwelt in the open towns, advising those that were in the like situation to retire with him into some of the fortified cities, and there wait the event with patience, since there was nothing but terror abroad, and the noise of the enemy, who had already begun to ravage the country, ver. 14-16. God speaks, ver. 17, and threatens to bring foes against them that should be irresistible. The prophet appears again in his own person, commiserating the daughter of his people, who is heard bewailing her forlorn case in a distant land; while the voice of God, like that of conscience, breaks in upon her complaints, and shows her that all this ruin is brought upon her by her own infidelities, ver. 18-20. The

prophet once more resumes his discourse; he regrets that no remedy can be found to close up the wounds of his country, and pathetically weeps over the number of her slain, ver. 21, chap. 9:1.”

Shall they fall, and not arise? shall he turn away, and not return?—

That is, It is as possible for sinners to return from their sin to God, for his grace is ever at hand to assist, as it is for God, who is pouring out his judgments, to return to them on their return to him. But these held fast deceit, and refused to return; they would not be undeceived.

Verse 6. *As the horse rusheth into the battle.*— This strongly marks the unthinking, careless desperation of their conduct.

Verse 7. *The stork in the heaven*— The birds of passage know the times of their going and return, and punctually observe them; they obey the dictates of nature, but my people do not obey my law.

Verse 8. *The pen of the scribes is in vain.*— The deceitful pen of the scribes. They have written falsely, though they had the truth before them. It is too bold an assertion to say that “the Jews have never falsified the sacred oracles;” they have done it again and again. They have written falsities when they knew they were such.

Verse 10. *Therefore will I give their wives*— From this to the end of ver. 15 is repeated from chap. 6:13-15.

Verse 16. *The snorting of his horses was heard from Dan:*— From this to the end of verse 15 is repeated from Babylon to Jerusalem; and it was by this city, after the battle of Carchemish, that Nebuchadnezzar, in pursuing the Egyptians, entered Palestine.

The whole land trembled at the sound of the neighing of his strong ones— Of his war horses. This is a fine image; so terrible was the united neighing of the cavalry of the Babylonians that the reverberation of the air caused the ground to tremble. This is better, and more majestic, than the celebrated line of Virgil:—

Quadruple-dante pu-trem soni-tu quatit ungula campum. It would be much easier to shake the ground with the prancinys of many horses, than to cause an earthquake by the sound of the neighing of the troops of cavalry.

Verse 17. *I will send serpents*— These were symbols of the enemies that were coming against them; a foe that would rather slay them and destroy the land than get booty and ransom.

Verse 20. *The harvest is past*— The siege of Jerusalem lasted two years; for Nebuchadnezzar came against it in the ninth year of Zedekiah, and the city was taken in the eleventh; see 2 Kings 25:1-3. This seems to have been a proverb: “We expected deliverance the first year-none came. We hoped for it the second year-we are disappointed; we are not saved-no deliverance is come.”

Verse 22. *Is there no balm in Gilead?*— Yes, the most excellent in the world. “Is there no physician there?” Yes, persons well skilled to apply it. “Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?” Because ye have not applied to the physician, nor used the balm. Ye die because ye will not use the remedy. But to apply this metaphor: — The Israelites are represented as a man dying through disease; and a disease for the cure of which the balm of Gilead was well known to be a specific, when judiciously applied by a physician. But though there be balm and a physician, the people are not cured; neither their spiritual nor political evils are removed. But what may all this spiritually mean? The people are morally diseased; they have sinned against God, and provoked him to destroy them. They are warned by the prophet to repent and turn to God: they refuse, and sin on. Destruction is come upon them. Might they not have avoided it? Yes. Was it the fault of God? No. Did he not send his prophets with the richest offers of mercy? Did he not give them time, the best instructions, and the most effectual means of returning to him? Has not mercy, the heavenly balm, been ever at hand? And has not GOD, the great Physician, been ever ready to apply it? Yes. Why then are they not converted and healed? Because they would not apply to the Divine Physician, nor receive the only remedy by which they could be spiritually healed. They, then, that sin against the only remedy must perish, because they might have had it, but would not. It is not because there is a

deficiency of grace, nor of the means of grace, that men are not saved; but because they either make no use, or a bad use, of them. Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, has tasted death for every man; but few are saved, because they WILL NOT come unto him that they may have life.

In my old MS. Bible the text is rendered thus:—

Whether gumm is not in Galaad? Or a leche is not there? Why than the hid wounde of the daughter of my peple is not all helid?

How shall they escape who neglect so great a salvation? Reader, lay this to heart; and, while there is time, apply heartily to the great Physician for thy cure.

CHAPTER 9

The prophet bitterly laments the terrible judgments about to be inflicted upon his countrymen, and points out some of the evils which have provoked the Divine Majesty, 1-9. Judea shall be utterly desolated, and the inhabitants transplanted into heathen countries, 10-17. In allusion to an ancient custom, a band of mourning women is called to lament over the ruins of Jerusalem, 17, 18; and even the funeral dirge is given in terms full of beauty, elegance, and pathos, 19-22. God is the fountain of all good; man, merely an instrument by which a portion of this good is distributed in the earth; therefore none should glory in his wisdom, might, or riches, 23, 24. The judgments of God shall fall, not upon the land of Judea only, but also upon many heathen nations, 25, 26.

NOTES ON CHAP. 9

Verse 1. *O that my head were waters*— מִי יֵת רֹאשִׁי מַיִם mi yitten roshi mayim, “who will give to my head waters?” My mourning for the sins and desolations of my people has already exhausted the source of tears: I wish to have a fountain opened there, that I may weep day and night for the slain of my people. This has been the sorrowful language of many a pastor who has preached long to a hardened, rebellious people, to little or no effect. This verse belongs to the preceding chapter.

Verse 2. *O that I had in the wilderness*— In the eastern countries there are no such inns or houses of entertainment as those in Europe. There are in different places public buildings called caravanserais, where travelers may lodge: but they are without furniture of any kind, and without food. Indeed they are often without a roof being mere walls for a protection against the wild beasts of the desert. I wish to hide myself any where, in the most uncomfortable circumstances, that I may not be obliged any longer to witness the abominations of this people who are shortly to be visited with the most grievous punishments. Several interpreters suppose this to be the speech of GOD. I cannot receive this. I believe this verse to

be spoken by the prophet, and that God proceeds with the next verse, and so on to the ninth inclusive.

Verse 3. *They bend their tongues like their bow for lies*— And their lies are such that they as fully take away life as the keenest arrow shot from the best strung bow. The false prophets told the people that there was no desolation at hand: the people believed them; made no preparation for their defense; did not return to the Lord; and the sword came and destroyed them.

They are not valiant for the truth— They are bold in sin, and courageous to support their lies; but the truth they neither patronize nor support.

Verse 5. *And weary themselves to commit iniquity*.— O, what a drudgery is sin! and how much labor must a man take in order to get to hell! The tenth part of it, in working together with God, would bring him to the gate of glory.

Verse 7. *Behold, I will melt them*— I will put them in the furnace of affliction, and see if this will be a means of purging away their dross. See on chap. 6:27.

Verse 10. *Both the fowl of the heavens and the beast are fled*— The land shall be so utterly devastated, that neither beast nor bird shall be able to live in it.

Verse 11. *A den of dragons*— תַּנִּים tannim is supposed to mean here jackals; the chakal is a beast frequent in the east, an attendant on the lion, the refuse of whose prey he devours. It is an animal that seems to have been bred originally between the wolf and the dog. The original is sometimes interpreted, dragons, whales, etc.

Verse 12. *Who is the wise man*— To whom has God revealed these things? He is the truly wise man. But it is to his prophet alone that God has revealed these things, and the speedy fulfillment of the predictions will show that the prophet has not spoken of himself.

Verse 15. *I will feed them-with wormwood*— They shall have the deepest sorrow and heaviest affliction. They shall have poison instead of meat and drink.

Verse 17. *Call for the mourning women*— Those whose office it was to make lamentations at funerals, and to bewail the dead, for which they received pay. This custom continues to the present in Asiatic countries. In Ireland this custom also prevails, which no doubt their ancestors brought from the east. I have often witnessed it, and have given a specimen of this elsewhere. See the note on Matthew 9:23. The first lamentations for the dead consisted only in the sudden bursts of inexpressible grief, like that of David over his son Absalom, 2 Samuel 19:4. But as men grew refined, it was not deemed sufficient for the surviving relatives to vent their sorrows in these natural, artless expressions of wo, but they endeavored to join others as partners in their sorrows. This gave rise to the custom of hiring persons to weep at funerals, which the Phrygians and Greeks borrowed from the Hebrews. Women were generally employed on these occasions, because the tender passions being predominant in this sex, they succeeded better in their parts; and there were never wanting persons who would let out their services to hire on such occasions. Their lamentations were sung to the pipe as we learn from Matthew 9:23. See the funeral ceremonies practiced at the burial of Hector, as described by Homer:—

οι δ' επει εισαγαγον κλυτα δωματα, τον μεν επειτα
 τρητοις εν λεχεεσσι θεσαν, παρα δ' εισαν αιιδους,
 θρηνων εξαρχους, οι τε στονοεσσαν αιιδην
 οι μεν αρ' εθρηνεον, επι δε στεναχοντο γυναικες.

Il. lib. 24., ver. 719.

*“Arrived within the royal house, they stretched
 The breathless Hector on a sumptuous bed,
 And singers placed beside him, who should chant
 The strain funereal; they with many a groan
 The dirge began; and still at every close
 The female train with many a groan replied.”*

COWPER.

St. Jerome tells us that even to his time this custom continued in Judea; that women at funerals, with dishevelled hair and naked breasts, endeavored in a modulated voice to invite others to lament with them. The poem before us, from the seventeenth to the twenty-second verse, is both an illustration and confirmation of what has been delivered on this subject, and worthy of the reader's frequent perusal, on account of its affecting pathos, moral sentiments, and fine images, particularly in the twenty-first verse, where death is described in as animated a prosopopoeia as can be conceived. See Lototh's twenty-second Prelection, and Dodd. The nineteenth verse is supposed to be the funeral song of the women.

*“How are we spoiled!
We are greatly confounded!
For we have forsaken the land;
Because they have destroyed our dwellings.”*

Verse 20. *Teach your daughters*— This is not a common dirge that shall last only till the body is consigned to the earth; it must last longer; teach it to your children, that it may be continued through every generation, till God turn again your captivity.

Verse 21. *For death is come up into our windows*— Here DEATH is personified, and represented as scaling their wall; and after having slain the playful children without, and the vigorous youth employed in the labors of the field, he is now come into the private houses, to destroy the aged and infirm; and into the palaces, to destroy the king and the princes.

Verse 22. *And as the handful after the harvestman*— The reapers, after having cut enough to fill their hand, threw it down; and the binders, following after, collected those handfuls, and bound them in sheaves. Death is represented as having cut down the inhabitants of the land, as the reapers do the corn; but so general was the slaughter, that there was none to bury the dead, to gather up these handfuls; so that they lay in a state of putrescence, as dung upon the open field.

Verse 23. *Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom*— Because God is the Fountain of all good, neither wisdom, nor might, nor riches, nor prosperity can come but from or through him. Nothing can be more rational than that the Source of all our blessings should be acknowledged. Riches cannot deliver in the day of death; strength cannot avail against him; and as a shield against him, our wisdom is foolishness.

Verse 24. *But let him that glorieth*— To glory in a thing is to depend on it as the means or cause of procuring happiness. But there can be no happiness but in being experimentally acquainted with that God who exercises loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. He who has God's mercy for his portion may well exult; for he need not fear the power of any adversary.

Sometimes the ancient heathen poets uttered sentiments of morality far beyond their dispensation. Witness PHOCYLIDES on this subject:—

μη γαυρου σοφειη, μητ' αλκη, μητ' ενι πλουτω
εις θεος εστι σοφος, δυνατος θ' αμα, και τολυολβος.

*“If wisdom, strength, or riches be thy lot,
Boast not; but rather think thou hast them not.
ONE GOD alone from whom those gifts proceed*

be remarked, that these people were in general confederated against the Chaldeans.

Verse 26. *All that are in the utmost corners*— כל קצוצי פאה col
ketsutsey pheah. These words have been variously understood. The Vulgate translates: Omnes qui attonsi sunt in comam; “All who have their hair cut short.” The Targum, Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic have understood it nearly in the same way; and so our margin. Others think that the insular or peninsular situation of the people is referred to. Dr. Blayney thinks the Arabians are meant, who dwelt in the great desert, between Mesopotamia and Palestine. I really think our marginal reading should be preferred, as expressing the sense of all the ancient Versions.

CHAPTER 10

The Jews, about to be carried into captivity, are here warned against the superstition and idolatry of that country to which they were going. Chaldea was greatly addicted to astrology, and therefore the prophet begins with warning them against it, 1, 2. He then exposes the absurdity of idolatry in short but elegant satire; in the midst of which he turns, in a beautiful apostrophe, to the one true God, whose adorable attributes repeatedly strike in view, as he goes along, and lead him to contrast his infinite perfections with those despicable inanities which the blinded nations fear, 3-16. The prophet again denounces the Divine judgments, 17, 18; upon which Jerusalem laments her fate, and supplicates the Divine compassion in her favor, 19-25.

NOTES ON CHAP. 10

Verse 1. *Hear ye the word which the Lord speaketh unto you—* Dr.

Verse 3. *The customs of the people are vain*— חֻקֹּת chukkoth; the statutes and principles of the science are vain, empty, and illusory. They are founded in nonsense, ignorance, idolatry, and folly.

One cutteth a tree out of the forest— See the notes on Isaiah 40:19, and 44:9, etc., which are all parallel places and where this conduct is strongly ridiculed.

Verse 5. *They are upright as the palm tree*— As straight and as stiff as the trees out of which they are hewn.

Verse 7. *Who would not fear thee*— Who would not worship thee as the Author and Giver of all good? The fear of God is often taken for the whole of true religion.

Among all the wise men of the nation— Not even the wisest and most cultivated of the nations have ever found out any one equal to thee; but so exalted and holy art thou, that in all their wisdom and research they have never been able to find out the true God.

Verse 8. *The stock is a doctrine of vanities*.— Dr. Blayney translates, — “The wood itself is a rebuker of vanities.” The very tree out of which the god is hewn demonstrates the vanity and folly of the idolaters; for, can all the art of man make out of a log of wood an animate and intelligent being?

Verse 9. *Brought from Tarshish*— Some suppose this to be Tartessus in Spain, from which the Phoenicians brought much silver. Uphaz, Calmet thinks to be the river Pison; some think Ophir is intended.

Blue and purple is their clothing— These were the most precious dyes; very rare, and of high price.

Verse 10. *But the Lord*— The original word should be preserved, however we agree to pronounce it: יהוה Yehovah is the true God. He is without beginning, and without end. This is true of no being else.

He is the living God— His being is underived; and he gives life to all. He is the very Fountain whence all life is derived.

And an everlasting king— As he has made, so he governs, all things. His sway is felt both in the heavens and in the earth.

At his wrath the earth shall tremble— All storms, tempests, tornadoes, and earthquakes are the effects of his power; and when the nations are destroyed, or turned upside down, it is the effect of his displeasure.

Verse 11. *Thus shall ye say unto them*— This is the message you shall deliver to the Chaldean idolaters.

The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish— Both they and their worshippers shall be destroyed; and idolatry shall finally be destroyed from the earth; and the heavens shall look no more on so great an abomination. It is suffered for a while: but in the end shall be destroyed. This verse is written in a sort of Hebraeo-Syriaco-Chaldee; such a dialect as I suppose was spoken at that time in Babylon, or during the captivity. As it is a message to the Babylonians therefore, it is given in their own language. The Chaldee makes it the beginning of the copy of the epistle which the Prophet Jeremiah sent to the rest of the elders of the captivity who were in Babylon. All the ancient Versions acknowledge this verse; and it is found in all MSS. hitherto collated, except one of Dr. Kennicott's numbered 526; and he has included it between lines, as doubting its authenticity. Dr. Blayney supposes that some public teacher during the captivity, deducing it by direct inference from the prophet's words, had it inserted in the margin, and perhaps usually read together with this section, in the assemblies of the people, in order that they might have their answer always ready, whenever they were molested on the point of religion, or importuned to join the idolatrous worship of the Chaldeans.

Dahler has left it entirely out of the text, and introduces it in a note thus:— “After ver. 10 the Hebrew text is interrupted by a verse written in the Chaldean or Babylonish tongue. It is thus expressed:—

*Ye shall say unto them, Let the gods perish!
Who have not made the heavens and the earth.
Let them be banished from above the earth,
and from under the heavens.*

This verse can be considered only as a foreign insertion, not only on account of the difference of the language, but also because it interrupts the natural course of the ideas, and of the connection of the tenth and twelfth verses.”

As a curiosity I shall insert it in Hebrew, which the reader may compare with the Chaldee text, which I also subjoin.

אלה כזאת יאמרו להם האלהים אשר לא עשו ושמים והארץ
cazoth tomeru lahem; haelohim asher
lo ask hashshamayim vechaarets, yobedu min haarets, umin tachath
hashshamayim elleh. מארעא ומ תחות כדנא תאמרו להו אלהיא
kidna temerun lehon; elahaiya di shemaiya vearka la abadu, yebadu meara umin techoth
shemaiya elleh.

The Hebrew is the translation of Leusden; the Chaldee is that of the common text. Had not all the ancient Versions acknowledged it, I also, principally on account of the strangeness of the language, as being neither Chaldee nor Syriac, should have doubted its authenticity.

Verse 13. *When he uttereth his voice, there is a multitude of waters*—
This is a plain allusion to a storm of thunder and lightning, and the abundance of rain which is the consequence. Water is composed of two gases, hydrogen and oxygen: the electric or galvanic spark decomposes them, and they become air; when recomposed, they form water. The lightning acts upon the hydrogen and oxygen, which are found in the atmospheric air: they are decomposed, and water or rain is the consequence; which, being heavier than the air falls down in the form of rain.

This verse and the three following are the same in substance, and nearly in words, as chap. 51:16, and following.

Verse 14. *Every man is brutish*— נבער nibar, is a boor, acts as a brute, who may suppose that a stock of a tree, formed like a man, may be an intellectual being; and therefore shuns the form as though it had life. See Isaiah 44:10, 11. Of which verses, by the way, Dr. Blayney gives the following version to correct that of Bishop Lowth:—

Verse 10. Who hath formed a god? Or set up a graven image that profiteth not? 11. Behold, all that are connected with it shall be ashamed, And the artificers, they above all men! They shall assemble all of them; they shall stand forth; They shall fear; they shall be ashamed at the same time.

“That is, while they stand before the image they have set up, and worship it with a religious dread, the glaring absurdity of their conduct shall lead to their shame and disgrace.” With due deference to this learned man, I think this interpretation too refined.

Verse 16. *The Portion of Jacob is not like them*— Every nation had its tutelary god; this was its portion; in reference to this God says Deuteronomy 4:19, “He has divided the sun, moon, and stars, to all the nations under the heaven.” And the Lord had taken the Israelites to be his portion; for “the Lord’s portion is his people,” Deuteronomy 32:9, and David says, “The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance,” Psalm 16:5; 119:67. And hence Isaiah terms the smooth stones of the brook, to which Divine honors were paid, the portion of those idolaters, chap. 57:6. But in the text he says, “The PORTION, i.e., the God of Jacob is not like them; for he is the former of all things,” and they are formed by their foolish worshippers.

Verse 17. *Gather up thy wares*— Pack up your goods, or what necessities of life your enemies will permit you to carry away; for,

Verse 18. *I will sling out the inhabitants of the land*— I will project you with violence from your country. I will send you all into captivity. This discourse, from ver. 17, is supposed to have been delivered in the

eleventh year of Jehoiakim.

Verse 19. *This is a grief, and I must bear it.*— Oppressive as it is, I have deserved it, and worse; but even in this judgment God remembers mercy.

Verse 20. *My tabernacle is spoiled*— The city is taken, and all our villages ruined and desolated.

Verse 21. *The pastors are become brutish*— The king and his counselors, who, by refusing to pay the promised tribute to Nebuchadnezzar, had kindled a new war.

Verse 22. *The noise of the bruit is come*— How this silly French word bruit, which signifies noise, got in here, I cannot imagine. The simple translation is this: “The voice of the report! behold, it is come; yea, great commotion from the land of the north; (Chaldea;) to make the cities of Judea a desolation, a habitation of wild beasts.” That is, the report we had heard of the projected invasion of Judea by Nebuchadnezzar is confirmed. He has entered the land; the Chaldeans are at the doors, and the total desolation of Judea is their sole object.

Verse 23. *O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself*— I will not pretend to dispute with thee; thou dost every thing wisely and justly; we have sinned, and thou hast a right to punish; and to choose that sort of punishment thou thinkest will best answer the ends of justice. We cannot choose; thou hast appointed us to captivity; we must not repine: yet,

Verse 24. *Correct me, but with judgment*— Let not the punishment be to the uttermost of the demerit of the offense; else we shall be brought to nothing-totally and irrecoverably ruined.

Verse 25. *Pour out thy fury upon the heathen*— Even those who are now the executors of thy justice upon us will, in their turn, feel its scourge; for if judgment begins at us, who have been called thy house and thy people, shall they who have not acknowledged thee escape? It is impossible. The families and tribes which invoke thee not shall have thy fury poured out upon them, and especially they who “have eaten up Jacob and consumed

him, and have made his habitation desolate.” This was fulfilled in the Chaldeans. Nebuchadnezzar was punished with madness, his son was slain in his revels, and the city was taken and sacked by Cyrus; and the Babylonish empire was finally destroyed! This verse has been often quoted against those ungodly families who set not up the worship of God in their houses. These are spiritual Chaldeans, worse indeed than the Chaldeans ever were: they acknowledge God and his Christ; and yet neither worship nor serve him. How can that family expect the blessing of God, where the worship of God is not daily performed? No wonder their servants are wicked, their children profligate, and their goods cursed! What an awful reckoning shall such heads of families have with the Judge in the great day, who have refused to petition for that mercy which they might have had for the asking.

CHAPTER 11

The prophet proclaims the tenor of God's covenant with the Jews of old, 1-5; and then reproves them for their hereditary disobedience, 6-19. In consequence of this the Almighty is introduced, declaring he will show them no pity, 11-13; forbidding Jeremiah to intercede, 14; rejecting their sacrifices, 15; and in a word, condemning this fair but unfruitful tree to the fire, 16, 17. In what remains of the chapter the prophet predicts evil to his neighbors of Anathoth, who had conspired against him, 18-23. "Let us," said they, "destroy this tree, with the fruit thereof," etc., alluding to what Jeremiah had said in the sixteenth verse.

NOTES ON CHAP. 11

Verse 1. *The word that came to Jeremiah*— This discourse is supposed to have been delivered in the first year of the reign of Zedekiah. See Dahler.

Verse 2. *Hear ye the words of this covenant*— It is possible that the prophet caused the words of the covenant made with their fathers in the desert (Exodus 24:4-8) to be read to them on this occasion; or, at least, the blessings and the cursings which Moses caused to be pronounced to the people as soon as they had set foot in Canaan, Deuteronomy 27., 28.

Verse 3. *Cursed be the man that obeyeth not*— After the reading, the prophet appears to sum up the things contained in what was read to them; as if he had said, "Ye hear what the Lord saith unto you: remember, the sum of it is this: The man is cursed who obeyeth not; and he is blessed who obeys. From these declarations God will not depart."

Verse 5. *So be it, O Lord*— Let thy promises be fulfilled; and let the incorrigible beware of thy threatenings!

Verse 6. *Proclaim all these words*— Let the same covenant, with the

blessings and cursings, be read in every city of Judah, and in all the streets of Jerusalem, that all the people may know their duty, their privileges, and their danger.

Verse 9. *A conspiracy is found*— They were all fratres conjurati, sworn brothers, determined to cast off the Divine yoke, and no longer to have God to reign over them.

Verse 10. *They are turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers*— A great reformation had taken place under the reign of Josiah, and the public worship of idols had been abolished, and most of the high places destroyed; but under the reign of his son and his successors, they had turned back again to idolatry, and were become worse than ever. It required a captivity to cure them of this propensity: and God sent one: after that, there was no idolatry among the Jews.

Verse 12. *Go, and cry unto the gods*— See chap. 2:28.

Verse 14. *Therefore pray not thou for this people*— I am determined to give them up into the hands of their enemies; I will neither hear thy intercession, nor regard their prayers. Their measure is full.

Verse 15. *What hath my beloved to do in mine house*— This has been supposed to refer to Abraham, Moses, or such eminent servants of God, whose intercession was very powerful. Were even they to appear as intercessors, their prayer should not be regarded. Others think that this is an endearing expression which properly belonged to the Israelites. When God took them into covenant with himself, they were espoused to him, and therefore his beloved; but now that they have forsaken him, and joined themselves to another, what have they to do with his house or its ordinances, which they wish now to frequent with vows and sacrifices, when they see the evil fast coming upon them? This is probably the sense of this very obscure passage. Dr. Blayney translates, “What hath my beloved to do in my house whilst she practiseth wickedness? Shall vows and holy flesh (sacrifices) be allowed to come from thee? When thou art malignant, shalt thou rejoice?”

Verse 16. *The Lord called thy name, A green olive tree*— That is, he made thee like a green olive-fair, flourishing, and fruitful; but thou art degenerated, and God hath given the Chaldeans permission to burn thee up.

Verse 18. *The Lord hath given me knowledge of it*— The men of Anathoth had conspired against his life, because he reproved them for their sins, and denounced the judgments of God against them. Of this God had given him a secret warning, that he might be on his guard.

Verse 19. *I was like a lamb or an ox*— Dahler translates, “I was like a fattened lamb that is led to the slaughter.” Blayney, “I was like a tame lamb that is led to slaughter.” The word **אלופ** alluph, which we translate ox, is taken by both as an adjective, qualifying the noun **כבש** kebes, a lamb. It may probably signify a lamb brought up in the house-fed at home, (**אלופ** alluph,) instructed or nourished at home; perfectly innocent and unsuspecting, while leading to the slaughter. This meaning the word will bear in Arabic, for [A] alaf signifies accustomed, familiar, (to or with any person or thing;) a companion, a comrade, an intimate friend. I therefore think that **כבש אלופ** kechebes alluph signifies, like the familiar lamb-the lamb bred up in the house, in a state of friendship with the family. The people of Anathoth were Jeremiah’s townsmen; he was born and bred among them; they were his familiar friends; and now they lay wait for his life! All the Versions understood **אלופ** alluph as an epithet of **כבש** kebes, a chosen, simple, innocent lamb.

Let us destroy the tree with the fruit— Let us slay the prophet, and his prophecies will come to an end. The Targum has, Let us put mortal poison in his food; and all the Versions understand it something in the same way.

Verse 20. *Let me see thy vengeance on them*— Rather, I shall see (**אראה** ereh) thy punishment indicted on them.

Verse 22. *Behold, I will punish them*— And the punishment is, Their young men shall die by the sword of the Chaldeans; and their sons and daughters shall die by the famine that shall come on the land through the

desolations occasioned by the Chaldean army.

Verse 23. *The year of their visitation.*— This punishment shall come in that year in which I shall visit their iniquities upon them.

CHAPTER 12

This chapter is connected with the foregoing. The prophet expostulates with God concerning the ways of Providence in permitting the wicked to prosper, 1-4. It is intimated to him that he must endure still greater trials, 5, from his false and deceitful brethren, 6; but that still heavier judgments awaited the nation for their crimes, 7-13. That God, however, would at length have compassion on them; restore them to their land; and turn his judgments against those that oppressed them, if not prevented by their becoming converts to the true religion, 14-17.

NOTES ON CHAP. 12

Verse 1. *Righteous art thou, O Lord, when I plead with thee*— The prophet was grieved at the prosperity of the wicked; and he wonders how, consistently with God's righteousness, vice should often be in affluence, and piety in suffering and poverty. He knows that God is righteous, that every thing is done well; but he wishes to inquire how these apparently unequal and undeserved lots take place. On this subject he wishes to reason with God, that he may receive instruction.

Verse 2. *Thou art near in their mouth*— They have no sincerity: they have something of the form of religion, but nothing of its power.

Verse 3. *But thou, O Lord, knowest me*— I know that the very secrets of my heart are known to thee; and I am glad of it, for thou knowest that my heart is towards thee—is upright and sincere.

Verse 4. *How long shall the land mourn*— These hypocrites and open sinners are a curse to the country; pull them out, Lord, that the land may be delivered of that which is the cause of its desolation.

Verse 5. *If thou hast run with the footmen*— If the smallest evils to which thou art exposed cause thee to make so many bitter complaints,

how wilt thou feel when, in the course of thy prophetic ministry, thou shalt be exposed to much greater, from enemies much more powerful? Footmen may here be the symbol of common evil events; horsemen, of evils much more terrible. If thou have sunk under small difficulties, what wilt thou do when great ones come?

And if in the land of peace, wherein thou trustedst— I believe the meaning is this, “If in a country now enjoying peace thou scarcely thinkest thyself in safety, what wilt thou do in the swellings of Jordan? in the time when the enemy, like an overflowing torrent, shall deluge every part of the land?”

The overflowing of Jordan, which generally happened in harvest, drove the lions and other beasts of prey from their coverts among the bushes that lined its banks; who, spreading themselves through the country, made terrible havoc, slaying men, and carrying off the cattle.

Perhaps by footmen may be meant the Philistines, Edomites, etc., whose armies were composed principally of infantry; and by the horses, the Chaldeans, who had abundance of cavalry and chariots in their army. But still the words are proverbial, and the above is their meaning.

Verse 6. *For even thy brethren, and the house of thy father*— Thou hast none to depend on but God: even thy brethren will betray thee when they have it in their power.

Believe them not— Do not trust to them, do not commit thyself to them; they are in heart thy enemies, and will betray thee.

Verse 7. *I have forsaken mine house*— I have abandoned my temple.

I have given the dearly beloved of my soul— The people once in covenant with me, and inexpressibly dear to me while faithful.

Into the hand of her enemies.— This was a condition in the covenant I made with them; If they forsook me, they were to be abandoned to their enemies, and cast out of the good land I gave to their fathers.

Verse 8. *Mine heritage is unto me as a lion*— The people are enraged against me; they roar like a furious lion against their God. They have proceeded to the most open acts of the most flagrant iniquity.

Verse 9. *Is unto me as a speckled bird*— A bird of divers colors. This is a people who have corrupted the worship of the true God with heathenish rites and ceremonies; therefore, the different nations, (see ver. 10; whose gods and forms of worship they have adopted shall come and spoil them. As far as you have followed the surrounding nations in their worship, so far shall they prevail over your state. Every one shall take that which is his own; and wherever he finds his own gods, he will consider the land consecrated to them, and take it as his property, because those very gods are the objects of his worship. The fable of the daw and borrowed plumes is no mean illustration of this passage.

Dahler translates the whole verse thus:—

*Birds of prey! inundate with blood my heritage.
Birds of prey! come against her from all sides.
Run together in crowds, ye savage beasts!
Come to the carnage!*

Verse 10. *Many pastors have destroyed my vineyard*— My people have had many kinds of enemies which have fed upon their richest pastures; the Philistines, the Moabites, Ammonites, Assyrians, Egyptians. and now the Chaldeans.

Verse 11. *No man layeth it to heart.*— Notwithstanding all these desolations, from which the land every where mourns, and which are so plainly the consequences of the people's crimes, no man layeth it to heart, or considereth that these are God's judgments; and that the only way to have them removed is to repent of their sins, and turn to God with all their hearts.

Verse 12. *The sword of the Lord shall devour*— It is the sword of the Lord that has devoured, and will devour: this is what no man layeth to

heart. They think these things come in the course of events.

Verse 13. *They have sown wheat, but shall reap thorns*— All their projects shall fail: none of their enterprises shall succeed. They are enemies to God, and therefore cannot have his blessing.

Verse 14. *Against all mine evil neighbors*— All the neighboring nations who have united in desolating Judea shall be desolated in their turn: they also are wicked, and they shall be punished. If I make them executors of my justice, it is to them no proof of my approbation. God often uses one wicked nation to scourge another; and afterwards scourges the scourger by some other scourge. In some places a felon who was condemned to be hanged is made the common hangman for the county; he himself being still under the sentence of death,—

*Till soon some trusty brother of the trade
Shall do for him what he has done for others.*

Verse 15. *I will return, and have compassion on them*— This is a promise of restoration from the captivity, and an intimation also that some of their enemies would turn to the true God with them; learn the ways of his people; that is, would abjure idols, and take Jehovah for their God; and be built in the midst of his people, that is, Jew and Gentile forming one Church of the Most High.

Verse 17. *I will-destroy that nation*— Several of them did not obey, and are destroyed. Of the Moabites, Ammonites, and Chaldeans, not one vestige remains. The sixteenth verse is supposed to be a promise of the conversion of the Gentiles. See Ephesians 2:13-22.

From the thirteenth verse to the end is a different discourse, and Dahler supposes it to have been delivered in the seventh or eighth year of the reign of Jehoiakim.

CHAPTER 13

This chapter contains an entire prophecy. The symbol of the linen girdle, left to rot for a considerable time, was a type of the manner in which the glory of the Jews should be marred during the course of their long captivity, 1-11. The scene of hiding the girdle being laid near the Euphrates, intimated that the scene of the nation's distress should be Chaldea, which that river waters. The next three verses, by another emblem frequently used to represent the judgments of God, are designed to show that the calamities threatened should be extended to every rank and denomination, 12-14. This leads the prophet to a most affectionate exhortation to repentance, 15-17. But God, knowing that this happy consequence would not ensue, sends him with an awful message to the royal family particularly, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem in general, declaring the approaching judgments in plain terms, 18-27. The ardent desire for the reformation of Jerusalem, with which the chapter concludes, beautifully displays the compassion and tender mercy of God.

NOTES ON CHAP. 13

Verse 1. Thus saith the Lord unto me— This discourse is supposed to have been delivered under the reign of Jeconiah, the son and successor of Jehoiakim, who came to the throne in the eighteenth year of his age; when the Chaldean generals had encamped near to Jerusalem, but did not besiege it in form till Nebuchadnezzar came up with the great body of the army. In these circumstances the prophet predicts the captivity; and, by a symbolical representation of a rotten girdle, shows the people their totally corrupt state; and by another of bottles filled with wine, shows the destruction and madness of their counsels, and the confusion that must ensue.

Go and get thee a linen girdle— This was either a vision, or God simply describes the thing in order that the prophet might use it in the way of illustration.

Put it not in water.— After having worn it, let it not be washed, that it may more properly represent the uncleanness of the Israelites; for they were represented by the girdle; for “as the girdle cleaveth to the loins of a man, so have I caused to cleave unto me the whole house of Israel, and the whole house of Judah.” And as a girdle is as well for ornament as use; God took them for a name, and for a praise, and for a glory, ver. 11.

Verse 4. *Go to Euphrates, and hide it there*— Intending to point out, by this distant place, the country into which they were to be carried away captive.

Verse 7. *And behold, the girdle was marred; it was profitable for nothing.*— This symbolically represented the state of the Jews: they were corrupt and abominable; and God, by sending them into captivity, “marred the pride of Judah, and the great pride of Jerusalem,” ver. 9.

Verse 12. *Every bottle shall be filled with wine?*— The bottles were made for the purpose of being filled with wine; and it is likely, from the promising appearance of the season and the grapes, that there was a great likelihood of a copious vintage; and this made them say, “Do we not certainly know that every bottle shall be filled with wine? Have we not every prospect that it will be so? Do we need a revelation to inform us of this?”

Verse 13. *Behold, I will fill all the inhabitants of this land-with drunkenness.*— You pretend to take this literally, but it is a symbol. You, and your kings, and priests, and prophets, are represented by these bottles. The wine is God’s wrath against you, which shall first be shown by confounding your deliberations, filling you with foolish plans of defense, causing you from your divided counsels to fall out among yourselves, so that like so many drunken men you shall reel about and jostle each other; defend yourselves without plan, and fight without order, till ye all fall an easy prey into the hands of your enemies. The ancient adage is here fulfilled:—

Quos Deus vult perdere, prius dementat.

“Those whom God determines to destroy, he first renders foolish.”

Verse 16. Give glory to-God— Confess your sins and turn to him, that these sore evils may be averted.

While ye look for light— While ye expect prosperity, he turned it into the shadow of death-sent you adversity of the most distressing and ruinous kind.

Stumble upon the dark mountains— Before you meet with those great obstacles, which, having no light-no proper understanding in the matter, ye shall be utterly unable to surmount.

Verse 17. My soul shalt weep in secret places— If you will not hearken to the Lord, there is no remedy: destruction must come; and there is nothing left for me, but to go in secret, and mourn and bewail your wretched lot.

Verse 18. Say unto the king and to the queen— Probably Jeconiah and his mother, under whose tutelage, being young when he began to reign, he was left, as is very likely.

Sit down— Show that ye have humbled yourselves; for your state will be destroyed, and your glorious crown taken from your heads.

Verse 19. The cities of the south shall be shut up— Not only the cities of the north, the quarter at which the Chaldeans entered, but the cities of the south also; for he shall proceed from one extremity of the land to the other, spreading devastation every where, and carrying off the inhabitants.

Verse 20. Where is the flock-thy beautiful flock?— Jerusalem is addressed. Where are the prosperous multitudes of men, women, and children? Alas! are they not driven before the Babylonians, who have taken them captive?

Verse 21. *Thou hast taught them to be captains, and as chief over thee*—

This is said of their enemies, whether Assyrians or Chaldeans: for ever since Ahaz submitted himself to the king of Assyria, the kings of Judah never regained their independence. Their enemies were thus taught to be their lords and masters.

Verse 22. *Are thy skirts discovered*— Thy defenseless state is every where known; thou art not only weak, but ignominiously so. It is thy scandal to be in so depressed a condition; thou art lower than the basest of thy adversaries, and thou art so because of thy sin.

Verse 23. *Can the Ethiopian change his skin*— Can a black, at his own pleasure, change the color of his skin? Can the leopard at will change the variety of his spots? These things are natural to them, and they cannot be altered; so sin, and especially your attachment to idolatry, is become a second nature; and we may as well expect the Ethiopian to change his skin, and the leopard his spots, as you to do good, who have been accustomed to do evil. It is a matter of the utmost difficulty to get a sinner, deeply rooted in vicious habits, brought to the knowledge of himself and God. But the expression does not imply that the thing is as impossible in a moral as it is in a natural sense: it only shows that it is extremely difficult, and not to be often expected; and a thousand matters of fact prove the truth of this. But still, what is impossible to man is possible to God. See on ver. 27.

Verse 24. *The wind of the wilderness*.— Some strong tempestuous wind, proverbially severe, coming from the desert to the south of Judea.

Verse 25. *Trusted in falsehood*.— In idols, and in lying prophets.

Verse 26. *Therefore will I discover thy skirts upon thy face*— It was the custom to punish lewd women by stripping them naked, and exposing them to public view; or by throwing their clothes over their heads, as here intimated. Was this the way to correct the evil?

Verse 27. *I have seen thine adulteries*— Thy idolatries of different kinds,

practiced in various ways; no doubt often accompanied with gross debauchery.

Wo unto thee, O Jerusalem wilt thou not be made clean?— We see from this, that though the thing was difficult, yet it was not impossible, for these Ethiopians to change their skin, for these leopards to change their spots. It was only their obstinate refusal of the grace of God that rendered it impossible. Man cannot change himself; but he may pray to God to do it, and come to him through Christ, that he may do it. To enable him to pray and believe, the power is still at hand. If he will not use it, he must perish.

CHAPTER 14

This chapter begins with foretelling a drought that should greatly distress the land of Judea, the effects of which are described in a most pathetic manner, 1-6. The prophet then, in the people's name, makes a confession of sins, and supplication for pardon, 7-9. But God declares his purpose to punish, forbidding Jeremiah to pray for the people, 10-12. False prophets are then complained of, and threatened with destruction, as are also those who attend to them, 13-16. The prophet, therefore, bewails their misery, 17, 18; and though he had just now been forbidden to intercede for them, yet, like a tender pastor, who could not cease to be concerned for their welfare, he falls on the happy expedient of introducing themselves as supplicating in their own name that mercy which he was not allowed to ask in his, 19-22.

NOTES ON CHAP. 14

Verse 1. *The word-that came-concerning the dearth.*— This discourse is supposed to have been delivered, after the fourth year of Jehoiakim. Concerning the dearth. We have no historic record of any dearth that may fall in with the time of this prophecy, and perhaps it does not refer to any particular dearth: but this was a calamity to which Judea was very liable. They had ordinarily very dry summers, for scarcely any rain fell from April to the middle of October; and during much of this time, the rivers were generally either very low or entirely dry. They kept the rain of the winter in tanks and reservoirs; and if little fell in winter, a dearth was unavoidable. See an account of a dearth in the time of Elijah, 1 Kings 18:5, through which almost all the cattle were lost.

Verse 2. *The gates thereof languish*— The gates being the places of public resort, they are put here for the people.

They are black unto the ground— Covered from head to foot with a black garment, the emblem of sorrow and calamity.

Verse 3. *Their nobles have sent their little ones*— So general was this calamity, that the servants no longer attended to their lords, but every one was interested alone for himself; and the nobles of the land were obliged to employ their own children to scour the land, to see if any water could be found in the tanks or the pits. In the dearth in the time of Elijah, Ahab the king, and Obadiah his counselor, were obliged to traverse the land themselves, in order to find out water to keep their cattle alive. This and the three following verses give a lively but distressing picture of this dearth and its effects.

Verse 4. *The ground is chapt*— The cracks in the earth before the descent of the rains are in some places a cubit wide, and deep enough to receive the greater part of a human body.

Verse 6. *Snuffed up the wind like dragons*— תַּנִּיִּם tannim here probably means the hippopotamus, who, after feeding under the water, is obliged to come to the surface in order to take in fresh draughts of air; or it may mean the wild asses.

Verse 7. *O Lord, though our iniquities testify against us*— We deeply acknowledge that we have sinned, and deserve nothing but death. Yet act for thy name's sake-work in our behalf, that we perish not.

Verse 8. *O the hope of Israel*— O thou who art the only object of the hope of this people.

The Savior thereof in time of trouble— Who hast never yet abandoned them that seek thee.

Why shouldest thou be as a stranger in the land— As one who has no interest in the prosperity and safety of the country.

And as a way-faring man— A traveler on his journey.

That turneth aside to tarry for a night?— Who stays the shortest time he can; and takes up his lodging in a tent or caravanserai, for the dead of the

night, that he may pursue his journey by break of day. Instead of dwelling among us, thou hast scarcely paid the most transient visit to thy land. O come once more, and dwell among us.

Verse 9. *Yet thou, O Lord, art in the midst of us*— Thy ark, temple, and sacred rites, are all here; and thou thyself, who art every where present, art here also: but alas! thou dost not reveal thyself as the Father of mercies, who forgivest iniquity, transgression, and sin.

We are called by thy name; leave us not.— Let us call thee our Father, and say thou to us, “Ye are my sons and daughters!” O leave us not!

Verse 10. *Thus have they loved to wander*— And the measure of your iniquity being now full, ye must be punished.

Verse 11. *Pray not for this people*— They are ripe for destruction, intercede not for them. O, how dreadful is the state of that people in reference to whom the Lord says to his ministers, Pray not for them; or, what amounts nearly to a prohibition, withholds from his ministers the spirit of prayer and intercession in behalf of the people!

Verse 13. *Ah, Lord God! behold, the prophets say unto them*— True, Lord, they are exceedingly wicked; but the false prophets have deceived them; this is some mitigation of their offense. This plea God does not admit; and why? the people believed them, without having any proof of their Divine mission.

Verse 14. *The prophets prophesy lies*— They say they have visions, but they have them by divination, and they are false. The people should know their character, and avoid them but they love to have it so, and will not be undeceived.

Verse 15. *By sword and famine shall those prophets be consumed.*— Jeremiah had told Jehoiakim that, if he rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar, he should be overthrown, and the land wasted by sword and famine: the false prophets said there shall be neither sword nor famine, but peace and prosperity. The king believed them, and withheld the tribute.

Nebuchadnezzar, being incensed, invaded and destroyed the land; and the false prophets fell in these calamities. See 2 Kings 25:3; Lamentations 2:11-19.

Verse 16. *And the people-shall be cast out*— They shall be destroyed, because they preferred their lying words to my truth, proclaimed by thee.

Verse 17. *for the virgin daughter of my people is broken*— First, the land was sadly distressed by Pharaoh-necho, king of Egypt. Secondly, it was laid under a heavy tribute by Nebuchadnezzar. And, thirdly, it was nearly desolated by a famine afterwards. In a few years all these calamities fell upon them; these might be well called a great breach, a very grievous blow.

Verse 18. *If I go forth into the field, then behold the slain with the sword*— Every place presents frightful spectacles; the wounded, the dying, the starving, and the slain; none to bury the dead, none to commiserate the dying, none to bring either relief or consolation. Even the prophets and the priests are obliged to leave the cities, and wander about in unfrequented and unknown places, seeking for the necessaries of life. Dr. Blayney thinks that the going about of the prophets and priests of the land, is to be understood thus: — “They went trafficking about with their false doctrines and lying predictions, as pedlars do with their wares, seeking their own gain.” I think the other sense preferable.

Verse 19. *We looked for peace*— We expected prosperity when Josiah purged the land of idolatry.

And there is no good— For we have relapsed into our former ways.

Verse 20. *We acknowledge, O Lord, our wickedness*— This the prophet did in behalf of the people; but, alas! they did not join him.

Verse 21. *Do not disgrace the throne of thy glory*— The temple. Let not this sacred place be profaned by impious and sacrilegious hands.

Break not thy covenant— See Exodus 24:7, 8; 19:5. They had already broken the covenant, and they wish God to fulfill his part. They ceased to

be his people, for they abandoned themselves to idolatry; and yet they wished Jehovah to be their Lord; to defend, support, and fill them with all good things! But when the conditions of a covenant are broken by one of the contracting parties, the other party is not bound; and the covenant is necessarily annulled.

Verse 22. *Are there any among the vanities of the Gentiles*— Probably the dearth was now coming, as there had been a long want of rain. It was the prerogative of the true God to give rain and send showers at the prayers of his people.

Therefore we will wait upon thee— If thou do not undertake for us, we must be utterly ruined.

CHAPTER 15

God declares to Jeremiah that not even Moses and Samuel, whose prayers had been so prevalent, could divert him from his purpose of punishing so wicked a people, 1. Accordingly their captivity is again announced in a variety of images so full of terror, 2-9, that the prophet complains of his own hard fate in being obliged to deliver such unwelcome messages, 10; for which too he is reprov'd, 11-14. Immediately he appeals to God for his sincerity, and supplicates pardon, 15-18; and God tempers his reproof with promising again to protect him in the faithful discharge of his duty, 19-21.

NOTES ON CHAP. 15

Verse 1. *Though Moses and Samuel*— Moses had often supplicated for the people; and in consequence they were spared. See Exodus 32:11 and following verses, Numbers 14:13. Samuel also had prayed for the people, and God heard him, 1 Samuel 7:9; but if these or the most holy men were now to supplicate for this people, he would not spare them.

Cast them out of my sight, and let them go forth.— Do not bring them into my presence by your prayers; let them go forth into captivity.

Verse 2. *Whither shall we go forth?—Such as are for death, to death*— Some shall be destroyed by the pestilence, here termed death. See chap. 18:21. Others shall be slain by the sword in battle, and in the sackage of cities. Others shall perish by famine, shall be starved to death through the mere want of the necessaries of life; and the rest shall go into captivity. There shall be different sorts of punishments inflicted on them according to the nature of their transgressions. Some shall be punished in one way, and some in another.

Verse 3. *I will appoint over them four kinds*— There shall appear four instruments of my justice. 1. The sword to slay. 2. The dogs to tear what

is slain. 3. The fowls of the heaven to feed on the dead carcasses. And, 4. The wild beasts to destroy all that the fowls have left.

Verse 4. *I will cause them to be removed into an kingdoms of the earth*— This seems to have respect to the succeeding state of the Jews in their different generations; and never was there a prophecy more literally fulfilled; and it is still a standing monument of Divine truth. Let infidelity cast its eyes on the scattered Jews whom it may meet with in every civilized nation of the world; and then let it deny the truth of this prophecy, if it can. The Jews are scattered through every nation, and yet are not a nation; nor do they form even a colony on any part of the face of the earth. Behold the truth and the justice of God!

Verse 5. *Who shall go aside to ask how thou doest?*— Perhaps there is not a more despised nor a more degraded people under the sun. Scarcely any one thinks himself called upon to do a kind office for a Jew. Their character is bad in society, and they are not at all solicitous to redeem it.

Verse 6. *I am weary with repenting.*— With repeatedly changing my purpose. I have often, after purposing to punish, showed them mercy. I will do it no longer; it is useless. I took them often at their promise, and in every instance they have failed.

Verse 7. *I will fan them with a fan*— There is no pure grain; all is chaff.

In the gates of the land— The places of public justice: and there it shall be seen that the judgments that have fallen upon them have been highly merited. And from these places of fanning they shall go out into their captivity.

Verse 8. *The mother of the young men*— The metropolis or mother city, Jerusalem.

Verse 9. *She that hath borne seven*— She that hath had a numerous offspring; Jerusalem, the parent of so many cities, villages, and families in the land. Seven signifies a complete or full number.

Verse 10. *A man of contention to the whole earth!*— To the whole LAND, to all his countrymen; though he had done nothing to merit their displeasure.

Verse 11. *I will cause the enemy to entreat thee well in the time of evil*— This was literally fulfilled; see chap. 39:11, etc. Nebuchadnezzar had given strict charge to Nebuzaradan, commander in chief, to look well to Jeremiah, to do him no harm, and to grant him all the privileges he was pleased to ask.

Verse 12. *Shall iron break the northern iron and the steel?*— Shall our weak forces be able to oppose and overcome the powers of the Chaldeans? נְחָשֶׁת nechasheth, which we here translate steel, property signifies brass or copper united with tin, which gives it much hardness, and enables it to bear a good edge.

Verse 13. *Thy substance-will I give to the spoil without price*— Invaluable property shall be given up to thy adversaries. Or, without price-thou shalt have nothing for it in return.

Verse 15. *O Lord-remember me, and visit me*— Let me not be carried away into captivity; and it does not appear that he had ever been taken to Babylon. After the capture of the city he went into Egypt; and either died there, or was put to death by his countrymen.

Verse 16. *Thy word was-the joy and rejoicing of mine heart*— When I did receive the prophetic message, I did rejoice in the honor thou hadst done me; and I faithfully testified thy will to them. They have become mine enemies; not because there was any evil in me, but because I was faithful to thee.

Verse 18. *Wilt thou be altogether unto me as-waters that fail?*— Leaning either springs, which in the height of summer grow dry; or, like that phenomenon in the sandy desert, where, by a peculiar action of the air on the rising vapors, the resemblance of water is produced, so that the traveler, deceived, rejoices that he is come, in the sandy desert, to the verge of a beautiful lake; but the farther he travels, it is still at the same distance,

and at last vanishes; and he finds the whole was an illusion, for the waters have failed. Nothing can exceed the disappointment of the farmer whose subsistence absolutely depends on the periodical rains, when these fail, or fall short of their usual quantity. Some times the rice is sown and springs up in the most promising manner; but the latter rains fail, and whole fields of young rice wither and perish.

Verse 19. *If thou return*— By repentance unto me,—

Then will I bring thee again— Restore thee to thy own country. But some think the words are spoken to the prophet in reference to his ministry. He had greatly repined because of the persecutions which he endured. The Lord reprehends him, and is about to take from him the prophetic gift; but exhorts him first to take the precious from the vile—not to attend to the deceitful words of the people, but boldly declare the message he had given him; not to return unto the people, but let the people return unto him. And then he should be as God's mouth—his words should appear to be what they were, the genuine words of God; and the people should be obliged to acknowledge them as such.

Verse 20. *I will make thee a fenced brazen wall*— While thou art faithful to me, none of them shall be able to prevail against thee.

Verse 21. *I will deliver thee out of the hand of the wicked*— From the power of this evil people.

And I will redeem thee out of the hand of the terrible.— Out of the power of the Chaldean armies. Every thing took place as God had promised, for no word of his can ever fall to the ground.

CHAPTER 16

On account of the evils which threatened his country, the prophet is forbidden to encumber himself with a wife and family, or to bear any share in the little joys and sorrows of his neighbors, which were to be forgotten and absorbed in those public calamities, 1-9, which their sins should draw on them, 10-13. A future restoration however is intimated, 14, 15, after these calamities should be endured, 16-18; and the conversion of the Gentiles is foretold, 19-21.

NOTES ON CHAP. 16

Verse 1. *The word of the Lord came also unto me*— This discourse Dahler supposes to have been delivered some time in the reign of Jehoiakim.

Verse 2. *Those shalt not take thee a wife*— As it would be very inconvenient to have a family when the threatened desolations should come on the place. The reason is given in the following verses.

Verse 4. *They shall die of grievous deaths*— All prematurely; see chap. 14:16.

As dung upon the face of the earth— See chap. 8:2.

Be meat for the fowls— See chap. 7:33.

Verse 5. *Enter not into the house of mourning*— The public calamities are too great to permit individual losses to come into consideration.

Verse 6. *Nor cut themselves*— A custom of the heathen forbidden to the Jews, Leviticus 19:28; Deuteronomy 14:1, and which appears now to have prevailed among them; because, having become idolaters, they conformed to all the customs of the heathen. They tore their hair, rent their garments,

cut their hands, arms, and faces. These were not only signs of sorrow but were even supposed to give ease to the dead, and appease the angry deities. The Hindoos, on the death of a relation, express their grief by loud lamentations, and not unfrequently bruise themselves in an agony of grief

idols, and acknowledge that their fathers had believed lies, and worshipped vanities. This may be a prediction of the calling of the Gentiles by the Gospel of Christ; if so, it is a light amidst much darkness. In such dismal accounts there is need of some gracious promise relative to an amended state of the world.

Verse 20. *Shall a man make gods unto himself?*— Can any be so silly, and so preposterously absurd? Yes, fallen man is capable of any thing that is base, mean, vile, and wicked, till influenced and converted by the grace of Christ.

Verse 21. *Therefore, behold, I will this once*— I will not now change my purpose. They shall be visited and carried into captivity; nothing shall prevent this: and they shall know that my name is JEHOVAH. Since they would not receive the abundance of my mercies, they shall know what the true God can do in the way of judgment.

CHAPTER 17

This chapter begins with setting forth the very strong bias which the people of Judah had to idolatry, with the fatal consequences, 1-4. The happiness of the man that trusted in Jehovah is then beautifully contrasted with the opposite character, 5-8. God alone knows the deceitfulness and wretchedness of the heart of man, 9, 10. The comparison of a bird's hatching the eggs of another of a different species, which will soon forsake her, is highly expressive of the vanity of ill-acquired riches, which often disappoint the owner, 11. The prophet continues the same subject in his own person, appeals to God for his sincerity, and prays that the evil intended him by his enemies may revert on their own heads, 12-18. The remaining part of the chapter is a distinct prophecy relating to the due observance of the Sabbath, enforced both by promises and threatenings, 19-27.

NOTES ON CHAP. 17

Verse 1. *The sin of Judah*— Idolatry.

Is written with a pen of iron— It is deeply and indelibly written in their heart, and shall be as indelibly written in their punishment. Writing with the point of a diamond must refer to glass, or some vitrified substance, as it is distinguished here from engraving with a steel burine, or graver. Their altars show what the deities are which they worship. There may be reference here to the different methods of recording events in those days: — 1. A pen or stile of iron, for engraving on lead or wood. 2. A point of a diamond, for writing on vitreous substances. 3. Writing on tables of brass or copper. 4. Writing on the horns of the altars the names of the deities worshipped there. This is probable.

In several parts of India, and all through Ceylon, an iron or steel pen is used universally; with these the natives form the letters by incisions on

the outer rind of the palm leaf. Books written in this way are very durable. This pen is broad at the top, has a very fine sharp point, and is sharp at one side as a knife, to shave and prepare the palm leaf. A pen of this description now lies before me.

Verse 2. *Whilst their children remember*— Even the rising generation have their imagination stocked with idol images, and their memories with the frantic rites and ceremonies which they saw their parents observe in this abominable worship.

Verse 3. *O my mountain in the field*— The prophet here addresses the land of Judea, which was a mountainous country, Deuteronomy 3:25; but Jerusalem itself may be meant, which is partly built upon hills which, like itself, are elevated above the rest of the country.

Verse 5. *Cursed be the man that trusteth in man*— This reprehends their vain confidence in trusting in Egypt, which was too feeble itself to help, and, had it been otherwise, too ill disposed towards them to help them heartily. An arm of flesh is put here for a weak and ineffectual support. And he who, in reference to the salvation of his soul, trusts in an arm of flesh—in himself or others, or in any thing he has done or suffered, will inherit a curse instead of a blessing.

Verse 6. *Be shall be like the heath in the desert*— כַּעֲרֵעַר kearar; or, like a blasted tree, without moisture, parched and withered.

Shall not see when good cometh— Shall not be sensible of it: the previous drought having rendered it incapable of absorbing any more vegetable juices.

A salt land— Barren; and therefore unfit to be inhabited.

Verse 8. *A s a tree planted by the waters*— Which is sufficiently supplied with moisture, though the heat be intense, and there be no rain; for the roots being spread out by the river, they absorb from it all the moisture requisite for the flourishing vegetation of the tree.

Shall not see when heat cometh— Shall not feel any damage by drought, for the reason already assigned. It shall be strong and vigorous, its leaf always green; and shall produce plenty of fruit in its season.

Verse 9. The heart is deceitful— עקב הלב akob halleb, “the heart is supplanting-tortuous-full of windings-insidious;” lying ever at the catch; striving to avail itself of every favorable circumstance to gratify its propensities to pride, ambition, evil desire, and corruption of all kinds.

And desperately wicked— ואנש הוא veanush hu, and is wretched, or feeble; distressed beyond all things, in consequence of the wickedness that is in it. I am quite of Mr. Parkhurst’s opinion, that this word is here badly translated as אנש anash is never used in Scripture to denote wickedness of any kind. My old MS. Bible translates thus:— Schrewid is the herte of a man: and unserchable: who schal knowen it?

Who can know it?— It even hides itself from itself; so that its owner does not know it. A corrupt heart is the worst enemy the fallen creature can have; it is full of evil devices, — of deceit, of folly, and abomination, and its owner knows not what is in him till it boils over, and is often past remedy before the evil is perceived. Therefore trust not in man whose purposes are continually changing, and who is actuated only by motives of self-interest.

Verse 10. I the Lord search the heart— The Lord is called by his apostles, Acts 1:24, καρδιογνωστης, the Knower of the heart. To him alone can this epithet be applied; and it is from him alone that we can derive that instruction by which we can in any measure know ourselves.

Verse 11. As the partridge— קרע kore. It is very likely that this was a bird different from our partridge. The text Dr. Blayney translates thus:—

(As) the kore that hatcheth what it doth not lay (So is) he who getteth riches, and not according to right.

“The covetous man,” says Dahler, “who heaps up riches by unjust ways,

is compared to a bird which hatches the eggs of other fowls. And as the young, when hatched, and able at all to shift for themselves, abandon her who is not their mother, and leave her nothing to compensate her trouble, so the covetous man loses those unjustly-gotten treasures, and the fruit of his labor.”

And at his end shall be a fool.— Shall be reputed as such. He was a fool all the way through; he lost his soul to get wealth, and this wealth he never enjoyed. To him also are applicable those strong words of the poet:—

*“O cursed lust of gold! when for thy sake
The wretch throws up his interest in both worlds.
First starved in this, then damned in that to come.”*

BLAIR.

Verse 12. A glorious high throne— As he is cursed who trusts in man, so he is blessed who trusts in GOD. He is here represented as on a throne in his temple; to him in the means of grace all should resort. He is the support, and a glorious support, of all them that trust in him.

Verse 13. Written on the earth— They shall never come to true honor. Their names shall be written in the dust; and the first wind that blows over it shall mar every letter, and render it illegible.

Verse 14. Heal me-and I shall be healed— That is, I shall be thoroughly healed, and effectually saved, if thou undertake for me.

Thou art my praise.— The whole glory of the work of salvation belongs to thee alone.

Verse 15. Where is the word of the Lord?— Where is the accomplishment of his threatenings? Thou hast said that the city and the temple should both be destroyed. No such events have yet taken place. But they did take place, and every tittle of the menace was strictly fulfilled.

Verse 16. I have not hastened from being a pastor— Dr. Blayney

translates thus: “But I have not been in haste to outrun thy guidance.” I was obliged to utter thy prediction; but I have not hastened the evil day. For the credit of my prophecy I have not desired the calamity to come speedily; I have rather pleaded for respite. I have followed thy steps, and proclaimed thy truth. I did not desire to be a prophet; but thou hast commanded, and I obeyed.

Verse 17. *Be not a terror unto me*— Do not command me to predict miseries, and abandon me to them and to my enemies.

Verse 18. *Let them be confounded*— They shall be confounded. These words are to be understood as simple predictions, rather than prayers.

Verse 19. *The gate of the children of the people*— I suppose the most public gate is meant; that through which there was the greatest thoroughfare.

Verse 20. *Ye kings of Judah, and all Judah*— This last clause is wanting in eight of Kennicott’s and De Rossi’s MSS., in the Arabic, and some copies of the Septuagint.

Verse 21. *Take heed to yourselves and bear no burden*— From this and the following verses we find the ruin of the Jews attributed to the breach of the Sabbath; as this led to a neglect of sacrifice, the ordinances of religion, and all public worship, so it necessarily brought with it all immorality. This breach of the Sabbath was that which let in upon them all the waters of God’s wrath.

Verse 24. *If ye diligently hearken unto me*— So we find that though their destruction was positively threatened, yet still there was an unexpressed proviso that, if they did return to the Lord, the calamities should be averted, and a succession of princes would have been continued on the throne of David, ver. 25, 26.

Verse 27. *But if ye will not hearken*— Then their sin lay at their own door. How fully were they warned; and how basely did they reject the counsel of God against themselves!

CHAPTER 18

The type of the potter's vessel, and its signification, 1-10. The inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem exhorted to repentance, 11; but on their refusal, (which is represented to be as unnatural as if a man should prefer the snowy Lebanon or barren rock to a fruitful plain, or other waters to the cool stream of the fountain,) their destruction is predicted, 12-17. In consequence of these plain reproofs and warnings of Jeremiah, a conspiracy is formed against him, 18. This leads him to appeal to God for his integrity, 19, 20; who puts a most dreadful curse in the mouth of his prophet, strongly indicative of the terrible fate of his enemies, 21-23.

NOTES ON CHAP. 18

Verse 1. *The word which came to Jeremiah*— This discourse is supposed to have been delivered some time in the reign of Jehoiakim, probably within the first three years.

Verse 2. *Go down to the potter's house*— By this similitude God shows the absolute state of dependence on himself in which he has placed mankind. They are as clay in the hands of the potter; and in reference to every thing here below, he can shape their destinies as he pleases. Again; though while under the providential care of God they may go morally astray, and pervert themselves, yet they can be reclaimed by the almighty and all-wise Operator, and become such vessels as seemeth good for him to make. In considering this parable we must take heed that in running parallels we do not destroy the free agency of man, nor disgrace the goodness and supremacy of God.

Verse 3. *He wrought a work on the wheels.*— אל האבנים al haabnayim, upon the stones, the potter's wheel being usually made of such, the spindle of the moving stone being placed on a stone below, on which it turned, and supported the stone above, on which the vessel was manufactured, and which alone had a rotatory motion. The potter's wheel

in the present day seems to differ very little from that which was in use between two and three thousand years ago.

Verse 4. *The vessel-was marred in the hands of the potter*— It did not stand in the working; it got out of shape; or some gravel or small stone having been incorporated with the mass of clay, made a breach in that part where it was found, so that the potter was obliged to knead up the clay afresh, place it on the wheel, and form it anew; and then it was such a vessel as seemed good to the potter to make it.

Verse 6. *Cannot I do with you as this potter?*— Have I not a right to do with a people whom I have created as reason and justice may require? If they do not answer my intentions, may I not reject and destroy them; and act as this potter, make a new vessel out of that which at first did not succeed in his hands?

It is generally supposed that St. Paul has made a very different use of this similitude from that mentioned above. See Romans 9:20, etc. His words are, “Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?” To this every sensible and pious man will answer, Undoubtedly he has. But would any potter make an exceedingly fair and good vessel on purpose to dash it to pieces when he had done? Surely no! And would or could, the God of infinite perfection and love make millions of immortal souls on purpose for eternal perdition, as the horrible decree of reprobation states? No! This is a lie against all the attributes of God. But does not the text state that he can, out of the same lump, the same mass of human nature, make one vessel to honor, and another to dishonor? Yes. But the text does not say, what the horrible decree says, that he makes one part, and indeed the greater, for eternal perdition. But what then is the meaning of the text? Why evidently this: As out of the same mass of clay a potter may make a flagon for the table and a certain utensil for the chamber, the one for a more honorable, the other for a less honorable use, though both equally necessary to the owner; so God, out of the same flesh and blood, may make the tiller of the field and the prophet of the Most High; the one in a more honorable, the other in a less honorable employ; yet both equally necessary in the world, and equally capable of bringing glory to God in their respective places. But

if the vessel be marred in his hand, under his providential and gracious dealings, he may reject it as he did the Jews, and make another vessel, such as he is pleased with, of the Gentiles; yet even these marred vessels, the reprobate Jews, are not finally rejected; for all Israel shall be saved in (through) the Lord, i.e., Jesus Christ. And should the Gentiles act as the Jews have done, then they also shall be cut off, and God will call his Church by another name. See on Romans 9:22 and below.

Verses 7-10. *At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, etc. — If that nation, against whom, etc. — And at what instant, etc. — If it do evil, etc.*— These verses contain what may be called God's decree by which the whole of his conduct towards man is regulated. If he purpose destruction against an offending person, if that person repent and turn to God, he shall live and not die.

If he purpose peace and salvation to him that walketh uprightly, if he turn from God to the world and sin, he shall die and not live.

Verse 12. *There is no hope*— See chap. 2:25.

Verse 13. *The virgin of Israel*— Instead of **ישראל** Yisrael, three of Kennicott's and De Rossi's MSS., with the Alexandrian copy of the Septuagint, have **ירושלם** Yerushalem, Jerusalem.

Verse 14. *Will a man leave the snow of Lebanon*— Lebanon was the highest mountain in Judea. Would any man in his senses abandon a farm that was always watered by the melted snows of Lebanon, and take a barren rock in its place? How stupid therefore and absurd are my people, who abandon the everlasting God for the worship of idols!

Verse 16. *A perpetual hissing*— **שריקות** sherikoth. a shrieking, hissing; an expression of contempt.

Verse 17. *I will scatter them as with an east wind*— It is the property of this wind, almost every where, to parch up, blast, and destroy grain and trees, and even cattle and men suffer from it. Hence the old metrical

proverb:—

“When the wind blows from the east, ‘Tis good for neither man nor beast.”

Verse 18. *Come, and let us devise devices*— Let us form a conspiracy against him, accuse him of being a false prophet, and a contradicter of the words of God, for God has promised us protection, and he says we shall be destroyed, and that God will forsake his people.

Let us smite him with the tongue— ON the tongue; so it should be rendered. Lying and false testimony are punished in the eastern countries, to the present day, by smiting the person on the mouth with a strong piece of leather like the sole of a shoe. Sometimes a bodkin is run through the tongue. Blasphemy, calumny, and cursing of parents, are usually punished in that way among the Chinese.

Verse 20. *They have digged a pit for my soul.*— For my life; this they wish to take away.

Stood before thee to speak good for them— I was their continual intercessor.

Verse 21. *Therefore deliver up their children*— The execrations in these verses should be considered as simply prophetic declarations of the judgments which God was about to pour out on them.

If we consider them in their grammatical meaning, then they are not directions to us to whom our Lawgiver has said, “Love your enemies.”

CHAPTER 19

By the significant type of breaking a potter's vessel, Jeremiah is directed to predict the utter desolation of Judah and Jerusalem, 1-15. The prophets taught frequently by symbolic actions as well as by words.

NOTES ON CHAP. 19

Verse 1. *Go and get a potter's earthen bottle*— This discourse was also delivered some time in the reign of Jehoiakim. Under the type of breaking a potter's earthen bottle or jug, Jeremiah shows his enemies that the word of the Lord should stand, that Jerusalem should be taken and sacked, and they all carried into captivity.

Ancients of the priests— The chiefs of the twenty-four classes which David had established. See 1 Chronicles 24:4.

Verse 4. *Estranged this place*— Ye have devoted my temple to a widely different purpose from that for which it was erected.

Verse 5. *Offerings unto Baal*— A general name for all the popular idols; Baal, Moloch, Ashtaroth, etc.

Verse 7. *I will make void the counsel of Judah*— Probably this refers to some determination made to proclaim themselves independent, and pay no more tribute to the Chaldeans.

To be meat for the fowls— See on chap. 7:33.

Verse 9. *I will cause them to eat the flesh of their sons*— This was literally fulfilled when Jerusalem was besieged by the Romans. This also the prophet might have had in view.

Verse 11. *Even so will I break this people and this city*— The breaking of

the bottle was the symbolical representation of the destruction of the city and of the state.

That cannot be made whole again— This seems to refer rather to the final destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, than to what was done by the Chaldeans. Jerusalem was healed after 70 years: but nearly 1800 years have elapsed since Jerusalem was taken and destroyed by the Romans; and it was then so broken, that it could not be made whole again.

Verse 12. *And even make this city as Tophet*— A place of slaughter and destruction.

Verse 14. *Then came Jeremiah from Tophet*— He had probably gone to the valley of Hinnom, and there repeated the discourse which he had a little before delivered to the chief priests and elders.

Verse 15. *Because they have hardened their necks*— A metaphor taken from unruly and unbroken oxen, who resist the yoke, break and run away with their gears. So this people had broken and destroyed the yoke of the law.

CHAPTER 20

Jeremiah, on account of his prophesying evil concerning Judah and Jerusalem, is beaten and imprisoned by Pashur, chief governor of the temple, 1, 2. On the following day the prophet is released, who denounces the awful judgments of God which should fall upon the governor and all his house, as well as upon the whole land of Judah, in the approaching Babylonish captivity, 3-6. Jeremiah then bitterly complains of the reproaches continually heaped upon him by his enemies; and, in his haste, resolves to speak no more in the name of Jehovah; but the word of the Lord is in his heart as a burning flame, so that he is not able to forbear, 7-10. The prophet professes his trust in God, whom he praises for his late deliverance, 11-13. The remaining verses, which appear to be out of their place, contain Jeremiah's regret that he was ever born to a life of so much sorrow and trouble, 14-18. This complaint resembles that of Job; only it is milder and more dolorous. This excites our pity, that our horror. Both are highly poetical, and embellished with every circumstance that can heighten the coloring. But such circumstances are not always to be too literally understood or explained. We must often make allowances for the strong figures of eastern poetry.

NOTES ON CHAP. 20

Verse 1. Pashur-chief governor— Pashur was probably one of the chief priests of the twenty-four classes.

Verse 2. Put him in the stocks— Probably such a place near the gate as we term the lock-up, the coal-hole; or it may mean a sort of dungeon.

Verse 3. The Lord hath not called thy name Pashur—Security on all sides. This name thou hast had, but not by Divine appointment.

But Magor-missabib-Fear on every side. This name hath God given thee; because, in the course of his providence, thou shalt be placed in the circumstances signified by it: thou shalt be a terror to thyself.

Verse 6. And thou, Pashur-shall go into captivity. Thou shalt suffer for the false prophecies which thou hast delivered, and for thy insults to my prophet.

Verse 7. *O Lord, thou hast deceived me*— Thou hast promised me protection; and, lo! I am now delivered into the hands of my enemies. These words were probably spoken when Pashur smote him, and put him in prison.

I think our translation of this passage is very exceptionable. My old Bible reads, Thou laddist me aside Lord; and I was lad aside. The original word is פִּתְּיָנִי *pittithani*, thou hast persuaded me, i.e., to go and prophesy to this people. I went, faithfully declared thy message, and now I am likely to perish by their cruelty. As the root פָּתַח *pathah* signifies to persuade and allure as well as to deceive, the above must be its meaning in this place. Taken as in our Version it is highly irreverent. It is used in the same sense here as in Genesis 9:27: God shall enlarge (persuade, margin) Japheth; and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem.

Verse 8. *I cried violence and spoil*— This was the burden of the message thou didst give me.

Verse 9. *I wilt not make mention of him*— I will renounce the prophetic office, and return to my house.

As a burning fire shut up in my bones— He felt stings of conscience for the hasty and disobedient resolution he had formed; he felt ashamed of his own weakness, that did not confide in the promise and strength of God; and God's word was in him as a strongly raging fire, and he was obliged to deliver it, in order to get rid of the tortures which he felt from suppressing the solemn message which God had given. It is as dangerous to refuse to go when called, as it is to run without a call. On this subject, see on chap. 1:6.

Verse 10. *Report-and we will report it.*— Let us spread calumnies against him every where; or let us spread reports of dangers coming upon him, that we may intimidate him, and cause him to desist.

Verse 11. *But the Lord is with me as a mighty terrible one*— Thus was he, by his strong confidence in the strong God, delivered from all his fears, and enabled to go on comfortably with his work.

Verse 13. *Sing unto the Lord*— He was so completely delivered from all fear, that although he remained in the same circumstances, yet he exults in the Divine protection, and does not fear the face of any adversary.

Verse 14. *Cursed be the day wherein I was born*

Verse 18. *Wherefore came I forth*— It would have been well had I never been born, as I have neither comfort in my life, nor comfort in my work.

CHAPTER 21

Nebuchadnezzar being come up against Jerusalem, Zedekiah sends Pashur and Zephaniah to the prophet to request him to intercede with God in behalf of his people, 1, 2. But he is declared to be against Jerusalem, and the whole land of Judah; and the only mitigation of their punishment must proceed from their surrendering to the king of Babylon, 3-10. Prophecy concerning the house of the king of Judah, 11, 12. Notwithstanding the amazing fortifications round about Jerusalem, in which the people vainly trust, the Lord will most assuredly visit them for their iniquities; the city shall be taken by the Chaldeans, 13, 14.

NOTES ON CHAP. 21

Verse 1. *The word which came unto Jeremiah*— The chapters in the remaining parts of this prophecy seem strangely interchanged. This subject has been mentioned in the introduction, and some tables given; and to these the critical reader is requested to refer. The discourse here was delivered about the ninth year or the reign of Zedekiah. This chapter, observes Dr. Blayney, contains the first of those prophecies which were delivered by Jeremiah, subsequent to the revolt of Zedekiah, and the breaking out of the war thereupon; and which are continued on to the taking of Jerusalem, related in chap. 29., in the following order: ch. 21., 34., 37., 32., 33., 38., 39.

Pashur the son of Melchiah— There can be little doubt that this Pashur was a different person from him who was called the son of Immur in the preceding chapter.

Verse 2. *Inquire, I pray thee*— See whether God intends to deliver us into or out of the hand of the Chaldeans.

Verse 4. *I will turn back the weapons*— Every attempt you make to repel the Chaldeans shall be unsuccessful.

I will assemble them into the midst of this city.— I will deliver the city into their hands.

Verse 6. *They shall die of a great pestilence.*— The sword may appear to be that of man, though I have given the Chaldeans their commission; but the pestilence shall appear to be the immediate act of GOD.

Verse 7. *Nebuchadrezzar*— This name is spelt as above in twenty-six places of this book; and in ten places it is spelt Nebuchadnezzar, which is the common orthography. The difference is only a 7 resh for a 2 nun; but the MSS. are various on this point. It is the same person who is intended by both names; and here all the Versions, except the Arabic, which omits the name, have it in the usual form.

Verse 8. *Behold, I set before you the way of life, and the way of death.*— Meaning escape or destruction in the present instance. This is explained in the next verse.

Verse 10. *He shall burn it with fire.*— What a heavy message to all; and especially to them who had any fear of God, or reverence for the temple and its sacred services!

Verse 12. *Execute judgment in the morning*— Probably the time for dispensing judgment was the morning, when the people were going to their work; but the words may mean, Do justice promptly, do not delay. Let justice be administered as soon as required.

Verse 13. *O inhabitant of the valley, and rock of the plain*— Dr. Blayney translates: “O thou inhabitant of the levelled hollow of a rock.” With all his explanation I cannot see the good sense of this translation. Jerusalem itself, though partly on two hills, was also extended in the valley; and Zion, the city of David, was properly a rock, strongly fortified both by nature and art; and by its ancient possessors, the Jebusites, was deemed impregnable.

Who shall come down against us?— Probably the words of those

courtiers who had persuaded Zedekiah to rebel against the king of Babylon.

Verse 14. *I will kindle a fire in the forest thereof*— I will send destruction into its center, that shall spread to every part of the circumference, and so consume the whole.

The beginning of the thirty-fourth chapter should follow here. See the arrangement on ver. 1.

CHAPTER 22

This section of prophecy, extending to the end of the eighth verse of the next chapter, is addressed to the king of Judah and his people. It enjoins on them the practice of justice and equity, as they would hope to prosper, 14; but threatens them, in case of disobedience, with utter destruction, 5-9. The captivity of Shallum, the son of Josiah, is declared to be irreversible, 10-12; and the miserable and unlamented end of Jeconiah, contemptuously called Coniah, is foretold, 13-19. His family is threatened with the like captivity, and his seed declared to be for ever excluded from the throne, 20-30.

NOTES ON CHAP. 22

Verse 1. *Go down to the house of the king of Judah, and speak there this word*— This is supposed by Dahler to have been published in the first year of the reign of Zedekiah.

Verse 2. *O king of Judah-thou, and thy servants*— His ministers are here addressed, as chiefly governing the nation; and who had counselled Zedekiah to rebel.

Verse 6. *Thou art Gilead unto me, and the head of Lebanon*— Perhaps in allusion, says Dahler, to the oaks of Gilead, and the cedars of Mount Lebanon, of which the palace was constructed. Lebanon was the highest mountain in Israel, and Gilead the richest and most fertile part of the country; and were, therefore, proper emblems of the reigning family. Though thou art the richest and most powerful, I, who raised thee up, can bring thee down and make thee a wilderness.

Verse 7. *They shall cut down thy choice cedars*— The destruction of the country is expressed under the symbol of the destruction of a fine forest; a multitude of fellers come against it, each with his axe; and, there being no resistance, every tree is soon felled to the earth. “These destroyers,” God

says, “I have prepared, **קדשתי** kiddashti, I have sanctified-consecrated, to this work. They have their commission from me.”

Verse 8. *Many nations shall pass*— These words seem borrowed from Deuteronomy 29:22, etc.

Verse 10. *Weep ye not for the dead*— Josiah, dead in consequence of the wound he had received at Megiddo, in a battle with Pharaoh-necho, king of Egypt; but he died in peace with God.

But weep sore for him that goeth away— Namely, Jehoahaz, the son of Josiah, called below Shallum, whom Pharaoh-necho had carried captive into Egypt from which it was prophesied he should never return, 2 Kings 23:30-34. He was called Shallum before he ascended the throne, and Jehoahaz afterwards; so his brother Eliakim changed his name to Jehoiakim, and Mattaniah to Zedekiah.

Verse 13. *Wo unto him that buildeth his house*— These evils, charged against Jehoiakim, are nowhere else circumstantially related. We learn from 2 Kings 23:35-37, that he taxed his subjects heavily, to give to Pharaoh-necho, king of Egypt: “He exacted the silver and gold of the people of the land, and did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord.” The mode of taxation is here intimated; he took the wages of the hirelings, and caused the people to work without wages in his own buildings, etc.

Verse 15. *Shalt thou reign, etc.*— Dost thou think thou art a great king, because thou dwellest in a splendid palace?

Verse 18. *They shall not lament for him, saying, Ah my brother!*— These words were no doubt the burden of some funeral dirge. Alas! a brother, who was our lord or governor, is gone. Alas, our sister! his QUEEN, who has lost her glory in losing her husband. **הודא** hodah is feminine, and must refer to the glory of the queen.

The mournings in the east, and lamentations for the dead, are loud, vehement, and distressing. For a child or a parent grief is expressed in a variety of impassioned sentences, each ending with a burden like that in

the text, “Ah my child!” “Ah my mother!” as the prophet in this place:
 הוי אחי hoi achi, “Ah my brother!” הוי אחות hoi achoth, “Ah sister!”
 הוי אדון hoi adon, “Ah lord!” הוי הדרה hoi hodah “Ah the glory.”

Mr. Ward, in his *Manners and Customs of the Hindoos*, gives two examples of lamentation; one of a mother for the death of her son, one of a daughter for her departed mother. “When a woman,” says he, “is overwhelmed with grief for the death of her child, she utters her grief in some such language as the following:—

Ah, my Hureedas, where is he gone?.

— ‘*Ah my child, my child!*’ *My golden image,*

Hureedas, who has taken? -‘Ah my child, my child!’

I nourished and reared him, where is he gone?.

— ‘*Ah my child, my child!*’ *Take me with thee.*

— ‘*Ah my child, my child!*’ *He played round me like a golden top.*

-‘*Ah my child, my child!*’ *Like his face I never saw one.*

— ‘*Ah my child, my child!*’ *The infant continually cried, Ma Ma!*

— ‘*Ah my child, my child!*’ *Ah my child, crying,*

Ma! come into my lap. — ‘Ah my child, my child!’

Who shall now drink milk? -‘Ah my child, my child!’

Who shall now stay in my lap? -‘Ah my child, my child!’

Our support is gone! -‘Ah my child, my child!’

“*The lamentations for a mother are in some such strains as these:—*

Mother! where is she gone? -‘Ah my mother, my mother!’

You are gone, but what have you left for me?

— ‘*Ah my mother, my mother!*’

Whom shall I now call mother, mother?

— ‘*Ah my mother, my mother!*’

Where shall I find such a mother? -‘Ah my mother, my mother!’”

From the above we may conclude that the funeral lamentations, to which the prophet refers, generally ended in this way, in each of the verses or interrogatories.

There is another intimation of this ancient and universal custom in 1 Kings

13:30, where the old prophet, who had deceived the man of God, and who was afterwards slain by a lion, is represented as mourning over him, and saying, **הוי אחי** hoi achi, “Alas, my brother!” this being the burden of the lamentation which he had used on this occasion. Similar instances may be seen in other places, Jeremiah 30:7; Ezekiel 6:11; Joel 1:15; and particularly Amos 5:16, 17, and Revelation 18:10-19.

Verse 19. *With the burial of an ass*— Cast out, and left unburied, or buried without any funeral solemnities, and without such lamentations as the above.

Verse 20. *Go up to Lebanon*— Probably Anti-Libanus, which, together with Bashan and Abarim, which we here translate passages, were on the way by which the captives should be led out of their own country.

Verse 21. *I spake unto thee in thy prosperity*— In all states and circumstances I warned thee by my prophets; and thou wilt only be ashamed of thy conduct when thou shalt be stripped of all thy excellencies, and reduced to poverty and disgrace, ver. 22.

Verse 22. *The wind shall eat up all thy pastors*— A blast from God’s mouth shall carry off thy kings, princes, prophets, and priests.

Verse 23. *How gracious shalt thou be*— A strong irony.

Verse 24. *Though Coniah*— Called Jeconiah, probably on ascending the throne. See on ver. 10.

The signet upon my right hand— The most precious seal, ring, or armet. Though dearer to me than the most splendid gem to its possessor.

Verse 26. *I will cast thee out, and thy mother*— See all this fulfilled, 2 Kings 24:12, 13. All were carried by Nebuchadnezzar into captivity together.

Verse 28. *Is this man Coniah a despised broken idol?*— These are probably the exclamations of the people, when they heard those solemn

denunciations against their king and their country.

Verse 29. *O earth*— These are the words of the prophet in reply: O land! unhappy land! desolated land! Hear the judgment of the Lord!

Verse 30. *Write ye this man childless*— Though he had seven sons, 1 Chronicles 3:17, yet having no successor, he is to be entered on the genealogical tables as one without children for none of his posterity ever sat on the throne of David.

CHAPTER 23

Sequel of the discourse which commenced in the preceding chapter. The prophet denounces vengeance against the pastors of Israel who have scattered and destroyed the flock of the Lord, 1, 2. He concludes with gracious promises of deliverance from the Babylonish captivity, and of better times under the Messiah, when the converts to Christianity, who are the true Israel of God, shadowed forth by the old dispensation, shall be delivered, by the glorious light of the Gospel, from worse than Chaldean bondage, from the captivity of sin and death. But this prophecy will not have its fullest accomplishment till that period arrives which is fixed in the Divine counsel for the restoration of Israel and Judah from their various dispersions, of which their deliverance from the Chaldean domination was a type, when Jesus the Christ, the righteous Branch, the Root and Offspring of David, and the only legitimate Heir to the throne, shall take unto himself his great power, and reign gloriously over the whole house of Jacob, 3-8. At the ninth verse a new discourse commences. Jeremiah expresses his horror at the great wickedness of the priests and prophets of Judah, and declares that the Divine vengeance is hanging over them. He exhorts the people not to listen to their false promises, 9-22; and predicts the utter ruin that shall fall upon all pretenders to inspiration, 23-32, as well as upon all scoffers at true prophecy, 33-40.

NOTES ON CHAP. 23

Verse 1. *Wo be unto the pastors*— There shall a curse fall on the kings, princes, priests, and prophets; who, by their vicious conduct and example, have brought desolation upon the people.

Verse 2. *Ye have scattered my flock*— The bad government both in Church and State was a principal cause of the people's profligacy.

Verse 5. *I will raise unto David a righteous Branch*— As there has been

no age, from the Babylonish captivity to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, in which such a state of prosperity existed, and no king or governor who could answer at all to the character here given, the passage has been understood to refer to our blessed Lord, Jesus Christ, who was a branch out of the stem of Jesse; a righteous king; by the power of his Spirit and influence of his religion reigning, prospering, and executing judgment and justice in the earth.

Verse 6. *In his days Judah shall be saved*— The real Jew is not one who has his circumcision in the flesh, but in the spirit. The real Israel are true believers in Christ Jesus; and the genuine Jerusalem is the Church of the first-born, and made free, with all her children, from the bondage of sin, Satan, death, and hell. All these exist only in the days of the Messiah. All that went before were the types or signifiers of these glorious Gospel excellencies.

And this is his name whereby he shall be called THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.— I shall give the Hebrew text of this important passage: **וְזֶה שְׁמוֹ אֲשֶׁר יִקְרְאוּ יְהוָה צְדִקְנוּ** *vezeh shemo asher yikre'o Yehovah tsidkenu*, which the Septuagint translate as follows, **καὶ τούτο τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ ὃ καλεσεὶ αὐτὸν κερῖος, ἰωσηδεκ**, “And this is his name which the Lord shall call him Josedek.”

Dahler translates the text thus:—

***Et voici le nom dont on l'appellera:
L'Éternel, Auteur de notre félicité.***

***“And this is the name by which he shall be called;
The Lord, the Author of our happiness.”***

Dr. Blayney seems to follow the Septuagint; he translates thus, “And this is the name by which Jehovah shall call him, OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.”

In my old MS. Bible, the first English translation ever made, it is thus: —
And this is the name that thei schul clepen him: oure rigtwise Lord .

Coverdale's, the first complete English translation of the Scriptures ever printed, (1535,) has given it thus: — And this is the name that they shall call him: even the Lorde oure rightuous Maker.

Matthews (1549) and Becke (1549) follow Coverdale literally; but our present translation of the clause is borrowed from Cardmarden, (Rouen, 1566,) "Even the Lord our righteousness."

Dr. Blayney thus accounts for his translation: — "Literally, according to the Hebrew idiom, 'And this is his name by which Jehovah shall call, Our Righteousness;' a phrase exactly the same as, 'And Jehovah shall call him so;' which implies that God would make him such as he called him, that is, our Righteousness, or the author and means of our salvation and acceptance. So that by the same metonymy Christ is said to 'have been made of God unto us wisdom, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption,' 1 Corinthians 1:30.

"I doubt not that some persons will be offended with me for depriving them, by this translation, of a favourite argument for proving the Divinity of our Savior from the Old Testament. But I cannot help it; I have done it with no ill design, but purely because I think, and am morally sure, that the text, as it stands, will not properly admit of any other construction. The Septuagint have so translated before me, in an age when there could not possibly be any bias or prejudice either for or against the fore-mentioned doctrine, a doctrine which draws its devasive proofs from the New Testtament only."

Dahler paraphrases, — "This Prince shall be surnamed by his people, 'The Lord, the author of our happiness.' The people shall feel themselves happy under him; and shall express their gratitude to him."

I am satisfied that both the translation from Cardmarden downwards, and the meaning put on these words, are incorrect. I prefer the translation of Blayney to all others; and that it speaks any thing about the imputed righteousness of Christ, cannot possibly be proved by any man who understands the original text. As to those who put the sense of their creed upon the words, they must be content to stand out of the list of Hebrew

critics. I believe Jesus to be Jehovah; but I doubt much whether this text calls him so. No doctrine so vitally important should be rested on an interpretation so dubious and unsupported by the text. That all our righteousness, holiness, and goodness, as well as the whole of our salvation, come by HIM, from HIM, and through HIM, is fully evident from the Scriptures; but this is not one of the passages that support this most important truth. See on chap. xxxiii.

Verse 7. *The Lord liveth which brought up*— See on chap. 16:14, 15.

Verse 9. *Mine heart within me is broken because of the prophets*— The first word of this clause is לַנְּבִיאִים *lannebiim*, which we incorporate with the whole clause, and translate, “Because of the prophets.” But as a new prophecy begins here, it is evident that the word is the title to this prophecy; and is thus distinguished both by Blayney and Dahler, CONCERNING THE PROPHETS. This discourse was delivered probably in the reign of Jehoiakim.

All my bones shake— He was terrified even by his own message, and shocked at the profanity of the false prophets.

Verse 10. *The land is full of adulterers*— Of idolaters. Of persons who break their faith to ME, as an impure wife does to her husband.

The pleasant places of the wilderness are dried up— He speaks here, most probably, in reference to dearth. Profane oaths, false swearing, evil courses, violence, etc., had provoked God to send this among other judgments; see ver. 19.

Verse 11. *In my house*— They had even introduced idolatry into the Temple of God!

Verse 13. *I have seen folly in the prophets of Samaria*— This was not to be wondered at, for their religion was a system of corruption.

Verse 14. *I have seen also in the prophets of Jerusalem*— That is, the prophets of Jerusalem, while professing a pure faith, have followed the

ways, and become as corrupt as the prophets of Samaria.

They are all of them unto me as Sodom— Incurrible, brutish sinners, who will as surely be destroyed as Sodom and Gomorrah were.

Verse 16. *Hearken not unto the words of the prophets*— That is, of those who promise you safety, without requiring you to forsake your sins and turn unto the Lord; see ver. 17.

Verse 18. *Who hath stood in the counsel of the Lord*— Who of them has ever received a word of prophecy from me? My word is not in them.

Verse 19. *Behold, a whirlwind*— The simoom: the hot pestilential wind blowing from the south, frequently mentioned or referred to in the sacred writings; see ver. 10.

Verse 20. *In the latter days ye shall consider it*— I give you warning: and this punishment which I now threaten shall surely take place; a short time will determine it; ye shall not escape.

Verse 21. *I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran*— Not to save souls, but to profit themselves.

I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied.— They never received the word at my mouth; yet they went, publishing their own deceits, and pretending them to be revelations from God. The churches which have legal emoluments are ever in danger of being overrun and ruined by worldly and self-interested priests.

Verse 23. *Am I a God at hand, — and not a God afar off?*— You act as if you thought I could not see you! Am I not omnipresent? Do not I fill the heavens and the earth? ver. 24.

Verse 27. *Bay their dreams*— Dreams were anciently reputed as a species of inspiration; see Numbers 12:6; 1 Samuel 28:6; Joel 3:1; Daniel 7:1. In the Book of Genesis we find many examples; and although many mistook the workings of their own vain imaginations in sleep for revelations from

God, yet he has often revealed himself in this way: but such dreams were easily distinguished from the others. They were always such as had no connection with the gratification of the flesh; they were such as contained warnings against sin, and excitements to holiness; they were always consecutive-well connected, with a proper beginning and ending; such as possessed the intellect more than the imagination. Of such dreams the Lord says, (ver. 28:) The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream-permit him to show what he has thus received from the Lord: but let him tell it as a dream, and speak my word faithfully, lest he may have been deceived.

Verse 28. *What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord.*— Do not mingle these equivocal matters with positive revelations. Do not consider a dream, even from a prophet, as that positive inspiration which my prophets receive when their reason, judgment, and spiritual feelings are all in full and in regular exercise. Mix none of your own devices with my doctrines.

Verse 29. *Is not my word like as a fire?*— It enlightens, warms, and penetrates every part. When it is communicated to the true prophet, it is like a fire shut up in his bones; he cannot retain it, he must publish it: and when published, it is like a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces; it is ever accompanied by a Divine power, that causes both sinner and saint to feel its weight and importance.

In the original words there is something singular: **הלוֹא כֹה דְבַרִי כֶאֱשׁ** halo coh debari kaesh, “Is not thus my word like fire?” I suspect, with Dr. Blayney, that **כֹה** coh, thus, was formerly written **כֹח** coach, strength or power; and so it was understood by the Targumist: “Are not all my words strong, like fire?” and probably the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews read it thus, and had it in view when he wrote: “For the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword,” Hebrews 4:12. This admitted, the text would read, “Is not my word powerful, like fire?” or, “Is not the power of my word like fire?” But however we understand the words, let us take heed lest we think, as some have thought and affirmed, that the sacred writings are quite sufficient of themselves to enlighten, convince, and convert the soul, and that there is no need of the

Holy Spirit. Fire itself must be applied by an agent in order to produce its effects; and surely the hammer cannot break the rock in pieces, unless wielded by an able workman. And it is God's Spirit alone that can thus apply it; for we find it frequently read and frequently spoken, without producing any salutary effects. And by this very thing the true preachers of the word of God may be distinguished from the false, non-commissioned ones; those who run, though they are not sent, ver. 21. The word of him who has his commission from heaven shall be as a fire and as a hammer; sinners shall be convinced and converted to God by it. But the others, though they steal the word from their neighbor-borrow or pilfer a good sermon, yet they do not profit the people at all, because God did not send them, ver. 32; for the power of God does not in their ministry accompany the word.

There may be an allusion to the practice in some mining countries, of roasting stones containing ore, before they are subjected to the hammer, in order to pulverize them. In Cornwall I have seen them roast the tin stones in the fire, before they placed them under the action of the hammers in the stamp mill. The fire separated the arsenic from the ore, and then they were easily reduced to powder by the hammers of the mill; afterwards, washing the mass with water, the grains of tin sank to the bottom, while the lighter parts went off with the water, and thus the metal was procured clean and pure. If this be the allusion, it is very appropriate.

Verse 30. *I am against the prophets*— Three cases are mentioned here which excited God's disapprobation: 1. The prophets who stole the word from their neighbor; who associated with the true prophets, got some intelligence from them, and then went and published it as a revelation which themselves had received, ver. 30. 2. The prophets who used their tongues; הלקחים לשונם hallokechim leshonam, who lick or smooth with their tongues-gave their own counsels as Divine revelations, flattering them in their sins, and promising peace, when God had not spoken; and prefaced them, "Thus saith the Lord," ver. 31. 3. The prophets who made up false stories, which they termed prophecies, revealed to them in dreams; and thus caused the people to err, ver. 32.

Verse 33. *What is the burden of the Lord?*— The word מִשָּׂא massa, here

used, signifies burden, oracle, prophetic discourse; and is used by almost every prophet. But the persons in the text appear to have been mockers. “Where is this burden of the Lord?”- “What is the burden now?” To this insolent question the prophet answers in the following verses.

I will ever forsake you— I will punish the prophet, the priest and the people, that speak thus, ver. 34. Here are burdens.

Verse 36. *Every man’s word shall be his burden*— Ye say that all God’s messages are burdens, and to you they shall be such: whereas, had you used them as you ought, they would have been blessings to you.

For ye have perverted the words of the living God— And thus have sinned against your own souls.

Verse 39. *I will utterly forget you, and I will forsake you and the city*— Dr. Blayney translates: — I will both take you up altogether, and will cast you off together with the city. Ye are a burden to me: but I will take you up, and then cast you off. I will do with you as a man weary with his burden will do; cast it off his shoulders, and bear it no more.

Verse 40. *I will bring an everlasting reproach upon you*— And this reproach of having rebelled against so good a God, and rejected so powerful a Savior, follows them to this day through all their dispersions, in every part of the habitable earth. The word of the Lord cannot fail.

CHAPTER 24

Under the emblem of the good and bad figs is represented the fate of the Jews already gone into captivity with Jeconiah, and of those that remained still in their own country with Zedekiah. It is likewise intimated that God would deal kindly with the former, but that his wrath would still pursue the latter, 1-10.

NOTES ON CHAP. 24

Verse 1. *The Lord showed me, and, behold, two baskets of figs*— Besides the transposition of whole chapters in this book, there is not unfrequently a transposition of verses, and parts of verses. Of this we have an instance in the verse before us; the first clause of which should be the last. Thus:—

“After that Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon had carried away captive Jeconiah, the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah, with the carpenters and smiths from Jerusalem, and had brought them to Babylon, the Lord showed me, and, behold, two baskets of figs were set before the temple of the Lord.”

Verse 2. “One basket had very good figs, even like the figs that are first ripe; and the other basket had very naughty figs, which could not be eaten, they were so bad.”

This arrangement restores these verses to a better sense, by restoring the natural connection.

This prophecy was undoubtedly delivered in the first year of the reign of Zedekiah.

Under the type of good and bad figs, God represents the state of the persons who had already been carried captives into Babylon, with their king Jeconiah, compared with the state of those who should be carried

away with Zedekiah. Those already carried away, being the choice of the people, are represented by the good figs: those now remaining, and soon to be carried into captivity, are represented by the bad figs, that were good for nothing. The state also of the former in their captivity was vastly preferable to the state of those who were now about to be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon. The latter would be treated as double rebels; the former, being the most respectable of the inhabitants, were treated well; and even in captivity, a marked distinction would be made between them, God ordering it so. But the prophet sufficiently explains his own meaning.

Set before the temple—As an offering of the first-fruits of that kind.

Verse 2. *Very good figs*— Or, figs of the early sort. The fig-trees in Palestine, says Dr. Shaw, produce fruit thrice each year. The first sort, called boccore, those here mentioned, come to perfection about the middle or end of June. The second sort, called kermez, or summer fig, is seldom ripe before August. And the third, which is called the winter fig, which is larger, and of a darker complexion than the preceding, hangs all the winter on the tree, ripening even when the leaves are shed, and is fit for gathering in the beginning of spring.

Could not be eaten— The winter fig, — then in its crude or unripe state; the spring not being yet come.

Verse 5. *Like these good figs, so will I acknowledge*— Those already carried away into captivity, I esteem as far more excellent than those who still remain in the land. They have not sinned so deeply, and they are now penitent; and, therefore, I will set mine eyes upon them for good, ver. 6. I will watch over them by an especial providence, and they shall be restored to their own land.

Verse 7. *They shall be my people*— I will renew my covenant with them, for they will return to me with them whole heart.

Verse 8. *So will I give Zedekiah*— I will treat these as they deserve. They shall be carried into captivity, and scattered through all nations.

Multitudes of those never returned to Judea; the others returned at the end of seventy years.

Verse 10. *I will send the sword*— Many of them fell by sword and famine in the war with the Chaldeans, and many more by such means afterwards. The first received their captivity as a correction, and turned to God; the latter still hardened their hearts more and more, and probably very many of them never returned: perhaps they are now amalgamated with heathen nations. Lord, how long?

CHAPTER 25

This chapter contains a summary of the judgments denounced by Jeremiah against Judah, Babylon, and many other nations. It begins with reproving the Jews for disobeying the calls of God to repentance, 1-7; on which account their captivity, with that of her neighboring nations, during seventy years, is foretold, 8-11. At the expiration of that period, (computing from the invasion of Nebuchadnezzar in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, to the famous edict of the first year of Cyrus,) an end was to be put to the Babylonian empire, 12-14. All this is again declared by the emblem of that cup of wrath which the prophet, as it should seem in a vision, tendered to all the nations which he enumerates, 15-29. And for farther confirmation, it is a third time repeated in a very beautiful and elevated strain of poetry, 30-38. The talent of diversifying the ideas, images, and language, even when the subject is the same, or nearly so, appears no where in such perfection as among the sacred poets.

NOTES ON CHAP. 25

Verse 1. *The word that came to Jeremiah-to the fourth year*— This prophecy, we see, was delivered in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, and the chapter that contains it is utterly out of its place. It should be between chapters 35:and 36.

The defeat of the Egyptians by Nebuchadnezzar at Carchemish, and the subsequent taking of Jerusalem, occurred in this year, viz., the fourth year of Jehoiakim.

The first year of Nebuchadrezzar— This king was associated with his father two years before the death of the latter. The Jews reckon his reign from this time, and this was the first of those two years; but the Chaldeans date the commencement of his reign two years later, viz., at the death of his father.

Verse 7. *That ye might provoke*— Ye would not hearken; but chose to provoke me with anger.

Verse 9. *Behold, I will send*— At this time Nebuchadrezzar had not invaded the land, according to this Version; but the Hebrew may be translated, “Behold I am sending, and have taken all the families;” that is, all the allies of the king of Babylon.

Instead of **וְאֵל** reel, “and To Nebuchadrezzar,” as in the common Hebrew Bible, seven MSS. of Kennicott’s and De Rossi’s, and one of my own, have **וְאֵל**, veeth, “AND Nebuchadrezzar,” which is undoubtedly the true reading.

Verse 10. *I will take from them*— See chap. 7:34, and 16:9.

The sound of the mill-stones, and the light of the candle.— These two are conjoined, because they generally ground the corn before day, by the light of the candle. Sir J. Chardin has remarked, that every where in the morning may be heard the noise of the mills; for they generally grind every day just as much as is necessary for the day’s consumption. Where then the noise of the mill is not heard, nor the light of the candle seen, there must be desolation; because these things are heard and seen in every inhabited country.

Verse 11. *Shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.*— As this prophecy was delivered in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, and in the first of Nebuchadnezzar, and began to be accomplished in the same year, (for then Nebuchadnezzar invaded Judea, and took Jerusalem,) seventy years from this time will reach down to the first year of Cyrus, when he made his proclamation for the restoration of the Jews, and the rebuilding of Jerusalem. See the note on Isaiah 13:19, where the subject is farther considered in relation to the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, and the city of Babylon.

Verse 12. *And that nation*— **הַגּוֹי הַזֶּה** haggioi hahu. Dr. Blayney contends that this should be translated his nation, and that **הַזֶּה** hahu is

the substantive pronoun used in the genitive case. It is certainly more clear and definite to read, "I will punish the king of Babylon, and His nation."

Will make it perpetual desolations— See the note on Isaiah 13:19, where the fulfillment of this prophecy is distinctly marked.

Verse 14. *Many nations and great kings*— The Medes and the Persians, under Cyrus; and several princes, his vassals or allies.

Verse 16. *Take the wine cup of this fury*— For an ample illustration of this passage and simile, see the note on Isaiah 51:21.

Verse 17. *Then took I the cup-and made all the nations to drink*— This cup of God's wrath is merely symbolical, and simply means that the prophet should declare to all these people that they shall fall under the Chaldean yoke, and that this is a punishment inflicted on them by God for their iniquities. "Then I took the cup;" I declared publicly the tribulation that God was about to bring on Jerusalem, the cities of Judah, and all the nations.

Verse 19. *Pharaoh king of Egypt*— This was Pharaoh-necho, who was the principal cause of instigating the neighboring nations to form a league against the Chaldeans.

Verse 20. *All the mingled people*— The strangers and foreigners; Abyssinians and others who had settled in Egypt.

Land of Uz— A part of Arabia near to Idumea. See on Job. 1:1.

Verse 22. *Tyrus and-Zidon*— The most ancient of all the cities of the Phoenicians.

Kings of the isles which are beyond the sea.— As the Mediterranean Sea is most probably meant, and the Phoenicians had numerous colonies on its coasts, I prefer the marginal reading, the kings of the region by the sea side.

Verse 23. *Dedan*— Was son of Abraham, by Keturah, Genesis 25:3.

Tema; Was one of the sons of Ishmael, in the north of Arabia, Genesis 36:15.

Buz— Brother of Uz, descendants of Nahor, brother of Abraham, settled in Arabia Deserta, Genesis 22:21.

Verse 24. *The mingled people*— Probably the Scenite Arabians.

Verse 25. *Zimri*— Descendants of Abraham, by Keturah, Genesis 25:2, 6.

Elam— Called Elymais by the Greeks, was on the south frontier of Media, to the north of Susiana, not far from Babylon.

Verse 26. *The kings of the north, far and near*— The first may mean Syria; the latter, the Hyrcanians and Bactrians.

And the king of Sheshach shall drink after them.— Sheshach was an ancient king of Babylon, who was deified after his death. Here it means either Babylon, or Nebuchadnezzar the king of it. After it has been the occasion of ruin to so many other nations, Babylon itself shall be destroyed by the Medo-Persians.

Verse 27. *Be drunken, and spue*— Why did we not use the word vomit, less offensive than the other, and yet of the same signification?

Verse 29. *The city which is called by my name*— Jerusalem, which should be first given up to the destruction.

Verse 32. *Evil shall go forth from nation to nation*— One nation after another shall fall before the Chaldeans.

Verse 33. *From one end of the earth*— From one end of the land to the other. All Palestine shall be desolated by it.

Verse 34. *Howl, ye shepherds*— Ye kings and chiefs of the people.

Ye shall fall like a pleasant tresses.— As a fall will break and utterly ruin a precious vessel of crystal, agate, etc., so your overthrow will be to you irreparable ruin.

Verse 38. *As the lion*— Leaving the banks of Jordan when overflowed, and coming with ravening fierceness to the champaign country.

CHAPTER 26

Jeremiah, by the commend of God, goes into the court of the Lord's house; and foretells the destruction of the temple and city, if not prevented by the speedy repentance of the people, 1-7. By this unwelcome prophecy his life was in great danger; although saved by the influence of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, who makes a masterly defense for the prophet, 8-18. Urijah is condemned, but escapes to Egypt; whence he is brought hack by Jehoiakim, and slain, 20-23. Ahikam befriends Jeremiah, 24.

NOTES ON CHAP. 26

Verse 1. *In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim*— As this prophecy must have been delivered in the first or second year of the reign of Jehoiakim, it is totally out of its place here. Dr. Blayney puts it before chap. 36.; and Dr. Dahler immediately after chap. ix., and before chap. 46.

Verse 4. *If ye will not hearken*— This and several of the following verses are nearly the same with those in chap. 7:13, etc., where see the notes.

Verse 8. *And all the people*— That were in company with the priests and the prophets.

Verse 10. *The princes of Judah*— The king's court; his cabinet counsellors.

Verse 12. *The Lord sent me to prophesy*— My commission is from him, and my words are his own. I sought not this painful office. I did not run before I was sent.

Verse 13. *Therefore*

Verse 14. *As for me, behold, I am in your hand*— I am the messenger of God; you may do with me what you please; but if you slay me, you will bring innocent blood upon yourselves.

Verse 16. *This man is not worthy to die*— The whole court acquitted him.

Verse 17. *Certain of the elders*— This is really a fine defense, and the argument was perfectly conclusive. Some think that it was Ahikam who undertook the prophet's defense.

Verse 18. *Micah the Morasthite*— The same as stands among the prophets. Now all these prophesied as hard things against the land as Jeremiah has done; yet they were not put to death, for the people saw that they were sent of God.

Verse 20. *Urijah-who prophesied*— The process against Jeremiah is finished at the nineteenth verse; and the case of Urijah is next brought on, for he was also to be tried for his life; but hearing of it he fled to Egypt. He was however condemned in his absence; and the king sent to Egypt, and brought him thence and slew him, and caused him to have an ignominious burial, ver. 21-23.

Verse 24. *The hand of Ahikam-was with Jeremiah*— And it was probably by his influence that Jeremiah did not share the same fate with Urijah. The Ahikam mentioned here was probably the father of Gedaliah, who, after the capture of Jerusalem, was appointed governor of the country by Nebuchadnezzar, chap. 40:5. Of the Prophet Urijah, whether he was true or false, we know nothing but what we learn from this place.

That they should not give him into the hand of the people— Though acquitted in the supreme court, he was not out of danger; there was a popular prejudice against him, and it is likely that Ahikam was obliged to conceal him, that they might not put him to death. The genuine ministers of God have no favor to expect from those who are HIS enemies.

CHAPTER 27

Ambassadors being come from several neighboring nations to solicit the king of Judah to join in a confederacy against the king of Babylon, Jeremiah is commanded to put bands and yokes upon his neck, (the emblems of subjection and slavery,) and to send them afterwards by those ambassadors to their respective princes; intimating by this significant type that God had decreed their subjection to the Babylonian empire, and that it was their wisdom to submit. It is farther declared that all the conquered nations shall remain in subjection to the Chaldeans during the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, and those of his son and grandson, even till the arrival of that period in which the Babylonians shall have filled up the measure of their iniquities; and that then the mighty Chaldean monarchy itself, for a certain period the paramount power of the habitable globe, shall be voted with a dreadful storm of Divine wrath, through the violence of which it shall be dashed to pieces like a potter's vessel, the fragments falling into the hands of many nations and great kings, 1-11. Zedekiah, particularly, is admonished not to join to the revolt against Nebuchadnezzar, and warned against trusting to the suggestions of false prophets, 11-18. The chapter concludes with foretelling that what still remained of the sacred vessels of the temple should be carried to Babylon, and not restored till after the destruction of the Chaldean empire, 19-22.

NOTES ON CHAP. 27

Verse 1. *In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim*— It is most evident that his prophecy was delivered about the fourth year of Z

Verse 2. *Make thee bonds and yokes*— Probably yokes with straps, by which they were attached to the neck. This was a symbolical action, to show that the several kings mentioned below should be brought under the dominion of the Chaldeans.

Verse 5. *I have made the earth*— I am the Creator and Governor of all things, and I dispose of the several kingdoms of the world as seemeth best to me.

Verse 6. *And now have I given*— These kingdoms are at my sovereign disposal; and at present, for the punishment of their rulers and people, I shall give them into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon.

Verse 7. And all nations shall serve him (Nebuchadnezzar,) and his son, (Evil-merodach chap. 52:31,) and his son's son, (Belshazzar, Daniel 5:11.) All which was literally fulfilled.

Verse 9. *Therefore hearken not ye to your prophets*— Who pretend to have a revelation from heaven.

Nor to your diviners— קסמיכם kosemeychem, from קסם kasam, to presage or prognosticate. Persons who guessed at futurity by certain signs in the animate or inanimate creation.

Nor to your dreamers— חלמתיכם chalomotheychem, from חלם chalam, to break in pieces; hence חלום chalom, a dream, because it consists of broken fragments. Dream-interpreters, who, from these broken shreds patch up a meaning by their own interpolations.

Nor to your enchanters— ענניכם oneneychem, from ענ anan, a cloud-cloud-mongers. Diviners by the flight, color, density, rarity, and shape of clouds.

Nor to your sorcerers— כשפייכם cashshapheychem, from כשף kashaph, to discover; the discoverers, the finders out of hidden things, stolen goods,

etc. Persons also who use incantations, and either by spells or drugs pretend to find out mysteries, or produce supernatural effects. Every nation in the world had persons who pretended to find out hidden things, or foretell future events; and such were gladly encouraged by the ignorant multitude; and many of them were mere apes of the prophets of God. Man knows that he is short-sighted, feels pain at the uncertainty of futurity, and wishes to have his doubts resolved by such persons as the above, to put an end to his uncertainty.

Verse 13. *Why will ye die*— If ye resist the king of Babylon, to whom I have given a commission against you, ye shall be destroyed by the sword and by famine; but if ye submit, ye shall escape all these evils.

Verse 16. *The vessels of the Lord's house*— Which had been carried away by Nebuchadnezzar under the reigns of Jehoiakim and Jeconiah, 2 Chronicles 36:7-10.

Shall now shortly be brought again— This is a lie. They shall not be restored till I bring them up, ver. 22, which was after the captivity, when they were sent back by Cyrus, the Lord inclining his heart to do it, Ezra 1:7, and 7:19.

Verse 19. *Concerning the pillars*— Two brazen columns placed by Solomon in the pronaos or portico of the temple, eighteen cubits high, and twelve in circumference, 1 Kings 7:16-22; Jeremiah 52:11.

The sea— The brazen sea, ten cubits in diameter, and thirty in circumference. It contained water for different washings in the Divine worship, and was supported on twelve brazen oxen. Perhaps these are what are called the bases here. See the parallel places in the margin, and the notes on them.

Verse 22. *They shall be carried to Babylon*— Far from those already taken being brought back, those which now remain shall be carried thither, unless ye submit to the Chaldeans. They did not submit, and the prophecy was literally fulfilled; see chap. 52:17-23; 2 Kings 25:13, and the other places in the margin.

CHAPTER 28

One of those pretended prophets spoken of on the preceding chapter, having contrasted and opposed Jeremiah, receives an awful declaration that, as a proof to the people of his having spoken without commission, he should die in the then current year; which accordingly came to pass its the seventh month, 1-17.

NOTES ON CHAP. 28

Verse 1. *And it came to pass the same year—the fifth month*— Which commenced with the first new moon of August, according to our calendar. This verse gives the precise date of the prophecy in the preceding chapter; and proves that Zedekiah, not Jehoiakim, is the name that should be read in the first verse of that chapter.

Hananiah the son of Azur the prophet— One who called himself a prophet; who pretended to be in commerce with the Lord, and to receive revelations from him. He was probably a priest; for he was of Gibeon, a

Verse 9. *When the word of the prophet shall come to pass*— Here is the criterion. He is a true prophet who specifies things that he says shall happen, and also fixes the time of the event; and the things do happen, and in that time.

You say that Nebuchadnezzar shall not overthrow this city; and that in two years from this time, not only the sacred vessels already taken away shall be restored, but also that Jeconiah and all the Jewish captives shall be restored, and the Babylonish yoke broken, see verses 2, 3, 4. Now I say that Nebuchadnezzar will come this year, and destroy this city, and lead away the rest of the people into captivity, and the rest of the sacred vessels; and that there will be no restoration of any kind till seventy years from this time.

Verse 10. *Then Hananiah-took the yoke-and brake it.*— He endeavored by this symbolical act to persuade them of the truth of his prediction.

Verse 13. *Yokes of iron.*— Instead of Nebuchadnezzar's yoke being broken, this captivity shall be more severe than the preceding. All these nations shall have a yoke of iron on their neck. He shall subdue them and take all their property, even the beasts of the field.

Verse 15. *Hear now, Hananiah; the Lord hath not sent thee*— This was a bold speech in the presence of those priests and people who were prejudiced in favor of this false prophet, who prophesied to them smooth things. In such cases men wish to be deceived.

Verse 16. *This year thou shalt die*— By this shall the people know who is the true prophet. Thou hast taught rebellion against the Lord, and God will cut thee off; and this shall take place, not within seventy years, or two years, but in this very year, and within two months from this time.

Verse 17. *So Hananiah-died the same year in the seventh month.*— The prophecy was delivered in the fifth month, (ver. 1,) and Hananiah died in the seventh month. And thus God, in mercy, gave him about two months, in which he might prepare to meet his Judge. Here, then the true prophet

was demonstrated, and the false prophet detected. The death of Hananiah thus predicted, was God's seal to the words of his prophet; and must have gained his other predictions great credit among the people.

CHAPTER 29

This chapter contains the substance of two letters sent by the prophet to the captives in Babylon. In the first he recommends to them patience and composure under their present circumstances, which were to endure for seventy years, 1-14; in which, however, they should fare better than their brethren who remained behind, 15-19. But, finding little credit given to this message, on account of the suggestions of the false prophets, Ahab the son of Kolaiah, and Zedekiah, the son of Maaseiah, who flattered them with the hopes of a speedy end to their captivity, he sends a second, in which he denounces heavy judgments against those false prophets that deceived them, 20-23; as he did afterwards against Shemaiah the Nehelamite, who had sent a letter of complaint against Jeremiah, in consequence of his message, 24-32.

NOTES ON CHAP. 29

Verse 1. *Now these are the words of the letter*— This transaction took place in the first or second year of Zedekiah. It appears that the prophet had been informed that the Jews who had already been carried into captivity had, through the instigations of false prophets, been led to believe that they were to be brought out of their captivity speedily. Jeremiah, fearing that this delusion might induce them to take some hasty steps, ill comporting with their present state, wrote a letter to them, which he entrusted to an embassy which Zedekiah had sent on some political concerns to Nebuchadnezzar. The letter was directed to the elders, priests, prophets, and people who had been carried away captives to Babylon.

Verse 4. *Thus saith the Lord of hosts*— This was the commencement of the letter.

Verse 5. *Build ye houses*— Prepare for a long continuance in your present captivity. Provide yourselves with the necessaries of life, and multiply in the land, that ye may become a powerful people.

Verse 7. *Seek the peace of the city*— Endeavor to promote, as far as you can, the prosperity of the places in which ye sojourn. Let no disaffection appear in word or act. Nothing can be more reasonable than this. Wherever a man lives and has his nourishment and support, that is his country as long as he resides in it. If things go well with that country, his interest is promoted by the general prosperity, he lives at comparative ease, and has the necessaries of life cheaper; and unless he is in a state of cruel servitude, which does not appear to have been the case with those Israelites to whom the prophet writes, (those of the first captivity,) they must be nearly, if not altogether, in as good a state as if they had been in the country that gave them birth. And in this case they were much better off than their brethren now in Judea, who had to contend with famine and war, and scarcely any thing before them but God’s curse and extermination.

Verse 8. *Neither hearken to your dreams*— Rather, dreamers; for it appears there was a class of such persons, who not only had acquired a facility of dreaming themselves, but who undertook to interpret the dreams of others.

Verse 10. *For thus saith the Lord*— It has been supposed that a very serious transposition of verses has taken place here; and it has been proposed to read after ver. 9 the sixteenth to the nineteenth inclusive; then the tenth, and on to the fourteenth inclusive; then the twentieth, the fifteenth, the twenty-first, and the rest regularly to the end.

That after seventy years be accomplished— לפי מלאה lephi meloth, “at the mouth of the accomplishment,” or “fill to the mouth.” Seventy years is the measure which must be filled;—fill this to the brim;—complete this measure, and then you shall be visited and released. The whole seventy must be completed; expect no enlargement before that time.

Verse 11. *Thoughts of peace*— Here God gives them to understand, 1. That his love was moved towards them. 2. That he would perform his good word, his promises often repeated, to them. 3. That for the fulfillment of these they must pray, seek, and search. 4. That he would hearken, and they should find him; provided, 5. They sought him with

their whole heart, ver. 10-13.

Verse 14. *I will gather you from all the nations*— A quotation from Deuteronomy 30:3, and see also Deuteronomy 4:7.

Verse 15. *Because ye have said*— The Septuagint very properly insert this verse between the twentieth and the twenty-first, and thus the connection here is not disturbed, and the connection below completed.

Verse 17. *Behold, I will send upon them the sword*— Do not envy the state of Zedekiah who sits on the throne of David, nor that of the people who are now in the land whence ye have been carried captive, (ver. 16,) for “I will send the sword, the pestilence, and the famine upon them;” and afterwards shall cause them to be carried into a miserable captivity in all nations, (ver. 18;) but ye see the worst of your own case, and you have God’s promise of enlargement when the proper time is come. The reader will not forget that the prophet is addressing the captives in Babylon.

Verse 20. *Hear ye therefore the word*

Verse 23. *Have committed adultery with their neighbors' wives*— This is supposed to refer to the case of Susanna. See above.

Verse 24. *Speak to Shemaiah*— Zephaniah was the second priest, sagan, or chief priest's deputy, and Seraiah, high priest, when Jerusalem was taken. See chap. 52:24. Shemaiah directs his letter to the former, and tells him that God had appointed him to supply the place of the high priest, who was probably then absent. His name was either Azariah or Seraiah his son, but called Jehoiada from the remarkable zeal and courage of that pontiff. See the passages in the margin. — Dodd. After the taking of Jerusalem, Zephaniah was put to death by Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah, see chap. 37:3. The history of Jehoiada may be seen 2 Kings 11:3, etc.

Verse 26. *For every man that is mad, and maketh himself a prophet*— Mad, **משגע** meshugga, in ecstatic rapture; such as appeared in the prophets, whether true or false, when under the influence, the one of God, the other of a demon. See 2 Kings 9:11; Hosea 9:7.

Verse 32. *I will punish Shemaiah*— 1. He shall have no posterity to succeed him. 2. His family, i.e., relations, etc., shall not be found among those whom I shall bring back from captivity. 3. Nor shall he himself see the good that I shall do for my people. And all this shall come upon him and his because he hath taught rebellion against the Lord. He excited the people to reject Jeremiah, and to receive the lying words of the false prophets; and these led them to rebel.

CHAPTER 30

This and the following chapter must relate to a still future restoration of the posterity of Jacob from their several dispersions, as no deliverance hitherto afforded them comes up to the terms of it; for, after the return from Babylon, they were again enslaved by the Greeks and Romans, contrary to the prediction in the eighth verse; in every papistical country they have labored under great civil disabilities, and in some of them have been horribly persecuted; upon the ancient people has this mystic Babylon very heavily laid her yoke; and in no place in the world are they at present their own masters; so that this prophecy remains to be fulfilled in the reign of David, i.e., the Messiah; the type, according to the general structure of the prophetic writings, being put for the antitype. The prophecy opens by an easy transition from the temporal deliverance spoken of before, and describes the mighty revolutions that shall precede the restoration of the descendants of Israel, 1-9, who are encouraged to trust in the promises of God, 10, 11. They are, however, to expect corrections; which shall have a happy issue in future period, 12-17. The great blessings of Messiah's reign are enumerated, 18-22; and the wicked and impenitent declared to have no share in them, 23, 24.

NOTES ON CHAP. 30

Verse 1. *The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord*— This prophecy was delivered about a year after the taking of Jerusalem; so Dahler. Dr. Blayney supposes it and the following chapter to refer to the future restoration of both Jews and Israelites in the times of the Gospel; though also touching at the restoration from the Babylonish captivity, at the end of seventy years. Supposing these two chapters to be penned after the taking of Jerusalem, which appears the most natural, they will refer to the same events, one captivity shadowing forth another, and one restoration being the type or pledge of the second.

Verse 2. *Write thee all the words that I have spoken unto thee in a*

book.— The book here recommended I believe to be the thirtieth and thirty-first chapters; for among the Hebrews any portion of writing, in which the subject was finished, however small, was termed סֵפֶר *sepher*, a BOOK, a treatise or discourse.

Verse 3. *The days come*— First, After the conclusion of the seventy years. Secondly, Under the Messiah.

That I will bring again the captivity of Israel— The ten tribes, led captive by the king of Assyria, and dispersed among the nations.

And Judah— The people carried into Babylon at two different times; first, under Jeconiah, and, secondly, under Zedekiah, by Nebuchadnezzar.

Verse 5. *We have heard a voice of trembling*— This may refer to the state and feelings of the people during the war which Cyrus carried on against the Babylonians. Trembling and terror would no doubt affect them, and put an end to peace and all prosperity; as they could not tell what would be the issue of the struggle, and whether their state would be better or worse should their present masters fall in the conflict. This is well described in the next verse, where men are represented as being, through pain and anguish, like women in travail. See the same comparison Isaiah 13:6-8.

Verse 7. *Alas! for that day is great*— When the Medes and Persians with all their forces shall come on the Chaldeans, it will be the day of Jacob's trouble-trial, dismay, and uncertainty; but he shall be delivered out of it—the Chaldean empire shall fall, but the Jews shall be delivered by Cyrus. Jerusalem shall be destroyed by the Romans, but the Israel of God shall be delivered from its ruin. Not one that had embraced Christianity perished in the sackage of that city.

Verse 8. *I will break his yoke*— That is, the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar.

Of him.— Of Jacob, (ver. 7,) viz., the then captive Jews.

Verse 9. *But they shall serve the Lord their God, and David their King*—

This must refer to the times of the Messiah and hence the Chaldee has, “They shall obey the Lord their God, **וישת מאו למשיחה בר דוד**, veyishta meun limschicha bar David, and they shall obey the Messiah, the Son of David.” This is a very remarkable version; and shows that it was a version, not according to the letter, but according to their doctrine and their expectation. David was long since dead; and none of his descendants ever reigned over them after the Babylonish captivity, nor have they since been a regal nation. Zerubbabel, under the Persians, and the Asmoneans, can be no exception to this. They have been no nation since; they are no nation now; and it is only in the latter days that they can expect to be a nation, and that must be a Christian nation.

Christ is promised under the name of his progenitor, David, Isaiah 55:3, 4; Ezekiel 34:23, 24; 37:24, 25; Hosea 3:5.

Verse 11. *Though I make a full end of all nations*— Though the Persians destroy the nations whom they vanquish, yet they shall not destroy thee.

Verse 12. *Thy bruise is incurable*— **אנוש** anush, desperate, not incurable; for the cure is promised in ver. 17, I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds.

Verse 13. *There is none to plead thy cause*— All thy friends and allies have forsaken thee.

Verse 15. Thy sorrow is incurable **אנוש** anush, desperate. See ver. 12.

Verse 16. *They that devour thee*— The Chaldeans.

Shall be devoured— By the Medes and Persians.

All that prey upon thee will I give for a prey.— The Assyrians were destroyed by the Babylonians; the Babylonians, by the Medes and Persians; the Egyptians and Persians were destroyed by the Greeks, under Alexander. All these nations are now extinct, but the Jews, as a distinct

people, still exist.

Verse 18. *The city shall be builded upon her own heap*— Be re-edified from its own ruins. See the book of Nehemiah, passim.

And the palace shall remain— Meaning, the king's house shall be restored; or, more probably, the temple shall be rebuilt; which was true, for after the Babylonish captivity it was rebuilt by Nehemiah, etc. By the tents, distinguished from the dwelling-places of Jacob, we may understand all the minor dispersions of the Jews, as well as those numerous synagogues found in large cities.

Verse 19. *I will multiply them*— They shall be very numerous; even where at present they have but tents.

I will also glorify them— I will put honor upon them every where, so that they shall be no longer contemptible. This will be a very great change, for they are now despised all over the earth.

Verse 20. *Their children also*— They shall have the education of their own children as formerly.

And their congregation— Their religious assemblies.

Shall be established— Being, in the latter days, incorporated with those “who serve the Lord their God, and worship the Messiah, the son of David.”

Verse 21. *Their nobles shall be of themselves*— Strangers shall not rule over them; and—

Their governor shall proceed from the midst of them— Both Nehemiah and Zerubbabel, their nobles and governors after the return from Babylon, were Jews.

Verse 22. *Ye shall be my people*— The old covenant shall be renewed.

Verse 23. *The whirlwind of the Lord*— A grievous tempest of desolation,—

Shall fall with pain upon the head of the wicked.— On Nebuchadnezzar and the Chaldeans.

Verse 24. *In the latter days ye shall consider it.*— By the latter days the Gospel dispensation is generally meant; and that restoration which is the principal topic in this and the succeeding chapter refers to this time. Had the Jews properly considered this subject, they would long ere this have been brought into the liberty of the Gospel, and saved from the maledictions under which they now groan. Why do not the Jews read their own prophets more conscientiously?

CHAPTER 31

This chapter continues the subject of the preceding in a beautiful vision represented at a distant period. God is introduced expressing his continual regard for Israel, and promising to restore them to their land and liberty, 1-5. Immediately heralds appear, proclaiming on Mount Ephraim the arrival of the great year of jubilee, and summoning the people to gather unto Zion, 6. Upon which God resumes the speech; and makes such gracious promises both of leading them tenderly by the way, and making them happy in their own land, that all the nations of the world are called upon to consider with deep attention this great salvation, 7-14. The scene is then diversified by a very happy invention. Rachel, the another of Joseph and Benjamin, is represented as risen from her tomb, in a city of Benjamin near Jerusalem, looking about for her children, and bitterly lamenting their fate, as none of them are to be seen in the land of their fathers, 15. But she is consoled with the assurance that they are not lost, and that they shall in due time be restored, 16, 17. To this another tender and beautiful scene immediately succeeds. Ephraim, (often put for the TEN tribes,) comes in view. He laments his past errors, and expresses the most earnest desires of reconciliation; upon which God, as a tender parent, immediately forgives him, 18-20. The virgin of Israel is then directed to prepare for returning home, 21, 22; and the vision closes with a promise of abundant peace and security to Israel and Judah in the latter days, 23-26. The blessed condition of Israel under the Messiah's reign is then beautifully contrasted with their afflicted state during the general dispersion, 27, 28. In the remaining part of the chapter the promises to the posterity of Jacob of the impartial administration of justice, increasing peace and prosperity, the universal diffusion of righteousness, and stability in their own land after a general restoration in Gospel times, are repeated, enlarged on, and illustrated by a variety of beautiful figures, 29-

NOTES ON CHAP. 31

Dr. Blayney has introduced this and the preceding chapter with the following excellent observations:—

“There are many prophecies,” says he, “in various parts of the Old Testament, which announce the future restoration of Israel to their own land, and the complete re-establishment of both their civil and religious constitution in the latter days, meaning the times of the Gospel dispensation. These two chapters contain a prophecy of this kind; which must necessarily be referred to these times, because it points out circumstances which certainly were not fulfilled at the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, nor have hitherto had their completion. For the people who returned from Babylon were the people of Judah only, who had been carried away captive by Nebuchadnezzar; but here it is foretold, that not only should the captivity of Judah be restored, but the captivity of Israel also, meaning those ten tribes which were carried away before, by Shalmaneser king of Assyria; and who still remain in their several dispersions, having never returned, in a national capacity at least, to their own land, whatever some few individuals have done. But the terms of the prophecy entitle us to expect, not an obscure and partial, but a complete and universal, restoration; when God will manifest himself, as formerly, the God and Patron of all the families of Israel, and not of a few only. Again it is promised that, after this restoration, they should no more fall under the dominion of foreigners, but be governed by princes and magistrates of their own nation, independently of any but God, and David their king. But this was not the case with the Jews who returned from Babylon. They then indeed had a leader, Zerubbabel, one of their own nation, and also of the family of David; but both the nation and their leader continued still in a state of vassalage, and the most servile dependence upon the Persian monarchy. And when the Grecian monarchy succeeded, they changed their masters only, but not their condition; till at length under the Asmonean princes they had for a while an independent government of their own, but without any title to the name of David. At last they fell under the Roman yoke; since which time their situation has been such as not to afford the least ground to pretend that the promised

restoration has yet taken place. It remains therefore to be brought about in future under the reign of the Messiah, emphatically distinguished by the name of David; when every particular circumstance predicted concerning it will no doubt be verified by a distinct and unequivocal accomplishment. There is no particular date annexed to this prophecy, whereby to ascertain the precise time of its delivery. But it may not unreasonably be presumed to have followed immediately after the preceding one in which the restoration of the people from their Babylonish captivity is in direct terms foretold. From hence the transition is natural and easy to the more glorious and general restoration which was to take place in a more distant period, and was designed for the ultimate object of the national hopes and expectations. Both events are frequently thus connected together in the prophetic writings; and perhaps with this design, that when that which was nearest at hand should be accomplished, it might afford the clearest, and strongest, and most satisfactory kind of evidence that the latter, how remote soever its period, would in like manner be brought about by the interposition of Providence in its due season. But though this prophecy relates wholly to one single subject, it seems naturally to divide itself into three distinct parts. The first part, after a short preface, in which the prophet is required to commit to writing the matters revealed to him, commences with representing, in a style of awe and energy, the consternation and distress which, in some future day of visitation, should fall upon all nations, preparatory to the scene of Jacob's deliverance, ver. 5-9. Israel is encouraged to confide in the Divine assurance of restoration and protection, ver. 10, 11. He is prepared previously to expect a severe chastisement for the multitude of his sins; but consoled with the prospect of a happy termination, ver. 12-17. This is followed by an enumeration at large of the blessings and privileges to which the Jews should be restored upon their re-admission into God's favor, ver. 18-22. Again, however, it is declared that the anger of JEHOVAH would not subside till his purposed vengeance against the wicked should have been fully executed; and then, but not till then, an entire reconciliation would take place between him and all the families of Israel, ver. 23, chap. 31:1. The second part of this prophecy begins chap. 31:2, and is marked by a sudden transition to a distant period of time, represented in a vision, and embellished with a variety of beautiful scenes and images. God announces the renewal of his ancient love for Israel; and promises, in consequence thereof, a speedy

restoration of their former privileges and happiness, ver. 2-5. Already the heralds have proclaimed on Mount Ephraim the arrival of the joyful day; they summon the people to re-assemble once more in Zion; and promulge by special command the glad tidings of salvation which God had accomplished for them. God himself declares his readiness to conduct home the remnant of Israel from all parts of their dispersion, to compassionate and relieve their infirmities, and to provide them with all necessary accommodations by the way, ver. 6-9. The news is carried into distant lands; and the nations are summoned to attend to the display of God's power and goodness in rescuing his people from their stronger enemies, and in supplying them after their return with all manner of good things to the full extent of their wants and desires, ver. 10-14. Here the scene changes; and two new personages are successively introduced, in order to diversify the same subject, and to impress it more strongly. Rachel first; who is represented as just risen from the grave, and bitterly bewailing the loss of her children; for whom she anxiously looks about, but none are to be seen. Her tears are dried up; and she is consoled with the assurance that they are not lost for ever, but shall in time be brought back to their ancient borders, ver. 15-17. Ephraim comes next. He laments his past undutifulness with great contrition and penitence, and professes an earnest desire of amendment. These symptoms of returning duty are no sooner discerned in him, than God acknowledges him once more as a darling child and resolves with mercy to receive him, ver. 18-20. The virgin of Israel is then earnestly exhorted to hasten the preparations for their return; and encouraged with having the prospect of a signal miracle wrought in her favor, ver. 21, 22. And the vision closes at last with a promise that the Divine blessing should again rest upon the land of Judah; and that the men of Judah should once more dwell there, cultivating it according to the simplicity of ancient institutions, and fully discharged from every want, ver. 23-26. In the third part, by way of appendix to the vision, the following gracious promises are specifically annexed: That God would in time to come supply all the deficiencies of Israel and Judah; and would be as diligent to restore as he had ever been to destroy them; and would not any more visit the offenses of the fathers upon the children, ver. 27-30. That he would make with them a better covenant than he had made with their forefathers, ver. 31-34. That they should continue his people by an ordinance as firm and as lasting as that of the heavens, ver.

35-37. And that Jerusalem should again be built, enlarged in its extent, and secure from future desolation, ver. 38-40.”

Verse 1. *At the same time*— This discourse was delivered at the same time with the former; and, with that, constitutes the Book which God ordered the prophet to write.

Will I be the God of all the families of Israel— I shall bring back the ten tribes, as well as their brethren the Jews. The restoration of the Israelites is the principal subject of this chapter.

Verse 2. *The people which were left of the sword*— Those of the ten tribes that had escaped death by the sword of the Assyrians.

Found grace in the wilderness— The place of their exile; a wilderness, compared to their own land. — Dahler. See Isaiah 40:3

Verse 3. *I have loved thee with an everlasting love*— עולם אהבתך וְאֶהְבֶּתְךָ veahabath olam ahabtich, “and with the old love I have loved thee.” “Also, with a love of long standing have I loved thee.”-Blayney. “But I love thee always.”-Dahler. I still bear to the Jewish people that love which I showed to their fathers in Egypt, in the wilderness, and in the promised land. Can it be supposed, by any person seriously considering the context, that these words are spoken of God’s decree of election in behalf of the Jews? Those who make it such, act most injudiciously on their own principle; for, how few of the Jews have ever given evidence that they were the children of God, from their restoration from Babylon to the present day! The words refer simply to their state as a people, most wondrously preserved by the providence and mercy of God, as a standing proof of the Divine authority of the Scriptures, and as an evidence of God’s displeasure against sin.

Therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee.— “Therefore have I lengthened out mercy to thee.”-Blayney,

C’est pourquoi je t’ai conserve ma grace. Dahler.

“Therefore I have preserved my grace to thee.”

The exiles, who had not for a long time received any proofs of the Divine protection, are represented as deploring their state; but God answers, that though this may seem to be the case, he has always loved them; and this continued love he will show by bringing them out of their captivity. However creeds may fare, this is the sense of the passage; all the context proves this.

Verse 4. *O virgin of Israel*— Israelites in general; now called virgin, because restored to their ancient purity.

With thy tabrets— Women in general played on these; they were used in times of rejoicing, and accompanied with dancing. To these customs, still preserved, the prophet alludes.

Verse 5. *Thou shalt yet plant vines upon the mountains of Samaria*— This was the regal city of the Israelites, as Jerusalem was of the Jews.

Shall eat them as common things.— By the law of Moses no man was permitted to eat of the fruit of his vineyard till the fifth year after planting. For the first three years it was considered uncircumcised, unclean, not fit to be eaten; in the fourth year it was holy to the Lord, the fruit belonged to Him; in the fifth year he might use it for himself, Leviticus 19:23-25. But in the time here mentioned the fruit should be considered common-lawful at all times to be eaten.

Verse 6. *For there shall be a day*— Literally, for this is the day, or the day is come. The watchmen—the prophets.

Arise ye, and let us go up to Zion— Let both Israelites and Jews join together in the worship of the Lord.

Verse 7. *The chief of the nations*— The same as Jacob or Israel; for most certainly this people was once the most honorable on the face of the earth.

O Lord, save thy people— Let the Jews earnestly intercede in behalf of

their Israelitish brethren; or let them rejoice and praise the Lord, who hath saved the remnant of Israel. So Dr. Blayney thinks the clause should be understood.

Verse 8. *I will bring them from the north country*— From Babylon.

From the coasts of the earth— The ten tribes were carried away partly into Assyria by Tiglath-pileser, and partly into Mesopotamia and Media by Shalmaneser, 2 Kings 15:29; 17:6. Assyria and Media, being very distant from Palestine, might have been called, in prophetic language, the coasts of the earth.

The blind and the lame— I will so effectually remove all difficulties out of the way, so provide for them on the journey, so supernaturally support their bodies and minds, that the veriest invalids shall safely proceed to, and happily arrive at, the end of their journey.

Verse 9. *They shall come unth weeping*— Duly penetrated with a sense of their sins, they shall deeply deplore them; and, while weeping for them, earnestly supplicate God to have mercy upon them.

By the rivers of waters— I will so guide and provide for them in the arid deserts, that they shall find streams of water whenever necessary. Every one knows of how much consequence water is to travelers in the eastern deserts.

Ephraim is my first-born.— Ephraim, being the most considerable, is often put for the whole of the ten tribes.

Verse 12. *And shall flow together*— Perhaps this may refer to their assembling at the three great national feasts, the passover, pentecost, and tabernacles.

Their soul shall be as a watered garden— Full of the light, life, and power of God; so that they shall rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and give thanks in every thing.

Verse 14. *And I will satiate the soul of the priests*— The worship of God being restored, they shall have their proper share of the victims brought to the temple.

Verse 15. *A voice was heard in Ramah*— The Ramah mentioned here, (for there were several towns of this name,) was situated in the tribe of Benjamin, about six or seven miles from Jerusalem. Near this place Rachel was buried; who is here, in a beautiful figure of poetry, represented as coming out of her grave, and lamenting bitterly for the loss of her children, none of whom presented themselves to her view, all being slain or gone into exile. St. Matthew, who is ever fond of accommodation, applies these words, chap. 2:17, 18, to the massacre of the children at Bethlehem. That is, they were suitable to that occasion, and therefore he so applied them; but they are not a prediction of that event.

Verse 16. *They shall come again from the land of the enemy*.— This could not be said of the murdered innocents at Bethlehem; they never came again; but the Jews, who had gone into captivity, did come again from the land of their enemy to their own border.

Verse 18. *I have surely heard Ephraim bemoantng himself*— The exiled Israelites are in a state of deep repentance.

Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised— I was at first like an unbroke and untoward steer, the more I was chastised the more I rebelled; but now I have benefited by thy correction.

Turn thou me— I am now willing to take thy yoke upon me, but I have no power. I can only will and pray. Take the matter into thy own hand, and fully convert my soul.

Verse 19. *After that I was turned*— Converted from my sin, folly, and idolatry.

I repented— To conviction of sin, I now added contrition for sin. Conviction, in this sense of the word, must precede contrition or repentance. As soon as a man sees himself lost and undone, he is convicted

of sin; when convicted, he begins to mourn. Thus contrition follows conviction.

I smote upon my thigh— My sorrow grew deeper and deeper; I smote upon my thigh through the extremity of my distress. This was a usual sign of deep affliction. See Ezekiel 21:12. It was the same among the ancient Greeks. So Homer:—

ως εφ'ατ' αυταρ αρης θαλερω πεπληγετο μηρω
χερσι καταπρηνεσ', ολοφυρομενος δε προσηυδα.

IL. lib. 15:113.

***“She spake: and with expanded arms, his thighs
Smiting, thus sorrowful, the god exclaimed.”***

COWPER.

— αυταρ αχιλλευς
μηρω πληξαμενος πατροκληα προσειπεν.

IL. lib. 16:124.

“Achilles saw it, smote his thigh, and said.”

COWPER.

I have often seen persons in deep grief act thus.

Verse 20. *Is Ephraim my dear son?*— It is impossible to conceive any thing more tenderly affectionate than this. Let us consider the whole account. The ten tribes, called here Ephraim, for the reason before alleged, are represented as acknowledging their sins. I have heard Ephraim bemoaning himself; and in his lamentation he says, 1. Thou hast chastised me. 2. Though he at first rebelled against the chastisement, yet at last he submitted and acknowledged his offenses. 3. He turned from all his offenses; he was converted. 4. After his conversion, (שׁוּבִי, shubi,) he

repented; after conviction came contrition, as before stated. 5. Being in a state of godly sorrow, he was instructed, **הוֹדַעִי** hivvadei, he got a thorough knowledge of the desperate wickedness of his heart and life. 6. Having received this instruction, he was filled with excessive grief; which is signified here by smiting on his thigh. See above. 7. He finds that from his youth up he had been sinning against God; and although his youthful sins had long passed from his memory, yet the light of God brought them back, and he was ashamed and confounded at the sight of them. 8. In this state of confusion and distress God sees him; and, commiserating his state, thus speaks:—

1. Is Ephraim my dear son? Bad as he is in his own sight, and in the sight of my justice, he is now a penitent, and to me is precious. 2. However loathsome and disfigured he may be with sin and sorrow, he is to me a pleasant child—a child of delights; one in whose conversion I delight, and my angels rejoice. 3. I did speak against him: **כִּי מִדִּי דַבְרֵי בּוֹ** ki middey dabberi bo, for “from the abundance of my speaking in him;” accusing, threatening, promising, exhorting, encouraging; “I do still earnestly remember him.” God has taken much pains with him, and is unwilling to give him up; but now that he repents, he has not received the grace of God utterly in vain. 4. God feels a yearning desire towards him; **הָמוּ מְעֵי לוֹ** hamu meai lo, “my bowels are agitated for him.” I feel nothing towards him but pity and love. When a sinner turns to God, God ceases to be angry with him. 5. God expresses his determination to save him; **אֲרַחֲמֵנוּ רַחֵם** rachem arachamennu, “I will be affectionately merciful to him, with tender mercy, saith the Lord.” He shall find that I treat him as a father does a returning prodigal son. So every penitent is sure to find mercy at the hand of God.

Verse 21. Set thee up waymarks— Alluding to stones, or heaps of stones, which travelers in the desert set up to ascertain the way, that they may know how to return. Mark the way to Babylon: thither ye shall certainly go; but from it ye shall as certainly return.

Verse 22. A woman shall compass a man— **נִקְבָּה תְּסוֹבֵב גָּבֵר** nekebah tesobeb gaber, “A weak woman shall compass or circumvent a strong

man.” This place has given much trouble to Biblical critics. By many Christian writers it is considered a prophecy of the miraculous conception of the holy virgin; but as I am sure no such meaning is in the words, nor in the context, so I am satisfied no such meaning can be fairly brought out of them. Houbigant thinks there is a small error in the text, i.e., תשובב teshobeb, shall return, and not תסובב tesobeb, shall compass. This reading is found in two of Kennicott’s MSS., and he contends that the passage should be read, “The wife shall return to her husband;” alluding to the conversion of the Jewish people, called above a backsliding daughter. This makes a good sense; but I do not see why this should be called a new thing in the earth. After all, I think it likely that the Jews in their present distressed circumstances are represented under the similitude of a weak defenseless female נקבה nekebah; and the Chaldeans under that of a fierce strong man, גבר gaber, who had prevailed over and oppressed this weak woman. But, notwithstanding the disparity between them, God would cause the woman—the weak defenseless Jews, to compass—to overcome, the strong man—the powerful Babylonians. And this the prophet says would be a new thing in the land; for in such a case the lame would take the prey. The context favors both these meanings. Dr. Blayney gives a sense very near to this: “A weak woman shall repulse a strong or mighty man.” It is most likely a proverbial expression.

Verse 23. *The Lord bless thee, O habitation of justice*— After their return they shall be remarkably prosperous. Piety and industry shall go hand in hand; they shall have their husbandmen, their shepherds, and neatherds, ver. 24. And Jerusalem shall become a righteous city, and the temple shall be a place of holiness; so the weary there shall have rest, and the sorrowful shall be abundantly comforted, ver. 24, 25.

Verse 26. *Upon this I awaked*— It appears that the prophecy, commencing with chap. 30:2 and ending with ver. 25 of this chapter, was delivered to the prophet in a dream. Dahler supposes it to be a wish; that the prophet, though he could not hope to live to that time, might be permitted to awake up from his tomb; and, having seen this prosperity, would be content to return to his grave.

Verse 27. *I will sow-with the seed of man and with the seed of beast.*— I will multiply both men and cattle.

Verse 29. *The fathers have eaten a sour grape*— A proverbial expression for, “The children suffer for the offenses of their parents.” This is explained in the next verse: “Every one shall die for his own iniquity.” No child shall suffer Divine punishment for the sin of his father; only so far as he acts in the same way can he be said to bear the sins of his parents.

Verse 31. *A new covenant*— The Christian dispensation.

Verse 33. *after those days*— When vision and prophecy shall be sealed up, and Jesus have assumed that body which was prepared for him, and have laid down his life for the redemption of a lost world, and, having ascended on high, shall have obtained the gift of the Holy Spirit to purify the heart; then God’s law shall, by it, be put in their inward parts, and written on their hearts; so that all within and all without shall be holiness to the Lord. Then God will be truly their God, received and acknowledged as their portion, and the sole object of their devotion; and they shall be his people, filled with holiness, and made partakers of the Divine nature, so that they shall perfectly love him and worthily magnify his name.

Verse 34. *And they shall teach no more*— It shall be a time of universal light and knowledge; all shall know God in Christ, from the least to the greatest; the children shall be taught to read the New Covenant, and to understand the terms of their salvation.

I will forgive their iniquity— It shall be a time of GENERAL PARDON; multitudes shall be daily in the Christian Church receiving the witness of God’s Spirit, and in their life and conversation witnessing a good confession. How wonderfully is this prophecy fulfilled in the age of Bibles, Sunday schools, and village preaching.

Verse 36. *If those ordinances*— As sure as the sun shall give light to the day, and the moon to the night, so surely shall the Jews continue to be a distinct people. The same thing is expressed in other words in the next verse. Hitherto this prophecy has been literally fulfilled; the Jews are still

a distinct people from all the dwellers upon earth. Every attempt that has been made in any country to naturalize and unite them with the people of that country, has proved abortive. The well-circumstanced attempt made this year (1830) in England, when the strongest interest was excited in their behalf, has also utterly failed. And why? Because of God's purpose expressed in chap. 31:35-37 of the BOOK of the Prophet JEREMIAH.

Verse 38. *The city shall be built to the Lord*— This cannot mean the city built after the return from Babylon, for two reasons: 1. This is to be much greater in extent; 2. It is to be permanent, never to be thrown down, ver. 40. It must therefore mean, if taken literally at all, the city that is to be built by them when they are brought in with the fullness of the Gentiles.

The tower of Hananeel— This stood in the northeast part of the city; from thence the wall proceeded to the corner gate, (probably the same as the old gate,) thus named from its running out into an angle in that part.

Verse 39. *Upon the hill Gareb*— Gareb and Goath are out of the limits of this city. The latter is supposed to be Golgotha; that is, the heap of Gotha, which, being the place where our Lord was crucified, was without the city. These hills were a little to the north-west of the old city walls: but are destined to be within the new city. See Dr. Blayney on all these verses.

Verse 40. *The whole valley of the dead bodies*— The valley of the son of Hinnom.

And all the fields unto the brook of Kidron, unto the corner of the horse-gate toward the east— All these places, the fuller's field, etc., shall be consecrated to the Lord, and become a part of this new city; so that this will appear to be a city much more extensive than the city of Jerusalem ever was; and to be suited to that time, when the people shall have the law written in their hearts, and God shall have filled the land with the seed of man, and with the seed of beast. Talia saecula currite! "Make speed, ye happy times!"

CHAPTER 32

Jeremiah, now confined for his faithful admonitions, foretells the fate of the king and city, 1-5. According to the direction of God, he buys of his cousin Hanameel a field in Anathoth; the contract, or deed of sale, being subscribed, sealed, and witnessed, and delivered to Baruch, together with a duplicate not sealed, who is commanded to put them into an earthen vessel that they may remain there for many days, 6-14. This transaction of the prophet, which is entered and subscribed in the public register, God constitutes a sign or pledge of the Jews' return from the Babylonish captivity, and of their again possessing houses, fields, and vineyards, in their own land, and by their own right, according to their tribes and families, 15. Jeremiah's prayer, in which he recounts God's marvellous acts towards the children of Israel, and deeply deplores the lamentable state of the country, and the numerous provocations which have led to it, 16-25. After which God is introduced declaring his purpose of giving up his people into the hands of their enemies, 26-35; promising, however, to restore them in due time to their ancient possessions, and to make with them an everlasting covenant, 36-44.

NOTES ON CHAP. 32

Verse 1. *The word that came*— This prophecy bears its own date: it was delivered in the tenth year of Zedekiah, which answered to the eighteenth of Nebuchadnezzar. It appears from 2 Kings 25:8, that the eleventh year of Zedekiah was the nineteenth of Nebuchadnezzar; and consequently, that the eighteenth of that monarch must have been the tenth of the Jewish king.

Verse 2. *Then the king of Babylon's army besieged Jerusalem*— The siege had commenced the year before, and continued a year after ending in the fifth month of the following year; consequently, the siege must have lasted about eighteen months and twenty-seven days. See 2 Kings 25:18.

Verse 4. *And shall speak with him mouth to mouth*— He shall be reduced to a state of the most abject servitude. The slave was obliged to fix his eyes on every motion of the master whilst giving his orders, who often condescended to give them only by dumb signs.

Verse 7. *The right of redemption is thine*— The law had established that the estates of a family should never be alienated. If, therefore, a man through poverty was obliged to sell his patrimony, the nearest relative had a right to purchase it before all others, and even to redeem it, if it had been sold to another. This is what is called the right of goel, or kinsman, Leviticus 25:25. And in the year of jubilee the whole reverted to its ancient master Leviticus 25:13.

Verse 8. *This was the word of the Lord*.— It was by his appointment that I was to make this purchase. The whole was designed as a symbolical act, to show the people that there would be a return from Babylon, that each family should re-enter on its former possessions, and that a man might safely purchase on the certainty of this event.

Verse 9. *Weighed him the money*— It does not appear that there was any coined or stamped money among the Jews before the captivity; the Scripture, therefore, never speaks of counting money, but of weighing it.

Seventeen shekels of silver.— The shekel at this time must have been a nominal coin; it was a thing of a certain weight, or a certain worth. Seventeen shekels was the weight of the silver paid: but it might have been in one ingot, or piece. The shekel has been valued at from two shillings and threepence to two shillings and sixpence, and even at three shillings; taking the purchase-money at a medium of the value of the shekel, it would amount only to about two pounds two shillings and sixpence. But as estates bore value only in proportion to the number of years before the jubilee, and the field in question was then in the hands of the Chaldeans, and this cousin of Jeremiah was not likely to come back to enjoy it after seventy years, (nor could he then have it, as a jubilee would intervene and restore it to the original family,) and money must now be very scarce and high in its value, the seventeen shekels might have been a sufficient sum for a field in those circumstances, and one probably not large in its

dimensions.

Verse 10. *I subscribed the evidence*— We have here all the circumstances of this legal act: 1. An offer is made of the reversion of the ground, till the jubilee, to him who would then of right come into possession. 2. The price is agreed on, and the silver weighed in the balances. 3. A contract or deed of sale is drawn up, to which both parties agreeing, 4. Witnesses are brought forward to see it signed and sealed; for the contract was both subscribed and sealed. 5. A duplicate of the deed was drawn, which was not to be sealed, but to lie open for the inspection of those concerned in some public place where it might be safe and always to be seen. 6. The original, which was sealed up, was put in an earthen pitcher in order to be preserved from accidents. 7. This was delivered by the purchaser into the hands of a third party, to be preserved for the use of the purchaser, and witnesses were called to attest this delivery. 8. They subscribed the book of the purchase, perhaps a town book, or register, where such purchases were entered. Baruch was a scribe by profession; and the deeds were delivered into his hands, before witnesses, to be preserved as above. Perhaps the law, in this case, required that the instrument should be thus lodged. But, in the present case, both the deeds, the original and the duplicate, were put into the earthen pitcher because the city was about to be burnt; and if lodged as usual, they would be destroyed in the general conflagration. See ver. 14.

Verse 15. *Houses and fields-shall be possessed again*— That is, this is an evidence that the captivity shall not last long: houses, etc., shall here be possessed again, either by their present owners or immediate descendants. The young might return; at least, all under ten years of age: there was no natural impossibility that they should not live till they should be fourscore.

Verse 16. *I prayed unto the Lord*— And what a prayer! What weight of matter, sublimity of expression, profound veneration, just conception, Divine unction, powerful pleading, and strength of faith! Historical, without flatness; condensed, without obscurity; confessing the greatest of crimes against the most righteous of Beings, without despairing of his mercy, or presuming on his goodness: a confession that, in fact,

acknowledges that God's justice should smite and destroy, had not his infinite goodness said, I will pardon and spare.

Verse 19. *Thine eyes are open upon all the ways of-men*— Thou art omniscient, and knowest all things; thou art omnipresent, and seest all things.

Verse 24. *Behold the mounts*— The huge terraces raised up to plant their engines on, that they might throw darts, stones, etc., into the city.

Because of the sword, and of the famine, and of the pestilence— The city was now reduced to extreme necessity; and from the siege continuing nearly a year longer, we may conclude that the besieged made a noble defense.

Verse 29. *With the houses, upon whose roofs*— As it is most probable that Baal was the sun, they might have chosen the tops of the houses, which were always flat, with battlements around, to offer incense and sacrifice to him at his rising, and while he was in sight above the horizon.

Verse 30. *For the children of Israel and the children of Judah have only done evil*— They have all been transgressors from their earliest history.

For the children of Israel— The ten tribes.

Have only provoked me to anger with the work of their hands— They have been sinners beyond all others, being excessive idolaters. Their hands have formed the objects of their worship.

Verse 33. *Though I taught them, rising up early and teaching them*— From the frequent reference to this, we may naturally conclude that morning preaching prevailed much in Judea.

Verse 37. *Behold, I will gather them out of all countries*— A promise often repeated. See chap. 29:14, and the notes on chap. 31:8, etc.

Verse 39. *I will give them one heart*— And that a clean one.

And one way— And that a holy and safe one: and to have this clean heart, and to walk in this good way, will be for the good of them and their children after them. God's blessing is a profitable inheritance. They shall have but one object of worship, and one way of salvation; and being saved from sin, idolatry, and destruction, they must necessarily be happy within and happy without.

Verse 41. *Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good*— Nothing can please God better than our coming to him to receive the good which, with his whole heart and his whole soul, he is ready to impart. How exceedingly condescending are these words of God!

Verse 42. *Will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised*— God's word cannot fail. The Jews have never yet received the good that God has promised. Nothing like the fulfillment of these promises took place after their return from Babylon; therefore there remaineth yet a rest for these ancient people of God; and it is under the Christian dispensation that they are to have it.

Verse 44. *Men shall buy fields for money*— This is a reference to the symbolical purchase mentioned at the beginning of the chapter; that may be considered by them as a sure sign of their restoration, not only to the same land, but to their respective inheritances in that land. This the power of God could alone perform.

CHAPTER 33

In this chapter the prophet predicts a restoration of Israel and Judah to the favor of God, attended with such glorious circumstances as shall astonish all the world, 1-9. Their prosperity from that period is then described by a beautiful enumeration of circumstances, 10-13. Thus leads to the promise of the Messiah, the grand subject of the prophetic writings, and the happiness and stability which the children of Israel shall enjoy under his government; promises which, in so far as they respect the great body of the Jews, remain still to be fulfilled, 14-26.

NOTES ON CHAP. 33

Verse 1. *Moreover the word of the Lord*— This was in the eleventh year of the reign of Zedekiah, Jeremiah being still shut up in prison: but he was now in the court of the prison, where the elders and the king's officers, etc., might consult him with the greater ease; for they continued to inquire, foolishly thinking, that if he would but prophesy good things, that these must come, or that he had sufficient power with God to induce him to alter his mind, — destroy the Chaldeans, and deliver the city.

Verse 2. *Thus saith the Lord the Maker thereof*— עֹשֶׂה *osah*, the doer of it. That is, he who is to perform that which he is now about to promise. Thus translated by Dahler. — Voici ce que dit l'Eternel, qui fait ce qu'il a dit. — "Thus saith the Lord, who doth that which he hath said." The word Jehovah, not Lord, should be used in all such places as this.

Verse 3. *Call unto eve, and I will answer thee*— To me alone it belongs to reveal what is future; and the stupendous things which are now coming are known only to myself. These idolaters go to their gods to get information relative to the issue of the present commotions; but there is no light in them. Ask thou, O Jeremiah, and I will tell thee the great and mighty things which even thou knowest not.

Verse 4. *Thus saith the Lord*— This is a new confirmation of what has already been said, viz., The city shall fall, a number of the inhabitants shall perish, the rest shall be carried into captivity; but the nation shall be preserved, and the people return from their captivity.

Verse 6. *Behold I will bring it health and, cure*— אֲרֻכָּה aruchah, an extensive plaister; or, as we phrase it, a plafster as large as the sore. I will repair the losses of families by numerous births, and bless the land with fertility.

Verse 7. *The captivity of Judah and the captivity of Israel*— This must respect the latter times, for the ten tribes did not return with the Jews at the termination of the seventy years.

Verse 8. *I will cleanse them*— These promises of pardon and holiness must be referred to their state under the Gospel, when they shall have received Jesus as the promised Messiah.

Verse 9. *They shall fear and tremble*— The surrounding nations shall be persuaded that it is the hand of the Almighty that has wrought this change in your behalf; and shall fear to molest you, and tremble lest they should incur the displeasure of your God by doing you any kind of evil.

Verse 11. *The voice of them that shall say, Praise the Lord of hosts*— That is, the voice of the Levites in the sacred service: intimating that the temple should be rebuilt, and the public service restored.

Verse 12. *A habitation of shepherds*— See on chap. 31:12.

Verse 14. Behold the days comet See chap. 23:5, and 31:31.

That good thing which I have promised— By my prophets: for those who have predicted the captivity have also foretold its conclusion, though not in such express terms as Jeremiah did. See Hosea 1:10, etc.; 2:15, etc.; 6:11, etc.; Amos 9:14, etc., and Jeremiah 3:12, etc. The end of the captivity has been foretold by Micah, chap. 7:9, etc.; Zephaniah, 3:10, etc.; and by Jeremiah, chap. 16:15; 23:3; 29:10; 32:37. The Targum

explains verses 14, 15, and 16 of the Messiah.

Verse 16. *And this is the name wherewith she shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness.*— See what has been said on chap. 23:6, which is generally supposed to be a strictly parallel passage: but they are very different, and I doubt whether they mean exactly the same thing. As to our translation here, it is ignorant, and almost impious; it says that Jerusalem, for that is the antecedent, shall be called The Lord our Righteousness. The pronoun לה lah, which is translated her, is the masculine affix, in the Chaldaic form, which frequently occurs; and Dr. Blayney translates, “And this is He whom Jehovah shall call our righteousness,” or Justification. Perhaps there is a sense which these words will bear far more congenial to the scope of the place. I will give the original, as before: לה יהוה צדקנו וזה אשר יקרא ליהוה צדקנו vезeh asher yikra lah, Jehovah tsidkenu, “And this one who shall call to her is the Lord our Justification;” that is, the salvation of the Jews shall take place when Jesus Christ is proclaimed to them as their Justifier, and they receive him as such.

Instead of לה lah, her or him, Chaldaice, the Vulgate, Chaldee, and Syriac have read לו lo, him, less ambiguously; and this reading is supported by one or two MSS. This emendation renders the passage here more conformable to that in chap. 23:6; but if the translation above be admitted, all embarrassment is gone.

One of my own MSS. has לה loh, with the masculine points, and no mappik on the ה he; and for tsidkenu has צדקינו tsidkeynu, the contracted plural form, our righteousness: but this may be a mistake. The passages in this and the twenty-third chapter were not, I am satisfied, intended to express the same thing. I suppose that above refers to the preaching or proclaiming Christ crucified to the Jews, when the time shall arrive in which they shall be incorporated with the Gentile Church. Dahler translates this as he did that in chap. xxiii., which is a perfect oversight: but paraphrastic renderings are too often introduced by this learned foreigner.

Verse 18. *Neither shall the priests the Levites want a man*— This is a repetition of the promise made to Phinehas, Numbers 25:13.

Verse 20. *If ye can break my covenant of the day*— See the note on chap. 31:36.

Verse 22. *So will I multiply the seed of David*— This must be understood of the spiritual David, Jesus Christ, and his progeny, genuine Christians. The two families which God chose for the priesthood, that of Aaron and Phinehas, or, on its being taken away from him, that of Ithamar, 1 Samuel 2:35, are both extinct. Nor has the office of high priest, or priest of any kind offering sacrifice, been exercised among the Jews for nearly eighteen hundred years; therefore what is said here of the priesthood must refer to the spiritual priesthood, at the head of which is Jesus Christ.

Verse 24. *The two families which the Lord hath chosen*— Some think these refer to the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah; but they never can be considered as two distinct families, being of one and the same race. Others think that the families of Jacob and David are intended; but neither were these distinct. If the two families which had the priesthood be not meant, then the regal family of David, and the sacerdotal family of Jacob through Levi, may be designed. See ver. 26. Following the spiritual interpretation, neither the regal nor sacerdotal family has failed; for Jesus is a King and a Priest, and all true believers in him are kings and priests unto God and the Lamb. And the highest King that ever reigned is He who is the seed of David, King of kings and Lord of lords, who has all power in heaven and in earth.

CHAPTER 34

This chapter contains two prophecies: the first, delivered during the siege of Jerusalem, predicts to Zedekiah the taking and burning of the city, with his own peaceful death and honorable burial, 1-7. The second was delivered when the Chaldeans had for some time broken up the siege. It reproves the Jews for their conduct towards their brethren of the poorer sort, whom they released, by a solemn covenant, from bondage, in the extremity of their danger; but compelled to return to it when they thought that danger over, 8-11. For this God threatens them with the sword, pestilence, and famine; and with the return of the Chaldeans, who should take the city, destroy it and the other cities by fire, and make an utter desolation of the whole land of Judea, 12-22.

NOTES ON CHAP. 34

Verse 1. *The word which came unto Jeremiah*— This discourse was delivered in the tenth year of the reign of Zedekiah. The chapter contains two discourses; one, ver. 1-7, which concerns the taking of the city, and Zedekiah's captivity and death; the other, ver. 8-22, which is an invective against the inhabitants of Jerusalem for having Hebrew male and female slaves. These, having been manumitted at the instance of the prophet, were afterwards brought back by their old masters, and put in the same thralldom; for which God threatens them with severe judgments.

Nebuchadnezzar-and all his army, and all the kingdoms of the earth of his dominion— That is, his army was composed of soldiers gathered out of Babylon, and out of all his tributary dominions: one hundred and twenty provinces.

Verse 2. *He shall burn it with fire*— This was a newly-added circumstance. Among many ancient nations they burned the bodies of the more illustrious dead. Odours were used in the burning: they then gathered the ashes, and put them into an urn or pitcher, sometimes into a strong

vessel, and buried them. Many of these have been dug up in different parts of England, where the Romans had stations.

Verse 3. *Thou shalt not escape*— This, however, he had attempted, but was taken in his flight. See chap. 39:4, and 52:7, etc.

Verse 5. *Thou shalt die in peace*— Thou shalt not die a violent death; and at thy death thou shalt have all those funereal solemnities which were usual at the demise of kings. See 2 Chronicles 16:14.

So shall they burn odours for thee— Scented wood and other odoriferous substances are placed on the funeral pile of the rich Hindoos, and burned with the body.

And they will lament thee, saying, Ah lord!— They will recite the funeral dirge that begins with those words. See the note on chap. 22:18.

Verse 6. *Spake all these Words unto Zedekiah*— He delivered this message at the hazard of his life. Jeremiah feared God, and had no other fear.

Verse 7. *Against Lachish, and against Azekah*— These were two cities of Judah of considerable importance: they had been strongly fortified by Rehoboam, 2 Chronicles 11:9-11; 2 Chronicles 32:9.

Verse 8. *The word that came unto Jeremiah*— Here the second discourse begins, which was delivered probably a short time, even a few days, after the former.

Zedekiah had made a covenant— We find no account elsewhere of this covenant: “Every man should let his man-servant and his maid-servant go free;” i.e., as we learn from ver. 14, on the sabbatical year; for the seventh year was the year of release. See Deuteronomy 15:12.

Verse 11. *But afterward they turned*— They had agreed to manumit them at the end of the seventh year; but when the seventh year was ended, they recalled their engagement, and detained their servants. This, I believe, is

what is here meant.

Verse 16. *Ye-polluted my name*— Had made the covenant in my name, calling me to witness it; now ye have dishonored my name, by breaking that covenant, and acting contrary to my law.

Verse 17. *I proclaim a liberty for you*— Ye proclaimed liberty to your slaves, and afterward resumed your authority over them; and I had in consequence restrained the sword from cutting you off: but now I give liberty to the sword, to the pestilence, and to the famine, and to the captivity, to destroy and consume you, and enslave you: for ye shall be removed to all the kingdoms of the earth. The prophet loves to express the conformity between the crime and its punishment. You promised to give liberty to your enslaved brethren; I was pleased, and bound the sword in its sheath. You broke your promise, and brought them again into bondage; I gave liberty to the sword, pestilence, and famine, to destroy multitudes of you, and captivity to take the rest. Thus you are punished according to your crimes, and in the punishment you may see the crime. Sword, pestilence, and famine are frequently joined together, as being often the effects of each other. The sword or war produces famine; famine, the pestilence.

Verse 18. *When they cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts thereof*— This was the ancient and most solemn way of making a covenant. 1. A calf as sacrifice was offered to God to secure his approbation and support. 2. The victim was then exactly divided from the nose to the rump; the spinal marrow being divided longitudinally, in the most careful manner, that the half of it might remain on each side. 3. These divided parts were laid opposite to each other, a passage being left between them. 4. The contracting parties entered this passage at each end, met in the middle, and there took the covenant oath; adjudging themselves to death should they break this covenant. 5. Then they both feasted on the victim. In reference to this last circumstance, God says he will give their bodies for meat to the fowls of heaven and to the beasts. This is a farther conformity between the crime and the punishment. See my notes on Genesis 15:9-17.

Verse 21. *The king of Babylon's army, which are gone up from you.*—Nebuchadnezzar, hearing that there was an Egyptian army coming to the relief of Jerusalem, raised the siege, went out, and met and defeated the Egyptians. It was in the interim this prophecy was delivered.

Verse 22. *I will-cause them to return*— They did return; re-invested the city; and, after an obstinate defense, took it, plundered it, and burned it to the ground, taking Zedekiah and his princes captive.

CHAPTER 35

Jeremiah is commanded to go to the Rechabites, who, on the approach of the Chaldean army, took refuge in Jerusalem; and to try their obedience to the command of Jonadab, (or Jehonadab, 2 Kings 10:15, 16,) their great progenitor, who lived in the reign of Jehu, king of Israel, upwards of two hundred and fifty years before this time, offerse them wine to drink, which they refuse, 1-11. Hence occasion is taken to upbraid the Jews with their disobedience to God, their heavenly Father, 12-17; and a blessing is pronounced on the Rechabites, 18, 19.

NOTES ON CHAP. 35

Verse 1. *The word which came-in the days of Jehoiakim*— What strange confusion in the placing of these chapters! Who could have expected to hear of Jehoiakim again, whom we have long ago buried; and we have now arrived in the history at the very last year of the last Jewish king.

This discourse was probably delivered in the fourth or fifth year of Jehoiakim's reign.

Verse 2. *The house of the Rechabites*— The Rechabites were not descendants of Jacob; they were Kenites, 1 Chronicles 2:55, a people originally settled in that part of Arabia Petraea, called the land of Midian; and most probably the descendants of Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses. Compare Numbers 10:29-32, with Judges 1:16; 4:11.

Those mentioned here seem to have been a tribe of Nomades or Scenite Arabs, who fed their flockss in the deserts of Judea; they preserved the simple manners of their ancestors, considering the life of the inhabitants of cities and large towns as the death of liberty; believing that they would dishonor themselves by using that sort of food that would oblige them to live a sedentary life. Jonadab, one of their ancestors, had required his children and descendants to abide faithful to the customs of their

forefathers; to continue to live in tents, and to nourish themselves on the produce of their flocks; to abstain from the cultivation of the ground, and from that particularly of the vine and its produce. His descendants religiously observed this rule, till the time when the armies of the Chaldeans had entered Judea; when, to preserve their lives, they retired within the walls of Jerusalem. But even there we find, from the account in this chapter, they did not quit their frugal manner of life: but most scrupulously observed the law of Jonadab their ancestor, and probably of this family.

When the children of Hobab, or Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, were invited by him to accompany them in their journeying to the Promised Land, it is very likely that they continued their ancient usages, and lived a patriarchal life. Their property, consisting in nothing but their cattle and tents, was easily removable from place to place; and their manner of living was not likely to excite the envy or jealousy of those who had learnt to relish the luxuries of life; and therefore we may naturally conclude that as they were enemies to none, so they had no enemies themselves. Nature has few wants. Most of those which we feel are factitious; and howsoever what we call civilization may furnish us with the conveniences and comforts of life, let us not deceive ourselves by supposing that these very things do not create the very wants which they are called in to supply; and most certainly do not contribute to the comfort of life, when the term of life is considerably abridged by their use. But it is time to return to the case of the Rechabites before us.

Verse 3. *The whole house of the Rechabites*— That is, the family—the chiefs of which are here specified.

Verse 4. *Igdaliah, a man of God*— A prophet or holy man, having some office in the temple.

Verse 5. *Pots full of wine, and cups*— The cups were to draw the wine out of the pots, in order to drink it.

Verse 6. *We will drink no wine*— The reason is given above. Their whole religious and political institution consisted in obedience to three simple

precepts, each of which has an appropriate spiritual meaning:—

1. *Ye shall drink no wine*— Ye shall preserve your bodies in temperance, shall use nothing that would deprive you of the exercise of your sober reason at any time; lest in such a time ye should do what might be prejudicial to yourselves, injurious to your neighbor, or dishonorable to your God.

2. *Neither shall ye build house*— Ye shall not become residents in any place; ye shall not court earthly possessions; ye shall live free from ambition and from envy, that ye may be free from contention and strife.

3. *But-ye shall dwell in tents*— Ye shall imitate your forefathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the rest of the patriarchs, who dwelt in tents, being strangers and pilgrims upon earth, looking for a heavenly country, and being determined to have nothing here that would indispose their minds towards that place of endless rest, or prevent them from passing through temporal things so as not to lose those that are eternal.

There must necessarily be more in these injunctions than meets the eye in the letter of this account.

Verse 8. *Thus have we obeyed the voice*— We have considered these precepts so very reasonable, so very useful, so conducive to the health of both body and mind, and sanctioned by such a respectable antiquity that we scrupulously and religiously observe them.

Verse 11. *But-when Neouchadnezzar-came up*— If at present we appear to be acting contrary in any respect to our institutions, in being found in the city, necessity alone has induced us to take this temporary step. We have sought the shelter of the city for the preservation of our lives; so now we dwell at Jerusalem.

Verse 14. *The words of Jonadab-are performed-but ye hearkened not unto me.*— The Lord, knowing the fidelity of this people, chose to try them in this way, that he might, by their conscientious obedience to the precepts of their forefathers, show the Jews, to their confusion, their

ingratitude to him, and their neglect of his precepts, which if a man do, he shall live by them.

Verse 17. *I will bring upon Judah and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem all the evil*— Having, by the conduct of the Rechabites, clearly and fully convicted them of ingratitude and rebellion, he now proceeds to pronounce sentence against them.

Verse 19. *Thus saith the Lord-Jonadab shall not want a man to stand before me for ever.*— His name shall ever be honorable, and his posterity shall enjoy my continual protection, and there shall never be found a time in which men of his spirit shall be wanting as patterns of genuine simplicity, filial obedience, purity of manners, and deadness to the world. True Christians may be considered as the genuine successors of these ancient Rechabites; and some suppose that the Essenes, in our Lord's time, were literally their descendants and that these were they who followed our Lord particularly, and became the first converts to the Gospel. If so, the prophecy is literally fulfilled: they shall never want a man to stand before God, to proclaim his salvation, and minister to the edification and salvation of others, as long as the earth shall endure.

CHAPTER 36

God commands Jeremiah to write down in one roll or volume all the predictions he had uttered against Israel and Judah, and all the surrounding nations, from the day of his vocation to the prophetic office, that the house of Judah might have abundant warning of the dreadful calamities with which their country was about to be visited, if not prevented by a timely repentance, 1-3. The prophet employs Baruch the scribe, the son of Neriah, to write from his mouth all the words of the Lord, and then to read them publicly upon a fast day in the Lord's house, 4-8. A general fast is proclaimed in the following year, viz., the fifth year of the reign of Jehoiakim; upon which occasion Baruch, in obedience to the prophet's command, reads the words of Jeremiah to all the people at the entry of the new gate of the temple, 9, 10. The princes, hearing of this, send for Baruch, who reads the roll to them; at the contents of which they are greatly alarmed, and solemnly resolve to give information to the king, at the same time advising both the prophet and his scribe to hide themselves, 11-19. Jehoiakim likewise having sent for the roll, Jehudi reads to him a part; and then the king, though advised to the contrary by some of his princes, having cut the leaves, throws the whole into the fire, 20-25, and orders Jeremiah and Baruch to be seized; but they could not be found, because a special providence of God had concealed them, 26. Jeremiah is commanded to re-write his prophecies, and to denounce the judgments of God against the king who had destroyed the first roll, 27-31. Baruch accordingly writes from the mouth of Jeremiah a new copy, with numerous additions, 32.

NOTES ON CHAP. 36

Verse 1. *And it came to pass in the fourth year*— About the end of this year, see ver. 9. This discourse also bears its own date, and was probably delivered at a time when the people enjoyed peace, and were about to celebrate one of their annual fasts.

Verse 2. *Take thee a roll of a book*— Take a sufficient quantity of parchment; cut and stitch it together, that it may make a roll on which to write the words that I have already spoken, that they may serve for a testimony to future generations. The Jewish rolls, several of which now lie before me, were made of vellum, or of sheep-skins dressed in the half-tanned or Basil manner. These were cut into certain lengths, and those parts were all stitched together, and rolled upon a roller. The matter was written on these skins in columns or pages. Sometimes two rollers are used, that as the matter is read from the roll in the left hand, the reader may coil it on the roller in his right. In this form the Pentateuch is written which is read in the synagogues.

Verse 3. *It may be that the house of Judah will hear*— It was yet possible to avert the judgments which had been so often denounced against them. But in order to this they must—1. Hear what God has spoken. 2. Every man turn from his evil way. 3. If they do so, God graciously promises to forgive their iniquity and their sin.

Verse 4. *Then Jeremiah called Baruch*— This man, so useful to the prophet, and so faithfully attached to him, was by office a scribe; which signifies, not only a writer, but also a man in office; a chancellor, secretary, etc., a learned man; one acquainted with laws and customs.

Verse 6. *Upon the fasting day*— A day when multitudes of people would be gathered together from all parts to implore the mercy of God. This was a favorable time to read these tremendous prophecies.

Verse 7. *Present their supplication*— “Let their supplication fall,” that they may fall down before God, and deplore their sins.

Verse 9. *In the ninth month*— Answering to a part of our December.

Verse 10. *In the chamber of Gemariah*— He was one of the princes of Judah. See ver. 12.

Verse 17. *How didst thou write all these words?—At his mouth?*— So the text should be pointed. They wished to know whether he had not copied

them, or whether he wrote as Jeremiah prophesied.

Verse 19. *Go, hide thee, thou and Jeremiah*— They saw that the king would be displeased, and most probably seek their lives; and as they believed the prophecy was from God, they wished to save both the prophet and his scribe; but they were obliged to inform the king of what they had heard.

that is to fall on Jehoiakim and his courtiers.

Verse 30. *He shall have none to sit upon the throne of David*— He shall have no successor and himself shall have an untimely end, and shall not even be buried, but his body be exposed to the open air, both night and day. He who wishes to hide his crimes, or take away the evidence which is against him, adds thereby to his iniquities, and is sure in consequence to double his punishment. See the threatening against Jehoiakim, chap. 22:19, and the note there.

Verse 32. *There were added-many like words*.— All the first roll, with many other threatening and perhaps more minute declarations which were merely of a temporary importance and local application; and the Holy Spirit did not think proper to record them here.

CHAPTER 37

Zedekiah succeeds Coniah, the son of Jehoiakim, in the Jewish throne, and does that which is evil in the sight of the Lord, 1, 2. The king sends a message to Jeremiah, 3-5. God suggests an answer; and foretells the return of the Chaldean army, who should most assuredly take and burn the city, 6-10. Jeremiah, in attempting to leave this devoted city, and retire to his possession in the country, is seized as a deserter, and cast into a dungeon, 11-15. The king, after a conference with him, abates the rigour of his confinement, 16-21.

NOTES ON CHAP. 37

Verse 1. *And king Zedekiah the son of Josiah*— Of the siege and taking of Jerusalem referred to here, and the making of Zedekiah king instead of Jeconiah, see 2 Kings 24:1, etc., and the notes there.

Verse 3. *Zedekiah-to the prophet Jeremiah*— He was willing to hear a message from the Lord, provided it were according to his own mind. He did not fully trust in his own prophets.

Verse 4. *Now Jeremiah came in and went out*— After the siege was raised, he had a measure of liberty; he was not closely confined, as he afterwards was. See ver. 16.

Verse 5. *Then Pharaoh's army*— This was Pharaoh-hophra or Apries, who then reigned in Egypt in place of his father Necho. See Ezekiel 29:6, etc. Nebuchadnezzar, hearing that the Egyptian army, on which the Jews so much depended, was on their march to relieve the city, suddenly raised the siege, and went to meet them. In the interim Zedekiah sent to Jeremiah to inquire of the Lord to know whether they might consider themselves in safety.

Verse 7. *Pharaoh's army-shall return to Egypt*— They were defeated by

the Chaldeans; and, not being hearty in the cause, returned immediately to Egypt, leaving Nebuchadnezzar unmolested to recommence the siege.

Verse 10. *For though ye had smitten the whole army*— Strong words; but they show how fully God was determined to give up this city to fire and sword, and how fully he had instructed his prophet on this point.

Verse 12. *Jeremiah went forth*— At the time that Nebuchadnezzar had raised the siege, and gone to meet the Egyptian army.

Go into the land of Benjamin— To Anathoth, his native city.

To separate himself thence— “To receive a portion thereof among the people;”—Blayney: who supposes that Jeremiah went to receive a portion of the proceeds of his patrimony at Anathoth, which had, previously to the siege, been in the hands of the Chaldeans. The siege being now raised, he thought of looking thus after his own affairs. The Chaldee is to the same sense. “He went that he might divide the inheritance which he had there among the people.”

Dahler translates, ‘He went to withdraw himself from the siege, as many others of the inhabitants.’ I believe he went to withdraw himself from a city devoted to destruction, and in which he could no longer do any good.

Verse 13. *Thou fallest away to the Chaldeans*.— Thou art a deserter, and a traitor to thy country. As he had always declared that the Chaldeans should take the city, etc., his enemies took occasion from this to say he was in the interest of the Chaldeans, and that he wished now to go to them, and betray the place.

Verse 15. *And smote him*— Without any proof of the alleged treachery, without any form of justice.

In prison to the house of Jonathan— In Asiatic countries there is an apartment in the houses of the officers of the law, to confine all the accused that are brought before them. Jonathan was a scribe or secretary, and had a prison of this kind in his house.

Verse 16. *Entered into the dungeon, and into the cabins*— The dungeon was probably a deep pit; and the cabins or cells, niches in the sides, where different malefactors were confined. See Blayney.

Verse 17. *Is there any word from the Lord?*— Is there any farther revelation?

There is: — thou shalt be delivered— What bold faithfulness! And to a king, in whose hands his life now lay.

Verse 19. *Where are now your prophets*— They told you that the Chaldeans should not come; I told you they would. According to my word the Chaldeans are come, and are departed only for a short time.

Verse 20. *Cause me not to return to the house of Jonathan*— He had been ill used in this man's custody, so as to endanger his life, the place being cold, and probably unhealthy.

Verse 21. *Then Zedekiah—the court of the prison*— Was contiguous to the king's house, where the prisoners could readily see their friends.

Give him daily a piece of bread out of the bakers' street— From the public stores; which he received till all the provisions were spent.

CHAPTER 38

The princes of Judah, taking offense at Jeremiah on account of his predicting the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple by the Chaldeans, cause him to be cast into a deep and miry dungeon, 1-6. Ebed-melech, an Ethiopian, gets the king's permission to take him out, 7-13. Jeremiah advises the king, who consulted him privately, to surrender to the Chaldeans, 14-23. The king promises the prophet that he will not put him to death, and requires him not to reveal what had passed to the princes; to whom he accordingly gives an evasive answer, telling them only so much of the conference as related to his request for his life, 24-28.

NOTES ON CHAP. 38

Verse 1. *Then Shephatiah*— This was the faction-what Dahler terms the Antitheocratic faction—who were enemies to Jeremiah, and sought his life.

Verse 3. *This city shall surely be given*— This was a testimony that he constantly bore: he had the authority of God for it. He knew it was true, and he never wavered nor equivocated.

Verse 4. *Let this man be put to death*— And they gave their reasons plain enough: but the proof was wanting.

Verse 5. *He is in your hand*— Ye have power to do as you please; I must act by your counsel. Poor weak prince! you respect the prophet, you fear the cabal, and you sacrifice an innocent man to your own weakness and their malice!

Verse 6. *So Jeremiah sunk in the mire*.— Their obvious design was, that he might be stifled in that place.

Verse 7. *Ebed-melech*— The servant of the king one of the eunuchs who

belonged to the palace. Perhaps it should be read, “Now, a servant of the king, a Cushite, one of the eunuchs,” etc.

The king then sitting in the gate of Benjamin— To give audience, and to administer justice. We have often seen that the gates of cities were the places of public judicature.

Verse 9. *My lord the king, these men have done evil*— He must have been much in the king’s confidence, and a humane and noble spirited man, thus to have raised his voice against the powerful cabal already mentioned.

There is no more bread in the city.— They had defended it to the last extremity; and it appears that bread had been afforded to the prophet according to the king’s commandment, as long as there was any remaining. See chap. 36:21.

Verse 10. *Take from hence thirty men*— The king was determined that he should be rescued by force, if the princes opposed.

Verse 11. *Went into the house of the king-and took thence*— The eastern kings had their wardrobes always well furnished; as garments were a usual present to ambassadors, etc. I cannot think that, in the proper acceptance of the words, these were in any part of the king’s house.

Old cast clouts, and old rotten rags— The fact seems to be this: there were several garments that had been used, and would not be used again; and there were others which, through continuing long there, had by insects, etc., been rendered useless. These he took, tied to the cord, let down to the prophet, that he might roll them round the ropes, and place them under his arm-pits, so that in being hauled up he might not suffer injury from the ropes, which in this case must sustain the whole weight of his body.

Verse 14. *Into the third entry*— A place to enter which two others must be passed through.

Verse 16. *As the Lord liveth, that made us this soul*— He is the living God, and he is the Author of that life which each of us possesses; and as

sure as he lives, and we live by him, I will not put thee to death, nor give thee into the hands of those men who seek thy life. A very solemn oath; and the first instance on record of the profane custom of swearing by the soul.

Verse 17. *Wilt assuredly go*— On the king's obedience to the advice of the prophet the safety of the city depended.

Unto the king of Babylon's princes— The generals of the army then returning to the siege from the defeat of the Egyptians; for Nebuchadnezzar himself was then at Riblah, in Syria, chap. 39:5, 6.

Verse 19. *They mock me*.— Insult me, and exhibit me in triumph.

Verse 22. *All the women-brought forth*— I think this place speaks of a kind of defection among the women of the harem; many of whom had already gone forth privately to the principal officers of the Chaldean army, and made the report mentioned in the end of this verse. These were the concubines or women of the second rank.

Verse 23. *They shall bring out all thy wives and thy children*— These were the women of the first rank, by whom the king had children. These had no temptation to go out to the Chaldeans, nor would they have been made welcome; but the others being young, and without children, would be well received by the Chaldean princes.

Verse 26. *I presented my supplication*— This was telling the truth, and nothing but the truth, but not the whole truth. The king did not wish him to defile his conscience, nor did he propose any thing that was not consistent with the truth.

Verse 27. *The matter was not perceived*.— They did not question him farther; and the king's commandment to remove him from the house of Jonathan being well known, they took for granted that they had all the information that they sought. And he was most certainly not obliged to relate any thing that might embroil this weak king with his factious but powerful princes, or affect his own life. He related simply what was

necessary, and no more.

CHAPTER 39

This chapter gives an account of the siege and taking of Jerusalem; the flight, capture, and punishment of Zedekiah; the burning of the city; and the carrying away of the people, (a few of the meanest excepted,) to Babylon, 1-10; also of the release of Jeremiah, and the special orders of Nebuchadnezzar concerning him, 11-14. The remaining verses relate to the subject of the preceding chapter; and contain promises of personal safety to Ebed-melech the Ethiopian amidst the public calamities, on account of his piety, and his humanity to the prophet, 15-18.

NOTES ON CHAP. 39

Verse 1. *In the ninth year of Zedekiah—in the tenth month*— This month is called Tebeth in Esther 2:16. It began with the first new moon of our January, and it was on the tenth day of this month that Nebuchadnezzar invested the city.

Verse 2. *The eleventh year—in the fourth month*— This month in the Hebrew calendar is called Thammuz, and commences with the first new moon of our July. The siege had lasted just eighteen months.

The city was broken up.— A breach was made in the wall by which the Chaldeans entered.

Verse 3. *Sat in the middle gate*— The city of Jerusalem stood upon two hills, Sion to the south, and Acra to the north, with a deep valley between them. The gate of the center, as the term seems plainly to import, was a gate of communication in the middle of the valley, between the two parts of the city, sometimes called the higher and the lower city. The Chaldeans entered the city on the north side by a breach in the walls, and rushing forward and posting themselves in this gate, in the very heart or center of the city, became thereby masters at will of the whole. Zedekiah with his troop, perceiving this, fled out of the opposite gate on the south side. See

Blayney. This is likely; but we know nothing positively on this subject.

Nergal-sharezer— These were the principal commanders; but Dr. Blayney thinks that instead of six persons, we have in reality but three, as the name that follows each is a title of office. Thus, Nergal-sharezer, who was Samgar; Nebusarsechim, who was Rab-saris; and Nergal-sharezer, who was Rab-mag. As Nergal-sharezer occurs twice here, and we know that Nebuzaradan was general-in-chief, the first Nergal-sharezer is probably a mistake for Nebuzar-adan, or some other of the commanders. But these things are as uncertain as they are unimportant.

Verse 4. *Went forth out of the city by night*— Probably there was a private passage under ground, leading without the walls, by which Zedekiah and his followers might escape unperceived, till they had got some way from the city.

The way of the plain.— There were two roads from Jerusalem to Jericho. One passed over the mount of Olives; but, as this might have retarded his flight, he chose the way of the plain, and was overtaken near Jericho, perhaps about sixteen or eighteen miles from Jerusalem. He had probably intended to have passed the Jordan, in order to escape to Egypt, as the Egyptians were then his professed allies.

Verse 5. *To Riblah*— This city was situated on the northern frontier of Palestine, and Hamath was a large city belonging also to Syria. See Genesis 10:18.

Verse 7. *Bounds him with chains*— Margin: “Two brazen chains;” one for his hands, and the other for his feet.

Verse 9. *Those that fell away*— That deserted to the Chaldeans during the siege.

Verse 10. *Left of the poor of the people*— The very refuse of the inhabitants, who were not worthy of being carried away; and among them he divided the fields and vineyards of those whom he took away.

Verse 12. *Take him-look well to him*— Nebuchadnezzar had heard that this prophet had foretold his capture of the city, and had frequently used all his influence to induce Zedekiah to pay the tribute, and not rebel against him; and on this account would be inclined to show the prophet especial favor.

Verse 16. *Go and speak to Ebed-melech*— The king's servant, the Cushite.

Verse 18. *I will surely deliver thee*— Thou hast feared the Lord, and not the king, nor his princes, and thou hast taken the part of the prophet, and become his intercessor. Thou shalt not be slain. Thou hast put thy trust in me; thou shalt therefore be safe whithersoever thou goest. They that fear God need fear nothing besides.

CHAPTER 40

This and the four following chapters contain a distinct account of what passed in the land of Judah from the taking of Jerusalem to the retreat of the remnant of the people to Egypt; together with the prophecies of Jeremiah concerning that place, whither he himself accompanied them. In this chapter we have an account of the enlargement of Jeremiah by Nebuzar-adan, the captain of the guard, who advises him to put himself under the jurisdiction of Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam, whom the king of Babylon had made governor over the land of Judea, 1-5. The prophet and many of the dispersed Jews repair to Gedaliah, 6-12. Johanan acquaints the governor of a conspiracy against him, but is not believed, 13-16.

NOTES ON CHAP. 40.

Verse 1. *The word that came to Jeremiah*— This and the four following chapters contain a particular account of what passed in the land of Judea from the taking of the city to the retreat of the people into Egypt, and the prophecies of Jeremiah concerning them there.

Had let him go from Ramah— This has embarrassed most of the commentators. Dr. Blayney has thrown much light upon it by his translation and note:—

“The word that came to Jeremiah from Jehovah, after that Nebu-Zaradan captain of the guards had taken him, and let him go from Ramah: for he had been bound with chains among all the captives of Jerusalem and Judah, who were carried away captive to Babylon.”

“HAD TAKEN HIM, AND LET HIM GO. — Most interpreters have understood בקחתו אתו bekachto otho of Nebuchadnezzar’s having first taken Jeremiah as a captive unto Ramah. But if the order of the sentence

be well observed, as well as the more common use of the verb לקח lakach, it will, I think, rather appear that those words relate to his taking or having him brought to him, in order to give him his discharge.”

Verse 2. *The Lord thy God hath pronounced*— I know that thou art a true prophet, for what thou hast predicted from thy God is come to pass.

Verse 4. *Come; and I will look well unto thee*— Thou art now at full liberty to do as thou pleasest; either to come to Babylon or to stay in thy own land.

Verse 5. *Go back also to Gedaliah*— If thou wilt stay in thy own land, thou hadst best put thyself under the protection of thy countryman Gedaliah, whom the King of Babylon has made governor of the land.

Verse 8. *Ishmael the son of Nethaniah*— This is he who afterwards murdered Gedaliah. He had been employed to do this by Baalis, king of the Ammonites, with whom he appears to have taken refuge during the siege. See ver. 14.

Verse 14. *But Gedaliah the son of Ahikam believed then not.*— The account given of this man proves him to have been a person of uncommon greatness of soul. Conscious of his own integrity and benevolence, he took the portrait of others from his own mind; and therefore believed evil of no man, because he felt none towards any in his own breast. He may be reproached for being too credulous and confident: but any thing of this kind that may be justly charged against him serves only to show the greatness of his mind. A little soul is ever suspicious, and ready to believe the worst of every person and thing. A great mind acts always on the contrary.

Verse 16. *Thou shalt not do this thing*— He cannot be so base.

Thou speakest falsely of Ishmael.— He thought it quite possible that the man who was capable of becoming an assassin was capable of telling a lie; and therefore he would not credit what he said. Had he been a little more distrustful, he would have saved his own life. The next chapter shows that

Johanan's information was too true. So noble Gedaliah lost his life by not believing that evil of others of which he himself was incapable.

CHAPTER 41

Ishmael executes his conspiracy against Gedaliah the governor and his companions, and attempts to carry away the Jews who were with him captives to the Ammonites, 1-10; but Johanan recovers them, and purposes to flee into Egypt. 11-18.

NOTES ON CHAP 41

Verse 1. *Now-in the seventh month*— Answering to the first new moon in our month of October.

There they did eat bread together— This was the same as making a solemn covenant; for he who ate bread with another was ever reputed a friend.

Verse 2. *Smote Gedaliah*— See the preceding chapter, ver. 14.

Verse 5. *Having their beards shaven*— All these were signs of deep mourning, probably on account of the destruction of the city.

Verse 6. *Weeping all along as he went*— This felonious hypocrite pretended that he also was deeply afflicted, and wished to bear them company in their sorrow.

Come to Gedaliah— He will appoint you vineyards and fields.

Verse 7. *Slew them*— He kept the murder of Gedaliah secret, and no doubt had a band of his assassins lodged in Mizpah; and he decoyed these fourscore men thither that he might have strength to slay them. He kept ten alive because they told him they had treasures hidden in a field, which they would show him. Whether he kept his word with them is not recorded. He could do nothing good or great; and it is likely that, when he had possessed himself of those treasures, he served them as he had served their companions. Grain is preserved to the present day in subterranean

pits, called *mattamores*, iD different parts of the east.

Verse 9. *Now the pit-was it which Asa the king had made for fear of Baasha*— See 1 Kings 15:22. Asa made this cistern as a reservoir for water for the supply of the place; for he built and fortified Mizpah at the time that he was at war with Baasha, king of Israel.

Verse 10. *Carried away captive*— He took all these that he might sell them for slaves among the Ammonites.

Verse 14. *Went unto Johanan*— They were weary of the tyranny of Ishmael, and were glad of an opportunity to abandon him.

Verse 16. The women-children, and the eunuchs! These were all most probably, persons who belonged to the palace and harem of Zedekiah: some of them his own concubines and their children.

Verse 17. *Dwelt in the habitation of Chimham*— The estate that David gave Chimham, the son of Barzillai. See 2 Samuel 19:37, etc. He took this merely as a resting-place; as he designed to carry all into Egypt, fearing the Chaldeans, who would endeavor to revenge the death of Gedaliah.

CHAPTER 42

Johanan and the remnant of the people desire Jeremiah to ask counsel of God what they should do, 1-3. The prophet assures them of safety in Judea, but destruction in Egypt, 4-18; and reproves their hypocrisy in asking counsel with which they had no intention to comply, 19-22.

NOTES ON CHAP. 42

Verse 1. *The captains of the forces*— The different leaders of the small bands or companies, collected from different parts of the land. The principal are those here named.

Verse 3. *That the Lord thy God may show us*— They all thought there was no safety in Jerusalem or in Judea, and therefore determined to leave the land: but they did not know which might be the safest direction to take; for though they inclined to Egypt, yet they wished to know the mind of God on that point.

Verse 5. *The Lord be a true and faithful Witness*— The Lord is such; and as ye have bound yourselves to obey his voice, he will register the covenant, and bless or curse according as ye shall conduct yourselves in this matter.

Verse 7. *After ten days*— All this time he was waiting upon God; for it is evident the prophets could not prophesy when they pleased, any more than the disciples of our Lord could work miracles when they wished. The gift of prophecy and the gift of miracles were both dependent on the will of the Most High, and each of them was given only for the moment; and when the necessity was over, the influence ceased.

Verse 10. *For I repent me of the evil*— The meaning is, As I have punished you only because you continued to be rebellious, I will arrest this punishment as soon as you become obedient to my word. You need not fear the king of Babylon if you have me for your helper; and I will so

show mercy to you that he shall see it, and cease from afflicting you, as he shall see that I am on your side.

Verse 15. *If ye-set your faces to enter into Egypt, etc.*— Every evil that ye dreaded by staying in your own land shall come upon you in Egypt.

Verse 16. *The sword-and the famine-shall follow close after you*— Shall be at your heels; shall overtake and destroy you; for there ye shall die.

Verse 19. *Go ye not into Egypt*— Why? Because God knew, such was their miserable propensity to idolatry, that they would there adopt the worship of the country, and serve idols.

Verse 20. *For ye dissembled in your hearts*— What a most miserable and incorrigible people! Ingratitude, hypocrisy, rebellion, and cruelty seem to have been enthroned in their hearts! And what are they still? Just what their fathers were, except in the mere article of idolatry; and that they do not practice because they are indifferent to their own religion and to that of all others. Examine their devotions and their lives, and see whether Charity herself can say they believe in the God of Abraham!

Verse 21. *Ye have not obeyed the voice*— Though ye have requested to have this particular revelation of the Divine will, and promised obedience, yet have ye not done one thing for which ye sent me to inquire of the Lord.

Verse 22. *Now therefore know certainly*— As ye have determined to disobey, God has determined to punish. Ye may now follow the full bent of your wicked devices, and I will follow the requisitions of my justice. Ye shall die by the sword, by the pestilence, and by the famine, in the place whither ye desire to go to sojourn. Thus was their doom sealed.

With such dispositions and with such rebellion of heart, it is strange that they should put themselves to any trouble to inquire of the Lord relative to their future operations. They did not intend to obey; but as a matter of curiosity they would inquire to hear what the prophet might say; and if according to their own inclination, they would obey.

CHAPTER 43

The leading men, discrediting Jeremiah's prophecy, carry the people into Egypt, 1-7. Jeremiah, by a type, foretells the conquest of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar, 8-13. This mode of conveying instruction by actions was very expressive, and frequently practiced by the prophets. The image of Nebuchadnezzar arraying himself with Egypt, as a shepherd puts on his garment, is very noble. Egypt at this time contended with Babylon for the empire of the east; yet this mighty kingdom, when God appoints the revolution, shifts its owner with as much ease as a shepherd removes his tent or garment, which the new proprietor has only to spread over him. See ver. 12.

NOTES ON CHAP. 43

Verse 2. *Thou speakest falsely*— They had no other color for their rebellion than flatly to deny that God had spoken what the prophet related.

Verse 6. *Men, and women, and children, and the king's daughters*— See the note on chap. 41:10. It is truly surprising that the Chaldeans should have left behind any of the royal family of Judah! But, 1. Perhaps they knew not there were any. 2. If they did know, they might think, being children of concubines, they could not inherit. Or, 3. That being females, they were not eligible. And they had taken care to seize all Zedekiah's sons, and slay them before his eyes.

Verse 7. *Came they even to Tahpanhes*— This city was called Daphne by the Greeks, and was situated at the extremity of Lower Egypt, near to Heliopolis. It was called Daphne Pelusiaca. They halted at this place, most probably for the purpose of obtaining the king's permission to penetrate farther into Egypt. It was at this place that, according to St. Jerome, tradition says the faithful Jeremiah was stoned to death by these rebellious wretches; for whose welfare he had watched, prayed, gone through many

indignities, and suffered every kind of hardship. And now he sealed the truth of his Divine mission with his blood.

Verse 9. *Take great stones*— This discourse seems to have been delivered about a year after the destruction of Jerusalem. They pretended that they dared not stay in Judea for fear of the Chaldeans. The prophet here assures them that Nebuchadnezzar shall come to Egypt, extend his conquests in that kingdom, and place his tent over the very place where these stones were laid up, and destroy them. How these prophecies were fulfilled, see at the end of chap. 44.

Verse 11. *Such as are for death to death*— See the note on chap. 15:2.

Verse 12. *He shall burn them, and carry them away captives*— Some of these gods, such as were of wood, he will burn; those of metal he will carry away. Some of them were of gold. See below.

Shall array himself with the land of Egypt— Shall take all its wealth, and all its grandeur; shall take all its spoils.

As a shepherd putteth on his garment— With as much ease, and with as little opposition; and with as full a confidence that it is now his own.

He shall go forth from thence in peace.— He shall suffer no interruption, nor endure any disaster in his return from his Egyptian expedition. See the proof of all this in the notes at the end of chap. xliv.

Verse 13. *He shall break also the images of Beth-shemesh*— **בית שמש** beith shemesh is, literally, the house or temple of the sun; which was worshipped here, and whose images are said to have been of solid gold. These Nebuchadnezzar was to break and carry away; and the houses of the gods—all the temples of Egypt, he was to burn with fire. Beth-shemesh is the same as Heliopolis.

CHAPTER 44

Jeremiah reproves the Jews in Egypt for continuing in idolatry after the exemplary judgments indicted by God on their nation for that sin, 1-14; and, upon their refusing to reform, denounces destruction to them, and to that kingdom wherein they sought protection, 15-30.

NOTES ON CHAP. 44

Verse 1. *The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the Jews*— Dahler supposes this discourse to have been delivered in the seventeenth or eighteenth year after the taking of Jerusalem.

Which dwell at Migdol— A city of Lower Egypt, not far from Pelusium.

Tahpanhes— Daphne Pelusiaca, the place to which the emigrant Jews first went.

Noph— מִפְּחַם Maphes, Targum. Memphis. a celebrated city of Middle Egypt, and the capital of its district.

The country of Pathros— A district of Upper Egypt, known by the name of the Thebais. See Bochart, Lib. Phaleg, lib. iv., c. 22. Thus we find that the Jews were scattered over the principal parts of Egypt.

Verse 2. *No man dwelleth therein*— The desolation of the land of Judea must have been exceedingly great when this, in almost any sense, could be spoken of it.

Verse 4. *O, do not this abominable thing*— A strong specimen of affectionate entreaty. One of the finest figures of poetry, when judiciously managed, the anthropopathia, the ascribing human passions to God, is often used by this prophet: so God is said to grieve, to mourn, to have his bowels moved with compassion, to repent, to be angry, etc. Here he is

represented as tenderly expostulating: O, do not; or, I entreat you, do not that abominable thing which I hate. 1. Do it not: your God commands. 2. O, do it not: your Father entreats. 3. It is an abominable thing, and should not be done. 4. I hate it, and on that account ye should abstain from it.

Verse 5. *But they hearkened not*— 1. They disregarded the authority of their God. 2. They were not moved by the entreaties of their most affectionate Father. 3. In abominations they delighted. And, 4. They loved that which God hated; and, apparently, because he hated it.

Verse 7. *This great evil against your souls*— Will not self-interest weigh with you? See what ruin your conduct has brought upon your country. Your fathers sinned as you are doing; and where are they now? Either destroyed, or in captivity. And you are now taking the same way to your own destruction.

Verse 9. *Have ye forgotten the wickedness of your fathers*— It seems that the women were principal agents in idolatrous practices; for the queens—the wives, of rulers and of common people, burnt incense to the queen of heaven, (the moon,) ver. 17, and poured out drink-offerings to her.

Verse 15. *Then all the men—and all the women*— We have not seen the women in determined rebellion before. Here they make a common cause with their idolatrous husbands.

Verse 19. *And when we burned incense to the queen of heaven*— The MOON seems to have been called מלכת melecheth, as the sun was called מלך molech. The Hindoos pour out water to the sun thrice a day; and to the moon whenever they worship her.

The idolatrous worship of these people was a sort of imitation of the worship of the true God; only sacrifice was not common in it. The factious women here tell us in what it consisted. 1. They burnt incense to the moon, and perhaps to the sun and the planets. 2. They poured out libations to her. 3. They made and consecrated cakes to her. All these were prescribed in the worship of the true GOD. See, among others, Exodus

29:23, etc.; Leviticus 2:4; 23:16; and Numbers 6:15. And the women vindicate their conduct by asserting that they did all this by the consent of their husbands: “Did we worship her without our men?”

Verse 22. *Therefore is your land a desolation*— I grant that ye and your husbands have joined together in these abominations; and what is the consequence?” The Lord could no longer bear because of your evil doings; and therefore is your land a desolation, and an astonishment, and a curse, without an inhabitant, this day.”

Verse 30. *Behold I will give Pharaoh-hophra*— That is, Pharaoh Apries. How this and the prophecies in the preceding chapter were fulfilled, we learn from ancient historians. The sum of such information is this: the subjects of Pharaoh Apries rebelling, he sent Amasis, one of his generals, to reduce them to their duty. But no sooner had Amasis begun to make his speech, than they fixed a helmet on his head, and proclaimed him king. Amasis accepted the title, and confirmed the Egyptians in their revolt; and the greater part of the nation declaring for him, Apries was obliged to retire into Upper Egypt; and the country being thus weakened by intestine war, was attacked and easily overcome by Nebuchadnezzar, who on quitting it left Amasis his viceroy. After Nebuchadnezzar’s departure, Apries marched against Amasis; but, being defeated at Memphis, was taken prisoner, carried to Sais, and was strangled in his own palace, thus verifying this prophecy. See Herodotus in Euterpe.

Thus Nebuchadnezzar made an easy conquest of the land. He conquered it as easily as “a shepherd puts on his cloak: he went thence in peace,” having clothed himself with its spoils; and left all quiet under a viceroy of his own choosing. The rebellion of Pharaoh’s subjects was the “fire that God kindled in Egypt,” chap. 43:12. And thus was he “delivered into the hands of his enemies,” his revolted people; and “into the hand of him who sought his life,” i.e., Amasis his general. And thus the whole prophecy was literally fulfilled.

CHAPTER 45

This chapter is evidently connected with the subject treated of in the thirty-sixth. Baruch, who had written the prophecies of Jeremiah, and read them publicly in the temple, and afterwards to many of the princes, is in great affliction because of the awful judgments with which the land of Judah was about to be visited; and also on account of the imminent danger to which his own life was exposed, in publishing such unwelcome tidings, 1-3. To remove Baruch's fear with respect to this latter circumstance, the prophet assures him that though the total destruction of Judea was determined because of the great wickedness of the inhabitants, yet his life should be preserved amidst the general desolation, 4, 5.

NOTES ON CHAP. 45

Verse 1. *The word that Jeremiah-spake unto Baruch*— This is another instance of shameless transposition. This discourse was delivered in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, several years before Jerusalem was taken by the Chaldeans. It is a simple appendage to chap. 36., and there it should have been inserted.

Verse 3. *Thou didst say, Wo is me note!*— All that were the enemies of Jeremiah became his enemies too; and he needed these promises of support.

The Lord hath added grief to my sorrow— He had mourned for the desolations that were coming on his country, and now he mourns for the dangers to which he feels his own life exposed; for we find, from chap. 36:26, that the king had given commandment to take both Baruch and Jeremiah, in order that they might be put to death at the instance of his nobles.

Verse 4. *Behold, that which I have built*— I most certainly will fulfill all

those threatenings contained in the roll thou hast written; for I will destroy this whole land.

Verse 5. *And seekest thou great things for thyself?*— Nothing better can be expected of this people: thy hopes in reference to them are vain. Expect no national amendment, till national judgments have taken place. And as for any benefit to thyself, think it sufficient that God has determined to preserve thy life amidst all these dangers.

But thy life will I give unto thee for a prey— This is a proverbial expression. We have met with it before, chap. 21:9, 38:2, 39:18; and it appears to have this meaning. As a prey or spoil is that which is gained from a vanquished enemy, so it is preserved with pleasure as the proof and reward of a man's own valor. So Baruch's life should be doubly precious unto him, not only on account of the dangers through which God had caused him to pass safely, but also on account of those services he had been enabled to render, the consolations he had received, and the continual and very evident interposition of God in his behalf. All these would be dearer to him than the spoils of a vanquished foe to the hero who had overcome in battle.

Spoil may signify unlooked-for gain. The preservation of his life, in such circumstances, must be more than he could reasonably expect; but his life should be safe, and he should have it as a spoil, whithersoever he should go. This assurance must have quieted all his fears.

CHAPTER 46

The difference between the preceding and the subsequent prophecies in point of composition is very remarkable; the last excelling much in majesty and elegance. This chapter (of which the first verse forms a general title to this and the five chapters following) contains two distinct prophecies relating to Egypt. The first was delivered previous to an engagement between Pharaoh-necho, king of Egypt, and Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon; in which the Egyptians were routed in Carchemish with great slaughter, as here predicted. The prophet sees the mighty preparations; but they are all declared to be of no avail, as God had decreed their fall, 1-6. The King of Egypt, however, is represented as marching with all the confidence of victory, like a river overflowing its banks, and threatening all around with its inundation, 7, 8. But this immense armament of Pharaoh-necho, consisting of various nations, shall, by a righteous judgment of God, receive such a signal overthrow near the river Euphrates, that the political consequence of Egypt shall be thereby irretrievably ruined, and its remaining power become contemptible in the sight of the nations, 9-12. The other prophecy, beginning at the thirteenth verse, relates to the memorable overthrow of the Egyptians by Nebuchadnezzar, subsequent to his siege of Tyre, in the sixteenth year after the destruction of Jerusalem, 13-26. The promise, in the conclusion of the chapter, of preservation to the Jews, (who have for many ages continued a distinct people, when the various nations of antiquity who oppressed them, or with whom they had any intercourse, have long ago ceased to have any separate and visible existence,) has been most remarkably fulfilled; and is a very signal act of providence, and a pledge of the restoration of Israel to the Divine favor, when the time of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled, 27, 28.

NOTES ON CHAP. 46

Verse 1. *The word of the Lord-against the Gentiles*— This is a general title to the following collection of prophecies, written concerning different

nations, which had less or more connection with the Jews, either as enemies, neighbors, or allies.

They were not written at the same time; and though some of them bear dates, yet it would be difficult to give them any chronological arrangement. Dahler's mode of ascertaining the times of their delivery may be seen in the table in the introduction.

Verse 2. *Pharaoh-necho*— This was the person who defeated the army of Josiah, in which engagement Josiah received a mortal wound, of which he died, greatly regretted, soon after at Megiddo. After this victory, he defeated the Babylonians, and took Carchemish; and, having fortified it, returned to his own country. Nabopolassar sent his son Nebuchadnezzar with an army against him, defeated him with immense slaughter near the river Euphrates, retook Carchemish, and subdued all the revolted provinces, according to the following prophecies.

Verse 3. *Order ye the buckler*— This is the call to the general armament of the people against the Chaldeans.

Verse 4. *Furbish the spears*— Cleanse, brighten, and sharpen them; from the Franco-Gallic fourbir, to polish, brighten.

Brigandines.— A coat of mail, especially that which was made scale fashion; one plate overlapping the other, like the scales of fish.

Verse 5. *Wherefore have I seen them dismayed*— What! such a numerous, formidable, and well-appointed army panic-struck? So that they have turned back-fled apace, and looked not round; while their mighty ones—their generals and commanders, striving to rally them, are beaten down.

Verse 6. *Let not the swift flee away*— Even the swiftest shall not be able to escape.

They shall-fall toward the north— By the Euphrates, which was northward of Judea. Here the Egyptian army was routed with great

slaughter.

Verse 7. *Who is this that cometh up as a flood*— The vast concourse of people is here represented as a river: for instance, the Jordan, suddenly swollen with the rains in harvest, rolling its waters along, and overflowing the whole country. A fine image to represent the incursions of vast armies carrying all before them. Such was the army of Pharaoh-necho in its march to Carchemish.

Verse 9. *The Ethiopians*— Hebrews Cush, Phut, and the Ludim. This army was composed of many nations. Cush, which we translate Ethiopians, almost invariably means the Arabians; and here, those Arabs that bordered on Egypt near the Red Sea. Phut probably means the Libyans; for Phut settled in Libya, according to Josephus. Phut and Cush were two of the sons of Ham, and brothers to Mitsraim, the father of the Egyptians, Genesis 10:6; and the Ludim were descended from Mitsraim; see Genesis 10:13. Bochart contends that the Ludim were Ethiopians, and that they were famous for the use of the bow. Phaleg, lib. 4:26.

Verse 10. *For this is the day of the Lord God of hosts*— The prophet represents this as a mighty sacrifice, where innumerable victims were slain.

Verse 11. *Go up into Gilead, and take balm*— An irony. Egypt is so completely enfeebled by this overthrow, that her political wound is utterly incurable. This figure is used with the more propriety here, as the Egyptians have been celebrated from the remotest antiquity for their knowledge of medicine.

Verse 12. *The nations have heard of thy shame*— Of thy disgrace, by this prodigious slaughter of thy troops.

Verse 13. *How Nebuchadrezzar-should come and smite the land of Egypt*.— See on chap. 44: This was after Amasis had driven Pharaoh-necho into Upper Egypt. See chap. 44:30.

Verse 14. *Migdol*— Magdolum, a city of Lower Egypt. Noph, Memphis. Tahpanhes, Daphne. See before, chap. 44:1,

Round about thee.— The Phoenicians, Philistines, Ammonites, Moabites, and Edomites, all prostrated by the arms of the Chaldeans.

Verse 15. *They stood not, because the Lord did drive them.*— The Lord panie-struck them, and drove them back.

Verse 16. *One fell upon another*— In their terror and confusion ranks fell on ranks, and overturned each other.

Let us go again to our own people— Let us flee to our own country with all possible speed. These were the auxiliaries.

Verse 17. *They did cry there*— Dr. Blayney translates this cry thus:—

— “O Pharaoh, king of Egypt, A tumult hath frustrated the appointed meeting.”

These allies sent their excuse to Pharaoh, that the disasters they had met with had prevented them from joining him as they had intended.

Verse 18. *As Tabor is among the mountains*— This mountain is situated in the plain of Esdraelon in Galilee, on the confines of the tribes of Zebulun and Issachar, Joshua 19:22. It stood by itself, separated from all the other mountains by deep valleys, and is the highest of the whole.

And as Carmel by the sea— Carmel is a mountain on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, on the southern frontier of the tribe of Asher. Were the Egyptians as distinguished for valor and strength as the mountains Tabor and Carmel are for height among the other mountains in their vicinity, they should not be able to stand the shock of the Chaldean army.

Verse 19. *Furnish thyself to go into captivity*— The thing is unavoidable; prepare for this calamity.

Verse 20. *Egypt is like a very fair heifer*— Fruitful and useful; but destruction cometh out of the north, from Chaldea. It may be that there is

an allusion here to Isis, worshipped in Egypt under the form of a beautiful cow.

Verse 21. *Are fled away together*— Perhaps there is a reference here to the case of a cow stung with gnats. She runs hither and thither not knowing where to go; so shall it be with this scattered people.

Verse 22. *The voice shall go like a serpent*— See Isaiah 29:4, and the note there.

Verse 23. *They shall cut down her forest*— Supposed to mean her cities, of which Egypt had no fewer than one thousand and twenty.

Verse 24. *The hand or the people of the north*— The Chaldeans.

Verse 25. *The multitude of No*— אַמֹּן מִנְּנוֹ Amon minno, the Amon of No, called by the Greeks *διοσπολις*, or Jupiter's city. It was the famous Thebes, celebrated anciently for its hundred gates. Amon was the name by which the Egyptians called Jupiter, who had a famous temple at Thebes.

The word Pharaoh is twice repeated here; and Dr. Dahler thinks that one may design Pharaoh Hophrah, and the other Amasis, the new king.

Verse 26. *Afterward it shall be inhabited*— That is, within forty years, as Ezekiel had predicted, chap. 29:13.

Verse 27. *Fear not-my servant Jacob*— In the midst of wrath God remembers mercy. Though Judah shall be destroyed, Jerusalem taken, the temple burnt to the ground, and the people carried into captivity, yet the nation shall not be destroyed. A seed shall be preserved, out of which the nation shall revive.

Verse 28. *I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have driven thee; but I will not make a full end of thee*— The Jews still remain as a distinct people, while the Assyrians, Chaldeans, Egyptians, etc., are no more!

ON this subject, I cannot withhold from my readers the following very judicious remarks of Bp. Newton, in his Dissertations on the Prophecies.

“The preservation of the Jews through so many ages, and the total destruction of their enemies, are wonderful events; and are made still more wonderful by being signified beforehand by the spirit of prophecy, as particularly in the passage before us. Their preservation is really one of the most illustrious acts of Divine Providence. They are dispersed among all nations, yet not confounded with any. The drops of rain which fall, nay the great rivers which flow into the ocean, are soon mingled with and lost in that immense body of waters. And the same, in all human probability, would have been the fate of the Jews; they would have been mingled and lost in the common mass of mankind: but, on the contrary, they flow into all parts of the world, mix with all nations, and yet keep separate from all. They still live as a distinct people; and yet they nowhere live according to their own laws, nowhere elect their own magistrates, nowhere enjoy the full exercise of their religion. Their solemn feasts and sacrifices are limited to one certain place; and that hath been now for many ages in the hands of strangers and aliens, who will not suffer them to come thither. No people have continued unmixed so long as they have done; not only of those who have sent colonies into foreign countries, but even of those who have remained in their own country. The northern nations have come in swarms into the more southern parts of Europe: but where are they now to be discerned and distinguished? The Gauls went forth in great bodies to seek their fortune in foreign parts; but what traces or footsteps of them are now remaining any where? In France, who can separate the race of the ancient Gauls from the various other people who from time to time have settled there? In Spain, who can distinguish between the first possessors, the Spaniards, and the Goths and Moors, who conquered and kept possession of the country for some ages? In England, who can pretend to say certainly which families are derived from the ancient Britons, and which from the Romans, Saxons, Danes, and Normans? The most ancient and honorable pedigrees can be traced up only to a certain period; and beyond that there is nothing but conjecture and uncertainty, obscurity and ignorance. But the Jews can go up higher than any nation; they can even deduce their pedigree from the beginning of the world. They may not know from what particular tribe or family they are descended; but they

know certainly that they all sprang from the stock of Abraham. And yet the contempt with which they have been treated, and the hardships they have undergone in almost all countries, should, one would think, have made them desirous to forget or renounce their original: but they profess it; they glory in it; and after so many wars, massacres, and persecutions, they still subsist; they are still very numerous. And what but a supernatural power could have preserved them in such a manner as no other nation upon earth has been preserved? Nor is the providence of God less remarkable in the destruction of their enemies, than in their own preservation. For, from the beginning, who have been the great enemies and oppressors of the Jewish nation, removed them from their own land, and compelled them into captivity and slavery? The Egyptians afflicted them much, and detained them in bondage several years. The Assyrians carried away captive the ten tribes of Israel; and the Babylonians, afterwards, the two remaining tribes of Judah and Benjamin. The Syro-Macedonians, especially Antiochus Epiphanes, cruelly persecuted them; and the Romans utterly dissolved the Jewish state, and dispersed the people so as that they have never been able to recover their city and country again. And where are now those great and famous monarchies, which in their turn subdued and oppressed the people of God? Are they not vanished as a dream; and not only their power, but their very names, lost in the earth? The Egyptians, Assyrians, and Babylonians were overthrown and entirely subjugated by the Persians; and the Persians, it is remarkable, were the restorers of the Jews as well as the destroyers of their enemies. The Syro-Macedonians were swallowed up by the Romans; and the Roman empire, great and powerful as it was, was broken into pieces by the incursions of the northern nations; while the Jews are subsisting as a distinct people at this day. And what a wonder of providence is it, that the vanquished should so many ages survive the victors; and the former be spread all over the world, while the latter are no more! Nay, not only nations have been punished for their cruelties to the Jews, but Divine vengeance has pursued even single persons who have been their persecutors and oppressors. The first-born of Pharaoh was destroyed; and he himself with his host, drowned in the sea. Nebuchadnezzar was stricken with madness, and the crown was transferred from his family to strangers. Antiochus Epiphanes and Herod died in great agonies, with ulcers and vermin issuing from them. Flaccus,

governor of Egypt, who barbarously plundered and oppressed the Jews of Alexandria, was afterwards banished and slain; and Caligula, who persecuted the Jews for refusing to do Divine honors to his statue, was murdered in the flower of his age, after a short and wicked reign. But where are now, — since they have absolutely rejected the Gospel. and been no longer the peculiar people of God, — where are now such visible manifestations of a Divine interposition in their favor? The Jews would do well to consider this point; for, rightly considered, it may be an effectual means of opening their eyes, and of turning them to Christ our Savior.” See Bp. Newton on the prophecies, dissert. 8:sect. 2. And see the notes on Ezekiel, where the calamities of these miserable people are largely detailed.

CHAPTER 47

Among the nations doomed to suffer from the hostilities of Nebuchadnezzar are the Philistines, (see chap. 25:20.) And the calamities predicted in this chapter befell them probably during the long siege of Tyre, when their country was desolated to prevent their giving Tyre or Sidon any assistance, 1-5. The whole of this chapter is remarkably elegant. The address to the sword of Jehovah, at the close of it, is particularly a very beautiful and bold personification, 6, 7.

NOTES ON CHAP. 47

Verse 1. *The word of the Lord-against the Philistines*— The date of this prophecy cannot be easily ascertained. Dr. Blayney thinks it was delivered about the fourth year of Zedekiah, while Dahler assigns it some time in the reign of Josiah.

Before that Pharaoh smote Gaza.— We have no historical relation of any Egyptian king smiting Gaza. It was no doubt smitten by some of them; but when, and by whom, does not appear either from sacred or profane history.

Verse 2. *Waters rise up out of the north*— Waters is a common prophetic image for a multitude of people. The north here, as in other places of this prophecy, means Chaldea.

Verse 3. *The stamping of the hoofs*— At the galloping sound,—

Quadrupedante putrem sonitu quatit ungula campum,

is a line of Virgil, (AEn. 8:596,) much celebrated; and quoted here by Blayney, where the galloping sound of the horses' hoofs is heard. In the stamping of the horses, the rushing of the chariots, and the rumbling of the wheels, our translators intended to convey the sense by the sound of the

words, and they have not been unsuccessful. Their translation of the original is at the same time sufficiently literal.

The fathers shall not look back— Though their children are left behind, they have neither strength nor courage to go back to bring them off.

Verse 4. *To spoil all the Philistines*— These people, of whom there were five seignories, occupied the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, to the south of the Phoenicians.

Tyrus and Zidon— Places sufficiently remarkable both in the Old and New Testament, and in profane history. They belonged to the Phoenicians; and at thir time were depending on the succor of their allies, the Philistines. But their expectation was cut off.

The remnant of the country of Caphtor.— Crete, or Cyprus. Some think it was a district along the coast of the Mediterranean, belonging to the Philistines; others, that the Cappadocians are meant.

Verse 5. *Baldness is come upon Gaza*— They have cut off their hair in token of deep sorrow and distress.

Ashkelon is cut off— Or put to silence; another mark of the deepest sorrow. Ashkelon was one of the five seignories of the Philistines, Gaza was another.

The remnant of their valley— Or plain; for the whole land of the Philistines was a vast plain, which extended along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea from Phoenicia to the frontiers of Egypt. The whole of this plain, the territory of the Philistines, shall be desolated.

Verse 6. *O thou sword of the Lord*— This is a most grand prosopopoeia—a dialogue between the sword of the Lord and the prophet. Nothing can be imagined more sublime.

Put up thyself into thy scabbard, rest, and be still.— Shed no more blood, destroy no more lives, erase no more cities, desolate no more countries.

Rest: — hast thou not been long enough at this work of judgment? O be still: — let wars and desolations cease for ever.

Verse 7. *How can it be quiet*— This is the answer of the Sword. I am the officer of God's judgments, and he has given me a commission against Ashkelon, and against the sea shore; all the coast where the Philistines have their territories. The measure of their iniquities is full; and these God hath appointed this sword to ravage. The Philistines were ever the implacable enemies of the Jews, and the basest and worst of all idolaters. On these accounts the sword of the Lord had its commission against them; and it did its office most fearfully and effectually by the hand of the Chaldeans.

CHAPTER 48

The following prophecy concerning the Moabites is supposed to have had its accomplishment during the long siege of Tyre in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar. The whole of this chapter is poetry of the first order. The distress of the cities of Moab, with which it opens, is finely described. The cries of one ruined city resound to those of another, 1-3. The doleful helpless cry of the children is heard, 4; the highways, on either hand, resound with the voice of weeping, 5; and the few that remain resemble a blasted tree in the wide howling waste, 6. Chemosh, the chief god of the Moabites, and the capital figure in the triumph, is represented as carried off in chains, with all his trumpery of priests and officers, 7. The desolation of the country shall be so general and sudden that, by a strong figure, it is intimated that there shall be no possibility of escape, except it be in the speediest flight, 8, 9. And some idea may be formed of the dreadful wickedness of this people from the consideration that the prophet, under the immediate inspiration of the Almighty, pronounces a curse on those who do the work of the Lord negligently, in not proceeding to their utter extermination, 10. The subject is then diversified by an elegant and well-supported comparison, importing that the Moabites increased in insolence and pride in proportion to the duration of their prosperity, 11; but this prosperity is declared to be nearly at an end; the destroyer is already commissioned against Moab, and his neighbors called to sing the usual lamentation at his funeral, 13-18. The prophet then represents some of the women of Aroer and Ammon, (the extreme borders of Moab,) standing in the highways, and asking the fugitives of Moab, What intelligence? They inform him of the complete discomfiture of Moab, 19-24, and of the total annihilation of its political existence, 25. The Divine judgments about to fall upon Moab are farther represented under the expressive metaphor of a cup of intoxicating liquor, by which he should become an object of derision because of his intolerable pride, his magnifying himself against Jehovah, and his great contempt for the children of Israel in the day of their calamity, 26, 27. The prophet then points out the great distress of Moab by a variety of striking figures, viz., by the failure of the customary

rejoicings at the end of harvest, by the mournful sort of music used at funerals, by the signs which were expressive among the ancients of deep mourning, as shaving the head, clipping the beard, cutting the flesh, and wearing sackcloth; and by the methods of catching wild beasts in toils, and by the terror and pitfall, 28-46. In the close of the chapter it is intimated that a remnant shall be preserved from this general calamity whose descendants shall be prosperous in the latter days, 47.

NOTES ON CHAP. 48

Verse 1. *Against Moab*— This was delivered some time after the destruction of Jerusalem. The Moabites were in the neighborhood of the Ammonites, and whatever evils fell on the one would naturally involve the other. See Isaiah 15:and 16: on this same subject.

Wo unto Nebo! for it is spoiled— This was a city in the tribe of Reuben, afterwards possessed by the Moabites. It probably had its name from Nebo, one of the principal idols of the Moabites.

Kiriathaim— Another city of the Moabites.

Misgab is confounded— There is no place of this name known, and therefore several learned men translate **המשגב** hammisgab, literally, The high tower, or fortress, which may apply to Kiriathaim, or any other high and well-fortified place.

Verse 2. *No more praise of Moab*— “The glory of Moab, that it had never been conquered,” (Dahler,) is now at an end. Dr. Blayney translates:—

“Moab shall have no more glorying in Heshbon; They have devised evil against her (saying.)”

And this most certainly is the best translation of the original. He has marked also a double paronomasia in this and the next verse, a figure in which the prophets delight; **בהשבו חשבו** becheshbon chashebu “in

Cheshbon they have devised,” and **מַדְמַי תִּדְדוֹמִי** madmen tiddommi, “Madmena, thou shalt be dumb.”

Verse 3. Horonaim— Another city of Moab, near to Luhith. At this latter place the hill country of Moab commenced. “It is a place,” says Dahler, “situated upon a height between Areopolis and Zoar.”

Verse 6. Flee, save your lives— The enemy is in full pursuit of you.

Be like the heath— **כַּעֲרוֹעַר** caaroer, “like Aroer;” which some take for a city, others for a blasted or withered tree. It is supposed that a place of this name lay towards the north, in the land of the Ammonites, on a branch of the river Jabbok; surrounded by deserts. Save yourselves by getting into the wilderness, where the pursuing foe will scarcely think it worth his while to follow you, as the wilderness itself must soon destroy you.

Verse 7. Chemosh shall go forth into captivity— The grand national idol of the Moabites, Numbers 21:29; Judges 11:24. Ancient idolaters used to take their gods with them to the field of battle. This was probably in imitation of the Israelites, who took the ark with them in such cases.

Verse 9. Give wings unto Moab— There is no hope in resistance, and to escape requires the speediest flight. I cannot conceive how Dahler came to translate thus: Tirez Moab par les chevaux, “Drag Moab away by the hair of the head.”

Verse 10. Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully— Moab is doomed to destruction, and the Lord pronounces a curse on their enemies if they do not proceed to utter extirpation. God is the Author of life, and has a sovereign right to dispose of it as he pleases; and these had forfeited theirs long ago by their idolatry and other crimes.

Verse 11. Moab hath been at ease— The metaphor here is taken from the mode of preserving wines. They let them rest upon their lees for a considerable time, as this improves them both in strength and flavour; and when this is sufficiently done, they rack, or pour them off into other

vessels. Moab had been very little molested by war since he was a nation; he had never gone out of his own land. Though some had been carried away by Shalmaneser forty years before this, he has had neither wars nor captivity.

Therefore his taste remained in him— Still carrying on the allusion to the curing of wines; by resting long upon the lees, the taste and smell are both improved. See the note on Isaiah 25:6.

Verse 12. I will send unto him wanderers that shall cause him to wander— Dr. Blayney renders צַעִים *tsaim*, tilters; those who elevate one end of the wine cask when nearly run out that the remains of the liquor may be the more effectually drawn off at the cock. And this seems to be well supported by the following words,—

And shall empty his vessels— I will send such as will carry the whole nation into captivity.

Verse 13. Beth-el their confidence.— Alluding to the golden calves which Jeroboam had there set up, and commanded all the Israelites to worship.

Verse 17. How is the strong staff broken— The scepter. The sovereignty of Moab is destroyed.

Verse 18. That dost inhabit Dibon— This was anciently a city of the Reubenites, afterwards inhabited by the Moabites, about two leagues north of the river Arnon, and about six to the east of the Dead Sea. — Dahler.

Verse 19. O inhabitant of Aroer— See the note on ver. 6. This place, being at a greater distance, is counselled to watch for its own safety, and inquire of every passenger, What is done? that it may know when to pack up and be gone.

Verse 20. Tell ye it in Arnon— Apprise the inhabitants there that the territories of Moab are invaded, and the country about to be destroyed, that they may provide for their own safety.

Verse 21. *Upon Holon, etc.*— All these were cities of the Moabites, but several of them are mentioned in no other place.

Verse 25. *The horn of Moab is cut off, and his arm is broken*— His political and physical powers are no more.

Verse 27. *Was not Israel a derision unto thee?*— Didst thou not mock my people, and say their God was no better than the gods of other nations? See Ezekiel 25:8.

Was he found among thieves?— Did the Israelites come to rob and plunder you? Why then mock them, and rejoice at their desolation, when their enemies prevailed over them? This the Lord particularly resents.

Verse 28. *Dwell in the rock*— Go to the most inaccessible places in the mountains.

The hole's mouth.— And into the most secret eaves and holes of the earth.

Verse 29. The pride of Moab! See on Isaiah 16:1.

Verse 32. *O vine of Sibmah*— See on Isa 16:8.

Verse 34. *As a heifer of three years old*— Which runs lowing from place to place in search of her calf, which is lost or taken from her.

Verse 37. *For every head shall be bald*— These, as we have seen before, were signs of the deepest distress and desolation.

Verse 40. *He shall fly as an eagle*— The enemy will pounce upon him, carry him off, and tear him to pieces.

Verse 42. *Moab shall be destroyed from being a people*— They shall not have a king or civil governor: and I doubt whether there be any evidence that they were ever reinstated in their national character. They were

captivated by the Chaldeans; and probably many returned with the Jews on the edict of Cyrus: but as to their being an independent nation after this, where is the positive proof?

Verse 43. *Fear, and the pit, and the snare*— See the note on Isaiah 24:17, 18.

Verse 45. *They that fled stood under the shadow of Heshbon*— Heshbon being a fortified place, they who were worsted in the fight fled to it, and rallied under its walls; but, instead of safety, they found themselves disappointed, betrayed, and ruined. See ver. 2, and the note there.

But a fire shall come forth out of Heshbon— Jeremiah has borrowed this part of his discourse from an ancient poet quoted by Moses, Numbers 21:28; where see the notes.

The crown of the head— The choicest persons of the whole nation.

Verse 46. *The people of Chemosh*— The Moabites, who worshipped Chemosh as their supreme god.

Verse 47. *Will I bring again the captivity of Moab in the latter days*— I have already expressed doubts (see ver. 42) whether the Moabites were ever restored to their national distinction. The expressions in this chapter, relative to their total destruction as a people, are so strong and so frequent, that they leave little room for a limited interpretation. That many of them returned on the edict of Cyrus by virtue of which the Jews were restored, I doubt not; but neither the Ammonites, Moabites, Philistines, nor even the Jews themselves were ever restored to their national consequence. Perhaps the restoration spoken of here which was to take place in the latter days, may mean the conversion of these people, in their existing remnants, to the faith of the Gospel. Several judicious interpreters are of this opinion. The Moabites were partially restored; but never, as far as I have been able to learn, to their national consequence. Their conversion to the Christian faith must be the main end designed by this prophecy.

CHAPTER 49

This chapter is a collection of prophecies relating to several nations in the neighborhood of Judea; and, like those preceding, are supposed to have been fulfilled by the ministry of Nebuchadnezzar during the thirteen years' siege of Tyre. The chapter opens with a prophecy concerning the Ammonites, whose chief city, Rabbah, shall be destroyed; and Malcom, the supreme divinity of the people, with all his retinue of priests and officers, carried into captivity, 1-5. Promise that the Ammonites shall be restored to their liberty, 6. Prophecy against the Edomites, (very like that most dreadful one in the thirty-fourth chapter of Isaiah against the same people,) who shall be utterly exterminated, after the similitude of Sodom and Gomorrah, 7-22. Prophecy against Damascus, 23-27; and against Kedar, 28, 29. Utter desolation of the kingdoms of Hazor foretold, 30-33. The polity of the Elamites shall be completely dissolved, and the people dispersed throughout the nations, 34-38. The Elamites shall be delivered from their captivity in the latter days, 39. It will be proper here to observe that these predictions should not be so explained as if they admitted of merely a private interpretation; for, as Bishop Lowth remarks upon Isaiah's prophecy concerning the Idumeans, "by a figure very common in the prophetic writings, any city or people, remarkably distinguished as enemies of the people and kingdom of God, is put for those enemies in general;" therefore, it is under the Gospel dispensation that these prophecies shall be accomplished to their fullest extent upon all the antichristian nations that have sinned after the similitude of the ancient enemies of the people of God under the Mosaic economy.

NOTES ON CHAP. 49

Verse 1. CONCERNING THE AMMONITES— This prophetic discourse was also delivered after the capture of Jerusalem.

Hath Israel no sons?—no heir?— The Ammonites, it appears, took

advantage of the depressed state of Israel, and invaded their territories in the tribe of Gad, hoping to make them their own for ever. But the prophet intimates that God will preserve the descendants of Israel, and will bring them back to their forfeited inheritances.

Why then doth their king— מלכֶם Malcom or Milcom, the chief idol of the Ammonites. That the idol Milcom is here meant is sufficiently evident from ver. 3, where it is said: “Milcom (not their king) shall go into captivity; his PRIESTS and his princes together.” Milcom is also called Molech. Malcom is put here for the Ammonites, as the people of Chemosh in the preceding chapter are put for the Moabites in general.

Verse 3. Run to and fro by the hedges— It is supposed that this may refer to the women making lamentations for the dead, that were in general buried by the walls of their gardens; but others think that it refers to the smaller cities or villages, called here the daughters of Rabbah, the metropolis; the inhabitants of which are exhorted to seek safety somewhere else, as none can be expected from them, now that the enemy is at hand.

Verse 4. Wherefore gloriest thou— Though thy valleys be fruitful, yet glory not in them. Though thou have much political and military power, do not trust in them, nor in the multitude of thy cities; a stronger than thou is coming against thee.

Verse 6. Afterward I will bring again— The Ammonites are supposed to have returned with the Moabites and Israelites, on permission given by the edict of Cyrus.

Verse 7. CONCERNING EDOM— This is a new and separate discourse.

Teman— A part of Idumea, put here for the whole country.

Verse 8. Dwell deep— An allusion to the custom of the Arabs, who, when about to be attacked by a powerful foe, strike their tents, pack up their utensils, lade their camels, which they can do in a couple of hours, and set off to the great desert, and so bury themselves in it that no enemy

either will or can pursue, as it is the Arabs alone that know the deserts, and can find water and provender for their support.

Dedan— Was a city of Idumea, not far from Teman.

Verse 9. *If grape-gatherers*— Both in vintage and harvest every grape and every stalk are not gathered; hence the gleaners get something for their pains: but your enemies shall not leave one of you behind; all shall be carried into captivity.

Verse 10. *I have made Esau bare*— I have stripped him of all defense, and have discovered his hiding-places to his enemies.

Verse 11. *Leave thy fatherless children*— The connection of this with the context is not easy to be discerned; but, as a general maxim, it is of great importance. Widows and orphans are the peculiar care of God. He is as the best of fathers to the one, and the most loving of husbands to the other. Even the widows and orphans of Esau, who escape the general destruction, shall be taken care of by the Lord.

Verse 12. *Art thou he that shall altogether go unpunished?*— A similar form of speech appears, chap. 25:29. Others, less wicked than thou, have been punished and canst thou expect to escape? Thou shalt not escape.

Verse 13. *Bozrah shall become a desolation*— Bozrah, a city of Idumea, is here put for the whole country.

Verse 14. *I have heard a rumor*— The Lord has revealed to me what he is about to do to the Edomites.

An ambassador is sent— I believe this means only that God has given permission, and has stirred up the hearts of these nations to go against those whom he has doomed to destruction.

Verse 16. *O thou that dwellest*— All Idumea is full of mountains and rocks, and these rocks and mountains full of caves, where, in time of great heats, and in time of war, the people take shelter.

Verse 18. *As in the overthrow of Sodom*— The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighboring cities was so terrible, that, when God denounces judgments against incorrigible sinners, he tells them they shall be like Sodom and Gomorrah.

No man shall abide there— It shall be so desolate as not to be habitable. Travellers may lodge on the ground for a night; but it cannot become a permanent dwelling.

Verse 19. *Behold, he shall come up like a lion*— See the note on chap. 12:5. The similitude used here is well illustrated by Dr. Blayney: “When I shall occasion a like commotion in her (Idumea) as a fierce and strong lion may be supposed to do in the sheep-folds, then I will cause him (the man of whom it is said in the preceding verse that he should not dwell in it) to run away from her as the affrighted shepherds and their flocks run from the lion.”

A chosen man— Nebuchadnezzar. That is, God has chosen this man, and given him a commission against Idumea.

Verse 20. *The inhabitants of Teman*— Taken here for the whole of Idumea. These are a kind of synonyms which prevent monotony, and give variety to the poet’s versification.

Surely the least or the flock shall draw them out— They shall be like timid sheep; the weakest foe shall overcome them.

Verse 21. *The earth is moved*— The whole state is represented here as a vast building suddenly thrown down, so as to cause the earth to tremble, and the noise to be heard at a great distance.

Verse 22. *He shall come up and fly as the eagle*— Nebuchadnezzar. See chap. 48:40.

Verse 23. *CONCERNING DAMASCUS*.— This is the head or title of another prophecy. Damascus was one of the principal cities of Syria. It was taken

by David, 2 Samuel 8:6, was retaken in the reign of Solomon, 1 Kings 11:24, etc., and regained its independence. Its kings were often at war with the ten tribes, and once it joined with them for the destruction of Judah. To defend himself against these powerful enemies Ahaz made a league with the king of Assyria, who besieged Damascus, took, and demolished it. From that time we hear nothing of Damascus till we meet with it in this prophecy. It appears to have been rebuilt and restored to some consequence. It made an obstinate resistance to Nebuchadnezzar; but was at last taken and sacked by him. At present it is both a large and populous city, with considerable commerce.

Hamath is confounded— This is a city of Syria, on the Orontes. The Greeks called it Epiphania.

Arpad— Not far from Damascus.

Sorrow on the sea— They are like the troubled sea, that cannot rest.

Verse 25. *How is the city of praise not left*— Damascus is so ruined that she can no more be called a praiseworthy or happy city.

Verse 27. *The palaces of Ben-hadad*.— Damascus was a seat of the Syrian kings, and Ben-hadad was a name common to several of its kings.

Verse 28. *CONCERNING KEDAR, AND CONCERNING THE KINGDOMS OF HAZOR*— This is the title of another new prophecy.

Kedar was the name of one of the sons of Ishmael (Genesis 25:13) who settled in Arabia, and who gave name to a powerful tribe of Arabs who used to traffic with the Tyrians in cattle. It appears from this prophecy that Nebuchadnezzar got a commission to go against and reduce them to great misery.

Verse 29. *Their tents and their flocks*— This description of property shows that they were Scenite or Nomad Arabs; persons who dwell in tents, and whose principal property was cattle, especially camels, of the whole of which they were plundered by the Chaldeans.

Verse 30. *Dwell deep*— Retire into the depths of the desert. See on ver. 8.

Inhabitants of Hazor— I cannot find this place. It was no doubt in Arabia, and a place of considerable importance; but it is now no more.

Verse 31. *The wealthy nation*— גוי שליו *goi sheleiv*, “the peaceable nation”—

Have neither gates nor bars— The Arabs, who had nothing but their tents; no cities, nor even permanent villages.

Verse 32. *The utmost corners*— Even in these utmost inaccessible recesses the sword and pillage shall reach them. “‘The utmost corners;’ insulated coasts; the peninsula of Arabia.”-Blayney.

Verse 33. *Hazor shall be a dwelling for dragons*— Shall be turned into a wilderness.

A desolation for ever— Never to be repopled.

There shalt no man abide there— It may occasionally be visited, but never made a permanent abode.

Verse 34. *THE WORD-AGAINST ELAM*— Another new head of prophecy. As this was delivered in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah, it can have no natural nor historical connection with the other prophecies in this various chapter. Some think that by Elam Persia is always meant; but this is not at all likely. It was a part of the Babylonian empire in the time of Daniel, (chap. 8:2,) and is most probably what is called Elymais by the Greeks. This, with Susiana, Nebuchadnezzar subdued, and took from Astyages, king of Media.

Verse 35. *I will break the bow of Elam*— They were eminent archers; and had acquired their power and eminence by their dexterity in the use of the bow. See Isaiah 22:6. Strabo, Livy, and others speak of their eminence in archery.

Verse 36. *Will I bring the four winds*— Nebuchadnezzar and his armies, gathered out of different provinces, and attacking this people at all points in the same time.

There shall be no nation, etc.— They shall be scattered through the one hundred and twenty-seven provinces of which the Babylonish empire is composed.

Verse 38. *I will set my throne in Elam*— This is spoken either of Nebuchadnezzar or Cyrus. It is certain that Cyrus did render himself master of Elymais and Media, which are in the land of Elam.

Verse 39. *I will bring again the captivity of Elam*— As this is to be in the latter days, probably it may mean the spiritual freedom which these people would receive under the Gospel dispensation. Under Cyrus, the Elamites, collected out of all quarters, were united with the Persians, their neighbors, and became, with them, masters of the east. See Calmet and Dahler. There are still, however, difficulties on this subject. Who the Elamites were is still a question. That which appears to be nearest the truth is, that the Elamites and Persians were two distinct people, and continued so till blended together under Cyrus. It is in this light that I have considered the subject in the preceding notes. Neighboring people are frequently confounded in history, and sometimes the name of a people is given to those who have the same character.

CHAPTER 50.

This and the following chapter contain a prophecy relating to the fall of Babylon, interspersed with several predictions relative to the restoration of Israel and Judah, who were to survive their oppressors, and, on their repentance, to be pardoned and brought to their own land. This chapter opens with a prediction of the complete destruction of all the Babylonish idols, and the utter desolation of Chaldea, through the instrumentality of a great northern nation, 1-3. Israel and Judah shall be reinstated in the land of their forefathers after the total overthrow of the great Babylonish empire, 4, 5. Very oppressive and cruel bondage of the Jewish people during the captivity, 6, 7. The people of God are commanded to remove speedily from Babylon, because an assembly of great nations are coming out of the north to desolate the whole land, 8-10. Babylon, the hammer of the whole earth, the great desolator of nations, shall itself become a desolation on account of its intolerable pride, and because of the iron yoke it has rejoiced to put upon a people whom a mysterious Providence had placed under its domination, 11-34. The judgments which shall fall upon Chaldea, a country addicted to the grossest idolatry, and to every species of superstition, shall be most awful and general, as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, 35-40. Character of the people appointed to execute the Divine judgments upon the oppressors of Israel, 41-45. Great sensation among the nations at the very terrible and sudden fall of Babylon, 46.

NOTES ON CHAP. 50

Verse 1. THE WORD THAT THE LORD SPAKE AGAINST BABYLON— This is also a new head of discourse.

The prophecy contained in this and the following chapter was sent to the captives in Babylon in the fourth year of the reign of Zedekiah. They are very important; they predict the total destruction of the Babylonish empire, and the return of the Jews from their captivity. These chapters

were probably composed, with several additions, out of the book that was then sent by Jeremiah to the captives by the hand of Seraiah. See chap. 51:59-64.

Verse 2. *Declare ye among the nations*— God's determination relative to this empire.

Set up a standard— Show the people where they are to assemble.

Say, Babylon is taken— It is a thing so firmly determined, that it is as good as already done.

Bel— The tutelary deity of Babylon is confounded, because it cannot save its own city.

Merodach— Another of their idols, is broken to pieces; it was not able to save itself, much less the whole empire.

Her idols are confounded— It is a reproach to have acknowledged them.

Her images— Great and small, golden and wooden, are broken to pieces; even the form of them no longer appears.

Verse 3. *Out of the north there cometh up a nation*— The Medes, who formed the chief part of the army of Cyrus, lay to the north or north-east of Babylon.

Shall make her land desolate— This war, and the consequent taking of the city, began those disasters that brought Babylon in process of time to complete desolation; so that now it is not known where it stood, the whole country being a total solitude.

Verse 4. *In those days, and in that time*— In the times in which Babylon shall be opposed by the Medes and Persians, both Israel and Judah, seeing the commencement of the fulfilling of the prophecies, shall begin to seek the Lord with much prayer, and broken and contrite hearts. When the decree of Cyrus comes, they shall be ready to set off for their own

country, deploring their offenses, yet rejoicing in the mercy of God which has given them this reviving in their bondage.

Verse 5. *Let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant*— All our former covenants have been broken; let us now make one that shall last for ever. He shall be the LORD OUR GOD, and WE will no more worship idols. This covenant they have kept to the present day; whatever their present moral and spiritual state may be, they are no idolaters, in the gross sense of the term.

The description that is here given of the state of this people, their feelings and their conduct, finely exhibit the state of real penitents, who are fervently seeking the salvation of their souls.

1. In those days when Jesus Christ is manifested in the flesh; and in that time, when through him is preached the remission of sins, and the people who hear are pricked in their conscience.

2. The children of Israel and the children of Judah together. — No distinctions being then felt or attended to; for all feel themselves sinners, who have come short of the glory of God. Even national distinctions and religious differences, which bind men fastest, and hold them longest, are absorbed in the deep and overpowering concern they feel for their eternal interests.

3. Going and weeping shall they go. — Religious sorrow does not preclude activity and diligence. While they are weeping for their sins, they are going on in the path of duty, seeking the Lord while he may be found, and calling upon him while he is near.

4. They shall ask the way to Zion. — Real penitents are the most inquisitive of all mortals; but their inquiries are limited to one object, they ask the way to Zion. What shall we do to be saved? How shall we shun the perdition of ungodly men, etc.

5. With their faces thitherward. — They have turned FROM sin, and turned TO God. They have left the paths of the destroyer, and their hearts are

towards God, and the remembrance of his name. Thus they are profiting by that light which has convinced them of sin, righteousness, and judgment.

6. Come, and let us join ourselves to the Lord. — Religion is a social principle, and begets a social feeling in the soul. No man who feels his own sore, and the plague of his heart, wishes to venture alone in the way to heaven. He feels he wants counsel, support, comfort and the company of those who will watch over him in love. Like David, the true penitent is a companion of all those who fear the Lord. These heavenly feelings come from one and the same Spirit, and lead to the same end; hence they say,—

7. Let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant. It is said, that to be undecided, is to be decided. They who are not determined to go to heaven, will never reach it. If the heart be not laid under obligation, it will do nothing. “I hope I am in earnest; I trust I shall be in earnest about the salvation of my soul, it is very proper I should be so;” and such like, show an irresolute soul. Such persons are ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

Let us therefore bind ourselves. We have trifled too long; been indecisive too long; have halted too long between two opinions. We know now that Jehovah is God; let us, therefore, enter into a covenant with him. Let this covenant be a perpetual one: let us not make it for a day, for any particular time, but for ever; and let it never be broken. Let our part be kept inviolable: we ARE and WILL BE thy people; and God’s part will never fail, I AM and WILL BE your God.

The covenant requires a sacrifice. — Hence בְּרִית berith signifies both. Christ crucified is the great covenant sacrifice. By him God becomes united to us, and through him we become united to God.

Verse 6. *My people hath been lost sheep*— He pities them; for their pastors, kings, and prophets have caused them to err.

They have gone from mountain to hill— In all high places they have practiced idolatry.

Verse 7. *Their adversaries said, We offend not*— God has abandoned them; we are only fulfilling his designs in plaguing them.

Verse 8. *Remove out of the midst of Babylon*— The sentence of destruction is gone out against it; prepare for your flight, that ye be not overwhelmed in its ruin.

Be as the he-goats before the flocks.— Who always run to the head of the flock, giving the example for others to follow. This may be addressed to the elders and persons of authority among the people.

Verse 9. *An assembly of great nations*— The army of Cyrus was composed of Medes, Persians, Armenians, Caducians, Sacae, etc. Though all these did not come from the north; yet they were arranged under the Medes, who did come from the north, in reference to Babylon.

Their arrows— They are such expert archers, that they shall never miss their mark.

Verse 10. *Chaldea shall be a spoil*— She has been a spoiler, and she shall be spoiled. They had destroyed Judea, God's heritage; and now God shall cause her to be destroyed.

Verse 11. *As the heifer at grass*— Ye were wanton in the desolations ye brought upon Judea.

Verse 12. *Your mother*— Speaking to the Chaldeans: BABYLON, the metropolis, or mother city, shall be a wilderness, a dry land, a desert, neither fit for man nor beast.

Verse 15. *Shout against her round about*— Encompass her with lines and with troops; let none go in with relief, none come out to escape from her ruin.

Verse 16. *Cut off the sower*— Destroy the gardens and the fields, that there may be neither fruits nor tillage.

Verse 17. *Israel*— All the descendants of Jacob have been harassed and spoiled, first by the Assyrians, and afterwards by the Chaldeans. They acted towards them as a lion to a sheep which he has caught; first he devours all the flesh, next he breaks all the bones to extract the marrow.

Verse 18. *As I have punished the king of Assyria.*— The Assyrians were overthrown by the Medes and the Chaldeans. The king is here taken for all their kings, generals, etc., Tiglath-pileser, Shalmaneser, Sennacherib, Esar-haddon, etc. To them succeeded the Chaldean or Babylonish kings. Nebuchadnezzar came against Judea several times; and at last took the city and burnt it, profaned and demolished the temple, wasted the land, and carried the princes and people into captivity.

Verse 19. *I will bring Israel again*— This seems to refer wholly to the ten tribes; for Carmel, Bashan, Mount Ephraim, and Gilead, were in their territories.

Verse 20. *In those days and in that time*— This phrase appears to take in the whole of an epoch, from its commencement to its end. See ver. 4.

I will pardon them— So as to deliver them from their captivity, and exact no more punishment from them whom I reserve, namely, the remnant left in the Babylonish captivity.

Verse 21. *Go up against the land of Merathaim-and against the inhabitants of Pekod*— No such places as these are to be found any where else; and it is not likely that places are at all meant. The ancient Versions agree in rendering the first as an appellative, and the last as a verb, except the Chaldee, which has Pekod as a proper name. Dr. Blayney translates:—

***“Against the land of bitteresses, go up:
Upon it, and upon its inhabitants, visit, O sword!”***

Dr. Dahler renders thus:—

***“March against the country doubly rebellious,
And against its inhabitants worthy of punishment.”***

The latter of these two versions I take to be the most literal. The words are addressed to the Medes and Persians; and the country is Chaldea, doubly rebellious by its idolatry and its insufferable pride. In these two, it was exceeded by no other land.

Verse 23. *The hammer of the whole earth*— Nebuchadnezzar dashed to pieces the nations against whom he warred. He was the scourge of the Lord.

Verse 24. *I have laid a snare for thee*— It was not by storm that Cyrus took the city. The Euphrates ran through it; he dug a channel for the river in another direction, to divert its stream; he waited for that time in which the inhabitants had delivered themselves up to debauchery: in the dead of the night he turned off the stream, and he and his army entered by the old channel, now void of its waters. This was the snare of which the prophet here speaks. See Nerodotus, lib. i., c. 191.

Verse 26. *Open her store-houses*— At the time that Cyrus took the city, it was full of provisions and treasures of all kinds; the walls had suffered no injury; and when the inhabitants heard that the enemy was within, they thought they must have arisen out of the earth in the center of the city!

Verse 27. *Slay all her bullocks*— Princes, magistrates, etc., etc.

Verse 28. *Declare in Zion the vengeance of the Lord*— Zion was desolated by Babylon; tell Zion that God hath desolated the desolator.

The vengeance of his temple.— Which Nebuchadnezzar had pillaged, profaned, and demolished, transporting its sacred vessels to Babylon, and putting them in the temple of his god Bel.

Verse 29. *Call together the archers*— The preceding verses are the prediction: here, God calls the Medes and Persians to fulfill it.

Verse 31. *O thou most proud*— זָדוֹן zaddon. PRIDE in the abstract; proudest of all people.

Verse 32. *And the most proud*— זָדוֹן zaddon, as before. Here pride is personified and addressed, as if possessing a being and rational powers.

Verse 34. *Their Redeemer is strong*— And it was not that he wanted power, and that Nebuchadnezzar had much, that Jerusalem was taken; but because the people had sinned, and would not return; and therefore national sins called for national punishments. These have taken place; and now the Lord of hosts shows them that the power of the Chaldeans is mere weakness against his might.

Verse 35. *A sword*— War and its calamities, or any grievous plague; and so in the following verses.

Verse 38. *A drought is upon her waters*— May not this refer to the draining of the channel of the Euphrates, by which the army of Cyrus entered the city. See on ver. 24. The original is, however, חֶרֶב chereb, a sword, as in the preceding verses, which signifies war, or any calamity by which the thing on which it falls is ruined.

Verse 39. *The wild beasts of the desert*— Dahler translates these various terms, “The wild cats, the jackals, and the ostriches.” And Blayney the same. Wicklif, “Dragons, woodewoses, and ostriches.” Coverdale, “Wild beestes, apes, and estriches.”

Verse 40. *As God overthrew Sodom*— As the very ground on which these cities stood, with all the plain, now lies under the Dead Sea; so Babylon and the adjacent country shall be rendered totally barren and unfruitful, and utterly incapable of being inhabited. And this is the fact concerning both countries. See chap. 49:18.

Verse 41. *Behold, a people shall come from the north*— This and the two following verses are nearly the same with chap. 6:22-24. But here, destroyers against Babylon are intended; there, destroyers against

Jerusalem.

Verse 44. *Behold, he shall come up like a lion*— The same words as in chap. 49:19, etc., where see the note.

Verse 46. *At the noise of the taking of Babylon*— See the note on the parallel place, chap. 49:21. In the forty-ninth chapter, these words are spoken of Nebuchadnezzar; here, of Cyrus. The taking of Babylon was a wonder to all the surrounding nations. It was thought to be impregnable.

CHAPTER 51

Sequel of the prophecies of Jeremiah against Babylon. The dreadful, sudden, and final ruin that shall fall upon the Chaldeans, who have compelled the nations to receive their idolatrous rites, (see an instance in the third chapter of Daniel,) set forth by a variety of beautiful figures; with a command to the people of God, (who have made continual intercession for the conversion of their heathen rulers,) to flee from the impending vengeance, 1-14. Jehovah, Israel's God, whose infinite power, wisdom and understanding are every where visible in the works of creation, elegantly contrasted with the utterly contemptible objects of the Chaldean worship, 15-19. Because of their great oppression of God's people, the Babylonians shall be visited with cruel enemies from the north, whose innumerable hosts shall fill the land, and utterly extirpate the original inhabitants, 20-44. One of the figures by which this formidable invasion is represented is awfully sublime. "The SEA is come up upon Babylon; she is covered with the multitude of the waves thereof." And the account of the sudden desolation produced by this great armament of a multitude of nations, (which the prophet, dropping the figure, immediately subjoins,) is deeply afflictive. "Her cities are a desolation, a dry land, and a wilderness; a land wherein no man dwelleth, neither doth any son of man pass thereby." The people of God a third time admonished to escape from Babylon, lest they be overtaken with her plagues, 45, 46. Other figures setting forth in a variety of lights the awful judgments with which the Chaldeans shall be visited on account of their very gross idolatries, 47-58. The significant emblem with which the chapter concludes, of Seraiah, after having read the book of the Prophet Jeremiah against Babylon, binding a stone to it, and casting it into the river Euphrates, thereby prefiguring the very sudden downfall of the Chaldean city and empire, 59-64, is beautifully improved by the writer of the Apocalypse, chap. 18:21, in speaking of Babylon the GREAT, of which the other was a most expressive type; and to which many of the passages interspersed throughout the Old Testament Scriptures relative to Babylon must be ultimately referred, if we would give an interpretation in every respect equal to the terrible import of the language in which

these prophecies are conceived.

NOTES ON CHAP. 51

Verse 1. *Thus saith the Lord*— This chapter is a continuation of the preceding prophecy.

A destroying wind.— Such as the pestilential winds in the east; and here the emblem of a destroying army, carrying all before them, and wasting with fire and sword.

Verse 2. *And will send-fanners*— When the corn is trodden out with the feet of cattle, or crushed out with a heavy wheel armed with iron, with a shovel they throw it up against the wind, that the chaff and broken straw may be separated from it. This is the image used by the prophet; these people shall be trodden, crushed, and fanned by their enemies.

Verse 5. *For Israel hath not been forsaken*— God still continued his prophets among them; he had never cast them wholly off. Even in the midst of wrath-highly deserved and inflicted punishment, he has remembered mercy; and is now about to crown what he has done by restoring them to their own land. I conceive אָשָׁם asham, which we translate sin, as rather signifying punishment, which meaning it often has.

Verse 7. *Made all the earth drunken*— The cup of God's wrath is the plenitude of punishment, that he inflicts on transgressors. It is represented as intoxicating and making them mad.

Verse 8. *Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed*— These appear to be the words of some of the spectators of Babylon's misery.

Verse 9. *We would have healed Babylon*— Had it been in our power, we would have saved her; but we could not turn away the judgment of God.

Verse 10. *The Lord hath brought forth our righteousness.*— This is the answer of the Jews. God has vindicated our cause.

Verse 11. *Make bright the arrows*— This is the prophet's address to Babylon.

The Lord hath raised up the spirit of the kings of the Medes— Of Cyaxares king of Media, called Darius the Mede in Scripture; and of Cyrus king of Persia, presumptive heir of the throne of Cyaxares, his uncle. Cambyses, his father, sent him, Cyrus, with 30, 000 men to assist his uncle Cyaxares, against Neriglissar king of Babylon, and by these was Babylon overthrown.

Verse 12. *Set up the standard*— A call to the enemies of Babylon to invest the city and press the siege.

Verse 13. *O thou that dwellest upon many waters*— Thou who hast an abundant supply of waters. It was built on the confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates; the latter running through the city. But the many waters may mean the many nations which belonged to the Babylonish empire; nations and people are frequently so called in Scripture.

Verse 14. *I will fill thee with men*— By means of these very waters through the channel of thy boasted river, thou shalt be filled with men, suddenly appearing as an army of locusts; and, without being expected, shall lift up a terrific cry, as soon as they have risen from the channel of the river.

Verse 15. *He hath made the earth by his power*— The omnipotence of God is particularly manifested in the works of creation.

He hath established the world by his wisdom— The omniscience of God is particularly seen in the government of תבל *tebel*, the inhabited surface of the globe. What a profusion of wisdom and skill is apparent in that wondrous system of providence by which he governs and provides for every living thing.

And hath stretched out the heaven by his understanding.— Deep thought, comprehensive design, and consummate skill are especially seen

in the formation, magnitudes, distances, revolutions, and various affections of the heavenly bodies.

Verse 16. *When he uttereth his voice*— Sends thunder.

There is a multitude of waters— For the electric spark, by decomposing atmospheric air, converts the hydrogen and oxygen gases, of which it is composed, into water; which falls down in the form of rain.

Causeth the vapours to ascend— He is the Author of that power of evaporation by which the water is rarified, and, being lighter than the air, ascends in form of vapor, forms clouds, and is ready to be sent down again to water the earth by the action of his lightnings, as before. And by those same lightnings, and the agency of heat in general, currents of air are formed, moving in various directions, which we call winds.

Verse 17. *Every man is brutish by his knowledge*— He is brutish for want of real knowledge; and he is brutish when he acknowledges that an idol is any thing in the world. These verses, from fifteen to nineteen, are transcribed from chap. 10:12-16.

Verse 20. *Thou art my battle axe*— I believe Nebuchadnezzar is meant, who is called, chap. 50:23, the hammer of the whole earth. Others think the words are spoken of Cyrus. All the verbs are in the past tense: “With thee have I broken in pieces,” etc., etc.

Verse 24. *And I will render*— The ׀ vau should be translated but, of which it has here the full power: “But I will render unto Babylon.”

Verse 25. *O destroying mountain*— An epithet which he applies to the Babylonish government; it is like a burning mountain, which, by vomiting continual streams of burning lava inundates and destroys all towns, villages fields, etc., in its vicinity.

And roll thee down from the rocks— I will tumble thee from the rocky base on which thou restest. The combustible matter in thy bowels being exhausted, thou shalt appear as an extinguished crater; and the stony

mutter which thou castest out shall not be of sufficient substance to make a foundation stone for solidity, or a corner stone for beauty, ver. 26. Under this beautiful and most expressive metaphor, the prophet shows the nature of the Babylonish government; setting the nations on fire, deluging and destroying them by its troops, till at last, exhausted, it tumbles down, is extinguished, and leaves nothing as a basis to erect a new form of government on; but is altogether useless, like the cooled lava, which is, properly speaking, fit for no human purpose.

Verse 27. *Set ye up a standard*— Another summons to the Medes and Persians to attack Babylon.

Ararat, Minni— The Greater and Lesser Armenia.

And Ashchenaz— A part of Phrygia, near the Hellespont. So Bochart, Phaleg, lib. 1:c. 3, lib. 3:c. 9. Concerning Ashchenaz Homer seems to speak, Il. 2:370, 371:—

φορκυς αυ φρυγας ηγε, και ασκανιος θεοειδης,
τηλ' εξ ασκανιης.

***“Ascanius, godlike youth, and Phorcys led
The Phrygians from Ascania’s distant land.”***

Calmet thinks that the Ascantes, who dwelt in the vicinity of the Tanais, are meant.

Verse 29. *And the land shall tremble*— It is represented here as trembling under the numerous armies that are passing over it, and the prancing of their horses.

Verse 30. *The mighty men-have forborne to fight*— They were panic-struck when they found the Medes and Persians within their walls, and at once saw that resistance was useless.

Verse 31. *One post shall run to meet another*— As the city was taken by surprise, in the manner already related, so now messengers, one after

another, were despatched to give the king information of what was done; viz., that the city was taken at one end. Herodotus tells us that the extreme parts of the city were taken, before those of the center knew any thing of the invasion. Herodot. lib. 1:c. 191.

Verse 32. *That the passages are stopped*— Either the bridges or slips for boats, by which the inhabitants passed from one side to the other, and may mean the principal gates or passes in the city, which the victorious army would immediately seize, that they might prevent all communication between the inhabitants.

The reeds they have burned with fire— What this means I cannot tell, unless it refer to something done after the taking of the city. Setting fire to the reeds in the marshy ground, in order the better to clear the places, and give a freer passage to the water, that it may neither stagnate nor turn the solid ground into a marsh. Dr. Blayney thinks it refers to the firing of the houses, in order to throw the inhabitants into the greater confusion; but no historian makes any mention of burning the city, except what is said ver. 30, “They have burned her dwelling places;” and this may be a poetical expression. That they burnt nothing before they took the city must be evident from the circumstance of their taking the city by surprise, in the night time, with the greatest secrecy. Still there might have been some gates, barricadoes, or wooden works, serving for barracks or such like, which obstructed some of the great passages, which, when they had entered, they were obliged to burn, in order to get themselves a ready passage through the city. This is the more likely because this burning of reeds is connected with the stopping of the passages, burning the dwelling places, and breaking the bars.

Verse 33. *The daughter of Babylon is like a threshing floor*— The threshing wheel is gone over her; she is trodden under foot.

Verse 34. *Nebuchadrezzar-hath devoured me*— These are the words of Judea; he has taken away all my riches.

He hath cast me out.— He shall vomit all up; i.e., they shall be regained.

Verse 35. *The violence done to me-be upon Babylon, — and my blood upon the inhabitants of Chaldea*— Zion begins to speak, ver. 34, and ends with this verse. The answer of Jehovah begins with the next verse. Though the Chaldeans have been the instrument of God to punish the Jews, yet in return they, being themselves exceedingly wicked, shall suffer for all the carnage they have made, and for all the blood they have shed.

Verse 36. *I will dry up her sea*— Exhaust all her treasures.

Verse 37. *Without an inhabitant*.— See chap. 50:39.

Verse 39. *In their heat I will make their feasts*— It was on the night of a feast day, while their hearts were heated with wine and revelry, that Babylon was taken; see Daniel 5:1-3. This feast was held in honor of the goddess Sheshach, (or perhaps of Bel,) who is mentioned, ver. 41, as being taken with her worshippers. As it was in the night the city was taken, many had retired to rest, and never awoke; slain in their beds, they slept a perpetual sleep.

Verse 41. *How is Sheshach taken!*— Perhaps the city is here called by the name of its idol.

The praise of the whole earth— One of the seven wonders of the world;

moulder away until, in process of time, it shall not be discernible.

Verse 45. *My people, go ye out*— A warning to all the Jews in Babylon to leave the city, and escape for their lives.

Verse 46. *A rumor shall-come one year*— A year before the capture of the city there shall be a rumor of war, — and in that year Belshazzar was defeated by Cyrus. In the following year the city was taken.

Verse 48. *The heaven and the earth-shall sing for Babylon*— Its fall shall be a subject of universal rejoicing.

Verse 50. *Ye that have escaped the sword*— The Jews.

Let Jerusalem come into your mind.— Pray for its restoration; and embrace the first opportunity offered of returning thither.

Verse 51. *Strangers are come into the sanctuaries*— The lamentation of the pious Jews for the profanation of the temple by the Chaldeans.

Verse 53. *Though Babylon should mount up to heaven*— Though it were fortified even to the skies, it shall fall by the enemies that I will send against it.

Verse 55. *The great voice*— Its pride and insufferable boasting.

Verse 56. *The Lord God of recompenses*— The fall of Babylon is an act of Divine justice; whatever it suffers, it is in consequence of its crimes.

Verse 57. *I will make drunk her princes*— See on ver. 39.

Verse 58. *The broad walls of Babylon*— Herodotus, who saw these walls, says, “The city was a regular square, each side of which was one hand red and twenty stadia, the circumference four hundred and eighty stadia. It was surrounded by a wall fifty cubits broad, and two hundred cubits high; and each side had twenty-five brazen gates.”—Herod. lib. 1:c. 178. Had not Cyrus resorted to stratagem, humanly speaking, he could not

have taken this city. For the destruction of this wall and its very vestiges, see on Isaiah 13:19.

Verse 59. *The word which Jeremiah*— On account of the message sent by Jeremiah to the Jewish captives in Babylon.

Verse 60. *Wrote in a book*— Whether this book contained any more than is recorded in this place we do not know; probably it contained no more than what is found in verses 62-64. A book, ספר sepher, signifies, in Hebrew, any writing, great or small.

Verse 64. *Thus shall Babylon sink, etc.*— This is the emblem of its overthrow and irretrievable ruin. See Revelation 18:21, where we find that this is an emblem of the total ruin of mystical Babylon.

Herodotus relates a similar action of the Phocoeans, who, having resolved to leave their country, and never return to it again, μυδρον σιδηρον κατεπονωσαν, και ωμοσαν μη πριν ες φωκαιην ηξειν, πριν η τον μυδρον τουτον αναφηναι “threw a mass of iron into the sea, and swore that they would never return to Phocaea till that iron mass should rise and swim on the top.” The story is this: The Phocaeans, being besieged by Harpagus, general of the Persians, demanded one day’s truce to deliberate on the propositions he had made to them relative to their surrendering their city; and begged that in the mean while he would take off his army from the walls. Harpagus having consented, they carried their wives, children, and their most valuable effects, aboard their ships; then, throwing a mass of iron into the sea, bound themselves by an oath never to return till that iron should rise to the top and swim. See Herodotus, lib. 1:c. 165.

Horace refers to this in his epode Ad Populum Romanum, Epode 16:ver. 25:—

*Sed juremus in haec: simul imis saxa renarint
Vadis levata, ne redire sit nefas.*

*“As the Phocaeans oft for freedom bled,
At length with imprecated curses fled.”*

FRANCIS.

Thus far are the words of Jeremiah.— It appears that the following chapter is not the work of this prophet: it is not his style. The author of it writes Jehoiachin; Jeremiah writes him always Jeconiah, or Coniah. It is merely historical, and is very similar to 2 Kings 24:18-25:30. The author, whoever he was, relates the capture of Jerusalem, the fate of Zedekiah, the pillage and burning of the city and the temple. He mentions also certain persons of distinction who were slain by the Chaldeans. He mentions the number of the captives that were carried to Babylon at three different times; and concludes with the deliverance of King Jehoiachin from prison in Babylon, in which he had been for thirty-seven years. It is very likely that the whole chapter has been compiled from some chronicle of that time, or it was designed as a preface to the Book of the Lamentations; and would stand with great propriety before it, as it contains the facts on which that inimitable poem is built. Were it allowable, I would remove it to that place.

CHAPTER 52

This chapter was added after Jeremiah's time probably by Ezra, after the return from the captivity, of which it gives a short account, nearly the same as in 2 Kings 24:18-20, and 25: It is very properly subjoined to the preceding prophecies, in order to show how exactly they were fulfilled. It likewise forms a proper introduction to the following Lamentations, as it gives an account of the mournful events which gave rise to them.

Zedekiah's evil reign and rebellion against Nebuchadnezzar, 1-3.

Jerusalem is taken by the Chaldeans after a siege of eighteen months, 4-7. Zedekiah pursued and taken in the plains of Jericho, and his whole army dispersed, 8, 9. The king's sons and all the princes of Judah slain in Riblah, 10. Zedekiah has his eyes put out by order of the Chaldean monarch; and is afterward bound in chains, carried to Babylon, and imprisoned for life, 11. Nebuzar-adan, the captain of the guard, burns and spoils the city and temple, 12-19. The two pillars of the temple, with their dimensions and ornaments, 20-23. The officers of the temple, and several others, carried away captives into Babylon, and then slain by order of Nebuchadnezzar, 24-27. The number of Jews that Nebuchadnezzar carried away captive in the seventh year of his reign, 28; in his eighteenth year, 29; and in his twenty-third year 30.

Evil-merodach, the son of Nebuchadnezzar, in the year of his accession to the throne of Babylon, (which was in the thirty-seventh year of the captivity, and the one hundred and ninety-first from the building of Rome, according to the computation of Varro,) orders Jehoiachin to be taken out of prison, and treats him kindly for the remainder of his life, 31-34.

NOTES ON CHAP. 52

Verse 1. *Zedekiah was one and twenty years old*— See 2 Kings 24:18.

Verse 2. *And he did evil*— This and the following verse are the same as 2 Kings 24:19.

Verse 3. *Through the anger of the Lord*— Here is a king given to a people in God's anger, and taken away in his displeasure.

Verse 4. *Ninth year-tenth month*— Answering nearly to our January.

Verse 5. *So the city was besieged*— It held out one year and six months.

Verse 6. *And in the fourth month*— See the notes on chap. 39:1, etc. The fourth month answers nearly to our July.

Verse 8. *The army of the Chaldeans pursued*— See on 2 Kings 25:5.

Verse 9. *King of Babylon to Riblah*— See the note on chap. 39:5.

Verse 11. *He put out the eyes of Zedekiah*— See on chap. 39:7.

Verse 12. *Now in the fifth month*— Answering nearly to our August.

Verse 13. *And burned the house of the Lord*— Thus perished this magnificent structure, after it had stood four hundred and twenty-four years three months and eight days. It was built A.M. 2992, and destroyed A.M. 3416.

Verse 15. *Those that fell away*— The deserters to the Chaldeans during the siege.

Verse 16. *The poor of the land*— See on chap. 39:1.

Verse 17. *Also the pillars*— See on chap. 27:19.

Verses 18-23. In reference to these verses see the parallel texts in the margin, the various readings there, and the notes.

Verse 24. *The second priest*— See the note on 2 Kings 25:18.

The three keepers— The priests who stood at the door to receive the

offerings of the people, see 2 Kings 20:9, and 23:4.

Verse 25. *Seven men-that were near the king's person*— These were privy counsellors.

Verses 28-30. On these verses Dr. Blayney has some sensible remarks; I will extract the substance. These verses are not inserted in 2 Kings 25: Are we to conclude from these verses that the whole number of the Jews which Nebuchadnezzar, in all his expeditions, carried away, was no more than four thousand six hundred? This cannot be true; for he carried away more than twice that number at one time and this is expressly said to have been in the eighth year of his reign, 2 Kings 24:12-16. Before that time he had carried off a number of captives from Jerusalem, in the first year of his reign, among whom were Daniel and his companions, Daniel 1:3-6. These are confessedly not noticed here. And as the taking and burning of Jerusalem is in this very chapter said to have been in the fourth and fifth months of the nineteenth year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, those who were carried into captivity at the date of those events cannot possibly be the same with those that are said to be carried away either in the eighteenth or twenty-third year of that prince. Nor, indeed, is it credible that the number carried away at the time that the city was taken, and the whole country reduced, could be so few as eight hundred and thirty-two, (see ver. 29;) supposing a mistake in the date of the year, which some are willing to do without sufficient grounds.

Here then we have three deportations, and those the most considerable ones, in the first, in the eighth, and nineteenth years of Nebuchadnezzar, sufficiently distinguished from those in the seventh, eighteenth, and twenty-third years. So that it seems most reasonable to conclude with Abp. Usher, in *Chronologia Sacra*, that by the latter three the historian meant to point out deportations of a minor kind, not elsewhere noticed in direct terms in Scripture.

The first of these, said to have been in the seventh year of Nebuchadnezzar, was one of those that had been picked up in several parts of Judah by the band of Chaldeans, Syrians, and others, whom the king of Babylon sent against the land previously to his own coming, 2

Kings 24:2.

That in the eighteenth year corresponds with the time when the Chaldean army broke off the siege before Jerusalem, and marched to meet the Egyptian army, at which time they might think it proper to send off the prisoners that were in camp, under a guard to Babylon.

And the last, in the twenty-third year of Nebuchadnezzar, was when that monarch, being engaged in the siege of Tyre, sent off Nebuzaradan against the Moabites, Ammonites, and other neighboring nations, who at the same time carried away the gleanings of Jews that remained in their own land, amounting in all to no more than seven hundred and forty-five.

Josephus speaks of this expedition against the Moabites and Ammonites, which he places in the twenty-third year of Nebuchadnezzar; but mentions nothing done in the land of Israel at that time. Only he says that after the conquest of those nations, Nebuchadnezzar carried his victorious arms against Egypt, which he in some measure reduced, and carried the Jews whom he found there captives to Babylon. But the Egyptian expedition was not till the twenty-seventh year of Jehoiachin's captivity, i.e., the thirty-fifth of Nebuchadnezzar, as may be collected from Ezekiel 29:17; so that those who were carried away in the twenty-third year were not from Egypt, but were, as before observed, the few Jews that remained in the land of Judah.

Verse 31. *In the twelfth month*— Answering nearly to our twenty-fifth of April, A.M. 3442.

Lifted up the head of Jehoiachin— This phrase is taken from Genesis 40:13. It is founded on the observation that those who are in sorrow hold down their heads, and when they are comforted, or the cause of their sorrow removed, they lift up their heads. The Hebrew phrase, lift up the head, signifies to comfort, cheer, make happy.

Verse 32. *Spake kindly*— Conversed freely with him.

Set his throne— Gave him a more respectable seat than any of the captive

princes, or better than even his own princes had, probably near his person.

Verse 33. *And changed his prison garments*— That is, Jehoiachin changed his own garments, that he might be suited in that respect to the state of his elevation. Kings also, in token of favor, gave caftans or robes to those whom they wish to honor.

And he did continually eat bread before him— Was a constant guest at the king's table.

Verse 34. *And there was a continual diet given him*— This was probably a ration allowed by the king for the support of Jehoiachin's household. For other particulars, see the note on 2 Kings 25:30.

All the days of his life.— I believe these words have been by mistake added from the preceding verse. There, they are proper; here, they are tautological. They are wanting in the Septuagint and in the Arabic.

The preceding words, **עד יום מותו** *ad yom motho*, “to the day of his death,” are wanting in two of De Rossi's and one of Kennicott's MSS.

Coverdale ends thus: — All the days of his life untill he died. This is better than the common Version.

Immediately after this verse my old MS. Bible adds the following words: \\And done is aftir that into caitifte is brought Israel, and Jerusalem is bestroide, satte Jeremye the prophet weepund, and weiled with this lamentation Jerusalem; and with bitter inwit sighand and criand weilawai, seide. Then follows in red letters: Here beginneth the Lamentation of Jeremye, that is intitule Cenoth; with the sortynge out of Ebrue letters. ALEPH: How sitteth aloon the city, etc. See something of a similar kind from other authorities, at the beginning of Lamentations.

MASORETIC NOTES.

Number of verses in this Book, 1365.

Middle verse, chap. 28:11.

Masoretic sections, 31.

INTRODUCTION

TO THE

LAMENTATIONS OF JEREMIAH

THIS book, like the several books of the Pentateuch, is denominated in Hebrew **עִיכָה** eicah, how, from its first word; and sometimes **קִינּוֹת** kinnoth, lamentations, from its subject. In the Septuagint it is termed *yrhnoi tou ieremiou*, for the same reason. The Syriac and Arabic copy or follow the Septuagint; and so does the Vulgate, from the Lamentations of which, the book has that name which it bears in our language. In the Chaldee it has no name; and in it, and perhaps anciently in the Hebrew, it was written consecutively with the last chapter of Jeremiah.

It is one of the books of the **מְגִלּוֹת** Megilloth, or Roll, among the Jews; and because it relates to the ruin of their affairs, and contains promises of restoration, it is peculiarly prized, and frequently read. The five Megilloth are: Ecclesiastes, Canticles, Lamentations, Ruth, and Esther.

There has been little difference among learned men concerning the author of this book. The whole current of antiquity and modern times has pointed out Jeremiah as the writer: of this the style is a sufficient evidence. Mr. John Henry Pareau, in a Dissertation prefixed to his Translation and Notes on this book, (8vo. Lugd. Bat. 1790,) has proved this point amply from a general collation of the prophecy of Jeremiah with select passages in this book. I have heard of but one learned man who has entertained serious doubts on the subject, Mr. Herman Van der Hardt, who has supposed the five chapters were written by Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego, and Jeconiah. To this opinion I suppose none has ever been converted.

There has been more difference of opinion relative to the subject and occasion. Some have thought the book was composed on the death of Josiah; others that it was composed on occasion of the destruction of Jerusalem, and the various desolations connected with it. To this all its parts and its general phraseology seem best to apply; and this is the sentiment most generally embraced at present. This will receive much proof from a minute consideration of the book itself.

The composition of this poem is what may be called very technical. Every chapter, except the last, is an acrostic. Of the two first, each verse begins with a several letter of the Hebrew alphabet, in the order of the letters, with this exception, that in the second, third, and fourth chapters, the **ד** phe is put before the **א** ain; whereas in all the acrostic Psalms the latter preceded the former, as it does in all grammars of the Hebrew language. In the first and second chapters each verse is composed of three hemistichs or half verses, except the seventh verse of the first, and the nineteenth of the second chapter, which have each four hemistichs.

The third chapter contains sixty-four verses, each, as before, formed of three hemistichs, but with this difference, that each hemistich begins with the same letter, so that the whole alphabet is thrice repeated in this chapter.

The fourth chapter is made up of twenty-two verses, according to the number of the Hebrew letters; but the composition is different from all the rest, for each verse consists of only two hemistichs, and those much shorter than any in the preceding chapters.

I have called this an inimitable poem; better judges are of the same opinion. "Never," says Bishop Lowth, "was there a more rich and elegant variety of beautiful images and adjuncts arranged together within so small a compass, nor more happily chosen and applied."

"One would think," says Dr. South, "that every letter was written with a tear; every word, the sound of a breaking heart: that the author was compacted of sorrows; disciplined to grief from his infancy; one who never breathed but in sighs, nor spoke but in a groan."

“Nor can we too much admire,” says Dr. Blayney, “the full and graceful flow of that pathetic eloquence in which the author pours forth the effusions of a patriotic heart, and piously weeps over the ruins of his venerable country. But it was observed before that the prophet’s peculiar talent lay in working up and expressing the passions of grief and pity; and, unhappily for him as a man and a citizen, he met with a subject but too well calculated to give his genius its full display.”

David in several places has forcibly depicted the sorrows of a heart oppressed with penitential sorrow; but where, in a composition of such length, have bodily misery and mental agony been more successfully painted? All the expressions and images of sorrow are here exhibited in various combinations, and in various points of view. Misery has no expression that the author of the Lamentations has not employed. Patriots! you who tell us you burn for your country’s welfare, look at the prophecies and history of this extraordinary man; look at his Lamentations; take him through his life to his death, and learn from him what true patriotism means! The man who watched, prayed, and lived for the welfare of his country; who choose to share her adversities, her sorrows, her wants, her afflictions, and disgrace, where he might have been a companion of princes, and have sat at the table of kings; who only ceased to live for his country when he ceased to breathe;-that was a patriot, in comparison with whom almost all others are obscured, minished, and brought low, or are totally annihilated!

THE

LAMENTATIONS

OF

JEREMIAH

Chronological notes relative to the Book of the Lamentations

- Year from the Creation, according to Archbishop Usher, 3416.
- Year of the Jewish era of the world, 3173.
- Year from the Deluge, 1760.
- First year of the forty-eighth Olympiad.
- Year from the building of Rome, according to the Varronian account, 166.
- Year before the birth of Christ, 584.
- Year before the vulgar era of Christ's nativity, 588.
- Year of the Julian Period, 4126.
- Year of the era of Nabonassar, 160.
- Cycle of the Sun, 10.
- Cycle of the Moon, 3.
- Second year after the fourth Sabbatic year after the seventeenth Jewish jubilee, according to Helvicus.
- Twenty-ninth year of Tarquinius Priscus, the fifth king of the Romans: this was the seventy-ninth year before the commencement of the consular government.
- Thirty-eighth year of Cyaxares or Cyaraxes, the fourth king of Media.
- Eighteenth year of Agasicles, king of Lacedaemon, of the family of the Proclidae.
- Twentieth year of Leon, king of Lacedaemon, of the family of the

Eurysthenidae.

- Thirty-second year of Alyattes II., king of Lydia. This was the father of the celebrated Croesus.
- Fifteenth year of AEROPAS, the seventh king of Macedon.
- Nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon.
- Eleventh year of Zedekiah, the last king of Judah.

CHAPTER 1

The prophet begins with lamenting the dismal reverse of fortune that befell his country, confessing at the same time that her calamities were the just consequence of her sins, 1-6. Jerusalem herself is then personified and brought forward to continue the sad complaint, and to solicit the mercy of God, 7-22.

In all copies of the Septuagint, whether of the Roman or Alexandrian editions, the following words are found as a part of the text: kai egeneto meta to aicmalwtisyhnai ton israhel, kai ierousalhm erhmwyhnai, ekayisen ieremiav klaiwn, kai eyrhnhsen ton yrhnon touton epi ierousalhm, kai eipenù- “And it came to pass after Israel had been carried away captive, and Jerusalem was become desolate, that Jeremiah sat weeping: and he lament ed with this lamentation over Jerusalem; and he said.”

The Vulgate has the same, with some variations: — “Et factum est, postquam in captivitatem redactus est Israel, et Jerusalem deserta est, sedit Jeremias propheta fiens, et planxit lamentations hac in Jerusalem, et amaro animo suspirans et ejulans, digit.” The translation of this, as given in the first translation of the Bible into English, may be found at the end of Jeremiah, taken from an ancient MS. in my own possession.

I subjoin another taken from the first PRINTED edition of the English Bible, that by Coverdale, 1535. “And it came to passe, (after Israel was brought into captivitytie, and Jerusalem destroyed;) that Jeremy the prophet sat weeping, mournynge, and makeinge his mone in Jerusalem; so that with an hevvy herte he sighed and sobbed, sayenge.”

Matthew's Bible, printed in 1549, refines upon this: "It happened after Israell was brought into captivite, and Jerusalem destroyed, that Jeremy the prophet sate wepyng, and sorrowfully bewayled Jerusalem; and syghynge and hewlynge with an hevye and woofull hert, sayde."

Becke's Bible of the same date, and Cardmarden's of 1566, have the same, with a trifling change in the orthography.

On this Becke and others have the following note: — "These words are read in the LXX. interpreters: but not in the Hebrue."

All these show that it was the ancient opinion that the Book of Lamentations was composed, not over the death of Josiah, but on account of the desolations of Israel and Jerusalem.

The Arabic copies the Septuagint. The Syriac does not acknowledge it; and the Chaldee has these words only: "Jeremiah the great priest and prophet said."

NOTES ON CHAP. 1

Verse 1. *How doth the city sit solitary*— Sitting down, with the elbow on the knee, and the head supported by the hand, without any company, unless an oppressor near, — all these were signs of mourning and distress. The coin struck by Vespasian on the capture of Jerusalem, on the obverse of which there is a palm-tree, the emblem of Judea, and under it a woman, the emblem of Jerusalem, sitting, leaning as before described, with the legend *Judea capta*, illustrates this expression as well as that in Isaiah 47:1. See the note on Isaiah 3:26, where the subject is farther explained.

Become as a widow— Having lost her king. Cities are commonly described as the mothers of their inhabitants, the kings as husbands, and the princes as children. When therefore they are bereaved of these, they are represented as widows, and childless.

The Hindoo widow, as well as the Jewish, is considered the most destitute and wretched of all human beings. She has her hair cut short, throws off all ornaments, eats the coarsest food, fasts often, and is all but an outcast in the family of her late husband.

Is she become tributary!— Having no longer the political form of a nation; and the remnant that is left paying tribute to a foreign and heathen conqueror.

Verse 2. Among all her lovers— Her allies; her friends, instead of helping her, have helped her enemies. Several who sought her friendship when she was in prosperity, in the time of David and Solomon, are now among her enemies.

Verse 3. Between the straits.— She has been brought into such difficulties, that it was impossible for her to escape. Has this any reference to the circumstances in which Zedekiah and the princes of Judah endeavored to escape from Jerusalem, by the way of the gates between the two walls? Jeremiah 52:7.

Verse 4. The ways of Zion do mourn— A fine prosopopoeia. The ways in which the people trod coming to the sacred solemnities, being now no longer frequented, are represented as shedding tears; and the gates themselves partake of the general distress. All poets of eminence among the Greeks and Romans have recourse to this image. So Moschus, in his Epitaph on Bion, ver. 1-3:—

ailina moi stronaceite napai, kai dwrion udwr
 kai potamoi klaioite ton imeroenta biwna.
 nun futa moi muresye, kai alsea nun goaoisye, k. t. l.

*“Ye winds, with grief your waving summits bow,
Ye Dorian fountains, murmur as ye flow;
From weeping urns your copious sorrows shed,
And bid the rivers mourn for Bion dead.
Ye shady groves, in robes of sable hue,
Bewail, ye plants, in pearly drops of dew;
Ye drooping flowers, diffuse a languid breath,
And die with sorrow, at sweet Bion’s death.”*

FAWKES.

So Virgil, AEn. vii., ver. 759:—

*Te nemus Anguitiae, vitrea te Fucinus unda
Te liquidī flevere lacus.*

“For thee, wide echoing, sighed th’ Anguitian woods; For thee, in murmurs, wept thy native floods.”

And more particularly on the death of Daphnis, Eclog. 5:ver. 24:—

*Non ulli pastos illis egere diebus Frigida,
Daphni, boves ad flumina: nulla neque amnem
Libavit quadrupes, nec graminis attigit herbam.
Daphni, tuum Poenos etiam ingemuisse leones
Interitum, montesque feri, sylvaeque loquuntur.*

*“The swains forgot their sheep, nor near the brink
Of running waters brought their herds to drink:
The thirsty cattle of themselves abstained
From water, and their grassy fare disdained.
The death of Daphnis woods and hills deplore;
The Libyan lions hear, and hearing roar.”*

DRYDEN.

Verse 5. *Her adversaries are the chief*— They have now supreme

dominion over the whole land.

Verse 7. *Did mock at her Sabbaths.*— מִשְׁבַּתָּהּ mishbatteha. Some contend that Sabbaths are not intended here. The Septuagint has katoikesia authv, “her habitation;” the Chaldee, **עַל טוּבָהָא** al tubaha, “her good things;” the Syriac, [S] al toboroh, “her breach.” The Vulgate and Arabic agree with the Hebrew. Some of my oldest MSS. have the word in the plural number, מִשְׁבַּתֵּיהָ mishbatteyha, “her Sabbaths.” A multitude of Kennicott’s MSS. have the same reading. The Jews were despised by the heathen for keeping the Sabbath. Juvenal mocks them on that account:—

— *cui septima quaeque fuit lux*
Ignava et partem vitae non attigit ullam.

Sat. v.

*“To whom every seventh day was a blank,
and formed not any part of their life.”*

St. Augustine represents Seneca as doing the same: — Inutiliter id eos facere affirmans, quod septimani ferme partem aetatis suae perdent vacando, et multa in tempore urgentia non agendo laedantur. “That they lost the seventh part of their life in keeping their Sabbaths; and injured themselves by abstaining from the performance of many necessary things in such times.” He did not consider that the Roman calendar and customs gave them many more idle days than God had prescribed in Sabbaths to the Jews. The Sabbath is a most wise and beneficent ordinance.

Verse 9. *She remembereth not her last end*— Although evident marks of her pollution appeared about her, and the land was defiled by her sinfulness even to its utmost borders, she had no thought or consideration of what must be the consequence of all this at the last. — Blayney.

Verse 11. *They have given their pleasant things*— Jerusalem is compared to a woman brought into great straits, who parts with her jewels and trinkets in order to purchase by them the necessaries of life.

Verse 12. *Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?*— The desolations and distress brought upon this city and its inhabitants had scarcely any parallel. Excessive abuse of God's accumulated mercies calls for singular and exemplary punishment.

Verse 14. *The yoke of my transgressions*— I am now tied and bound by the chain of my sins; and it is so wreathed, so doubled and twisted round me, that I cannot free myself. A fine representation of the miseries of a penitent soul, which feels that nothing but the pitifulness of God's mercy can loose it.

Verse 15. *Called an assembly*— The Chaldean army, composed of various nations, which God commissioned to destroy Jerusalem.

Verse 17. *Zion spreadeth forth her hands*— Extending the hands is the form in supplication.

Jerusalem is as a menstruous woman— To whom none dared to approach, either to help or comfort, because of the law, Leviticus 15:19-27.

Verse 19. *I called for my lovers*— My allies; the Egyptians and others.

Verse 20. *Abroad the sword bereaveth*— WAR is through the country; and at home death; the pestilence and famine rage in the city; calamity in every shape is fallen upon me.

Virgil represents the calamities of Troy under the same image:—

— *Nec soli poenas dant sanguine Teucri:
Quondam etiam victis redit in prae cordia virtus;
Victoresque cadunt Danaï. Crudelis ubique
Luctus, ubique Pavor, et plurima mortis imago.*

Æneid. lib. 2:366.

*“Not only Trojans fall; but, in their turn,
The vanquished triumph, and the victors mourn.
Ours take new courage from despair and night;
Confused the fortune is, confused the fight.
All parts resound with tumults, complaints, and fears;
And grisly death in sundry shapes appears.”*

DRYDEN.

So Milton—

*“ — Despair
Tended the sick, busiest from couch to couch;
And over them triumphant Death his dart Shook.”*

Par. Lost, B. 11:489.

Jeremiah, chap. 9:21, uses the same image:—

*Death is come up into our windows:
He hath entered our palaces,
To cut off the infants without,
And the young men in our streets.*

So Silius Italicus, II. 548:—

*Mors graditur, vasto pandens cava guttura rletu,
Casuroque inhians populo.*

*“Death stalks along, and opens his hideous
throat to gulp down the people.”*

Verse 21. *They have heard that I sigh*— My affliction is public enough; but no one comes to comfort me.

They are glad that thou hast done it— On the contrary, they exult in my misery; and they see that THOU hast done what they were incapable of

performing.

Thou wilt bring the day that thou hast called, and they shall be like unto me.— Babylon shall be visited in her turn; and thy judgments poured out upon her shall equal her state with my own. See the last six chapters of the preceding prophecy for the accomplishment of this prediction.

Verse 22. *Let all their wickedness come before thee*— That is, Thou wilt call their crimes also into remembrance; and thou wilt do unto them by siege, sword, famine, and captivity, what thou hast done to me. Though thy judgments, because of thy long-suffering, are slow; yet, because of thy righteousness, they are sure.

For my sighs are many— My desolations continue; and my heart is faint—my political and physical strength almost totally destroyed.

Imprecations in the sacred writings are generally to be understood as declarative of the evils they indicate; or, that such evils will take place. No prophet of God ever wished desolation on those against whom he was directed to prophesy.

CHAPTER 2

The prophet shows the dire effects of the Divine anger in the miseries brought on his country; the unparalleled calamities of which he charges, on a great measure, on the false prophets, 1-14. In thus desperate condition, the astonishment and by-word of all who see her, Jerusalem is directed to sue earnestly for mercy and pardon, 15-22.

NOTES ON CHAP. 2

Verse 1. *How hath the Lord covered the daughter of Zion with a cloud—* The women in the eastern countries wear veils, and often very costly ones. Here, Zion is represented as being veiled by the hand of God's judgment. And what is the veil? A dark cloud, by which she is entirely obscured.

Instead of אֲדֹנָי Adonai, lord, twenty-four of Dr. Kennicott's MSS., and some of the most ancient of my own, read יְהוָה Yehovah, LORD, as in ver. 2.

The beauty of Israel— His Temple.

His footstool

Hath drawn back his right hand— He did not support us when our enemies came against us.

Verse 4. *He hath bent his bow—he stood with his right hand*— This is the attitude of the archer. He first bends his bow; then sets his arrow upon the string; and, lastly, placing his right hand on the lower end of the arrow, in connection with the string, takes his aim, and prepares to let fly.

Verse 6. *As if it were of a garden*— “As it were the garden of his own hedging.”-Blayney.

The Lord hath caused the solemn feasts— By delivering us up into the hands of the enemy our religious worship is not only suspended, but all Divine ordinances are destroyed.

Verse 7. *They have made a noise in the house of the Lord*— Instead of the silver trumpets of the sanctuary, nothing but the sounds of warlike instruments are to be heard.

Verse 8. *He hath stretched out a line*— The line of devastation; marking what was to be pulled down and demolished.

Verse 9. *Her gates are sunk into the ground*— The consequence of their being long thrown down and neglected. From this it appears that the captivity had already lasted a considerable time.

Her king and her princes are among the Gentiles— Zedekiah and many of the princes were then prisoners in Babylon, another proof that the captivity had endured some time, unless all this be spoken prophetically, of what should be done.

Verse 10. *Sit upon the ground*— See the note on chap. 1:1.

Keep silence— No words can express their sorrows: small griefs are eloquent, great ones dumb.

Verse 11. *Swoon in the streets of the city.*— Through the excess of the famine.

Verse 12. *When their soul was poured out into their mothers' bosom.*— When, in endeavoring to draw nourishment from the breasts of their exhausted mothers, they breathed their last in their bosoms! How dreadfully afflicting was this!

Verse 13. *What thing shall I take*— Or, rather, as Dr. Blayney, “What shall I urge to thee?” How shall I comfort thee?

Thy breach is great like the sea— Thou hast a flood of afflictions, a sea of troubles, an ocean of miseries.

Verse 14. *They have not discovered thine iniquity*— They did not reprove for sin, they flattered them in their transgressions; and instead of turning away thy captivity, by turning thee from thy sins, they have pretended visions of good in thy favor, and false burdens for thy enemies.

Verse 15. *The perfection of beauty*— This probably only applied to the temple. Jerusalem never was a fine or splendid city; but the temple was most assuredly the most splendid building in the world.

Verse 16. *This is the day that we looked for*— Jerusalem was the envy of the surrounding nations: they longed for its destruction, and rejoiced when it took place.

Verse 17. *The Lord hate done that*— This and the sixteenth verse should be interchanged, to follow the order of the letters in the Hebrew alphabet; as the sixteenth has פ phe for its acrostic letter, and the seventeenth has א ain, which should precede the other in the order of the alphabet.

Verse 18. *O wall of the daughter of Zion*— חומת בת ציון chomath bath tsiyon, wall of the daughter of Zion. These words are probably those of the passengers, who appear to be affected by the desolations of the land; and they address the people, and urge them to plead with God day and night for their restoration. But what is the meaning of wall of the daughter

of Zion? I answer I do not know. It is certainly harsh to say “O wall of the daughter of Zion, let tears run down like a river day and night.” Zion’s ways may lament, and her streets mourn; but how the walls can be said to weep is not so easy to be understood, because there is no parallel for it. One of my most ancient MSS. omits the three words; and in it the text stands thus: “Their heart cried unto the Lord, Let tears run down like a river day and night; give thyself no rest,” etc.

Let not the apple of thine eye cease.— **בַּת עַי** bath ayin means either the pupil of the eye, or the tears. Tears are the produce of the eye, and are here elegantly termed the daughter of the eye. Let not thy tears cease. But with what propriety can we say to the apple or pupil of the eye, Do not cease! Tears are most certainly meant.

Verse 19. Arise, cry out in the night— This seems to refer to Jerusalem besieged. Ye who keep the night watches, pour out your hearts before the Lord, instead of calling the time of night, etc.; or, when you call it, send up a fervent prayer to God for the safety and relief of the place.

Verse 20. Consider to whom thou hast done this— Perhaps the best sense of this difficult verse is this: “Thou art our Father, we are thy children; wilt thou destroy thy own offspring? Was it ever heard that a mother devoured her own child, a helpless infant of a span long?” That it was foretold that there should be such distress in the siege, — that mothers should be obliged to eat their own children, is evident enough from Leviticus 26:29; Deuteronomy 28:53, 56, 57; but the former view of the subject seems the most natural and is best supported by the context. The priest and the prophet are slain; the young and old lie on the ground in the streets; the virgins and young men are fallen by the sword. “THOU hast slain them in the day of thine anger; THOU hast killed, and not pitied.” See chap. 4:10.

Verse 22. Thou hast called as in a solemn day— It is by thy influence alone that so many enemies are called together at one time; and they have so hemmed us in that none could escape, and none remained unslain or uncaptivated, Perhaps the figure is the collecting of the people in Jerusalem on one of the solemn annual festivals. God has called terrors

together to feast on Jerusalem, similar to the convocation of the people from all parts of the land to one of those annual festivals. The indiscriminate slaughter of young and old, priest and prophet, all ranks and conditions, may be illustrated by the following verses from Lucan, which appear as if a translation of the nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first verses of this chapter:—

*Nobilitas cum plebe perit; lateque vagatur
 Ensis, et a nullo revocatum est pectore ferrum.
 Stat cruor in Templis; multaque rubentia caede
 Lubrica saxa madent. Nulli sua profuit aetas.
 Non senes extremum piguit vergentibus annis
 Praecipitasse diem; nec primo in limine vitae,
 Infanti miseri nascentia rumpere fata.*

Pharsal. lib. ii., 101.

*“With what a slide devouring slaughter passed,
 And swept promiscuous orders in her haste;
 O’er noble and plebeian ranged the sword,
 Nor pity nor remorse one pause afford!
 The sliding streets with blood were clotted o’er,
 And sacred temples stood in pools of gore.
 The ruthless steel, impatient of delay,
 Forbade the sire to linger out his day:
 It struck the bending father to the earth,
 And cropped the wailing infant at its birth.”*

ROWE.

CHAPTER 3

The prophet, by enumerating his own severe trials, 1-20, and showing his trust in God, 21, encourages his people to the like resignation and trust in the Divine and never-failing mercy, 22-27. He vindicates the goodness of God in all his dispensations, and the unreasonableness of murmuring under them, 28-39. He recommends self-examination and repentance; and then, from their experience of former deliverances from God, encourages them to look for pardon for their sins, and retribution to their enemies, 40-66.

NOTES ON CHAP. 3

Verse 1. *I am the man that hath seen affliction*

Verse 12. *He hath bent his bow, and set me as a mark for the arrow.*— One might conjecture that the following thought in the Toozek i Teemour was borrowed from this:—

“One addressed the caliph Aaly, and said, ‘If the heavens were a bow, and the earth the cord thereof; if calamities were arrows, man the butt for those arrows; and the holy blessed God the unerring marksman; where could the sons of Adam flee for succor?’ The caliph replied, ‘The children of Adam must flee unto the Lord.’” This was the state of poor Jerusalem. It seemed as a butt for all God’s arrows; and each arrow of calamity entered into the soul, for God was the unerring marksman.

Verse 13. *The arrows of his quiver*— **בני אשפתו** beney aspatho, “The sons of his quiver.” The issue or effect; the subject, adjunct, or accident, or produce of a thing, is frequently denominated its son or child. So arrows that issue from a quiver are here termed the sons of the quiver.

Verse 15. *He hath filled me with bitterness*— **במרורים** bimrorim, with bitternesses, bitter upon bitter.

He hath made me drunken with wormwood.— I have drunk the cup of misery till I am intoxicated with it. Almost in all countries, and in all languages, bitterness is a metaphor to express trouble and affliction. The reason is, there is nothing more disagreeable to the taste than the one; and nothing more distressing to the mind than the other. An Arabic poet. Amralkeis, one of the writers of the Moallakat, terms a man grievously afflicted [A] a pounder of wormwood.

Verse 16. *He hath also broken my teeth with gravel stones*— What a figure to express disgust, pain, and the consequent incapacity of taking food for the support of life; a man, instead of bread, being obliged to eat small pebbles till all his teeth are broken to pieces by endeavoring to grind them. One can scarcely read this description without feeling the toothache. The next figure is not less expressive.

He hath covered me with ashes.— **הכפישני באפר** hichphishani beeper,

“he hath plunged me into the dust.” To be thrown into a mass or bed of perfect dust, where the eyes are blinded by it, the ears stopped, and the mouth and lungs filled at the very first attempt to respire after having been thrown into it—what a horrible idea of suffocation and drowning! One can scarcely read this without feeling a suppression of breath, or a stricture upon the lungs! Did ever man paint sorrow like this man?

Verse 17. *Those hast removed my soul*— Prosperity is at such an utter distance from me, that it is impossible I should ever reach it; and as to happiness, I have forgotten whether I have ever tasted of it.

Verse 18. *And my hope*— That first, that last support of the miserable—it is gone! it is perished! The sovereign God alone can revive it.

Verse 20. *By soul-is humbled in me*.— It is evident that in the preceding verses there is a bitterness of complaint against the bitterness of adversity, that is not becoming to man when under the chastising hand of God; and, while indulging this feeling, all hope fled. Here we find a different feeling; he humbles himself under the mighty hand of God, and then his hope revives, ver. 21.

Verse 22. *It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed*— Being thus humbled, and seeing himself and his sinfulness in a proper point of view, he finds that God, instead of dealing with him in judgment, has dealt with him in mercy; and that though the affliction was excessive, yet it seas less than his iniquity deserved. If, indeed, any sinner be kept out of hell, it is because God's compassion faileth not.

Verse 23. *They are new every morning*— Day and night proclaim the mercy and compassion of God. Who could exist throughout the day, if there were not a continual superintending Providence? Who could be preserved in the night, if the Watchman of Israel ever slumbered or slept?

Verse 24. *The Lord is my portion*— See on Psalm 119:67.

Verse 26. *It is good that a man should both hope*— Hope is essentially necessary to faith; he that hopes not, cannot believe; if there be no

expectation, there can be no confidence. When a man hopes for salvation, he should not only wait for it, but use every means that may lead to it; for hope cannot live, if there be no exercise. If hope become impatient, faith will be impossible: for who can believe for his salvation when his mind is agitated? He must therefore quietly wait. He must expect, and yet be dumb, as the words imply; ever feeling his utter unworthiness; and, without murmuring, struggle into life.

Verse 27. *That he bear the yoke in his youth.*— Early habits, when good, are invaluable. Early discipline is equally so. He who has not got under wholesome restraint in youth will never make a useful man, a good man, nor a happy man.

Verse 28. *He sitteth alone*— He has learned that necessary lesson of independence, that shows him how he is to serve himself; to give no trouble to others; and keep his troubles, as far as possible, in his own bosom.

Verse 29. *He putteth his mouth in the dust*— Lives in a state of deep humility.

If so be there may be hope.— Because there is room for hope.

Verse 30. *He giveth his cheek to him that smiteth*— He has that love that is not provoked. He is not quarrelsome, nor apt to resent injuries; he suffers long and is kind. Or, it may be rendered, “let him give his cheek.”

He is filled full with reproach.— Though all this take place, yet let his “trust be in God, who will not cast off for ever.” God will take his part, and bring him safely through all hardships.

Verse 31. *The Lord*— אֲדֹנָי Adonai; but one of my ancient MSS. has יהוה Jehovah. The above verse is quoted in reference to our Lord’s passion, by Matthew 26:62.

Verse 33. *For he doth not afflict willingly*— It is no pleasure to God to afflict men. He takes no delight in our pain and misery: yet, like a tender

and intelligent parent, he uses the rod; not to gratify himself, but to profit and save us.

Verse 34. *To crush under his feet*— He can neither gain credit nor pleasure in trampling upon those who are already bound, and in suffering; such he knows to be the state of man here below. From which it most assuredly follows, that God never afflicts us but for our good, nor chastises but that we may be partakers of his holiness.

All the prisoners of the earth— By the prisoners of the earth, or land, Dr. Blayney understands those insolvent debtors who were put in prison, and there obliged to work out the debt. Yet this is mercy in comparison with those who put them in prison, and keep them there, when they know that it is impossible, from the state of the laws, to lessen the debt by their confinement.

In verses 34, 35, and 36, certain acts of tyranny, malice, and injustice are specified, which men often indulge themselves in the practice of towards one another, but which the Divine goodness is far from countenancing or approving by any similar conduct. — Blayney.

Verse 35. *To turn aside the right of a man*— To make a man lose his right, because one of the higher orders opposes him. Dr. Blayney thinks that **עליו** elyon, instead of being referred to God, should be considered as pointing out one of the chief of the people. I do not see that we gain any thing by this. The evil fact is, turning aside the right of a man; and the aggravation of it is, doing it before the face of the Most High; that is, in a court of justice, where God is ever considered to be present.

Verse 36. *To subvert a man in his cause*— To prevent his having justice done him in a lawsuit, etc., by undue interference, as by suborning false witnesses, or exerting any kind of influence in opposition to truth and right. — Blayney.

The Lord approved not.— Instead of **אֲדֹנָי** Adonai, seventeen MSS., of Kennicott's, and one ancient of my own, have **יְהוָה** Yehovah. Approveth

not, לֹא רָאָה lo raah, doth not see, turns away his face from it, abhors it.

Verse 39. *Wherefore doth a living man complain*— He who has his life still lent to him has small cause of complaint. How great soever his affliction may be, he is still alive; therefore, he may seek and find mercy unto eternal life. Of this, death would deprive him; therefore let not a living man complain.

Verse 40. *Let us search*— How are we to get the pardon of our sins? The prophet tells us: 1. Let us examine ourselves. 2. “Let us turn again to the Lord.” 3. “Let us lift up our heart;” let us make fervent prayer and supplication for mercy. 4. “Let us lift up our hand;” let us solemnly promise to be his, and bind ourselves in a covenant to be the Lord’s only: so much lifting up the hand to God implies. Or, let us put our heart on our hand, and offer it to God; so some have translated this clause. 5. “We have transgressed;” let our confession of sin be fervent and sincere. 6. And to us who profess Christianity it may be added, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ as having died for thee; and thou shalt not perish, but have everlasting life. Verses 46, 47, 48, beginning with פֶּה phe, should, as to the order of the alphabet, follow 49, 50, 51, which begin with אֵין ain, which in

Verse 56. *Hide not thine ear at my breathing*— He dared not even to complain, nor to cry, nor to pray aloud: he was obliged to whisper his prayer to God. It was only a breathing.

Verse 57. *Fear not.*— How powerful is this word when spoken by the Spirit of the Lord to a disconsolate heart. To every mourner we may say, on the authority of God, Fear not! God will plead thy cause, and redeem thy soul.

Verse 60. *Thou hast seen-all their imaginations*— Every thing is open to the eye of God. Distressed soul! though thou knowest not what thy enemies meditate against thee; yet he who loves thee does, and will infallibly defeat all their plots, and save thee.

Verse 66. *Give them sorrow of heart*— They shall have a callous heart, covered with obstinacy, and thy execration. The former is their state, the latter their fate. This is the consequence of their hardening their hearts from thy fear. Blayney translates, “Thou wilt give with a hearty concordance thy curse unto them.” That is, Thou wilt give it to them freely, and without reserve; intimating that God felt no longer any bowels of compassion for them. Formerly he inflicted punishments with reluctance, while there was any hope of amendment: but, in the instance before us, the case was so hopeless, that God acts according to the simple principle of vindictive justice. The prophet therefore considers them on the utmost verge of final reprobation: another plunge, and they are lost for ever.

Verse 66. *Persecute and destroy them*— Thou wilt pursue them with destruction. These are all declaratory, not imprecatory.

From under the heavens of the Lord.— This verse seems to allude to the Chaldaic prediction, in Jeremiah 10:11. By their conduct they will bring on themselves the curse denounced against their enemies.

The Septuagint and Vulgate seem to have read “From under heaven, O Jehovah:” and the Syriac reads, “Thy heavens, O Jehovah!” None of these makes any material change in the meaning of the words.

It has already been noticed in the introduction, that this chapter contains a triple acrostic, three lines always beginning with the same letter; so that the Hebrew alphabet is thrice repeated in this chapter, twenty-two multiplied by three being equal to sixty-six.

CHAPTER 4

The present deplorable sate of the nation is now contrasted with its ancient prosperity, 1-12; and the unhappy change ascribed, in a great degree, to the profligacy of the priests and prophets, 13-16. The national calamities are tenderly lamented, 17-20. The ruin of the Edomites also, who had insulted the Jews in their distress, is ironically predicted, 21. See Psalm 137:7, and Obadiah 10-12. The chapter closes with a gracious promise of deliverance from the Babylonish captivity, 22.

NOTES ON CHAP. 4

Verse 1. *How is the gold become dim*— The prophet contrasts, in various affecting instances, the wretched circumstances of the Jewish nation, with the flourishing state of their affairs in former times. Here they are compared to gold, **זָהָב** zahab, native gold from the mine, which, contrary to its nature, is become dim, is tarnished; and even the fine, the sterling gold, **כֶּתֶם** kethem, that which was stamped to make it current, is changed or adulterated, so as to be no longer passable. This might be applied to the temple, but particularly to the fallen priests and apostate prophets.

The stones of the sanctuary— **אֲבְנֵי קֹדֶשׁ** abney kodesh, the holy stones; the Jewish godly men, who were even then the living stones of which God built his Church.

Verse 2. *The precious sons of Zion*— The Jewish priests and Jewish believers.

Comparable to fine gold— Who were of the pure standard of holiness; holy, because God who called them is holy; but now esteemed no better than earthen pitchers-vessels of dishonor in comparison of what they once were.

Verse 3. *Even the sea monsters draw out the breast*— The whales give suck to their young ones. The word תַּנִּין tannin, signifies all large and cruel creatures, whether aquatic or terrestrial; and need not here be restrained to the former sort. My Old MS. Bible translates curiously: Not and the cruel bestis that ben clepid Lamya, and thei nakeden ther tetis, geve ther whelpis souken.

Like the ostriches in the wilderness.— For her carelessness about her eggs, and her inattention to her young, the ostrich is proverbial.

Verse 4. *The tongue of the sucking child*— See the note on chap. 2:12.

Verse 5. *Embrace dunghills.*— Lie on straw or rubbish, instead of the costly carpets and sofas on which they formerly stretched themselves.

Verse 6. *For the punishment*— He thinks the punishment of Jerusalem far greater than that of Sodom. That was destroyed in a moment while all her inhabitants were in health and strength; Jerusalem fell by the most lingering calamities; her men partly destroyed by the sword, and partly by the famine.

Instead of no hands stayed on her, Blayney translates, “Nor were hands weakened in her.” Perhaps the meaning is, “Sodom was destroyed in a moment without any human labor.” It was a judgment from God himself: so the sacred text: “The LORD rained down fire and brimstone from the Lord out of heaven.” See Genesis 19:24.

Verse 7. *Her Nazarites were purer than snow*— נָזִיר nazir does not always signify a person separated under a religious vow; it sometimes denotes what is chief or eminent. It is applied to Joseph, Genesis 49:26. Blayney therefore translates here, HER NOBLES.

“Her nobles were purer than snow, they were whiter than milk;

They were ruddier on the bone than rubies; their veining was the sapphires.”

On which he remarks: — “In the first line the whiteness of their skin is described, and in the second, their flesh;” and as גזר *gazar* signifies to divide and intersect, as the blue veins do on the surface of the body, these are without doubt intended.

Milk will most certainly well apply to the whiteness of the skin; the beautiful ruby to the ruddiness of the flesh; and the sapphire, in its clear transcendent purple, to the veins in a fine complexion. The reverse of this state, as described in the following verse, needs no explanation. The face was a dismal dark brown, the flesh gone, the skin shrivelled, and apparently wrapped round the bones.

Verse 10. *The hands of the pitiful women have sodden their own children*— See on chap. 2:20. But here there is a reference to mothers eating their own children; and this was done, not by mothers cruel and brutal, but by נשים רחמניות *nashim rachmaniyoth*, the compassionate, the tender-hearted mothers. From these horrible scenes it is well to pass with as hasty a step as possible.

Verse 12. *The kings of the earth*— Jerusalem was so well fortified, both by nature and art, that it appeared as a miracle that it should be taken at all.

Verse 13. *For the sins of her prophets, and the iniquities of her priests*— These most wretched beings, under the pretense of zeal for the true religion, persecuted the genuine prophets, priests, and people of God, and caused their blood to be shed in the midst of the city, in the most open and public manner; exactly as the murderous priests, and blood-thirsty preachers, under the reign of bloody Queen Mary, did in England. However, the profligate priests and idolatrous prophets in Jerusalem, only shed the blood of the saints of God there: but the sanguinary papists, in the above reign, burnt the blood here, for they burnt the people alive; and at the same time, in their worse than Molochean cruelty, consigned, with all the fervor peculiar to their then ruthless Church, the souls of those whom they thus massacred, to the bitter pains of eternal death! O earth, cover not thou their blood!

Verse 14. *They have wandered as blind men in the streets*— Rather, “They ran frantic through the streets, they were stained with blood.” This was in their pretended zeal for their cause. Bishop Bonner, who was at the head of those sanguinary executions in England, was accustomed to buffet the poor Protestants, when on their examinations they were too powerful for him in argument:—

*“He proved his doctrine orthodox,
By apostolic blows and knocks.”*

Just as his elder brethren, the false priests and prophets of Jerusalem.

Verse 15. *When they fled away*— These priests and prophets were so bad, that the very heathen did not like to permit them to sojourn among them. The prophet now resumes the history of the siege.

Verse 17. *We have watched for a nation*— Viz., the Egyptians, who were their pretended allies, but were neither able nor wilting to help them against the Chaldeans.

Verse 18. *We cannot go in our streets*— Supposed to refer to the darts and other missiles cast from the mounds which they had raised on the outside of the walls, by which those who walked in the streets were grievously annoyed, and could not shield themselves.

Verse 19. *They pursued us upon the mountains*— They hunted down the poor Jews like wild beasts in every part of the country by their marauding parties, whilst the great army besieged Jerusalem. But this may apply to the pursuit of Zedekiah. See what follows.

Verse 20. *The breath of our nostrils, the anointed of the Lord*— That is, Zedekiah the king, who was as the life of the city, was taken in his flight by the Chaldeans, and his eyes were put out; so that he was wholly unfit to perform any function of government; though they had fondly hoped that if they surrendered and should be led captives, yet they should be permitted to live under their own laws and king in the land of their bondage.

Verse 21. *Rejoice and be Lad, O daughter of Edom*— A strong irony.

The cup also shall pass through unto thee— Thou who hast triumphed in our disasters shalt shortly have enough of thy own. They had joined themselves to the Chaldeans, (see Psalm 137:7,) and therefore they should share in the desolations of Babylon.

Verse 22. *The punishment of thine iniquity is accomplished, O daughter of Zion*— On the contrary: Rejoice, O Jerusalem, for thy captivity will soon end; thy sufferings are nearly completed; thou shalt soon return to thy own land: but he will visit thy iniquity, O Edom; he will discover thy sins. When sin is pardoned it is said to be covered: here, God says he will not cover the sins of Edom—he will not pardon them; they shall drink the cup of wrath.

The promise in this last verse may refer to Jerusalem under the Gospel. When they receive Christ crucified, they shall be gathered from all nations, become one with the Church among the Gentiles, be one flock under one and the same Shepherd, and shall be carried no more into captivity.

CHAPTER 5

This chapter is, as it were, an epiphonema, or conclusion to the four preceding, representing the nation as groaning under their calamities, and humbly supplicating the Divine favor, 1-22.

NOTES ON CHAP. 5

Verse 1. Remember, O Lord— In the Vulgate, Syriac, and Arabic, this is headed, “The prayer of Jeremiah.” In my old MS. Bible: Here bigynneth the orison of Jeremye the prophete.

Though this chapter consists of exactly twenty-two verses, the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet, yet the acrostic form is no longer observed. Perhaps any thing so technical was not thought proper when in agony and distress (under a sense of God’s displeasure on account of sin) they prostrated themselves before him to ask for mercy. Be this as it may, no attempt appears to have been made to throw these verses into the form of the preceding chapters. It is properly a solemn prayer of all the people, stating their past and present sufferings, and praying for God’s mercy.

Behold our reproach.— הַבִּיט hebita. But many MSS. of Kennicott’s, and the oldest of my own, add the הֵה he paragoric, הַבִּיטָה hebitah, “Look down earnestly with commiseration;” for paragoric letters always increase the sense.

Verse 2. Our inheritance is turned to strangers— The greater part of the Jews were either slain or carried away captive; and even those who were left under Gedaliah were not free, for they were vassals to the Chaldeans.

Verse 4. We have drunken our water for money— I suppose the meaning of this is, that every thing was taxed by the Chaldeans, and that they kept the management in their own hands, so that wood and water were both

sold, the people not being permitted to help themselves. They were now so lowly reduced by servitude, that they were obliged to pay dearly for those things which formerly were common and of no price. A poor Hindoo in the country never buys fire-wood, but when he comes to the city he is obliged to purchase his fuel, and considers it as a matter of great hardship.

Verse 5. *Our necks are under persecution*— We feel the yoke of our bondage; we are driven to our work like the bullock, which has a yoke upon his neck.

Verse 6. *We have given the hand to the Egyptians*— We have sought alliances both with the Egyptians and Assyrians, and made covenants with them in order to get the necessaries of life. Or, wherever we are now driven, we are obliged to submit to the people of the countries in order to the preservation of our lives.

Verse 7. *Our fathers have sinned, and are not*— Nations, as such, cannot be punished in the other world; therefore national judgments are to be looked for only in this life. The punishment which the Jewish nation had been meriting for a series of years came now upon them, because they copied and increased the sins of their fathers, and the cup of their iniquity was full. Thus the children might be said to bear the sins of the fathers, that is, in temporal punishment, for in no other way does God visit these upon the children. See Ezekiel 18:1, etc.

Verse 8. *Servants have ruled over us*— To be subject to such is the most painful and dishonorable bondage:—

*Quio domini faciant,
audent cum talia fures?*

Virg. Ecl. 3:16.

*“Since slaves so insolent are grown,
What may not masters do?”*

Perhaps he here alludes to the Chaldean soldiers, whose will the wretched Jews were obliged to obey.

Verse 9. *We gat our bread with the peril of our lives*— They could not go into the wilderness to feed their cattle, or to get the necessaries of life, without being harassed and plundered by marauding parties, and by these were often exposed to the peril of their lives. This was predicted by Moses, Deuteronomy 28:31.

Verse 10. *Our skin was black-because of the terrible famine.*— Because of the searching winds that burnt up every green thing, destroying vegetation, and in consequence producing a famine.

Verse 11. *They ravished the women in Zion, and the maids in the cities of Judah.*— The evii mentioned here was predicted by Moses, Deuteronomy 28:30, 32, and by Jeremiah, Jeremiah 6:12.

Verse 12. *Princes are hanged up by their hand*— It is very probable that this was a species of punishment. They were suspended from hooks in the wall by their hands till they died through torture and exhaustion. The body of Saul was fastened to the wall of Bethshan, probably in the same way; but his head had already been taken off. They were hung in this way that they might be devoured by the fowls of the air. It was a custom with the Persians after they had slain, strangled, or beheaded their enemies, to hang their bodies upon poles, or empale them. In this way they treated Histiaeus of Miletum, and Leonidas of Lacedaemon. See Herodot. lib. 6:c. 30, lib. 7:c. 238.

Verse 13. *They took the young men to grind*— This was the work of female slaves. See the note on Isaiah 47:2.

Verse 14. *The elders have ceased from the gate*— There is now no more justice administered to the people; they are under military law, or disposed of in every sense according to the caprice of their masters.

Verse 16. *The crown is fallen from our head*— At feasts, marriages, Ac., they used to crown themselves with garlands of flowers; all festivity of

this kind was now at an end. Or it may refer to their having lost all sovereignty, being made slaves.

Verse 18. *The foxes walk upon it.*— Foxes are very numerous in Palestine, see on Judges 15:4. It was usual among the Hebrews to consider all desolated land to be the resort of wild beasts; which is, in fact, the case every where when the inhabitants are removed from a country.

Verse 19. *Thou, O Lord, remainest for ever*— THOU sufferest no change. Thou didst once love us, O let that love be renewed towards us!

Verse 21. *Renew our days as of old.*— Restore us to our former state. Let us regain our country, our temple, and all the Divine offices of our religion; but, more especially, thy favor.

Verse 22. *But thou hast utterly rejected us*— It appears as if thou hadst sealed our final reprobation, because thou showest against us exceeding great wrath. But convert us, O Lord, onto thee, and we shall be converted. We are now greatly humbled, feel our sin, and see our folly: once more restore us, and we shall never again forsake thee! He heard the prayer; and at the end of seventy years they were restored to their own land.

This last verse is well rendered in the first printed edition of our Bible, 1535: — Renue our daies as in olde tyme, for thou hast now banished us longe ynough, and bene sore displeased at us.

My old MS. Bible is not less nervous: Newe thou our dais as fro the begynnyng: bot castand aweie thou put us out: thou wrathedist ugein us hugely .

Dr. Blayney translates, “For surely thou hast cast us off altogether:” and adds, “**כי** ought certainly to be rendered as causal; God’s having rejected his people, and expressed great indignation against them, being the cause and ground of the preceding application, in which they pray to be restored to his favor, and the enjoyment of their ancient privileges.”

Pareau thinks no good sense can be made of this place unless we translate

interrogatively, as in Jeremiah 14:19:—

*“Hast thou utterly rejected Judah?
Hath thy soul loathed Sion?”*

On this ground he translates here,

*An enim prorsus nos rejecisses?
Nobis iratus esses usque adeo?*

*“Hast thou indeed utterly cast us off?
Wilt thou be angry with us for ever?”*

Wilt thou extend thy wrath against us so as to show us no more mercy?
This agrees well with the state and feelings of the complainants.

MASORETIC NOTES

Number of verses in this Book, 154.

Middle verse, chap. 3:34.

In one of my oldest MSS., the twenty-first verse is repeated at the conclusion of the twenty-second verse. In another, yet older, there is only the first word of it, **השיבנו** hashibenu, Convert us!

Having given in the preceding preface and notes what I judge necessary to explain the principal difficulties in this very fine and affecting poem, very fitly termed THE LAMENTATIONS, as it justly stands at the head of every composition of the kind, I shall add but a few words, and these shall be by way of recapitulation chiefly.

The Hebrews were accustomed to make lamentations or mourning songs upon the death of great men, princes, and heroes, who had distinguished themselves in arms; and upon any occasion or public miseries and calamities. Calmet thinks they had collections of these sorts of

Lamentations: and refers in proof to 2 Chronicles 35:25: “And Jeremiah lamented for Josiah; and all the singing men and the singing women spake of Josiah in their lamentations, to this day; and made them an ordinance in Israel: and, behold, they are written in the Lamentations.”

From this verse it is evident, that Jeremiah had composed a funeral elegy on Josiah: but, from the complexion of this Book, it is most evident that it was not composed on the death of Josiah, but upon the desolations of Jerusalem, etc., as has already been noted. His lamentation for Josiah is therefore lost. It appears also, that on particular occasions, perhaps anniversaries, these lamentations were sung by men and women singers, who performed their several parts; for these were all alternate or responsive songs. And it is very likely, that this book was sung in the same way; the men commencing with א aleph, the women responding with ב beth and so on. Several of this sort of songs are still extant. We have those which David composed on the death of his son Absalom, and on the death of his friend Jonathan. And we have those made by Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, on the desolation of Egypt, Tyre, Sidon, and Babylon. See Isaiah 14:4, 5; 15.; 16.; Jeremiah 7:29; 9:10; 48:32; Ezekiel 19:1; 28:11; 32:2; Jeremiah 9:17. Besides these, we have fragments of others in different places; and references to some, which are now finally lost.

In the two first chapters of this book, the prophet describes, principally, the calamities of the siege of Jerusalem.

In the third, he deplores the persecutions which he himself had suffered; though he may in this be personifying the city and state; many of his own sufferings being illustrative of the calamities that fell generally upon the city and people at large.

The fourth chapter is employed chiefly on the ruin and desolation of the city and temple; and upon the misfortunes of Zedekiah, of whom he speaks in a most respectful, tender, and affecting manner:—

*“The anointed of Jehovah,
the breadth of our nostrils,
was taken in their toils,
Under whose shadow we said,
We shall live among the nations.”*

At the end he speaks of the cruelty of the Edomites, who had insulted Jerusalem in her miseries, and contributed to its demolition. These he threatens with the wrath of God.

The fifth chapter is a kind of form of prayer for the Jews, in their dispersions and captivity. In the conclusion of it, he speaks of their fallen royalty; attributes all their calamities to their rebellion and wickedness; and acknowledges that there can be no end to their misery, but in their restoration to the Divine favor.

This last chapter was probably written some considerable time after the rest: for it supposes the temple to be so deserted, that the foxes walked undisturbed among its ruins, and that the people were already in captivity.

The poem is a monument of the people's iniquity and rebellion; of the displeasure and judgment of GOD against them; and of the piety, eloquence, and incomparable ability of the poet.

INTRODUCTION

TO THE BOOK OF THE

PROPHET EZEKIEL

EZEKIEL the prophet was the son of Buzi; and was of the sacerdotal race, as himself informs us, chap. 1:3, and was born at a place called Saresa, as the pseudo-Epiphanius tells us in his Lives of the Prophets. He was carried captive by Nebuchadnezzar into Babylon, with Jeconiah king of Judah, and three thousand other captives of the principal inhabitants, and was sent into Mesopotamia, where he received the prophetic gift; which is supposed, from an obscure expression in his prophecies, chap. 1:1, to have taken place in the thirtieth year of his age. He had then been in captivity five years; and continued to prophesy about twenty-two years, from A.M. 3409 to A.M. 3430, which answers to the fourteenth year after the destruction of Jerusalem.

About three months and ten days after this conquest of Jerusalem, Nebuchadnezzar made another descent, and again besieged the city; and Jehoiachin, who succeeded his father Jehoiakim, was obliged to surrender. The victorious Chaldeans carried off all the inhabitants of note into Babylon, leaving none behind but the very poorest of the people. See 2 Kings 24:8-16. These captives were fixed at Tel-abib, and other places on the river Chebar, which flows into the east side of the Euphrates at Carchemish, nearly two hundred miles northward of Babylon. There, as Archbishop Newcome observes, he was present in body, though, in visionary representation, he was sometimes taken to Jerusalem.

With this same learned writer I am of opinion that, the better to understand the propriety and force of these Divine revelations, the circumstances and dispositions of the Jews in their own country, and in

their state of banishment, and the chief historical events of that period, should be stated and considered. Most writers on this Prophet have adopted this plan; and Archbishop Newcome's abstract of this history is sufficient for every purpose.

“Zedekiah, uncle to the captive king Jehoiachin, was advanced by Nebuchadnezzar to the kingdom of Judah; and the tributary king bound himself to subjection by a solemn oath in the name of Jehovah, Ezekiel 17:18. But notwithstanding the Divine judgments which had overwhelmed Judah during the reigns of his two immediate predecessors, he did evil in the sight of God, 2 Chronicles 36:12. Jerusalem became so idolatrous, impure, oppressive, and blood-thirsty, that God is represented as smiting his hands together through astonishment at such a scene of iniquity, chap. 22:13. The Prophet Jeremiah was insulted, rejected, and persecuted; false prophets abounded, whose language was, ‘Ye shall not serve the king of Babylon,’ Jeremiah 27:9. ‘I have broken the yoke of the king of Babylon,’ Jeremiah 28:2. They even limited the restoration of the sacred vessels, and the return of Jehoiachin and his fellow captives, to so short an interval as two years, Jeremiah 28:3, 4. Zedekiah, blinded by his vices and these delusions, flattered by the embassies which he had received from Edom, Moab, Ammon, Tyre, and Sidon, Jeremiah 27:3, and probably submitting with his accustomed timidity to the advice of evil counsellors, Jeremiah 28:25, rebelled against his powerful conquerors, and sent ambassadors into Egypt for assistance, Ezekiel 17:15. Hence arose a third invasion of the Chaldeans. Pharaoh-hophra, king of Egypt, did not advance to the assistance of Zedekiah till Jerusalem was besieged, Jeremiah 37:5. The Babylonians raised the siege with the design of distressing the Egyptians in their march, and of giving battle when advantage offered: but Pharaoh, with perfidy and pusillanimity, returned to his own country; and left the rebellious and perjured king of Judah to the rage of his enemies, Jeremiah 37:7. Before the siege was thus interrupted, Zedekiah endeavored to conciliate the favor of God by complying so far with the Mosaic law as to proclaim the sabbatical year a year of liberty to Hebrew servants, Exodus 21:2. But such was his impiety and so irresolute and fluctuating were his counsels, that, on the departure of the Chaldeans, he revoked his edict, Jeremiah 34:11; upon which God, by the Prophet Jeremiah, proclaimed liberty to the sword, to the pestilence, and to the famine; and

commissioned these messengers of his wrath to avenge himself on his people, Jeremiah 34:17. When the siege was resumed, we have a farther instance of Zedekiah's extreme infatuation; his rejection of Jeremiah's counsel, given him by the authority of God, to preserve himself, his family, and his city, by a surrender to the Chaldeans. Thus, after a siege of eighteen months, Jerusalem was stormed and burnt, Jeremiah 39:1, 2; Zedekiah was taken in his flight; his sons were slain before his eyes; his eyes were afterwards put out, agreeably to the savage custom of eastern conquerors; and he was carried in chains to Babylon, Jeremiah 39:5-7.

“The exiles on the river Chebar were far from being awakened to a devout acknowledgment of God's justice by the punishment inflicted on them: they continued rebellious and idolatrous, Ezekiel 2:3; 20:39, they hearkened to false prophets and prophetesses, Ezekiel 13:2, 17; and they were so alienated that he refused to be inquired of by them. In vain did Ezekiel endeavor to attract and win them by the charms of his flowing and insinuating eloquence; in vain did he assume a more vehement tone to awe and alarm them by heightened scenes of calamity and terror.

“We know few particulars concerning the Jews at Babylon. They enjoyed the instruction and example of the Prophet Daniel, who was carried away captive to that city in the third year of Jehoiakim, eight years before the captivity of Ezekiel, Daniel 1:1. Jeremiah cautioned them not to be deceived by their false prophets and diviners, Jeremiah 29:8, 9, 15, 21; against some of whom he denounced fearful judgments. He exhorted them to seek the peace of the city where they dwelt; to take wives, build houses, and plant gardens, till their restoration after seventy years, Jeremiah 29:5-7, 10. He also comforted them by a prediction of all the evil which God designed to inflict on Babylon: he assured them that none should remain in that proud city, but that it should be desolate for ever. The messenger, when he had read the book containing these denunciations, was commanded ‘to bind a stone to it, and cast it into the Euphrates, and say, Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise from the evil which I will bring on her,’ Jeremiah 51:59-64. It farther appears, by Divine hymns now extant, see Psalm 79., 102., 106., and 137., that God vouchsafed to inspire some of these Babylonian captives with his Holy Spirit. Nebuchadnezzar appointed Gedaliah ruler of the people that remained in Judea, 2 Kings

25:23; Jeremiah 40:5; and the scattered military commanders and their men, together with other Jews who had taken refuge in the neighboring countries, Jeremiah 40:7, 11, submitted to his government on the departure of the Chaldeans. The Jews employed themselves in gathering the fruits of the earth, Jeremiah 40:12, and a calm succeeded the tempest of war: but it was soon interrupted by the turbulence of this devoted people. Ishmael slew Gedaliah; and compelled the wretched remains of the Jews in Mizpah, the seat of Gedaliah's government, to retire with him towards the country of the Ammonites, Jeremiah 41:10; a people hostile to the Chaldeans, Jeremiah 27:3. Johanan raised a force to revenge this mad and cruel act, Jeremiah 41:11-15; pursued Ishmael, overtook him, and recovered from him the people whom he had forced to follow him: but the assassin himself escaped with eight men to his place of refuge. The succeeding event furnishes another signal instance of human infatuation. Johanan, through fear of the Chaldeans, many of whom Ishmael had massacred, together with Gedaliah, Jeremiah 41:3, conceived a design of retreating to Egypt, Jeremiah 41:17; but before he executed this resolution, he formally consulted the Prophet Jeremiah. The prophet answered him in the name of Jehovah, Jeremiah xlii., that if Johanan and the people abode in Judea, God would 'build them, and not pull them down: would plant them, and not pluck them up;' but if they went to sojourn in Egypt, they should 'die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence;' and should become an 'execration, and an astonishment, and a curse, and a reproach.' Notwithstanding this awful assurance, and the many prophecies of Jeremiah, which the most calamitous events had lately verified, Johanan defied the living God and his prophet, and madly adhered to his determination. Not long after the destruction of Jerusalem, the siege of Tyre was undertaken by Nebuchadnezzar. It continued for the space of thirteen years; and many think that the conquest of the Sidonians, Philistines, Ammonites, Moabites, and Idumeans, coincided with this period, the Chaldean being able to make powerful detachments from his vast forces. See the prophecies, Jeremiah 27:2, 3; 48., 49., and Ezekiel 25: After the reduction of that famous city, Nebuchadnezzar made his descent on Egypt, which he subdued and ravaged throughout; and at this time Johanan and his Jewish colonists experienced the vengeance of the conqueror, together with the Egyptians. So widely did Nebuchadnezzar spread his victories and devastations, that, according to the learned

chronologer Marsham, Lond. edit. 1672, fol. p. 556, s. 18, this might justly be called the era of the subversion of cities.

— *Omnis eo terrore AEgyptus, et Indi,
Omnis Arabs, omnes vertebant terga Sabaei.*
VIRG. AEn. 8:705.

‘The trembling Indians and Egyptians yield: Arabs and soft Sabaeans quit the field.’”

I may add that the stroke fell upon no people so heavily as upon the Jews, for no other station possessed privileges like them, and no other nation had sinned so deeply against God. Their crimes were seen in their punishment.

The principal design of this prophet was to comfort his companions in tribulation during their captivity, and to render it light by the most positive promises of their restoration to their own land, the re-building of the temple, and the re-establishment of the Divine worship, all their enemies being finally destroyed.

That Ezekiel is a very obscure writer, all have allowed who have attempted to explain his prophecies. The Jews considered him inexplicable. There is a tradition that the rabbins held a consultation whether they should admit Ezekiel into the sacred canon. And it was likely to be carried in the negative, when Rabbi Ananias rose up and said he would undertake to remove every difficulty from the account of Jehovah’s chariot, chap. i., which is confessedly the most difficult part in the whole book. His proposal was received; and to assist him in his work, and that he might complete it to his credit, they furnished him with three hundred barrels of oil to light his lamp during the time he might be employed in the study of this part of his subject! This extravagant grant proved at once the conviction the rabbins had of the difficulty of the work; and it is not even intimated that Rabbi Ananias succeeded in any tolerable degree, if indeed he undertook the task; and they believe that to this hour the chariot mentioned in chap. 1., and the account of the temple described at the conclusion of the book, have not been explained.

I believe it may be affirmed with truth that these parts of the prophecy have had as many different explanations as there have been expositors! Yet each has been sanguine in the hope that he had removed all difficulties; while every successor felt that the whole work was yet to be done, and that the Gordian knot was not likely to be untied unless by himself. And it is to be lamented that in these circumstances the work still remains as to its principal difficulties; and I certainly do not attempt to add another to Ezekiel's commentators with the most distant hope of being able to solve those particular difficulties.

After all, with the exception of the chariot, Gog and Magog, the peculiarities in the description of the temple, and some matters of this kind, the major part of the prophecy is very intelligible, and highly edifying; and does not present more difficulties than have been found in the preceding prophets, and may be found in those which follow. I have in the following notes done what I could, as a help to a better understanding of this part of the sacred writings.

The ancient Versions give some help; but it is astonishing how difficult it is to settle the text by a collation of MSS. This has not yet been properly done; and we cannot know the true meaning till we call ascertain the true reading. But after having labored in this way, I must express myself as the learned professor of the oriental tongues at Parma, J. B. De Rossi: *Tanta hic in suffixis praesertim pronomibus codicum inconstantia ac varietas, ut taeduerit me laboris mei, ac verius ego quod olim de uno Zachariae versu (11:5) dolens inquiebat Norzius, de toto Ezechielis libro usurpare possim, angustiatam fuisse animam meam ob varietates multas, et avertisse faciem meam ab eis.* "That there is so much inconstancy and variation among the MSS., especially in the subbed pronouns, that I was weary of my labor; and I could more truly say of the whole book of Ezekiel, than Norzius did relative to one passage in Zechariah, who, bitterly complaining of the many variations he met with, said, 'My soul was perplexed with them, and I turned away my face from them.'" As most of our printed editions have been taken from a very inadequate collation of MSS., especially of this prophet, much remains to be done to restore the text to a proper state of purity. When this is done it is presumed that several of the difficulties

in this book will be removed. In many instances Abp. Newcome has been very successful.

On the famous controversy relative to GOG and MAGOG, I must refer the reader to the notes on chap. 38:and 39., where the best accounts I have met with are detailed. There are only two schemes that appear at all probable; that which makes Gog Antiochus Epiphanes, king of Assyria, and that which makes him Cambyses, king of Persia. The former, as being the most probable, and the best supported in all its parts by the marks given in the prophecy, I have in a certain measure adopted, for want of one more satisfactory to my own mind.

The character of Ezekiel as a poet has been drawn at large by some of the most eminent critics of these and other countries. Lowth, Michaelis, and Eichhorn, are the chief. Abp. Newcome has quoted largely from the latter; and from his work, which is now very scarce and extremely dear, I shall present my readers with the following extracts:—

“The two first visions are so accurately polished, chap. 1-7, 8-11., and demanded so much art to give them their last perfection and proportion, that they cannot possibly be an unpremeditated work. And if, according to the commonly received opinion, they were publicly read by Ezekiel as we read them now, he must have seriously designed them as a picture, and finished them in form. The intention of his visions might make this necessary. He designed no doubt to make deep impressions upon the people whom he was to guide; and by highly laboring the Divine appearances, to open their ears for his future oracles and representations. The more complete, divine, and majestic the Divine appearances were which he represented, the deeper veneration was impressed upon the mind towards the prophet to whom such high visions were communicated. Most of the parts which compose Ezekiel, as they are generally works of art, are full of artificial and elaborate plans.

“The peculiarities of language in the first chapter are to be found in the middle and end of the book. The same enthusiasm which in the beginning of his prophecies produced the magnificent Divine appearances, must also have built the temple of God at the conclusion. As in the beginning every

thing is first proposed in high allegorical images, and afterwards the same ideas are repeated in plain words, thus also in the middle and at the end in every piece, allegorical representation is succeeded by literal. Throughout the style is rather prose than verse; and rough, hard, and mixed with the Chaldee.

“The division of Ezekiel into two parts has been adopted by several writers. They continue the former part to the thirty-ninth chapter, and consider the last nine chapters from the fortieth as a separate book. This division is possible. From the eleventh chapter a new elevated scene commences. Before there was nothing but oracles, full of misfortunes, punishments, death, and ruin; visions concerning the destruction of the government, and concerning the flight and state of the last king; and pictures of the universal corruption, idolatry, and superstition of Israel. From the fortieth chapter a new temple rises before the eyes of the holy seer; he walks round about it in Palestine; he measures the city and country for their new inhabitants; he orders sacrifices, feasts, and customs. In short, a Magna Charta is planned for priests, kings, and people, in future and better times. Lastly, from hence prosaic expressions predominate; at least the prophet elevates himself by poetical colouring much more rarely than before.

“A generally acknowledged character of Ezekiel is, that he minutely distinguishes every thing in its smallest parts. What the more ancient prophets brought together in one single picture, and to which they only alluded, and what they explained with the utmost brevity, and showed only from one side, that he explains and unfolds formally, and represents from all possible sides.

“Another character, and a principal one, which distinguishes his oracle is, that no other prophet has given so free a course to his imagination. Almost every thing is dressed in symbolical actions, in fables, narrations, allegories, or in the still higher poetry of visions. And as they are very complicate, there resound from all sides complaints of darkness. Whoever can look on these things with the eye of an eagle, and is not disturbed from the principal object by what is not essential; he alone is able to comprehend the sense of the whole composition, and he scarcely

conceives how any one can complain of obscurity. Meanwhile, how different soever the species of composition are which he hazards, they are all worked out in the same general form. What he represents in one image, picture, or vision, in allegory, parable, or narration, is explained in a short speech, which God, who is at his right hand, enables him to pronounce.

“It is evident that he has shown an inexhaustible imagination and power of invention throughout all the pages of his book. He uses all sorts of prophetic poetry to appear always great and magnificent; and it cannot be denied that he has given all kinds, excellent pieces, both in design and execution. Particularly, he is so used to ecstasies and visions that he adopts the language proper to these, where he has no visions to describe.

“If the dress of vision fitted any prophet, it was certainly Ezekiel: he was even naturally led to it by his situation, and by the subjects which he was to represent. He was to describe and foretell to his fellow captives several facts which happened in Palestine, in Jerusalem, and in the king’s palace. A narration and description in simple prose could not possibly suit a prophet; he must give his object the requisite prophetic dignity, by a particular dress.

“He therefore brought the scene of events nearer. For this purpose he chose high ecstasies, such as the Greek and Roman poets pretended to in their flights of enthusiasm; the hand of Jehovah came upon him, and carried him to that place where what he intended to propose to his countrymen in their exile might be seen and considered. All ecstasies in my opinion are nothing but dresses, nothing but poetical fictions; and a poet of another age, and of another tone, of an inferior imagination and poetical endowments, would have given the same ideas quite another dress.

“Accustomed to this kind of poetry, he represented the restitution of the Jewish state in a sublime vision. His imagination placed him upon graves, where he stood on the dried bones of the dead. He saw how the graves opened, the bones were clothed with flesh, and the dead came forth by a new creation. Could there be a more lively fiction for this case? Another poet would have represented the restoration of the Jews in simple words; and would only have compared it to a resurrection, or give it some other

ornamental delineation. To view this intuitively in an example, compare Ezekiel 37:1-14 and Isaiah 26:19.

‘Thy dead shall live, their dead bodies shall rise: Awake and sing, ye that dived in dust: For thy dew is as the dew of herbs, And the earth shall cast forth the mighty dead.’

“And, however numerous the fictions of Ezekiel are, they all appear in magnificent dress, and each in its peculiar splendid one. Lustre shines in him on every side; and if the poet has here and there overloaded his subject with ornaments, we shall be unable to refuse our admiration to his genius, notwithstanding these defects.

“The first part of his book may be an instance. The barren genius of Moses was gone when God appeared only in a fiery bush in the wilderness; and as the world improved in cultivation, a more luxuriant one succeeded in his place, which in process of time demanded wonderful figures and giant forms, that the representation of the Divine appearance might please. Isaiah had already appeared in a higher style than Moses. To him God manifested himself in the pomp of an oriental king; and this piece makes a strong impression by its unity and gains on us by its elevated simplicity, majesty, and dignity, Isaiah 6:But Ezekiel differs widely. Before him stands the chariot-throne of God, with wonderful forms; he summons all the pomp which nature and art can furnish; he abundantly employs fiction and composition to give his Divine appearance dignity, elevation, and majesty; and thus to make a suitable expression. The whole creation must lend him its most noble forms. Men, oxen, lions, and eagles support the throne: the Hebrew history must furnish all its most wonderful scenes, to surround the chariot-throne with the greatest pomp imaginable. I admire the master-hand of the artist, who knew how to compose in such a manner. I am astonished at the richness of his imagination, that could give dignity to all the exalted scenes of the Hebrew history, and could combine them in one body. But, notwithstanding this, the scene in Ezekiel is far from making the same deep and heart-striking impression with that of Isaiah. A short view of the whole in Isaiah does wonders; in Ezekiel the prospect is dispersed; and as it is not rounded, it astonishes rather than impresses. In Isaiah there is a majestic silence,

which is only interrupted by the heavenly cry of the seraphs, Isaiah 6:3; in Ezekiel, the noise of the restless wheels and moving wings confounds us. In Isaiah, the eye is delighted with artless majesty; in Ezekiel, it is consumed by the brightness of the fire which shines round about the chariot-throne.

“The author of the Revelation, whose poetry is in the same style with that of Ezekiel, and full of imagination, has for the most part avoided the rocks upon which his predecessor struck; and, happily for the most part, has cut

“Ezekiel,” says this learned prelate, “is inferior to Jeremiah in elegance, but is equal to Isaiah in **SUBLIMITY**, though in a different species of the sublime. He is bold, vehement, tragical, and deals very much in amplification. His **SENTIMENTS** are lofty, animated, poignant, and full of indignation. His **IMAGES** are fertile, magnificent, and sometimes rather bordering on indelicacy. His **DICTION** is grand, weighty, austere, rough, and sometimes uncultivated. He abounds in repetitions, not for the sake of beauty or grace, but from vehemence and indignation. Whatever his subject be, he keeps it always in his eye, without the least deviation, and is so much taken up with it that he has scarcely any regard to order or connection. In other things he may be perhaps exceeded by the other prophets, but in that species for which he was particularly turned, that is, force, impetuosity, weight, and grandeur, no writer ever equalled him. His diction is clear enough; almost all his obscurity arises from his subjects. His **VISIONS** are particularly obscure; which, however, as in Hosea, Amos, and Zechariah, are delivered in a plain historical narration.

“The greater part of the book, particularly the middle of it, is poetical; whether we regard the matter or the language. But some passages are so rough and unpolished, that we are frequently at a loss to what species of writing we ought to refer them. As to **STYLE**, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel may be placed with propriety enough in the same rank among the Hebrews, as Homer, Simonides, and **AEschylus** among the Greeks.”

Nothing need be added, and indeed nothing can be added, to this character; it is as fairly as it is fully drawn; and every paragraph in the book will show its propriety. But could we satisfactorily fathom the prophet’s meaning in those places where he is peculiarly obscure, we should feel the force and propriety of the bishop’s character still more, as in those very places the prophet is peculiarly sublime. The prophecy was delivered that it might be understood and be profitable; and no doubt it was fully apprehended by those to whom it was originally given, and for whose sake it was sent from heaven. As to the portions which respect a very remote futurity, they will be understood when the events take place; which will, in such times, be an additional argument in favor of Divine revelation, when it is seen with what precision and accuracy prophets have foreseen and described such very remote and apparently contingent events.

To the general reader the following table, taken from Calmet, may be useful:—

A.M. A Chronological Table of the Prophecies of Ezekiel

3405. Ezekiel is led captive to Babylon with King Jeconiah. From this year the epoch of these prophecies must be taken.

3409. The first vision by the river Chebar, chap. 1: The circumstances which followed Ezekiel's vocation to the prophetic office, chap. 1:2.

He draws upon a tile or bed of clay the plan of Jerusalem, and the siege that it was about to endure; and he remains lying on this plan, on his left side, three hundred and ninety days, chap. 4: See under A.M. 3420.

3410. He turns on his right side, and lies forty days, which point out the forty years of the sins of Judah, To this time chap. 5., 6., 7: refer.

About the month of September, this being the sixth year of the captivity of Jeconiah, he had the visions related, chap. 8., 9., x., 11.

3411. Prophecies and figurative actions by which he points out the flight, capture, and blinding of Zedekiah, chap. 12: and the seven following.

Zedekiah rebels against Nebuchadnezzar, chap. 17:15, 17.

The prophet charges the elders of Judah with hypocrisy, who came to consult him, chap. 20., 21.. 22., 23.

3414. The siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. This was a sabbatic year, Jeremiah 24:8, etc. The siege did not begin till about the middle of the winter, 2 Kings 25:1. The prophet's wife dies on the same day of the siege, and he is forbidden to mourn for her, chap. 24:1, 2.

3415. Predictions against EGYPT, chap. 29:16. Nebuchadnezzar puts to flight Pharaoh-hophra, and returns to the siege of Jerusalem three hundred

and ninety days before it was taken.

3416. Predictions against Tyre, chap. 26-28., the first day of the first month.

In the seventh day of the same month, God shows the prophet the miseries to be brought on Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar, chap. 30.

In the third month of the same year, the prophet had another vision against Egypt, chap. 31.

Jerusalem is taken the ninth of the fourth month. Zedekiah was taken prisoner near Jericho. He is brought to Riblah, where, after seeing his children slain, his eyes are put out, he is laden with chains and led to Babylon. Thus were fulfilled and reconciled the seemingly contradictory prophecies concerning him.

3417. Ezekiel being informed of the taking of Jerusalem the fifth day of the tenth month, he predicts the ruin of the remnant that was left there under Gedaliah, chap. 34:21-29.

He afterwards foretells the ruin of Egypt, chap. 32:1, 16, 32; and that of the Idumeans, chap. 25:12.

3419. The commencement of the siege of Tyre, which lasted thirteen years.

To the same time we must refer the miseries of the Sidonians, the Amalekites, the Moabites, and the Idumeans, pointed out by Jeremiah, chap. 27., 48., 49.; Ezekiel 25.

3420. End of the forty years mentioned chap. 4:5, 6, and of the three hundred and ninety years from the separation of Israel and Judah. The forty years commence with the renewal of the covenant under Josiah.

3430. The vision in which God showed the prophet the rebuilding of the city and the temple, and the restoration of the kingdom of Israel, chap.

40:1 to the end of the book.

This vision took place on the tenth of the first month, fourteen years after the taking of Jerusalem.

3432. Taking of the city of Tyre, by Nebuchadnezzar, to whom God promises the spoils of Egypt, as a compensation for the trouble and loss he sustained before Tyre, chap. 29:17-20.

Nebuchadnezzar enters Egypt. Amasis had been made king by the Cyrenians, who had rebelled against Pharaoh-hophra. Herodotus, lib. 4:c. 159, and lib. 2:cc. 161, 162.

3433. The king of Babylon overruns and subdues the whole of Egypt; commits the greatest outrages; and carries off captives the inhabitants, the Jews, and others whom he found there. See Jeremiah 43., 44., 46.; Ezekiel 29., 30., 31.

Nebuchadnezzar leaves Amasis king of Lower Egypt; Hophra, or Apries, having escaped to the Thebais.

3442. Death of Nebuchadnezzar.

Evil-merodach succeeds him; and sets Jeconiah at liberty, and makes him his companion, 2 Kings 15:27 and Jeremiah 52:31.

THE BOOK

OF THE

PROPHET EZEKIEL

Chronological Notes relative to the commencement of Ezekiel's prophesying

- Year from the Creation, according to Archbishop Usher, 3409.
- Year of the Jewish era of the world, 3166.
- Year from the Deluge, 1753.
- Second year of the forty-sixth Olympiad.
- Year from the building of Rome, according to the Varronian or generally received account, 159.
- Year from the building of Rome, according to Cato and the Fasti Consulares, 158.
- Year from the building of Rome, according to Polybius the historian, 157.
- Year from the building of Rome, according to Fabius Pictor, 153.
- Year of the Julian Period, 4119.
- Year of the era of Nabonassar, 153.
- Year from the foundation of Solomon's temple, 409.
- Year since the destruction of the kingdom of Israel by Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, 126.
- Second year after the third Sabbatic year after the seventeenth Jewish jubilee, according to Helvicus.
- Year before the birth of Christ, 591.
- Year before the vulgar era of Christ's nativity, 595.
- Cycle of the Sun, 3.
- Cycle of the Moon, 15.
- Twenty-second year of Tarquinius Priscus, the fifth king of the

Romans: this was the eighty-sixth year before the consulship of Lucius Junius Brutus, and Publius Valerius Poplicola.

- Thirty-first year of Cyaxares, or Cyaraxes, the fourth king of Media.
- Eleventh year of Agasicles, king of Lacedaemon, of the family of the Proclidae.
- Thirteenth year of Leon, king of Lacedaemon, of the family of the Eurysthenidae.
- Twenty-fifth year of Alyattes II., king of Lydia, and father of the celebrated Croesus.
- Eighth year of AErupas, the seventh king of Macedon.
- Sixth and last year of Psammis, king of Egypt, according to Helvicus, an accurate chronologer. This Egyptian king was the immediate predecessor of the celebrated Apries, called Vaphres by Eusebius, and Pharaoh-hophra by Jeremiah, chap. 44:30.
- First year of Baal, king of the Tyrians. Twelfth year of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon.
- Fourth year of Zedekiah, the last king of Judah.

CHAPTER 1

NOTES ON CHAP. 1

Verse 1. *In the thirtieth year*— We know not what this date refers to. Some think it was the age of the prophet; others think the date is taken from the time that Josiah renewed the covenant with the people, 2 Kings 22:3, from which Usher, Prideaux, and Calmet compute the forty years of Judah's transgression, mentioned chap. 4:6.

Abp. Newcome thinks there is an error in the text, and that instead of **בשלשים** bisheloshim, in the thirtieth, we should read **בחמישית** bachamishith, in the fifth, as in the second verse. "Now it came to pass in the fifth year, in the fourth month, in the fifth day of the month," etc. But this is supported by none of the ancient Versions, nor by any MS. The Chaldee paraphrases the verse, "And it came to pass thirty years after the high priest Hilkiyah had found the book of the law, in the house of the sanctuary," etc. This was in the twelfth year of Josiah's reign. The thirtieth year, computed as above, comes to A.M. 3409, the fourth year from the captivity of Jeconiah, and the fifth of the reign of Zedekiah. Ezekiel was then among the captives who had been carried away with Jeconiah, and had his dwelling near the river Chebar, Chaborus, or Aboras, a river of Mesopotamia, which falls into the Euphrates a little above Thapsacus, after having run through Mesopotamia from east to west. — Calmet.

Fourth month— Thammuz, answering nearly to our July.

I saw visions of God.— Emblems and symbols of the Divine Majesty. He particularly refers to those in this chapter.

Verse 2. *Jehoiachin's captivity*— Called also Jeconiah and Coniah; see 2 Kings 24:12. He was carried away by Nebuchadnezzar; see 2 Kings 24:14.

Verse 3. *The hand of the Lord*— I was filled with his power, and with the influence of the prophetic spirit.

Verse 4. *A whirlwind came out of the north*— Nebuchadnezzar, whose

land, Babylonia, lay north of Judea. Chaldea is thus frequently denominated by Jeremiah.

A great cloud, and a fire infolding itself— A mass of fire concentrated in a vast cloud, that the flames might be more distinctly observable, the fire never escaping from the cloud, but issuing, and then returning in upon itself. It was in a state of powerful agitation; but always involving itself, or returning back to the center whence it appeared to issue.

A brightness was about it— A fine tinge of light surrounded the cloud, in order to make its limits the more discernible; beyond which verge the turmoiling fire did not proceed.

The color of amber— This was in the center of the cloud; and this amber-coloured substance was the center of the laboring flame. The word **ηλεκτρον**, which we translate amber, was used to signify a compound metal, very bright, made of gold and brass.

Verse 5. *Also out on the midst thereof came four living creatures.*— As the ambercoloured body was the center of the fire, and this fire was in the center of the cloud; so out of this amber-coloured igneous center came the living creatures just mentioned.

Verse 6. *Every one had four faces*— There were four several figures of these living creatures, and each of these figures had four distinct faces: but as the face of the man was that which was presented to the prophet's view, so that he saw it more plainly than any of the others; hence it is said, ver. 5, that each of these figures had the likeness of a man; and the whole of this compound image bore a general resemblance to the human figure.

Verse 7. *Their feet were straight feet*— There did not seem to be any flexure at the knee, nor were the legs separated in that way as to indicate progression by walking. I have before me several ancient Egyptian images of Isis, Osiris. Anubis, etc., where the legs are not separated, nor is there any bend at the knees; so that if there was any motion at all, it must have been by gliding, not progressive walking. It is a remark of Adrian, that the

gods are never represented as walking, but always gliding; and he gives this as a criterion to discern common angelic appearances from those of the gods: all other spiritual beings walked progressively, rising on one foot, while they stretched out the other; but the deities always glided without gradual progressive motions. And Heliodorus in his Romance of Theogines and Charicha, gives the same reason for the united feet of the gods, etc., and describes the same appearances.

Like the sole of a calf's foot— Before it is stated to be a straight foot; one that did not lay down a flat horizontal sole, like that of the human foot.

And they sparkled like the color of burnished brass.— I suppose this refers rather to the hoof of the calf's foot, than to the whole appearance of the leg. There is scarcely any thing that gives a higher lustre than highly olished or burnished brass. Our blessed Lord is represented with legs like burnished brass, Revelation 1:15.

Verse 8. *They had the hands of a man under their wings*— I doubt much whether the arms be not here represented as all covered with feathers, so that they had the appearance of wings, only the hand was bare; and I rather think that this is the meaning of their having “the hands of a man under their wings.”

Verse 9. *Their wings were joined one to another*— When their wings were extended, they formed a sort of canopy level with their own heads or shoulders; and on this canopy was the throne, and the “likeness of the man” upon it, ver. 26.

They turned not when they went— The wings did not flap in flying, or move in the manner of oars, or of the hands of a man in swimming, in order to their passing through the air; as they glided in reference to their feet, so they soared in reference to their wings.

Verse 10. *As for the likeness of their faces*— There was but one body to each of those compound animals: but each body had four faces; the face of a man and of a lion on the right side; the face of an ox and an eagle on the left side. Many of these compound images appear in the Asiatic idols.

Many are now before me: some with the head and feet of a monkey, with the body, arms, and legs of a man. Others with the head of the dog; body, arms, and legs human. Some with the head of an ape; all the rest human. Some with one head and eight arms; others with six heads or faces, with twelve arms. The head of a lion and the head of a cock often appear; and some with the head of a cock, the whole body human, and the legs terminating in snakes. All these were symbolical, and each had its own appropriate meaning. Those in the text had theirs also, could we but find it out.

Verse 12. *They went every one straight forward*— Not by progressive stepping, but by gliding.

Whither the spirit was to go— Whither that whirlwind blew, they went, being borne on by the wind, see ver. 4.

Verse 13. *Like burning coals of fire*— The whole substance appeared to be of flame; and among them frequent coruscations of fire, like vibrating lamps, often emitting lightning, or rather sparks of fire, as we have seen struck out of strongly ignited iron in a forge. The flames might be something like what is called warring wheels in pyrotechny. They seemed to conflict together.

Verse 14. *The living creatures ran and returned*— They had a circular movement; they were in rapid motion, but did not increase their distance from the spectator. So I think this should be understood.

Verse 15. *One wheel upon the earth*— It seems at first view there were four wheels, one for each of the living creatures; that is, the creatures were compound, so were the wheels, for there was “a wheel in the middle of a wheel.” And it is generally supposed that these wheels cut each other at right angles up and down: and this is the manner in which they are generally represented; but most probably the wheel within means merely the nave in which the spokes are inserted, in reference to the ring, rim, or periphery, where these spokes terminate from the center or nave. I do think this is what is meant by the wheel within a wheel; and I am the more inclined to this opinion, by some fine Chinese drawings now before me,

where their deities are represented as walking upon wheels, the wheels themselves encompassed with fire. The wheel is simply by itself having a projecting axis; so of these it is said, “their appearance and their work was, as it were, a wheel within a wheel.” There were either two peripheries or rims with their spokes, or the nave answered for the wheel within. I have examined models of what are called Ezekiel’s wheels, which are designed to move equally in all directions: but I plainly saw that this was impossible; nor can any kind of complex wheel move in this way.

Verse 18. *As for their rings*— The strakes which form the rim or periphery.

They were dreadful— They were exceedingly great in their diameter, so that it was tremendous to look from the part that touched the ground to that which was opposite above.

Were full of eyes— Does not this refer to the appearance of nails keeping on the spokes, or strakes or bands upon the rim?

Verse 19. *When the living creatures went, the wheels went*— The wheels were attached to the living creatures, so that, in progress, they had the same motion.

Verse 20. *The spirit of the living creature was in the wheels*.— That is, the wheels were instinct with a vital spirit; the wheels were alive, they also were animals, or endued with animal life, as the creatures were that stood upon them. Here then is the chariot of Jehovah. There are four wheels, on each of which one of the compound animals stands; the four compound animals form the body of the chariot, their wings spread horizontally above, forming the canopy or covering of this chariot; on the top of which, or upon the extended wings of the four living creatures, was the throne, on which was the appearance of a man, ver. 26.

Verse 22. *The color of the terrible crystal*— Like a crystal, well cut and well polished, with various faces, by which rays of light were refracted, assuming either a variety of prismatic colors, or an insufferably brilliant splendor. This seems to be the meaning of the terrible crystal. Newcome

translates, fearful ice. The common translation is preferable.

Verse 23. *Every one had two, which covered on this side*— While they employed two of their wings to form a foundation for the firmament to rest on, two other wings were let down to cover the lower part of their bodies: but this they did only when they stood, ver. 24.

Verse 24. *The noise of their wings*— When the whirlwind drove the wheels, the wind rustling among the wings was like the noise of many waters; like a waterfall, or waters dashing continually against the rocks, or rushing down precipices.

As *the voice of the Almighty*— Like distant thunder; for this is termed the voice of God Psalm 18:13; Exodus 9:23, 28, 29; 20:18.

Verse 26. *A sapphire*— The pure oriental sapphire, a large well cut specimen of which is now before me, is one of the most beautiful and resplendent blues that can be conceived. I have sometimes seen the heavens assume this illustrious hue. The human form above this canopy is supposed to represent Him who, in the fullness of time, was manifested in the flesh.

Verse 27. *The color of amber*— There are specimens of amber which are very pure and beautifully transparent. One which I now hold up to the light gives a most beautiful bright yellow color. Such a splendid appearance had the august Being who sat upon this throne from the reins upward; but from thence downward he had the appearance of fire, burning with a clear and brilliant flame. For farther particulars see the notes on chap. x.

Verse 28. *As the appearance of the bow*— Over the canopy on which this glorious personage sat there was a fine rainbow, which, from the description here, had all its colors vivid, distinct, and in perfection—red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet. In all this description we must understand every metal, every color, and every natural appearance, to be in their utmost perfection of shape, color, and splendor. “And this,” as above described, “was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the

Lord.” Splendid and glorious as it was, it was only the “appearance of the likeness,” a faint representation of the real thing.

I have endeavored to explain these appearances as correctly as possible; to show their forms, positions, colors, etc. But who can explain their meaning? We have conjectures in abundance; and can it be of any use to mankind to increase the number of those conjectures? I think not. I doubt whether the whole does not point out the state of the Jews, who were about to be subdued by Nebuchadnezzar, and carried into captivity. And I am inclined to think that the “living creatures, wheels, fires, whirlwinds,” etc., which are introduced here, point out, emblematically, the various means, sword, fire, pestilence, famine, etc., which were employed in their destruction; and that God appears in all this to show that Nebuchadnezzar is only his instrument to inflict all these calamities. What is in the following chapter appears to me to confirm this supposition. But we have the rainbow, the token of God’s covenant, to show that though there should be a destruction of the city, temple, etc., and sore tribulation among the people, yet there should not be a total ruin; after a long captivity they should be restored. The rainbow is an illustrious token of mercy and love.

CHAPTER 2

The prophet, having been overwhelmed with the glorious vision in the preceding chapter, is here strengthened and comforted, 1, 2; and then commissioned to declare to the rebellious house of Israel the terrible judgments that would very shortly come upon the whole land, if they repented not; with a gracious assurance to Ezekiel that God would be constantly with him while executing the duties of his office, 3-5. The prophet is also commanded to be fearless, resolute, and faithful in the discharge of it. 6-8, as he must be the messenger of very unpleasing tidings, which well expose him to great persecution, 9, 10.

NOTES ON CHAP. 2

Verse 1. *And he said unto me*— In the last verse of the preceding chapter we find that the prophet was so penetrated with awe at the sight of the glory of God in the mystical chariot, that “he fell upon his face;” and, while he was in this posture of adoration, he heard the voice mentioned here. It is evident, therefore, that the present division of these chapters is wrong. Either the first should end with the words, “This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord,” ver. 28; or the first verse of this chapter should be added to the preceding, and this begin with the second verse.

Verse 2. *And the spirit entered into me*— This spirit was different to that mentioned above, by which the wheels, etc., were moved. The spirit of prophecy is here intended; whose office was not merely to enable him to foresee and foretell future events, but to purify and refine his heart, and qualify him to be a successful preacher of the word of life.

He who is sent by the God of all grace to convert sinners must be influenced by the Holy Ghost; otherwise he can neither be saved himself, nor become the instrument of salvation to others.

And set me upon my feet— That he might stand as a servant before his master, to receive his orders.

Verse 3. *Son of man*— This appellation, so often mentioned in this book, seems to have been given first to this prophet; afterwards to Daniel; and after that to the MAN Christ Jesus. Perhaps it was given to the two former to remind them of their frailty, and that they should not be exalted in their own minds by the extraordinary revelations granted to them; and that they should feel themselves of the same nature with those to whom they were sent; and, from the common principle of humanity, deeply interest themselves in the welfare of their unhappy countrymen. To the latter it might have been appropriated merely to show that though all his actions demonstrated him to be GOD, yet that he was also really MAN; and that in the man Christ Jesus dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. When the acts of Christ are considered, it is more easy to believe his eternal Godhead, than to be convinced that the person we hear speaking, and see working, is also a man like unto ourselves.

I send thee to the children of Israel— To those who were now in captivity, in Chaldea particularly; and to the Jews in general, both far and near.

Verse 4. *Thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord*— Let them know that what thou hast to declare is the message of the LORD, that they may receive it with reverence.

Every preacher of God's word should take heed that it is God's message he delivers to the people. Let him not suppose, because it is according to his own creed or confession of faith, that therefore it is God's word. False doctrines and fallacies without end are foisted on the world in this way. Bring the creed first to the Word of God, and scrupulously try whether it be right; and when this is done, leave it where you please; take the Bible, and warn them from God's word recorded there.

Verse 5. *Yet shall know that there hath been a prophet among them.*— By this they shall be assured of two things: 1. That God in his mercy had given them due warning. 2. That themselves were inexcusable, for not

taking it.

Verse 6. *Be not afraid of them*— They will maltreat thee for thy message; but let not the apprehension of this induce thee to suppress it. Though they be rebels, fear them not; I will sustain and preserve thee.

Verse 7. *Whether they will hear*— Whether they receive the message, or persecute thee for it, declare it to them, that they may be without excuse.

Verse 8. *Open thy mouth and eat that I give thee.*— Take my word as thou wouldst take thy proper food; receive it into thy heart; ponder it there, that it may be the means of strengthening and preserving thy soul, as proper nourishment will strengthen the body, and preserve from death. And the people to whom such messages of God may come should so hear it read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest it, that it may become efficient nourishment to their souls.

Verse 9. *A hand was sent*— Here the hand signifies not only the instrument of conveyance, but an emblem of the Divine power, which the hand of God always signifies.

A roll of a book— מגלת ספר megillath sepher. All ancient books were written so as to be rolled up; hence volumen, a volume, from volvo, I roll.

Verse 10. *It was written within and without*— Contrary to the state of rolls in general, which are written on the inside only. The Hebrew rolls are generally written in this way. There are several of such Hebrew rolls before me, all written on the inside only, consisting of skins of vellum, or parchment, or basil, a sort of half-tanned sheep or goat skin, sewed together, extending to several yards in length. Other Asiatic books were written in the same way. A Sanscrit roll of sixty feet in length, also before me, is written all on the inside; and a Koran, written in exceedingly small characters, about two inches broad and twelve feet long, and weighing but about half an ounce. But the roll presented to the prophet was written on both sides, because the prophecy was long, and to the same effect; that they might see the mind of God wherever they looked.

There was written therein lamentations, and mourning, and wo.— What an awful assemblage! קינים והגה ודי kinim, vahegeh, vehi, lamentations, and a groan, and alas! Lamentations on all hands; a groan from the dying; and alas, or Wo is me! from the survivors. It was the letter that killeth, and is the ministration of death. What a mercy to have that which is emphatically called το ευαγγελιον, The glad tidings, the good news! Christ Jesus is come into the world to save sinners; and he wills that all men should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. Here are rejoicings, thanksgivings, and exultation.

CHAPTER 3

This chapter contains more particular instructions to the prophet. It begins with repeating his appointment to his office, 1-3. Ezekiel is then informed that his commission is, at this time, to the house of Israel exclusively, 4-6; that his countrymen would pay little regard to him, 7; that he must persevere in his duty notwithstanding such great discouragement; and he is endued with extraordinary courage and intrepidity to enable him fearlessly to declare to a disobedient and gainsaying people the whole counsel of God, 8-11. The prophet is afterwards carried by the spirit that animated the cherubim and wheels, and by which he received the gift of prophecy, to a colony of his brethren in the neighborhood, where he remained seven days overwhelmed with astonishment, 12-15. He is then warned of the awful importance of being faithful in his office, 16-21; commanded to go forth into the plain that he may have a visible manifestation of the Divine Presence, 22; and is again favored with a vision of that most magnificent set of symbols described in the first chapter, by which the glorious majesty of the God of Israel was in some measure represented, 23. See also Isaiah 6:1-18; Daniel 10:5-19; and Revelation 1:10-16; 4:1-11, for other manifestations of the Divine glory, in all of which some of the imagery is very similar. The prophet receives directions relative to his future conduct, 24-27.

NOTES ON CHAP. 3

Verse 1. *Eat this roll, and go speak*— This must have passed in vision; but the meaning is plain. Receive my word—let it enter into thy Soul; digest it—let it be thy nourishment; and let it be thy meat and drink to do the will of thy Father who is in heaven.

Verse 3. *It was in my mouth as honey*— It was joyous to me to receive the Divine message, to be thus let into the secrets of the Divine counsel, and I promised myself much comfort in that intimate acquaintance with

which I was favored by the Supreme Being. In Revelation 10:10 we find St. John receiving a little book, which he ate, and found it sweet as honey in his mouth, but after he had eaten it, it made his belly bitter, signifying that a deep consideration of the awful matter contained in God's word against sinners, which multitudes of them will turn to their endless confusion, must deeply afflict those who know any thing of the worth of an immortal spirit.

Verse 5. *Thou art not sent to a people of a strange speech*— I neither send thee to thy adversaries, the Chaldeans, nor to the Medes and Persians, their enemies. Even these would more likely have hearkened unto thee than thy own countrymen.

Verse 7. *Impudent and hard-hearted.*— “Stiff of forehead, and hard of heart.”-Margin. The marginal readings on several verses here are very nervous and very correct.

Verse 12. *Then the Spirit took me up*— This, as Calmet remarks, has been variously understood. 1. An impetuous wind carried him to the place where his brethren sojourned. 2. The Holy Spirit, which filled his heart, transported him in a moment to the place where the captives were. 3. Or, he was so transported with heavenly ardour in his mind, that he ran immediately off, and seemed to fly to the place where God commanded him to go. The promptitude and impetuosity of his spirit seemed to furnish him with wings on the occasion. However this may be understood, the going to the captives was real.

A voice of a great rushing— This was the noise made by the wings of the living creatures that formed the chariot of Jehovah. See the notes on chap. 1:and x.

Blessed be the glory of the Lord— Probably the acclamation of the living creatures: “Let God be blessed from the throne of his glory! He deserves the praises of his creatures in all the dispensations of his mercy and justice, of his providence and grace.”

Verse 13. *A great rushing.*— All the living creatures and the wheels being

then in motion.

Verse 14. *I went in bitterness*— Being filled with indignation at the wickedness and obstinacy of my people, I went, determining to speak the word of God without disguise, and to reprove them sharply for their rebellion; and yet I was greatly distressed because of the heavy message which I was commanded to deliver.

Verse 16. *I came to them of the captivity*— Because the hand of the Lord was strong upon him and supported him, he soon reached the place.

Tel-abib— תל אביב “*a heap of corn.*” *So the Vulgate: acervum novarum frugum, “a heap of new fruits.”* [S] letola chib, “to the hill Chib,” or the hill of grief. — Syriac.

Seven days.— Perhaps God kept him all this time without an immediate revelation, that the bitterness and heat of spirit of which he speaks above might be subdued, and that he might speak God’s words in God’s own Spirit. Had he gone in a better spirit he had probably been employed in his work as soon as he had gained the place of labor.

Verse 17. *I have made thee a watchman*— The care and welfare of all this people I have laid on thee. Thou must watch for their safety, preach for their edification, and pray for their eternal welfare. And that thou mayest be successful, receive the word at my mouth, and warn them from me.

God is particularly jealous lest any words but his own be taught for Divine doctrines. He will not have human creeds, no more than TRADITIONS, taught instead of his own word. No word can be successful in the salvation of sinners but that which comes from God. Every minister of the Gospel should be familiar with his Maker by faith and prayer; God will then hold communion with his spirit; otherwise, what he preaches will be destitute of spirit and life, and his hackneyed texts and sermons, instead of being the bread from heaven, will be like the dry mouldy Gibeonitish crusts.

Verse 18. *Thou shalt surely die*— That is, If he turn not from his

wickedness, and thou givest him not warning, as above, he shalt die in his iniquity, which he should not have committed; but his blood will I require at thy hand-I will visit thy soul for the loss of his. O how awful is this! Hear it, ye priests, ye preachers, ye ministers of the Gospel; ye, especially, who have entered into the ministry for a living, ye who gather a congregation to yourselves that ye may feed upon their fat, and clothe yourselves with their wool; in whose parishes and in whose congregations souls are dying unconverted from day to day, who have never been solemnly warned by you, and to whom you have never shown the way of salvation, probably because ye know nothing of it yourselves! O what a perdition awaits you! To have the blood of every soul that has died in your parishes or in your congregations unconverted laid at your door! To suffer a common damnation for every soul that perishes through your neglect! How many loads of endless wo must such have to bear! Ye take your tithes, your stipends, or your rents, to the last grain, and the last penny; while the souls over whom you made yourselves watchmen have perished, and are perishing, through your neglect. O worthless and hapless men! better for you had ye never been born! Vain is your boast of apostolical authority, while ye do not the work of apostles! Vain your boast of orthodoxy, while ye neither show nor know the way of salvation! Vain your pretensions to a Divine call, when ye do not the work of evangelists! The state of the most wretched of the human race is enviable to that of such ministers, pastors, teachers, and preachers.

But let not this discourage the faithful minister who teaches every man, and warns every man, in all wisdom, that he may present every man perfect to Christ Jesus. If after such teaching and warning they will sin on, and die in their sins, their blood will be upon themselves; but thou, O man of God, hast delivered thine own soul.

Verse 20. *When a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness—* Which these words plainly state he may do, and commit iniquity and die in his sin; and consequently die eternally, which is also here granted; if he have not been warned, though he die in his sin, the blood-the life and salvation, of this person also will God require at the watchman's hand. Pastor hunc occidit, quia eum tacendo morti tradidit. "This man the pastor kills; for in being silent, he delivers him over to death."-GREGORY. From

these passages we see that a righteous man may fall from grace, and perish everlastingly. Should it be said that it means the self-righteous, I reply, this is absurd; for self-righteousness is a fall itself, and the sooner a man falls from it the better for himself. Real, genuine righteousness of heart and life is that which is meant. Let him that standeth take heed lest he fall.

And I lay a stumbling-block before him— That is, I permit him to be tried, and he fall in the trial. God is repeatedly represented as doing things which he only permits to be done. He lays a stumbling-block, i.e., he permits one to be laid.

Verse 22. *Arise, go forth into the plain*— Into a place remote from observation and noise; a place where the glory of God might have sufficient room to manifest itself, that the prophet might see all its movements distinctly.

Verse 24. *The spirit-said unto me, Go, shut thyself within thine house.*— Hide thyself for the present. The reason is immediately subjoined.

Verse 25. *They shall put bands upon thee*— Thy countrymen will rise up against thee; and, to prevent thy prophesying, will confine thee.

Verse 26. *I will make thy tongue cleave to the roof of thy mouth*— I will not give thee any message to deliver to them. They are so rebellious, it is useless to give them farther warning.

Verse 27. *I will open thy mouth*— When it is necessary to address them again, thou shalt sum up what thou hast said in this one speech: Thus saith the Lord, “He that heareth, let him hear; and he that forbeareth, let him forbear.” Let him who feels obedience to the voice of God his interest, be steadfast. Let him who disregards the Divine monition go in his own way, and abide the consequences.

CHAPTER 4

Ezekiel delineates Jerusalem, and lays siege to it, as a type of the manner in which the Chaldean army should surround that city, 1-3. The prophet commanded to lie on his left side three hundred and ninety days, and on his right side forty days, with the signification, 4-8. The scanty and coarse provision allowed the prophet during his symbolical siege, consisting chiefly of the worst kinds of grain, and likewise ill-prepared, as he had only cow's dung for fuel, tended all to denote the scarcity of proviswn, fuel, and every necessary of life, which the Jews should experience during the siege of Jerusalem. 9-17.

NOTES ON CHAP. 4

Verse 1. *Take thee a tile*— A tile, such as we use in covering houses, will give us but a very inadequate notion of those used anciently; and also appear very insufficient for the figures which the prophet was commanded to pourtray on it. A brick is most undoubtedly meant; yet, even the larger dimensions here, as to thickness, will not help us through the difficulty, unless we have recourse to the ancients, who have spoken of the dimensions of the bricks commonly used in building. Palladius, *De Re Rustica*, lib. 6:c. 12, is very particular on this subject: — *Sint vero lateres longitudine pedum duorum, latitudine unius, altitudine quatuor unciarum.* “Let the bricks be two feet long, one foot broad, and four inches thick.” Edit. Gesner, vol. 3:p. 144. On such a surface as this the whole siege might be easily pourtrayed. There are some brick-bats before me which were brought from the ruins of ancient Babylon, which have been made of clay and straw kneaded together and baked in the sun; one has been more than four inches thick, and on one side it is deeply impressed with characters; others are smaller, well made, and finely impressed on one side with Persepolitan characters. These have been for inside or ornamental work; to such bricks the prophet most probably alludes.

But the tempered clay out of which the bricks were made might be meant

here; of this substance he might spread out a sufficient quantity to receive all his figures. The figures were 1. Jerusalem. 2. A fort. 3. A mount. 4. The camp of the enemy. 5. Battering rams, and such like engines, round about. 6. A wall round about the city, between it and the besieging army.

Verse 2. *Battering rams*—כַּרִּים carim. This is the earliest account we have of this military engine. It was a long beam with a head of brass, like the head and horns of a ram, whence its name. It was hung by chains or ropes, between two beams, or three legs, so that it could admit of being drawn backward and forward some yards. Several stout men, by means of ropes, pulled it as far back as it could go, and then, suddenly letting it loose, it struck with great force against the wall which it was intended to batter and bring down. This machine was not known in the time of Homer, as in the siege of Troy there is not the slightest mention of such. And the first notice we have of it is here, where we see that it was employed by Nebuchadnezzar in the siege of Jerusalem, A.M. 3416. It was afterwards used by the Carthaginians at the siege of Gades, as Vitruvius writes, lib. 10:c. 19, in which he gives a circumstantial account of the invention, fabrication, use, and improvement of this machine. It was for the want of a machine of this kind, that the ancient sieges lasted so long; they had nothing with which to beat down or undermine the walls.

Verse 3. *Take thou unto thee an iron pan*—מַחַבֶּת machabath, a flat plate or slice, as the margin properly renders it: such as are used in some countries to bake bread on, called a griddle or girdle, being suspended above the fire, and kept in a proper degree of heat for the purpose. A plate like this, stuck perpendicularly in the earth, would show the nature of a wall much better than any pan could do. The Chaldeans threw such a wall round Jerusalem, to prevent the besieged from receiving any succours, and from escaping from the city.

This shall be a sign to the house of Israel.— This shall be an emblematical representation of what shall actually take place.

Verse 4. *Lie thou also upon thy left side*— It appears that all that is mentioned here and in the following verses was done, not in idea, but in fact. The prophet lay down on his left side upon a couch to which he was

chained, ver. 6, for three hundred and ninety days; and afterwards he lay in the same manner, upon his right side, for forty days. And thus was signified the state of the Jews, and the punishment that was coming upon them. 1. The prophet himself represents the Jews. 2. His lying, their state of depression. 3. His being bound, their helplessness and captivity. 4. The days signify years, a day for a year; during which they were to bear their iniquity, or the temporal punishment due to their sins. 5. The three hundred and ninety days, during which he was to lie on his left side, and bear the iniquity of the house of Israel, point out two things: the first, The duration of the siege of Jerusalem. Secondly, The duration of the captivity off the ten tribes, and that of Judah. 6. The prophet lay three hundred and ninety days upon his left side, and forty days upon his right side, in all four hundred and thirty days. Now Jerusalem was besieged the ninth year of the reign of Zedekiah, 2 Kings 25:1, 2, and was not taken till the eleventh year of the same prince, 2 Kings 25:2. But properly speaking, the siege did not continue the whole of that time; it was interrupted; for Nebuchadnezzar was obliged to raise it, and go and meet the Egyptians, who were coming to its succor. This consumed a considerable portion of time. After he had defeated the Egyptians, he returned and recommenced the siege, and did not leave it till the city was taken. We may, therefore, conclude that the four hundred and thirty days only comprise the time in which the city was actually besieged, when the city was encompassed with walls of circumvallation, so that the besieged were reduced to a state of the utmost distress. The siege commenced the tenth day of the tenth month of the ninth year of Zedekiah; and it was taken on the ninth day of the fourth month of the eleventh year of the same king. Thus the siege had lasted, in the whole, eighteen months, or five hundred and ten days. Subtract for the time that Nebuchadnezzar was obliged to interrupt the siege, in order to go against the Egyptians, four months and twenty days, or one hundred and forty days, and there will remain four hundred and thirty days, composed of $390+40=430$. See Calmet on this place. See also at the end of this chapter.

Verse 6. *Forty days*—Reckon, says Archbishop Newcome, near fifteen years and six months in the reign of Manasseh, two years in that of Amon, three months in that of Jehoahaz, eleven years in that of Jehoiakim, three months and ten days in that of Jehoiachin, and eleven years in that of

Zedekiah; and there arises a period of forty years, during which gross idolatry was practiced in the kingdom of Judah. Forty days may have been employed in spoiling and desolating the city and the temple.

Verse 9. *Take thou also unto thee wheat*— In times of scarcity, it is customary in all countries to mix several kinds of coarser grain with the finer, to make it last the longer. This mashlin, which the prophet is commanded to take, of wheat, barley, beans, lentiles, millet, and fitches, was intended to show how scarce the necessaries of life should be during the siege.

Verse 10. *Twenty shekels a day*— The whole of the above grain, being ground, was to be formed into one mass, out of which he was to make three hundred and ninety loaves; one loaf for each day; and this loaf was to be of twenty shekels in weight. Now a shekel, being in weight about half an ounce, this would be ten ounces of bread for each day; and with this water to the amount of one sixth part of a hin, which is about a pint and a half of our measure. All this shows that so reduced should provisions be during the siege, that they should be obliged to eat the meanest sort of aliment, and that by weight, and their water by measure; each man's allowance being scarcely a pint and a half, and ten ounces, a little more than half a pound of bread, for each day's support.

Verse 12. *Thou shalt bake it with dung*— Dried ox and cow dung is a common fuel in the east; and with this, for want of wood and coals, they are obliged to prepare their food. Indeed, dried excrement of every kind is gathered. Here, the prophet is to prepare his bread with dry human excrement. And when we know that this did not come in contact with the bread, and was only used to warm the plate, (see ver. 3,) on which the bread was laid over the fire, it removes all the horror and much of the disgust. This was required to show the extreme degree of wretchedness to which they should be exposed; for, not being able to leave the city to collect the dried excrements of beasts, the inhabitants during the siege would be obliged, literally, to use dried human ordure for fuel. The very circumstances show that this was the plain fact of the case. However, we find that the prophet was relieved from using this kind of fuel, for cow's dung was substituted at his request. See ver. 15.

Verse 14. *My soul hath not been polluted*— There is a remarkable similarity between this expostulation of the prophet and that of St. Peter, Acts 10:14.

Verse 16. *I will break the staff of bread*— They shall be besieged till all the bread is consumed, till the famine becomes absolute; see 2 Kings 25:3: “And on the ninth of the fourth month, the famine prevailed in the city; and THERE WAS NO BREAD for the people of the land.” All this was accurately foretold, and as accurately fulfilled.

Abp. Newcome on ver. 6 observes: “This number of years will take us back, with sufficient exactness, from the year in which Jerusalem was sacked by Nebuchadnezzar to the first year of Jeroboam’s reign, when national idolatry began in Israel. The period of days seems to predict the duration of the siege by the Babylonians, ver. 9, deducting from the year five months and twenty-nine days, mentioned 2 Kings 25:1-4, the time during which the Chaldeans were on their expedition against the Egyptians; see Jeremiah 37:6.” This amounts nearly to the same as that mentioned above.

CHAPTER 5

In this chapter the prophet shows, under the type of hair, the judgments which God was about to execute on the inhabitants of Jerusalem by famine, sword, and dispersion, 14. The type or allegory is then dropped, and God is introduced declaring in plain terms the vengeance that was coming on the whole nation which had proved so unworthy of those mercies with which they had hitherto been distinguished, 5-17.

NOTES ON CHAP. 5

Verses 1-4. *Take thee a sharp knife*— Among the Israelites, and indeed among most ancient nations, there were very few edge-tools. The sword was the chief; and this was used as a knife, a razor, etc., according to its different length and sharpness. It is likely that only one kind of instrument is here intended; a knife or short sword, to be employed as a razor.

Here is a new emblem produced, in order to mark out the coming evils. 1. The prophet represents the Jewish nation. 2. His hair, the people. 3. The razor, the Chaldeans. 4. The cutting the beard and hair, the calamities, sorrows, and disgrace coming upon the people. Cutting off the hair was a sign of mourning; see on Jeremiah 45:5; 48:37; and also a sign of great disgrace; see 2 Samuel 10:4. 5. He is ordered to divide the hair, ver. 2, into three equal parts, to intimate the different degrees and kinds of punishment which should fall upon the people. 6. The balances, ver. 1, were to represent the Divine justice, and the exactness with which God's judgments should be distributed among the offenders. 7. This hair, divided into three parts, is to be disposed of thus: 1. A third part is to be burnt in the midst of the city, to show that so many should perish by famine and pestilence during the siege. 2. Another third part he was to cut in small portions about the city, (that figure which he had pourtrayed upon the brick,) to signify those who should perish in different sorties, and in defending the walls. 3. And the remaining third part he was to scatter in the wind, to point out those who should be driven into captivity. And, 4.

The sword following them was intended to show that their lives should be at the will of their captors, and that many of them should perish by the sword in their dispersions. 5. The few hairs which he was to take in his skirts, ver. 3, was intended to represent those few Jews that should be left in the land under Gedaliah, after the taking of the city. 6. The throwing a part of these last into the fire, ver. 4, was intended to show the miseries that these suffered in Judea, in Egypt, and finally in their being also carried away into Babylon on the conquest of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar. See these transactions particularly pointed out in the notes on Jeremiah, chapters 40., 41., 42: Some think that this prophecy may refer to the persecution of the Jews by Antiochus Epiphanes.

Verse 5. *This is Jerusalem: I have set it in the midst of the nations*— I have made this city the most eminent and the most illustrious in the world. Some think that these words refer to its geographical situation, as being equally in the center of the habitable world. But any point on a globe is its center, no matter where laid down; and it would not be difficult to show that even this literal sense is tolerably correct. But the point which is the center of the greatest portion of land that can be exhibited on one hemisphere is the capital of the British empire. See my Sermon on the universal spread of the Gospel.

Verse 6. *She hath changed my judgments*— God shows the reason why he deals with Jerusalem in greater severity than with the surrounding nations; because she was more wicked than they. Bad and idolatrous as they were, they had a greater degree of morality among them than the Jews had. Having fallen from the true God, they became more abominable than others in proportion to the height, eminence, and glory from which they had fallen. This is the common case of backsliders; they frequently, in their fall, become tenfold more the children of wrath than they were before.

Verse 9. *I will do in thee that which I have not done*— The destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar was one of the greatest calamities that ever fell on any nation or place before; and that by the Romans under Titus exceeded all that has taken place since. These two sackages of that city have no parallel in the history of mankind.

Verse 10. *The fathers shall eat the sons*— Though we have not this fact so particularly stated in history, yet we cannot doubt of it, considering the extremities to which they were reduced during the siege. The same is referred to by Jeremiah, Lamentations 4:10. Even the women, who were remarkable for kindness and humanity, boiled their own children, and ate them during the siege.

Will I scatter into all the winds.— Disperse you, by captivity, among all the nations of the earth.

Verse 12. *A third part of thee*— See the note on ver. 1-4.

Verse 13. *I will cause my fury to rest*— My displeasure, and the evidences of it, shall not be transient; they shall be permanent upon you, and among you. And is not this dreadfully true to the present day?

Verse 16. *The evil arrows of famine*— Famine and pestilence are represented as poisoned arrows, inflicting death wherever they wound. The ancients represented them in the same way.

Verse 17. *So will I send upon you famine and evil beasts, and they shall bereave thee*— Wild beasts always multiply in depopulated countries. In England, wolves abounded when the country was thinly peopled, it is now full of inhabitants, and there is not one wolf in the land. Nebuchadnezzar and his Chaldeans may be called here evil beasts. He is often compared to a lion, Jeremiah 4:7; Daniel 7:14; on account of the ravages made by him and his Chaldean armies.

CHAPTER 6

In this chapter, which forms a distinct section, the prophet denounces the judgments of God against the Jews for their idolatry, 1-7; but tells them that a remnant shall be saved, and brought to a sense of their sins by their severe afflictions, 8-14.

NOTES ON CHAP. 6

Verse 2. *Set thy face toward the mountains of Israel*— This is a new prophecy, and was most probably given after the four hundred and thirty days of his lying on his left and right side were accomplished. By Israel here, Judea is simply meant; not the ten tribes, who had long before been carried into captivity. Ezekiel uses this term in reference to the Jews only.

The mountains may be addressed here particularly, because it was on them the chief scenes of idolatry were exhibited.

Verse 4. *Your images shall be broken*— Literally, your sun images; representations of the sun, which they worshipped. See the margin.

Verse 5. *Will scatter your bones round about your altars.*— This was literally fulfilled by the Chaldeans. According to Baruch, chap. 2:24, 25, they opened the sepulchres of the principal people, and threw the bones about on every side.

Verse 9. *They that escape of you shall remember me*— Those that escape the sword, the pestilence, and the famine, and shall be led into captivity, shall plainly see that it is God who has done this, and shall humble themselves on account of their abominations, leave their idolatry, and worship me alone. And this they have done from the Babylonish captivity to the present day.

Verse 11. *Smite with thine hand, and stamp with thy foot*— Show the

utmost marks of thy astonishment and indignation, and dread of the evils that are coming upon them. Some have contended for the propriety of clapping and stamping in public worship from these words! It is scarcely a breach of charity to think that such persons are themselves incapable either of attending on or conducting the worship of God. To be consistent, they should copy the prophet in his other typical actions as well as these; and then we shall hear of their lying on their left side for three hundred and ninety days, and on their right side for forty days; shaving their heads, burning their hair, baking their bread with dung, etc. Now all these things, because they were typical and commanded, were proper in the prophet: in such persons as the above they would be evidences of insanity. Such extravagant acts are no part of God's worship.

Verse 14. *And make the land-more desolate than the wilderness toward Diblath*— Diblath or Diblathayim is situated in the land of Moab. It is mentioned Numbers 33:46, Almon-Diblathaim; and in Jeremiah 48:22, Beth-Diblathaim. It was a part of that horrible wilderness mentioned by Moses, Deuteronomy 8:15, “wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought.” The precise reason why it is mentioned here is not very evident. Some think it is the same as Riblah, where Nebuchadnezzar slew the princes of Israel, and put out Zedekiah's eyes; the principal difference lying between the ד daleth and the ר resh, which in MSS. is often scarcely discernible; and hence vast multitudes of various readings. Five, probably six, of Kennicott's MSS. have רבלתה riblathah, as likewise two of my oldest MSS.; though in the margin of one a later hand directs the word to be read בדלת bedaleth, with daleth. But all the Versions read the word with a D. This may appear a matter of little importance, but we should take pains to recover even one lost letter of the word of God.

CHAPTER 7

This chapter, which also forms a distinct prophecy, foretells the dreadful destruction of the land of Israel, or Judah, (for after the captivity of the ten tribes these terms are often used indiscriminately for the Jews in general,) on account of the heinous sins of its inhabitants, 1-15; and the great distress of the small remnant that should escape, 16-19. The temple itself, which they had polluted with idolatry, is devoted to destruction, 20-22; and the prophet is directed to make a chain, as a type of that captivity, in which both king and people should be led in bonds to Babylon, 23-27. The whole chapter abounds in bold and beautiful figures, flowing in an easy and forcible language.

NOTES ON CHAP. 7

Verse 2. *An end, the end is come*— Instead of קץ בא הקץ kets ba hakkets, one MS. of Kennicott's, one of De Rossi's, and one of my own, read קץ בא בא הקץ kets ba, ba hakkets, "The end cometh, come is the end." This reading is supported by all the ancient Versions, and is undoubtedly genuine. The end COMETH: the termination of the Jewish state is coming, and while I am speaking, it is come. The destruction is at the door. The later hand, who put the vowel points to the ancient MS. that has the above reading, did not put the points to the first בא ba, but struck his pen gently across it, and by a mark in the margin intimated that it should be blotted out. All my ancient MSS. were without the points originally; but they have been added by modern hands, with a different ink; and they have in multitudes of instances corrected, or rather changed, important readings, to make them quadrate with the masora. But the original reading, in almost every case, is discernible.

The end is come upon the four corners of the land.— This is not a partial calamity; it shall cover and sweep the whole land. The cup of your iniquity is full, and my forbearing is at an end. This whole chapter is poetical.

Verse 4. *Thine abominations shall be in the midst of thee*— They shall ever stare thee in the face, upbraid thee with thy ingratitude and disobedience, and be witnesses against thee.

Verse 5. *An evil, an only evil*— The great, the sovereign, the last exterminating evil, is come: the sword, the pestilence, the famine, and the captivity. Many MSS. read אחר achar, after. So evil cometh after evil; one instantly succeeds another.

Verse 6. *An end is come, the end is come: it watcheth for thee*— This is similar to the second verse; but there is a paronomasia, or play upon letters and words, which is worthy of note. קץ בא בא הקץ הקץ אליך kets ba, ba hakkets, hekits elayich. קצה katsah signifies to make an end or extremity, by cutting off something, and יקץ yakats signifies to awake from sleep: hence קיץ kits, the summer, as the earth and its productions seem then to awake from the sleep of winter. The end or final destruction is here personified; and represented as an executioner who has arisen early from his sleep, and is waiting for his orders to execute judgment upon these offenders. Hence it is said:—

Verse 7. *The morning is come unto thee*— Every note of time is used in order to show the certainty of the thing. The morning that the executioner has watched for is come; the time of that morning, in which it should take place, and the day to which that time, precise hour of that morning, belongs in which judgment shall be executed. All, all is come.

And not the sounding again of the mountains.— The hostile troops are advancing! Ye hear a sound, a tumultuous noise; do not suppose that this proceeds from festivals upon the mountains; from the joy of harvestmen, or the treaders of the wine-press. It is the noise of those by whom ye and your country are to fall. ולא הר הררים veto hed harim, and not the reverberation of sound, or reflected sound, or reechoing from the mountains. “Now will I shortly pour out,” ver. 8. Here they come!

Verse 10. *Behold the day*— The same words are repeated, sometimes

varied, and pressed on the attention with new figures and new circumstances, in order to alarm this infatuated people. Look at the day! It is come!

The morning is gone forth— It will wait no longer. The rod that is to chastise you hath blossomed; it is quite ready.

Pride hath budded.— Your insolence, obstinacy, and daring opposition to God have brought forth their proper fruits.

Verse 11. *Violence is risen, up into a rod of wickedness*— The prophet continues his metaphor: “Pride has budded.”—And what has it brought forth? Violence and iniquity. To meet these, the rod of God cometh. There is such a vast rapidity of succession in the ideas of the prophet that he cannot wait to find language to clothe each. Hence we have broken sentences; and, consequently, obscurity. Something must be supplied to get the sense, and most critics alter words in the text. Houbigant, who rarely acknowledges himself to be puzzled, appears here completely nonplussed. He has given a meaning; it is this: “Violence hath burst forth from the rod; salvation shall not proceed from them, nor from their riches, nor from their turbulence: there shall be no respite for them.” Calmet has given no less than five interpretations to this verse. The simple meaning seems to be, that such and so great is their wickedness that it must be punished; and from this punishment, neither their multitude nor struggles shall set them free. They may strive to evade the threatened stroke; but they shall not succeed, nor shall they have any respite. Our Version is to be understood as saying, — None of the people shall be left; all shall be slain, or carried into captivity: nor shall any of theirs, their princes, priests, wives, or children, escape. And so deserved shall their desolation appear, that none shall lament them. This may be as good a sense as any, and it is nearest to the letter.

Verse 12. *Let not the buyer rejoice, nor the seller mourn*— Such is now the state of public affairs, that he who through want has been obliged to sell his inheritance, need not mourn on the account; as of this the enemy would soon have deprived him. And he who has bought it need not rejoice in his bargain, as he shall soon be stripped of his purchase, and either fall

by the sword, or be glad to flee for his life.

Verse 13. *For the seller shall not return*— In the sale of all heritages among the Jews, it was always understood that the heritage must return to the family on the year of jubilee, which was every fiftieth year; but in this case the seller should not return to possess it, as it was not likely that he should be alive when the next jubilee should come, and if he were even to live till that time, he could not possess it, as he would then be in captivity. And the reason is particularly given; for the vision—the prophetic declaration of a seventy years' captivity, regards the whole multitude of the people; and it shall not return, i.e., it will be found to be strictly true, without any abatement.

Verse 14. *They have blown the trumpet*— Vain are all the efforts you make to collect and arm the peoples and stand on your own defense; for all shall be dispirited, and none go to the battle.

Verse 15. *The sword is without*— War through all the country, and pestilence and famine within the city, shall destroy the whole, except a small remnant. He who endeavors to flee from the one shall fall by the other.

Verse 16. *They shall be on the mountains like doves of the valleys*— leather, like mourning doves **הגאיות** haggeayoth, chased from their dove-cotes, and separated from their mates.

Verse 17. *All knees shall be weak as water*.— Calmet understands this curiously: La frayeur dont on sera saisi, fera qu'on ne pourra retenir son urine. D'autres l'expliquent d'une autre souillure plus honteuse. I believe him to be nearly about right. St. Jerome is exactly the same: Pavoris magnitudine, urina polluet genua, nec valebit profluentes aquas vesica prohibere. This and other malretentions are often the natural effect of extreme fear or terror.

Verse 19. *They shall cast their silver in the streets*— Their riches can be of no use; as in a time of famine there is no necessary of life to be purchased, and gold and silver cannot fill their bowels.

It is the stumbling-block of their iniquity.— They loved riches, and placed in the possession of them their supreme happiness. Now they find a pound of gold not worth an ounce of bread.

Verse 20. *As for the beauty of his ornament*— Their beautiful temple was their highest ornament, and God made it majestic by his presence. But they have even taken its riches to make their idols, which they have brought into the very courts of the Lord's house; and therefore God hath set it—the temple, from him—given it up to pillage. Some say it means, “They took their ornaments, which were their pride, and made them into images to worship.”

Verse 22. *The robbers shall enter into it*— The Chaldeans shall not only destroy the city; but they shall enter the temple, deface it, plunder it, and burn it to the ground.

Verse 23. *Make a chain*— Point out the captivity; show them that it shall come, and show them the reason: “Because the land is full of bloody crimes,” etc.

Verse 24. *The worst of the heathen*— The Chaldeans; the most cruel and idolatrous of all nations.

Verse 25. *They shall seek peace*— They see now that their ceasing to pay the tribute to the king of Babylon has brought the Chaldeans against them; and now they sue for peace in vain. He will not hear: he is resolved on their destruction.

Verse 26. *Then shall they seek a vision*— Vision shall perish from the prophet, the law from the priest, and counsel from the ancients. Previously to great national judgments, God restrains the influences of his Spirit. His word is not accompanied with the usual unction; and the wise men of the land, the senators and celebrated statesmen, devise foolish schemes; and thus, in endeavoring to avert it, they hasten on the national ruin. How true is the saying, *Quem Deus vult perdere, prius dementat.* “Those whom God designs to destroy, he first infatuates.”

CHAPTER 8

*Here begins a section of prophecy extending to the twelfth chapter. In this chapter the prophet is carried in vision to Jerusalem, 1-4; and there shown the idolatries committed by the rulers of the Jews, even within the temple. In the beginning of this vision, by the noblest stretch of an inspired imagination, idolatry itself is personified, and made an idol; and the image sublimely called, from the provocation it gave God, the **IMAGE OF JEALOUSY**, 5. The prophet then proceeds to describe the three principal superstitions of this unhappy people: the Egyptian, 6-12, the Phoenician, 13, 14, and the Persian, 15, 16; giving the striking features of each, and concluding with a declaration of the heinousness of their sins in the sight of God, and the consequent greatness of their punishment, 17, 18.*

NOTES ON CHAP. 8

Verse 1. *In the sixth year, in the sixth month, in the fifth day of the month*— This, according to Abp. Usher, was the sixth year of Ezekiel's captivity. The sixth day of the fifth month of the ecclesiastical year, which answers to August A.M. 3410.

This chapter and the three following contain but one vision, of which I judge it necessary, with Calmet, to give a general idea, that the attention of the reader may not be too much divided.

The prophet, in the visions of God, is carried to Jerusalem, to the northern gate of the temple, which leads by the north side to the court of the priests. There he sees the glory of the Lord in the same manner as he did by the river Chebar. At one side he sees the image of jealousy. Going thence to the court of the people, he sees through an opening in the wall seventy elders of the people, who were worshipping all sorts of beasts and reptiles, which were painted on the wall. Being brought thence to the gate of the door of the house, he saw women weeping for Tammuz or

Adonis. As he returned to the court of the priests, between the porch and the altar, he saw twenty-five men with their backs to the sanctuary and their faces towards the east, worshipping the rising sun. This is the substance of the vision contained in the eighth chapter.

About the same time he saw six men come from the higher gate with swords in their hands; and among them, one with an ink-horn. Then the Divine Presence left the cherubim, and took post at the entrance of the temple, and gave orders to the man with the ink-horn to put a mark on the foreheads of those who sighed and prayed because of the abominations of the land; and then commanded the men with the swords to go forward, and slay every person who had not this mark. The prophet, being left alone among the dead, fell on his face, and made intercession for the people. The Lord gives him the reason of his conduct; and the man with the ink-horn returns, and reports to the Lord what was done. These are the general contents of the ninth chapter.

The Lord commands the same person to go in between the wheels of the cherubim, and take his hand full of live coals, and scatter them over the city. He went as commanded, and one of the cherubim gave him the coals; at the same time the glory of the Lord, that had removed to the threshold of the house, now returned, and stood over the cherubim. The cherubim, wheels, wings, etc., are here described as in the first chapter. This is the substance of the tenth chapter.

The prophet then finds himself transported to the east gate of the temple, where he saw twenty-five men, and among them Jaazaniah the son of Azur, and Pelatiah the son of Benaiah, princes of the people, against whom the Lord commands him to prophesy, and to threaten them with the utmost calamities, because of their crimes. Afterwards God himself speaks, and shows that the Jews who should be left in the land should be driven out because of their iniquities, and that those who had been led captive, and who acknowledged their sins and repented of them, should be restored to their own land. Then the glory of the Lord arose out of the city, and rested for a time on one of the mountains on the east of Jerusalem, and the prophet being carried in vision by the Spirit to Chaldea, lost sight of the chariot of the Divine glory, and began to show to the

captivity what the Lord had shown to him. This is the substance of the eleventh chapter.

We may see from all this what induced the Lord to abandon his people, his city, and his temple; the abominations of the people in public and in private. But because those carried away captives with Jeconiah acknowledged their sins, and their hearts turned to the Lord, God informs them that they shall be brought back and restored to a happy state both in temporal and spiritual matters, while the others, who had filled up the measure of their iniquities, should be speedily brought into a state of desolation and ruin. This is the sum and intent of the vision in these four chapters.

Verse 2. *The appearance of fire*— See the note on chap. 1:27.

Verse 3. *The image of jealousy*— סמל הקנאה *semel hakkinah*. We do not know certainly of what form this image was, nor what god it represented. Some say it was the image of Baal, which was placed in the temple by Manasses; others, that it was the image of Mars; and others, that it was the image of Tammuz or Adonis. Calmet supports this opinion by the following reasons: — 1. The name agrees perfectly with him. He was represented as a beautiful youth, beloved by Venus; at which Mars, her paramour, being incensed and filled with jealousy, sent a large boar against Adonis, which killed him with his tusks. Hence it was the image of him who fell a victim to jealousy. 2. The prophet being returned towards the northern gate, where he had seen the image of jealousy, ver. 14, there saw the women lamenting for Tammuz. Now Tammuz, all agree, signifies Adonis; it was that therefore which was called the image of jealousy. 3. The Scripture often gives to the heathen idols names of degradation; as Baal-zebub, god of flies; Baal-zebul; god of dung. It is likely that it was Adonis who is called The dead, Leviticus 19:27, 28; Deuteronomy 14:9, because he was worshipped as one dead. And the women represented as worshipping him were probably adulteresses, and had suffered through the jealousy of their husbands. And this worship of the image of jealousy provoked God to jealousy, to destroy this bad people.

Verse 4. *The vision that I saw in the plain*.— see the note on chap. 3:23;

see also chap. 1:3.

Verse 7. *A hole in the wall.*— This we find was not large enough to see what was doing within; and the prophet is directed to dig, and make it larger, ver. 8; and when he had done so and entered, he says:—

Verse 10. *And saw every form of creeping things*— It is very likely that these images portrayed on the wall were the objects of Egyptian adoration: the ox, the ape, the dog, the crocodile, the ibis, the scarabaeus or beetle, and various other things. It appears that these were privately worshipped by the sanhedrin or great Jewish council, consisting of seventy or seventy-two persons, six chosen out of every tribe, as representatives of the people. The images were portrayed upon the wall, as we find those ancient idols are on the walls of the tombs of the kings and nobles of Egypt. See the plates to Belzoni's Travels, the Isaic Tomb in the Bodleian Library, and the Egyptian hieroglyphics in general. Virgil speaks of these, AEn. lib. viii.:—

Omnigenumque Deum monstra, et latrator Anubis.

“All kinds of gods, monsters, and barking dogs.”

Verse 11. *Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan*— Shaphan was a scribe, or what some call comptroller of the temple, in the days of Josiah; and Jaazaniah his son probably succeeded him in this office. He was at the head of this band of idolaters.

Verse 14. *There sat women weeping for Tammuz.*— This was Adonis, as we have already seen; and so the Vulgate here translates. My old MS. Bible reads, There saten women, mornynge a mawmete of lecherye that is cleped Adonrdes. He is fabled to have been a beautiful youth beloved by Venus, and killed by a wild boar in Mount Lebanon, whence springs the river Adonis, which was fabled to run blood at his festival in August. The women of Phoenicia, Assyria, and Judea worshipped him as dead, with deep lamentation, wearing priapi and other obscene images all the while, and they prostituted themselves in honor of this idol. Having for some time mourned him as dead, they then supposed him revived and broke

out into the most extravagant rejoicings. Of the appearance of the river at this season, Mr. Maundrell thus speaks: “We had the good fortune to see what is the foundation of the opinion which Lucian relates, viz., that this stream at certain seasons of the year, especially about the feast of Adonis, is of a bloody color, proceeding from a kind of sympathy, as the heathens imagined, for the death of Adonis, who was killed by a wild boar in the mountain out of which this stream issues. Something like this we saw actually come to pass, for the water was stained to a surprising redness; and, as we observed in travelling, had stained the sea a great way into a reddish hue.” This was no doubt occasioned by a red ochre, over which the river ran with violence at this time of its increase. Milton works all this up in these fine lines:—

“Thammuz came next behind, Whose annual wound in Lebanon allured
The Syrian damsels to lament his fate, In amorous ditties all a summer’s
day; While smooth Adonis, from his native rock, Ran purple to the sea,
suffused with blood Of Thammuz, yearly wounded. The love tale Infected
Sion’s daughters with like heat: Whose wanton passions in the sacred
porch Ezekiel saw, when by the vision led, His eye surveyed the dark
idolatrics Of alienated Judah.” Par. Lost, b. 1:446.

Tammuz signifies hidden or obscure, and hence the worship of his image was in some secret place.

Verse 16. *Five and twenty men*— These most probably represented the twenty-four courses of the priests, with the high priest for the twenty-fifth. This was the Persian worship, as their turning their faces to the east plainly shows they were worshipping the rising sun.

Verse 17. *They put the branch to their nose*.— This is supposed to mean some branch or branches, which they carried in succession in honor of the idol, and with which they covered their faces, or from which they inhaled a pleasant smell, the branches being odoriferous. That the heathens carried branches of trees in their sacred ceremonies is well known to all persons acquainted with classic antiquity; and it is probable that the heathen borrowed those from the use of such branches in the Jewish feast of tabernacles. There are many strange, and some filthy, interpretations given

of this clause; but the former are not worth repeating, and I abominate the latter too much to submit to defile my paper with them. Probably the Brahminic Linga is here intended.

It really seems that at this time the Jews had incorporated every species of idolatry in their impure worship, — Phoenician, Egyptian, and Persian. I might add that some imagine the image of jealousy to be a personification of idolatry itself.

CHAPTER 9

The vision in this chapter seems intended to denote the general destruction of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, excepting a few pious individuals that were distressed at the abominations that were committed in the land; who, in order to be delivered from the general calamity, were MARKED, in allusion, perhaps, to the custom of eastern princes, who marked their servants in the forehead, or rather to the custom very frequent among the Pagan worshippers, of indelibly imprinting on different parts of their body the marks of their idols. To indicate, likewise, that God was soon to forsake the temple, the shechinah, or glorious symbol of his presence, is seen to remove from the inner sanctuary to the threshold or door of the temple, 1-7. The prophet intercedes for his people; but God, on account of the greatness of their sins, will not be entreated, 8-11.

NOTES ON CHAP. 9

Verse 1. Cause them that have charge over the city— By those six men with destroying weapons the Chaldeans are represented, who had received commission to destroy the city; and when the north is mentioned in such cases, Chaldea and the Chaldean armies are generally intended. There appears to have been six men with a sort of slaughter-bills, and one man with an inkhorn. These may represent the seven counsellors of the eastern monarchs, who always saw the king's face, and knew all the secrets of the government. One of them was that minister who had the office of reporting concerning criminals, who carried the book of death and the book of life into the presence of the king, where the names were entered of criminals who were destined to suffer, and of those who were either considered as innocent or recommended to mercy; those of the former in the book of death, those of the latter in the book of life. This person with the inkhorn might be termed, in our phrase, the recorder.

Verse 2. Stood beside the brazen altar.— To signify that the people

against whom they had their commission were, for their crimes, to be sacrificed to the demands of Divine justice.

Verse 3. *And he called to the man*— The person here who called was that who sat on the chariot of the Divine glory. See chap. 1:26.

Verse 4. *Set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh*— This is in allusion to the ancient every-where-used custom of setting marks on servants and slaves, to distinguish them from others. It was also common for the worshippers of particular idols to have their idol's mark upon their foreheads, arms, etc. These are called sectarian marks to the present day among the Hindoos and others in India. Hence by this mark we can easily know who is a follower of Vishnoo, who of Siva, who of Bramah, etc. The original words, **והתויתָ תו** *vehithvitha tau*, have been translated by the Vulgate, *et signa thau*, “and mark thou tau on the foreheads,” etc. St. Jerome and many others have thought that the letter tau was that which was ordered to be placed on the foreheads of those mourners; and Jerome says, that this Hebrew letter **ת** tau was formerly written like a cross. So then the people were to be signed with the sign of the cross! It is certain that on the ancient Samaritan coins, which are yet extant, the letter **ת** tau is in the form +, which is what we term St. Andrew's cross. The sense derived from this by many commentators is, that God, having ordered those penitents to be marked with this figure, which is the sign of the cross, intimated that there is no redemption nor saving of life but by the cross of Christ, and that this will avail none but the real penitent. All this is true in itself, but it is not true in respect to this place. The Hebrew words signify literally, thou shalt make a mark, or sign a sign, but give no intimation what that mark or sign was. It was intended here to be what the sprinkling of the blood of the paschal lamb on the lintels and door-posts of the Israelites was, namely, a notice to the destroying angel what house he should spare. As the whole of this matter only passed in vision we are bound to neither letter, nor any other kind of figure. The symbolical action teaches us that God, in general judgments, will make a distinction between the innocent and the guilty, between the penitent and the hardened sinner.

Verse 6. *Begin at my sanctuary*.— Let those who have sinned against

most mercy, and most privileges, be the first victims of justice. Those who know their Lord's will, and do it not, shall be beaten with many stripes. The unfaithful members of Christ's church will be first visited and most punished. But let not those who belong to the synagogue of Satan exult in this, for if judgment begin at the house of God what will the end be of them who obey not the Gospel! However, the truly penitent of all descriptions in such cases shall be safe. The command of God is, "Set a mark on all them that sigh and cry;" and his command to the destroyers is, "Come not near any man on whom is the mark."

Verse 7. *Defile the house*— A dreadful sentence, Let it be polluted, I will no more dwell in it; I now utterly forsake it.

Verse 8. *Wilt thou destroy all the residue of Israel, On thy pouring out of thy fury upon Jerusalem?*— These destroyers had slain the seventy elders, the twenty-five adorers of the sun, and the women that mourned for Tammuz; and on seeing this slaughter the prophet fell on his face, and began to make intercession.

Verse 9. *For they say, The Lords hath forsaken the earth*— את הארץ
eth haarets, "this land." He has no more place in Israel; he has quite abandoned it; he neither sees nor cares, and he can be no longer the object of worship to any man in Israel. This seems to be the meaning; and God highly resents it, because it was bringing him on a level with idols and provincial deities, who had, according to supposition, regency only in some one place.

Verse 10. *Mine eye shall not spare*— They say, the Lord seeth not: this is false; I have seen all their iniquities, and do see all their abominations; and I will bring deserved judgment upon them, and then that eye which now sees will neither pity nor spare.

Verse 11. *I have done as thou hast commanded me.*— Angels and men must all give account of their conduct to God; for although he is every where, and his eye sees all things, yet they must personally account for all that they have done. I have done as thou hast commanded me. The penitents are all signed; the penitents are all safe. This is good news for

them that mourn.

CHAPTER 10

The same august vision which appeared to the prophet at first, is repeated here; and coals of fire are scattered over the city to intimate that it was to be burned. The symbol of the Divine presence is likewise represented as removing farther and farther from the temple, to signify that God's protection was about to be withdrawn from it, 1-22. It may not be improper to remark, that whatever is particularly intended by the cherubim, wheels, firmament, throne, etc., described in this and the first chapter, the prophet several times informs us (chap. 1:28; 3:25; 8:4; 10:4, 18,) that his vision was a manifestation or similitude of the GLORY of Jehovah; or, in other words, consisted of a set of hieroglyphics by which this glory was in some measure represented. It is also worthy of observation, that the faces of the living creatures, of which we have an account in the fourth chapter of the Apocalypse, are precisely the same with those of Ezekiel's cherubim; and we may readily collect, as Mr. Mede remarks, the quarter of the heavens in which each cherub was situated in reference to the other three, from the consideration that as Ezekiel saw the vision proceeding from the NORTH, (see chap. 1:4, 10,) the human face of the cherubim was towards him, or the south; on his right hand, or the east, was the face of a lion; on his left hand, or the west, the face of an ox; and towards the north, the face of an eagle.

NOTES ON CHAP. 10

Verse 1. *As it were a sapphire stone*— See the note on chap. 1:22, 26. The chariot, here mentioned by the prophet, was precisely the same as that which he saw at the river Chebar, as himself tells us, ver. 15, of which see the description in chap. i.

Verse 2. *Coals of fire*— These were to signify the burning of the city by the Chaldeans. It seems that the space between the four wheels, which was all on fire, was that from which those coals were taken.

Verse 3. *On the right side of the house*— The right hand always marked the south among the Hebrews.

Verse 4. *The glory of the Lord went up*— This is repeated from chap. 9:3.

The house was filled with the cloud— This is a fact similar to what occurred frequently at the tabernacle in the wilderness, and in the dedication of the temple by Solomon. What is mentioned here was the Divine shechinah, the symbolical representation of the majesty of God.

Verse 5. *as the voice of the Almighty God*— That is, as thunder; for this was called the voice of God.

Verse 8. *The form of a man's hand under their wings*.— I am still of opinion that the hands and wings were not distinct. The arms were feathered like wings, and the hand terminated the arm; but as the long front feathers of the wings would extend much beyond the fingers, hence the hands would appear to be under the wings. See on chap. 1:8. The human hand might be intended to show that God helps and punishes man by man; and that, in the general operations of his providence, he makes use of human agency.

Verse 9. *The color of a beryl stone*.— אב תרשיש *eben Tarshish*, “the stone of Tarshish.” The Vulgate translates it chrysolith; Symmachus, the jacinth; the Septuagint, the carbuncle. In the parallel place, chap. 1:16, it is כעי תרשיש *keeyn Tarshish*, “like the eye of Tarshish;” i.e., the color of tarshish, or the stone so called, which the Vulgate translates visio maris, “like the sea,” i.e., azure. The beryl is a gem of a green color, passing from one side into blue, on the other side into yellow. The chrysolith is also green, what is called pistachio green; but the chrysolith of the ancients was our topaz, which is of a fine wine yellow. The beryl, or chrysolith, is most likely what is here meant by tarshish. One name among the ancients served for several kinds of gems that were nearly of the same color. The moderns go more by chemical characters than by color.

Verse 10. *A wheel had been in the midst of a wheel*.— It is difficult to comprehend this description. It is generally supposed to mean one wheel

within another, cutting each other at right angles. This, in my opinion, will not account for the motions attributed to these wheels; nor can I see how, on this supposition, they could have any motion; for if one was moved on its axis, the other must be dragged contrary to its axis. I have conjectured it rather to mean a wheel within a wheel, or a wheel with two rims, working on the same axis. See on chap. 1:16-18. It is however no matter of faith; and the reader may judge as he thinks proper. For other matters relative to this chariot, wheels, cherubim, wings, etc., I must refer to the notes on the first chapter. And perhaps from the whole of this vision and its difficulties, he will see the propriety of the council of rabbins ordering Rabbi Ananias three hundred barrels of oil to light his lamp during the time it would be necessary for him to employ in explaining this one vision.

Verse 13. *As for the wheels, it was cried unto them—O wheel.*— Never was there a more unfortunate and unmeaning translation. The word הגלגל haggalgal, may signify, simply, the roller, or a chariot, or roll on, or the swift roller. And he clepide ilke wheelis volible, or turninge about. Old MS. Bible. Any of these will do: “and as to the wheels,” לאופנים laophannim, “they were called in my hearing” הגלגל haggalgal, “the chariot.” The gentleman who took for his text “O wheel!” and made God’s decree of eternal predestination out of it, must have borrowed some of Rabbi Ananias’s three hundred barrels of oil! But such working of God’s word cannot be too severely reprehended.

As these wheels are supposed to represent Divine Providence, bringing about the designs of the Most thigh, how like is the above הגלגל haggalgal, taken as a verb, “roll on,” to those words of Virgil in his Pollio:—

*Talia saela, suis dixerunt, currite, fuis,
Concordes stabili fatorum numine Parcae.*

*“The Fates, when they this happy web have spun,
Shall bless the sacred clue, and bid it swiftly run.”*

Verse 14. *The first—was the face of a cherub*— In chap. 1:10, this is called

the “face of an ox;” here, the “face of a cherub:” hence, a cherub was in the likeness of an ox, at least, as to its head. כְּרוּב kerub never occurs as a verb; and its meaning cannot be precisely ascertained. Parkhurst thinks the כ caph to be here the note of similitude; and then translates כ ke, “like,” רַב rab or רֹבֵב rob, “the mighty one;” and, in consequence, makes the cherubim an emblem of the Holy Trinity. See his lengthy Dissertation under כְּרוּב in his Hebrew and English Lexicon.

Verse 20. And I knew that they were the cherubims.— This formation of the plural is quite improper. In general, Hebrew nouns of the masculine gender end in ם im, in the plural; the s, therefore, should never be added to such. Cherub is singular; cherubim is plural. The s should be uniformly expunged.

I have already referred to the end of this chapter for farther information relative to this glorious chariot of Jehovah; but I must say that I have met with nothing on the subject that entirely satisfies myself. In the preceding notes I have endeavored to make the literal meaning as plain as possible; and have occasionally given some intimations relative to the general design of this sublime vision. My readers are already apprised that I do not like conjectures on Divine things; many points, that had originally no other origin, are now incorporated with creeds of which it is deemed sinful to doubt. Because some learned and pious men have written to prove that this symbolical compound figure is a representation of the Holy Trinity; therefore, the sentiment now passes { current. Now this is not proved; and I suppose never can be proved. The continuator of the Historical Discourses of Saurin has made some sensible remarks on the subject of this vision; and these I shall lay here before the intelligent reader. They deserve attention.

THIS intelligent writer observes: “For the right interpretation of this vision, the following rules should be laid down:—

“The first rule is this: — An explanation, which accounts for all the parts contained in the vision, is much more probable than those which explain only one part.

“The second is this: — An explanation which is conformable to the present circumstances of the prophet, and of the people to whom he is sent, as well as to the nature of the things which he is called upon to say to them, is incomparably more probable than those explanations which go in quest of past or future events, which have no connection with the immediate circumstances of the prophet, nor with the end of his mission. These rules, which appear incontestable, being laid down, we observe, that their opinion who think that God here draws out a plan of the government of his providence, applied to the present state of the Jews, accounts for all that Ezekiel saw; and that in a manner which refers to the end of the prophet’s mission, and all that he had to say to this rebellious people. Why wish God to represent to his prophet the future state of the Christian Church, which was not to be founded till after a series of time, rather than the state of the Jewish Church, and the chastisements which hung over the heads of that hardened people? The people having revolted from God, and persevering obstinately in that revolt, notwithstanding the menaces of the prophet, it was proper to show to Ezekiel, in order that he might declare it to the rebellious, that Providence had its eyes open to all that had been done, all that had hitherto happened, and that it had seized upon the rod to smite. The people imagined, but too much according to the errors of infidelity, that God saw every thing with indifference and had given the world up to chance. It was necessary, therefore, to divest them of these fatal prejudices; and to teach them that the Supreme Being did not behold with the same eye order and disorder, contempt of his laws and submission to his will; and that all the revolutions of states are directed by a superior intelligence, which cannot be imposed upon. The Jewish people imagined but too much that the prophets exaggerated when they threatened them with the severest chastisements. They repeated with emphasis and complacency the promises of God made to the patriarchs; that their posterity should not only be more numerous than the stars of heaven, and the sand which covers the sea-shore; but that it should subsist for ever and ever. God had declared to Abraham, ‘I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee and thy seed after thee,’ Genesis 17:7. It was proper, therefore, to show this stiff-necked people that the threatenings of God and his promises were

not contradictory. That the people, conformable to the promises given by God to the patriarchs, should not be destroyed; but that, notwithstanding, they should be severely chastised, to correct them for their propensity to idolatry, and their scandalous irregularities.

“These suppositions, which are reasonable, being granted, we shall have no difficulty to perceive the sense of this celebrated vision. We shall not follow the order observed by Ezekiel, in the description of what he saw; he raises himself from the nearest to the most distant objects, going back from effects to their general cause. We will begin with the First Cause which gives motion to all that happens, traces out the plan, and procures the execution, according to the rules of his ineffable wisdom, and agreeably to the nature of those creatures which are the object of his agency. Next, we will proceed to consider the effects of this universal Providence, and the intelligent secondary causes which he frequently employs in the administration of the government of the universe.

“Ezekiel saw a firmament which was above the heads of the animals; there was the resemblance of a throne like a sapphire stone; and over the resemblance of the throne, there was, as it were, the resemblance of a man.’ This vast transparent firmament represents to us the heaven, the peculiar residence of the Lord of the earth; and where he hath established the throne of his empire. This ‘appearance of a man’ was the emblem of Providence or God; considered as taking care of all the creatures whom he hath made. Man is the symbol of intelligence. The mind of man, with respect to his knowledge and wisdom, is a weak sketch of that mind which knows all things, and whose wisdom is unbounded. And yet, of all sublunary beings, there is none that approaches so near to the Divine nature as man. Under this emblem also it is that God, considered as seeing all things and directing all, would be represented. This resemblance of man was seated upon a throne to show that God governs all things as Lord and that without agitation and without labor.

“The shining metal, and the fire which surrounded him who sat on the throne, were the symbol of his glory and his judgments, which are poured upon the wicked as a fire which nothing can withstand; agreeably to Isaiah, chap. 33:14.

“The Jews acknowledged that there was a Providence which governs the whole universe with infinite wisdom. The psalmist gives us a description of it, equally just and pathetic, in Psalm 104:27, etc. Christians, no less than Jews, admit this important truth; and the Gospel establishes it no less strongly than the law. See Matthew 6:26; 10:29, 30. To raise the mind of the prophet up to the first Mover of those events which strike and admonish us in all the revolutions which happen to individuals, families, and states, God shows him four wheels above the firmament, over which the emblem of Providence was placed on a throne. These wheels are a symbol of those perpetual revolutions, which are observed in the earth; and which, by turns, lift up and abase individuals and nations. They are of a prodigious height, to show that man cannot fathom or know all that is great, wonderful, and astonishing, in the ways of Providence. See Job 11:7, 8; Romans 11:33, 34; Isaiah 55:8, 9. These wheels move themselves every way, and are full of eyes in the vast circle of their feloes. This shows, that all which God does he effects without pain; and that the eye of his wisdom ordereth all events. The wheels did not move of themselves; but they followed the impulse of the four living creatures; ‘when the living creatures went, they went.’ This shows that, in the government of the world, all the living creatures are subject to Providence; and that God subordinates the creatures one to another. He directs what those holy intelligences ought to do, who serve him as ministers, and are here represented by the four animals. And these intelligences, enlightened and supported by the Supreme Wisdom, contribute, as far as is suitable, to all that happens to mankind. The angels whom Ezekiel saw were in number four, in reference to the four cardinal points of the world; to show that their ministry extends every where, and that there is no part of the universe which the Providence of God does not govern in an immediate manner, or by the means of his ministers. The extraordinary shape of these angels, which appeared to the prophet in vision, is symbolical; for it is not to be supposed that those heavenly ministers are really thus formed. The ‘four faces, wings, and arms of a man,’ denote the sublime qualities of these immediate ministers of the Deity; qualities entirely essential to fill up the extent of their duty. The face of a man denotes their intelligence; of a lion, their intrepid courage; of an ox, their patience and perseverance in labor; and of an eagle, their great penetration, their sublime sight into

heavenly things, and their readiness to rise up into all that is great and Divine. The 'wings being stretched out,' signifies that they are always ready to set forward, and run with rapidity wherever the commands of their great Master call them. The 'wings bent down,' are a symbol of that profound respect in which these heavenly ministers stand before the Lord of the universe. Under the wings there were men's arms, to show that zeal produces application and labor. Labour, without zeal, can never be supported; and zeal, without application, is only a hypocritical ardour, which amounts to nothing with that supreme Master who requires sincere homage from those who serve him. If God chose to make known to Ezekiel that his providence extends to all things, and that even in this life it often takes up the rod to chastise nations and individuals, he would also show beforehand that he wished not the destruction of the Jewish people, whom he was about to visit in his anger, but only its correction and amendment. This is signified by the 'precious metal,' which the prophet found unmelted in the midst of the fiery cloud. This cloud of fire, urged on by a whirlwind, and involving on all sides the metal, represented the judgments of God which were about to fall upon this rebellious nation, not to destroy, but to humble and purify it. Nothing is more proper than afflictions to bring men back to their duty. As fire purifies metals, so the paternal chastisements of God have a tendency to purify the soul and heart, if the man be not entirely incorrigible. The people upon whom God was about to pour the vials of his anger, were not worthy of his lenity. But that great God, who is firm in his promises, remembers the covenant of peace he had made with the patriarchs. This covenant is made sensible to the prophet under the image of a rainbow, which was round about him who appeared upon the throne. Every one knows, that this splendid phenomenon, which seems to join heaven and earth together, was given to Noah and his posterity as a symbol of the covenant which God then made with mankind, and by which he declared to them that the earth should undergo a deluge no more. Thus, the Pagans considered the Iris as the messenger of the gods. See Virgil, AEn. lib. 4:ver. 694. But whereas the rainbow to the Jews was a symbol of peace, the Iris of the Pagans was a messenger of trouble. On the sight of this bow, the symbol of grace, Ezekiel was to be encouraged; and persuaded that his people were not threatened with an utter destruction. The event fully justified all that the prophet had contemplated, with surprise, in this enigmatical picture. The

Chaldeans, the rod of the Lord's just severity, ravaged Judea; the people were carried away captive; they groaned for seventy years in a foreign land; but they were protected in a miraculous manner against the bloody designs of the cruel Haman; and at length, favored with various decrees of the kings of Persia, they had permission, not only to return to their own country but also to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple.' See Dr. Dodd's notes on this place.

CHAPTER 11

This chapter denounces the judgments of God against those wicked persons who remained in Jerusalem and made a mock of the types and predictions of the prophets, 1-13; compare ver. 3 with Jeremiah 1:13. God promises to favour those who were gone into captivity, and intimates their restoration from the Babylonish yoke, 14-21. Then the shechinah, or symbol of the Divine Presence, is represented forsaking the city, as in the foregoing chapter it did the temple, 22, 23; and the prophet returns in vision to the place from which he set out, (chap. 8:1. etc.,) in order to communicate his instructions to his brethren of the captivity, 24, 25.

NOTES ON CHAP. 11

Verse 1. *At the door of the gate five and twenty men*— The same persons, no doubt, who appear, chap. 8:16, worshipping the sun.

Jaazaniah the son of Azur— In chap. 8:16, we find a Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan. If Shaphan was also called Azur, they may be the same person. But it is most likely that there were two of this name, and both chiefs among the people.

Verse 3. *It is not near*— That is, the threatened invasion.

This city is the caldron, and we be the flesh.— See the vision of the seething pot, Jeremiah 1:13. These infidels seem to say: “We will run all risks, we will abide in the city. Though it be the caldron, and we the flesh, yet we will share its fate: if it perish, we will perish with it.” Or they may allude to the above prediction of Jeremiah, in order to ridicule it: “We were to have been boiled long ago: but the fulfillment of that prediction is not near yet.”

Verse 7. *Your slain—they are the flesh*— Jerusalem is the caldron, and those who have been slain in it, they are the flesh; and though ye purpose

to stay and share its fate, ye shall not be permitted to do so, ye shall be carried into captivity.

Verse 9. *And deliver you into the hands of strangers*— This seems to refer chiefly to Zedekiah and his family.

Verse 11. *I will judge you in the border of Israel*,— Though Riblah was in Syria, yet it was on the very frontiers of Israel; and it was here that Zedekiah's sons were slain, and his own eyes put out.

Verse 13. *Pelatiah the son of Benaiah died*.— Most probably he was struck dead the very hour in which Ezekiel prophesied against him. His death appears to have resembled that of Ananias and Sapphira, Acts 5:1, etc.

Verse 15. *Get you far from the Lord*— These are the words of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, against those of Israel who had been carried away to Babylon with Jeconiah. Go ye far from the Lord: but as for us, the land of Israel is given to us for a possession, we shall never be removed from it, and they shall never return to it.

Verse 16. *Yet will I be to them as a little sanctuary*— Though thus exiled from their own land, yet not forgotten by their God. While in their captivity, I will dispense many blessings to them; and I will restore them to their own land, ver. 17, from which they shall put away all idolatry, ver. 18.

Verse 19. *And I will give them one heart*— A whole system of renewed affections.

And I will put a new spirit within you— To direct and influence these new affections.

And I will take the stony heart out of their flesh— That which would not receive the impressions of my Spirit.

And will give them a heart of flesh— One that is capable of receiving and

retaining these impressions.

Verse 20. *That they may walk in my statutes*— The holiness of their lives shall prove the work of God upon their hearts. Then it shall appear that I am their God, because I have done such things in them and for them; and their holy conduct shall show that they are my people. See on chap. 36:25, etc.

Verse 21. *But as for them whose heart walketh*— Them whose affections are attached to idolatry, they shall have such reward as their idols can give them, and such a recompense as Divine justice shall award them.

Verse 23. *The glory of the Lord went up from the midst of the city*— This vision is no mean proof of the long-suffering of God. He did not abandon this people all at once; he departed by little and little. **FIRST**, he left the temple. **SECONDLY**, he stopped a little at the gate of the city. **THIRDLY**, he departed entirely from the city and went to the Mount of Olives, which lay on the east side of the city. Having tarried there for some time to see if they would repent and turn to him—**FOURTHLY**, he departed to heaven. The vision being now concluded, the prophet is taken away by the Spirit of God into Chaldea, and there announces to the captive Israelites what God had showed him in the preceding visions, and the good that he had spoken concerning them; who at first did not seem to profit much by them, which the prophet severely reproves.

CHAPTER 12

The prophet proceeds, by a variety of types and parables, to convince those of the captivity that their brethren who were left behind to sustain the miseries of a seige and the insults of a conqueror, would be in a much worse condition than they who were already settled in a foreign land. In the beginning of this chapter he foretells the approaching captivity of Judah by action instead of words, 1-7. He predicts particularly the flight, capture, captivity, and sufferings of Zedekiah and his followers, 8-16, compared with Jeremiah 52:11. He is to eat his food with trembling and signs of terror, as an emblem of the consternation of the Jews when surrounded by their enemies, 17-20; and then he answers the objections and bywords of scoffers and infidels, who either disbelieved his threatening or supposed the accomplishment of them very distant, 21-28. Josephus (Antiq. 11:10) tells us that Zedekiah thought the prophecy of Ezekiel in the thirteenth verse inconsistent with that of Jeremiah, (chap. 34:3,) and resolved to believe neither. Both, however, were literary fulfilled; and the event convinced him that they were not irreconcilable. Thus, blinded by infidelity, sinners rush on to that destruction against which they are sufficiently warned.

NOTES ON CHAP. 12

Verse 2. Which have eyes to see, and see not— It is not want of grace that brings them to destruction. They have eyes to see, but they will not use them. No man is lost because he had not sufficient grace to save him, but because he abused that grace.

Verse 3. Prepare thee stuff for removing— Get carriages to transport thy goods to another place; signifying by this the captivity that was at hand.

Verse 5. Dig thou through the wall— This refers to the manner in which Zedekiah and his family would escape from the city. They escaped by night through a breach in the wall. See Jeremiah 39:2-4; and 2 Kings 25:4.

Verse 6. *Thou shalt cover thy face, that thou see not the ground*—

Referring to the blinding of Zedekiah: even the covering of the face might be intended to signify that in this way Zedekiah should be carried to Babylon on men's shoulders in some sort of palanquin, with a cloth tied over his eyes, because of the recent wounds made by extracting them. All the prophecies from this to the twentieth chapter are supposed to have been delivered in the sixth year of Zedekiah, five years before the taking of Jerusalem. How accurate the prediction! and how exactly fulfilled!

Verse 10. *This burden*— This prediction concerning the prince. By this I point out the capture, misery, and ruin of Zedekiah.

Verse 13. *I will bring-him to Babylon-yet shall he not see it*— Because Nebuchadnezzar caused him to have his eyes put out at Riblah. To Babylon he was carried in his blind state, and there he died. In saying, My net also will I spread upon him, there is probably a reference to an ancient manner of fighting. One, who was called the retiarius, had a small casting net, which if he could throw over his antagonist's head, he then despatched him with his sword; if he missed his throw, he was obliged to run in order to get his net once more adjusted for another throw. In the mean time the other pursued him with all his speed to prevent this, and to despatch him; hence he was called secutor: the first the netman, the second the pursuer.

Verse 18. *Eat thy bread with quaking*— Assume the manner of a person who is every moment afraid of his life, who has nothing but a morsel of bread to eat, and a little water to drink. Thus signifying the siege, and the straits to which they should be reduced. See this explained, ver. 19.

Verse 22. *The days are prolonged, and every vision faileth?*— These are the words of the infidels and scoffers, who, because vengeance was not speedily executed on an evil work, set their heart to do iniquity. "These predictions either will not come in our days, or will wholly fail; why then should we disquiet ourselves about them?" Strange, that the very means used by the most gracious God to bring sinners to repentance, should be made by them the very instruments of their own destruction! See 2 Peter

3:4.

Verse 23. *The days are at hand*— Far from failing or being prolonged, time is posting on, and the destruction threatened is at the door.

Verse 26. *In your days will I say the word, and will perform it*— Even these mockers shall live to see and feel this desolation. This is more particularly intimated in the following verses.

Verse 28. *There shall none of my words be prolonged any more*— He had waited to be gracious; they abused his mercy; and at last the protracted wrath rushed upon them with irresistible force.

CHAPTER 13

This chapter denounces heavy judgments against the lying prophets who flattered the people, in the midst of their sin and danger, with false hopes of peace and security, 1-9. The work of these deceivers is beautifully compared to a frail and insolent piece of building, which can never stand against the battering elements of heaven, (the Chaldean forces,) which God will commission against it, 10-16. In the remaining part of the chapter woes are denounced against false prophetesses who practiced vain rites and divinations, with the view of promoting their own gain by deceiving the people, 17-23.

NOTES ON CHAP. 13

Verse 2. *That prophesy out of their own hearts*— Who are neither inspired nor sent by ME. They are prophets out of their own hearts. They have their mission from their own assumption, and proceed in it from their own presumption. Such either go of themselves, or are sent by man. Such prophets, ministers, preachers, and clergy have been a curse to the Church and to the world for some thousands of years.

Verse 4. *Thy prophets are like the foxes in the deserts*.— The cunning of the fox in obtaining his prey has been long proverbial. These false prophets are represented as the foxes who, having got their prey by great subtlety, run to the desert to hide both themselves and it. So the false prophets, when the event did not answer to their prediction, got out of the way, that they might not be overwhelmed with the reproaches and indignation of the people.

Verse 5. *Ye have not gone up into the gaps*— Far from opposing sinners, who are bringing down the wrath of God upon the place, you prevent their repentance by your flattering promises and false predictions. Ye have neither by prayers, example, nor advice, contributed any thing for the preservation of the place, or the salvation of the people's souls.

Verse 9. *They shall not be in the assembly of my people*— They shall not be reputed members of my Church. They shall not be reckoned in the genealogy of true Israelites that return from captivity; and they shall never have a possession in the land; they shall be exhereditated and expatriated. They shall all perish in the siege, by the sword, the famine, and the pestilence.

Verse 10. *One built up a wall*— A true prophet is as a wall of defense to the people. These false prophets pretend to be a wall of defense; but their wall is bad, and their mortar is worse. One gives a lying vision, another pledges himself that it is true; and the people believe what they say, and trust not in God, nor turn from their sins. The city is about to be besieged; it needs stronger fortifications than what it possesses. The prophet should be as a brazen wall for its defense; and such my prophets would have been had the people received the word from my mouth. But ye have prevented this by your lying vanities; and when you have perverted the people, you pretend to raise up a rampart of specious prophecy, full of fine promises, for their defense. What one false prophet says, another confirms; and this is like daubing over a bad wall with bad mortar, which prevents its blemishes and weaknesses being discovered, though it has no tendency to strengthen the building.

Verse 11. *There shall be an overflowing shower*— That shall wash off this bad mortar; sweep away the ground on which the wall stands, and level it with the earth. In the eastern countries, where the walls are built with unbaked bricks, desolations of this kind are often occasioned by tempestuous rains. Of this sort of materials were the walls of ancient cities made, and hence the reason why no vestige of them remains. Witness Babylon, which was thus built. See the note on chap. 4:1.

Verse 17. *Set thy face against the daughters of thy people, which prophesy*— From this it appears that there were prophetesses in the land of Israel, that were really inspired by the Lord: for as a false religion necessarily implies a true one, of which it is the ape; so false prophetesses necessarily imply true ones, whom they endeavored to imitate.

That there were true prophetesses among the Jews is evident enough from such being mentioned in the sacred writings. Miriam, the sister of Moses Exodus 15:20; Numbers 12:2; Deborah, Judges 4:4; Huldah, 2 Kings 22:14; Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, Luke 2:36; the four daughters of Philip the deacon, Acts 21:9.

Calmet observes that there was scarcely a heresy in the primitive Church that was not supported and fomented by seducing women.

Verse 18. *That sew pillows to all arm holes*— I believe this refers to those cushions which are so copiously provided in the eastern countries for the apartments of women; on which they sit, lean, rest their heads, and prop up their arms. I have several drawings of eastern ladies, who are represented on sofas; and often with their arm thrown over a pillow, which is thereby pressed close to their side, and against which they thus recline. The prophet's discourse seems to point out that state of softness and effeminacy to which the predictions of those false prophetesses allured the inhabitants of Jerusalem. A careless voluptuous life is that which is here particularly reprehended.

And make kerchiefs— The word kerchief is French, *couvre chef*, that which covers the head; hence handkerchief and neck handkerchief, and pocket handkerchief are pitifully improper; because none of them is used to cover the head, from which alone that article of dress has its name. But what are we to understand by kerchiefs here? Probably some kind of ornamental dress which rendered women more enticing, so that they could the more successfully hunt or inveigle souls (men) into the worship of their false gods. These they put on heads of every stature—women of all ages, קומה *komah*, of every woman that rose up to inveigle men to idolatry.

The word מספחות *mispatchoth*, translated here kerchiefs, and by the Vulgate cervicalia, bolsters, Calmet contends, means a sort of nets used in hunting, and in every place where it occurs it will bear this meaning; and hence the use to which it is here said to be applied, to hunt souls.

Verse 20. *The souls that ye hunt to make them fly.*— לפרחות

lephorechoth, into the flower gardens, says Parkhurst. These false prophetesses decoyed men into these gardens, where probably some impure rites of worship were performed, as in that of אשרה Asherah or Venus. See Parkhurst under פרה.

Verse 21. *Your kerchiefs*— Nets, or amulets, as some think.

Verse 22. *With lies ye have made the heart of the righteous sad*— Here is the ministry of these false prophetesses, and its effects. They told lies: they would speak, and they had no truth to tell; and therefore spoke falsities. They “saddened the souls of the righteous, and strengthened the hands of the wicked.” They promised them life, and prevented them from repenting and turning from their sins.

Verse 23. *Ye shall see no more vanity*— They pretended visions; but they were empty of reality.

Nor divine divinations— As God would not speak to them, they employed demons. Where God is not, because of the iniquity of the people, the devil is, to strengthen and support that iniquity. And if he cannot have his priests, he will have his priestesses; and these will have a Church like themselves, full of lying doctrines, and bad works.

CHAPTER 14

Here God threatens those hypocrites who pretended to worship him, while they loved and practiced idolatry, 1-11. He declares his irreversible purpose of punishing so guilty a nation, in behalf of which no intercession of the people of God shall be of any avail. The gross idolaters of Jerusalem and Judah shall be visited with God's four sore judgments, famine, 12-14; wild beasts, 15, 16; the sword, 17, 18; and pestilence, 19-21. A remnant shall be delivered from the wrath coming upon the whole land, 22, 23.

NOTES ON CHAP. 14

Verse 1. *Then came certain of the elders of Israel unto me*— These probably came to tempt him, or get him to say something that would embroil him with the government. They were bad men, as we shall see in the third verse.

Verse 3. *These men have set up their idols in their heart*— Not only in their houses; in the streets; but they had them in their hearts. These were stumbling-blocks of iniquity; they fell over them, and broke the neck of their souls. And should God be inquired of by such miscreants as these?

Verse 4. *According to the multitude of his idols*— I will treat him as an idolater, as a flagrant idolater.

Verse 7. *And cometh to a prophet*— Generally supposed to mean a false prophet.

I the Lord will answer him by myself— I shall discover to him, by my own true prophet, what shall be the fruit of his ways. So, while their false prophets were assuring them of peace and prosperity, God's prophets were predicting the calamities that afterwards fell upon them. Yet they believed the false prophets in preference to the true. Ahab, about to engage

with the Syrians, who had possession of Ramoth-Gilead, asked Micaiah, the prophet of the Lord, concerning the event; who told him he should lose the battle. He then inquired of Zedekiah, a false prophet, who promised him a glorious victory. Ahab believed the latter, marched against the enemy, was routed, and slain in the battle, 1 Kings 22:10, etc.

Verse 9. *I the Lord have deceived that prophet*— That is, he ran before he was sent; he willingly became the servant of Satan's illusions; and I suffered this to take place, because he and his followers refused to consult and serve me. I have often had occasion to remark that it is common in the Hebrew language to state a thing as done by the Lord which he only suffers or permits to be done; for so absolute and universal is the government of God, that the smallest occurrence cannot take place without his will or permission.

Verse 10. *The punishment of the prophet*— They are both equally guilty; both have left the Lord, and both shall be equally punished.

Verse 13. *By trespassing grievously*— Having been frequently warned, and having refused to leave their sin, and so filled up the measure of their iniquity.

Verse 14. *Though-Noah, Daniel, and Job*— The intercession even of the holiest of men shall not avert my judgments. Noah, though a righteous man, could not by his intercession preserve the old world from being drowned. Job, though a righteous man, could not preserve his children from being killed by the fall of their house. Daniel, though a righteous man, could not prevent the captivity of his country. Daniel must have been contemporary with Ezekiel. He was taken captive in the third year of Jehoiakim, Daniel 1:1. After this Jehoiakim reigned eight years, 2 Kings 3:36. And this prophecy, as appears from chap. 8:1, was uttered in the sixth year of Jehoiachin's captivity, who succeeded Jehoiakim, and reigned only three months, 2 Kings 24:6, 8. Therefore at this time Daniel had been Fourteen years in captivity. See Newcome. Even at this time he had gained much public celebrity. From this account we may infer that Job was as real a person as Noah or Daniel; and of their identity no man has pretended to doubt. When God, as above, has determined to punish a

nation, no intercession shall avail. Personal holiness alone can prevent these evils; but the holiness of any man can only avail for himself.

Verse 21. *My four sore judgments*— SWORD, war. FAMINE, occasioned by drought. PESTILENE, epidemic diseases which sweep off a great part of the inhabitants of a land. The NOISOME BEAST, the multiplication of wild beasts in consequence of the general destruction of the inhabitants.

Verse 22. *Behold, they shall come forth unto you*— Though there shall be great desolations in the land of Judea, yet a remnant shall be left that shall come here also as captives; and their account of the abominations of the people shall prove to you with what propriety I have acted in abandoning them to such general destruction. This speech is addressed to those who were already in captivity; i.e., those who had been led to Babylon with their king Jeconiah.

Verse 23. *Ye shall know that I have not done without cause*— There is no part of the conduct of God towards man that is not dictated by the purest principles of justice, equity, and truth. He does nothing but what is right; and whatever is right to be done, that ought to be done. In God's justice there is no severity; in God's mercy there is no caprice. He alone doth all things well; for he is the Fountain of justice and mercy.

CHAPTER 15

The Jewish nation, about to be destroyed by the Chaldeans, compared to a barren vine which is fit for nothing but to be cast into the fire, 1-8.

NOTES ON CHAP. 15

Verse 2. *What is the vine tree more than any tree*— It is certain that the vine is esteemed only on account of its fruit. In some countries, it is true, it grows to a considerable size and thickness: but, even then, it is not of a sufficient density to work into furniture. But whatever may be said of the stock of the vine, it is the branch that the prophet speaks of here; and I scarcely know the branch of any tree in the forest more useless than is the branch of the vine. Out of it who can even make a pin to drive into a mud wall, or hang any vessel on? A vine would never be cultivated for the sake of its wood; it is really worthless but as it bears fruit. What is Israel? Good for nothing, but as God influenced them to bring forth fruit to his glory. But now that they have ceased to be fruitful, they are good for nothing, but, like a withered branch of the vine, to be burnt.

Verse 4. *The fire devoureth both the ends of it, and the midst of it is burned*.— Judea is like a vine branch thrown into the fire, which seizes on both the ends, and scorches the middle: so both the extremities of the land is wasted; and the middle, Jerusalem, is now threatened with a siege, and by and by will be totally destroyed.

Verse 6. *Therefore thus saith the Lord*— As surely as I have allotted such a vine branch, or vine branches, for fuel; so surely have I appointed the inhabitants of Jerusalem to be consumed.

The design of this parable is to abate the pride of the Jews; to show them that, in their best estate, they had nothing but what they had received, and therefore deserved nothing; and now, having fallen from all righteousness, they can have no expectation of any thing but judgment unmixed with

mercy.

Verse 7. *They shall go out from one fire, and another fire shall devour them*— If they escape the sword, they shall perish by the famine; if they escape the famine, they shall be led away captives. To escape will be impossible. It will be to them according to the proverb:—

Incidit in Scyllam, cupiens vitare Charybdim.

“Out of the scald, into the flame.”

Verse 8. *They have committed a trespass*— They have prevaricated; they are the worst of sinners, and shall have the heaviest of punishments. Can men suppose that it is possible to hide even their dark hearts from God?

CHAPTER 16

In this chapter the mercy of God to Jerusalem, (or the Jewish Church and nation,) is set forth by the emblem of a person that should take up an exposed infant, bring her up with great tenderness, and afterwards marry her, 1-14. She is then upbraided with her monstrous ingratitude in departing from the worship of God, and polluting herself with the idolatries of the nations around her, under the figure of a woman that proves false to a tender and indulgent husband, 15-52. But, notwithstanding these her heinous provocations, God promises, after she should suffer due correction, to restore her again to his favor, 53-63. The mode of describing apostasy from the true religion to the worship of idols under the emblem of adultery, (a figure very frequent in the sacred canon,) is pursued with great force, and at considerable length, both in this and the twenty-third chapter; and is excellently calculated to excite in the Church of God the highest detestation of all false worship.

NOTES ON CHAP. 16

Verse 2. Cause Jerusalem to know her abominations— And such a revelation of impurity never was seen before or since. Surely the state of the Jews, before the Babylonish captivity, was the most profligate and corrupt of all the nations of the earth. This chapter contains God's manifesto against this most abominable people; and although there are many metaphors here, yet all is not metaphorical. Where there was so much idolatry, there must have been adulteries, fornications, prostitutions, and lewdness of every description. The description of the prophet is sufficiently clear, except where there is a reference to ancient and obsolete customs. What a description of crimes! The sixth satire of Juvenal is its counterpart. General remarks are all that a commentator is justified in bestowing on this very long, very circumstantial, and caustic invective. For its key, see on the thirteenth and sixty-third verses.

Verse 3. Thy birth and thy nativity is of the land of Canaan— It would

dishonor Abraham to say that you sprung from him: ye are rather Canaanites than Israelites. The Canaanites were accursed; so are ye.

Thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother a Hittite.— These tribes were the most famous, and probably the most corrupt, of all the Canaanites. So Isaiah calls the princes of Judah rulers of Sodom, chap. 1:10; and John the Baptist calls the Pharisees a generation or brood of vipers, Matthew 3:7. There is a fine specimen of this kind of catachresis in Dido's invective against AEneas:—

*Nec tibi Diva parens, generis nec
Dardanus auctor, Perflde;
sed duris genuit te cautibus horrens
Caucasus, Hyrcanaeque admorunt ubera tigres.*

AE n. lib. 4:365.

*“False as thou art, and more than false, forsworn;
Not sprung from noble blood, nor goddess born:
But hewn from hardened entrails of a rock, —
And rough Hyrcanian tigers gave thee suck.”*

DRYDEN.

This is strong: but the invective of the prophet exceeds it far. It is the essence of degradation to its subject; and shows the Jews to be as base and contemptible as they were abominable and disgusting.

Verse 4. *As for thy nativity, etc.*— This verse refers to what is ordinarily done for every infant on its birth. The umbilical cord, by which it received all its nourishment while in the womb, being no longer necessary, is cut at a certain distance from the abdomen: on this part a knot is tied, which firmly uniting the sides of the tubes, they coalesce, and incarnate together. The extra part of the cord on the outside of the ligature, being cut off from the circulation by which it was originally fed, soon drops off, and the part where the ligature was is called the navel. In many places, when this was done, the infant was plunged into cold water; in all cases washed, and

sometimes with a mixture of salt and water, in order to give a greater firmness to the skin, and constrict the pores. The last process was swathing the body, to support mechanically the tender muscles till they should acquire sufficient strength to support the body. But among savages this latter process is either wholly neglected, or done very slightly: and the less it is done, the better for the infant; as this kind of unnatural compression greatly impedes the circulation of the blood, the pulsation of the heart, and the due inflation of the lungs; respiration, in many cases, being rendered oppressive by the tightness of these bandages.

Verse 5. *Thou wast cast out in the open field*— This is an allusion to the custom of some heathen and barbarous nations, who exposed those children in the open fields to be devoured by wild beasts who had any kind of deformity, or whom they could not support.

Verse 6. *I said-Live*— I received the exposed child from the death that awaited it, while in such a state as rendered it at once an object of horror, and also of compassion.

— *Modo primos Edere vagitus,
et adhuc a matre rubentem.*

Verse 8. *Was the time of love*— Thou wast marriageable.

I spread my skirt over thee— I espoused thee. This was one of their initiatory marriage ceremonies. See Ruth 3:9.

I-entered into a covenant with thee— Married thee. Espousing preceded marriage.

Verse 10. *I clothed thee also with broidered work*— Cloth on which various figures, in various colors, were wrought by the needle.

With badgers' skin— See Exodus 25:6. The same kind of skin with which the tabernacle was covered.

Fine linen— בֶּשֶׂשׁ beshesh, with cotton. I have seen cloth of this kind

enveloping the finest mummies.

I covered thee with silk.— משי meshi. Very probably the produce of the silk-worm.

Verse 12. *I put a jewel on thy forehead*— על אפך al appech, upon thy nose. This is one of the most common ornaments among ladies in the east. European translators, not knowing what to make of a ring in the nose, have rendered it, a jewel on thy forehead or mouth, (though they have sometimes a piece of gold or jewel fastened to the center of their forehead.) I have already spoken of this Asiatic custom, so often referred to in the sacred writings: see Genesis 24:22, 42; Exodus 32:2; Job. 42:11; Proverbs 11:22; Isaiah 3:21; Hosea 2:13.

Verse 13. *Thus wast thou decked, etc.*— The Targum understands all this of the tabernacle service, the book of the law, the sacerdotal vestments, etc.

Thou didst prosper into a kingdom.— Here the figure explains itself: by this wretched infant, the low estate of the Jewish nation in its origin is pointed out; by the growing up of this child into woman's estate, the increase and multiplication of the people; by her being decked out and ornamented, her tabernacle service, and religious ordinances; by her betrothing and consequent marriage, the covenant which God made with the Jews; by her fornication and adulteries, their apostasy from God, and the establishment of idolatrous worship, with all its abominable rites; by her fornication and whoredoms with the Egyptians and Assyrians, the sinful alliances which the Jews made with those nations, and the incorporation of their idolatrous worship with that of Jehovah; by her lovers being brought against her, and stripping her naked, the delivery of the Jews into the hands of the Egyptians, Assyrians, and Chaldeans, who stripped them of all their excellencies, and at last carried them into captivity.

This is the key to the whole of this long chapter of metaphors; and the reader will do well to forget the figures, and look at the facts. The language and figures may in many places appear to us exceptionable: but these are

quite in conformity to those times and places, and to every reader and hearer would appear perfectly appropriate, nor would engender either a thought or passion of an irregular or improper kind. Custom sanctions the mode, and prevents the abuse. Among naked savages irregular passions and propensities are not known to predominate above those in civilized life. And why? Because such sights are customary, and therefore in themselves innocent. And the same may be said of the language by which such states and circumstances of life are described. Had Ezekiel spoken in such language as would have been called chaste and unexceptionable among us, it would have appeared to his auditors as a strange dialect, and would have lost at least one half of its power and effect. Let this be the prophet's apology for the apparent indelicacy of his metaphors; and mine, for not entering into any particular discussion concerning them. See also on ver. 63.

Verse 15. *Thou didst trust in thine own beauty*— Riches, strength, alliances, etc.; never considering that all they possessed came from God; therefore it was his comeliness which he had put upon them. Witness their original abject state, and the degree of eminence to which they had arrived afterwards through the protecting power of God.

Verse 17. *And madest to thyself images of men*— צלמי זכר tsalmey zachar, male images. Priapi are here meant, which were carried about in the ceremonies of Osiris, Bacchus, and Adonis; and were something like the lingam among the Hindoos. Herodotus, lib. ii, c. 48, 49, gives us an account of these male images: *πηχναια αγαλματα νευροσπαστα, τα περιφορευσι κατα κωμας ται γυναικες, νευον το αιδοιον, ου πολλω τεω ελασσον εον του αλλου σωματος*. This was done at the worship of Bacchus in Egypt: and they who wish to see more may consult Herodotus as above. In this phallic worship the women were principally concerned.

Verse 18. *Hast set mine oil and mine incense before them.*— It appears that they had made use of the holy vestments, and the different kinds of offerings which belonged to the Lord, to honor their idols.

Verse 21. *To cause them to pass through the fire*— Bp. Newcome quotes

a very apposite passage from Dionysius Halicarnass. Ant. Romans lib. i., s. 88, p. 72, and marg. p. 75, Edit. Hudson: **μετα δε τουτο, πυρκαϊας προ των σκηνων γενεσθαι κελευσας, εξαγει τον λεων τας φλογας υπερθρωσκοντα,της οσιωσεως των μιασματων ενεκα.** “And after this, having ordered that fires should be made before the tents, he brings out the people to leap over the flames, for the purifying of their pollutions.” This example shows that we are not always to take passing through the fire for being entirely consumed by it. Among the Israelites this appears to have been used as a rite of consecration.

Verse 24. *Thou hast also built unto thee an eminent place*— **גב** gab, a stew or brothel; Vulg. lupanar; Septuag. **οικημα πορνικον.** So my old MS. Bible, a bordel house. “Thou hast builded thy stewes and bordell houses in every place.”—Coverdale’s Bible, 1636. Bordel is an Italian word: how it got so early into our language I know not. Our modern word brothel is a corruption of it. Diodati translates, Tu hai edificato un bordello, “Thou hast built a brothel.” Houses of this kind were of a very ancient date.

Verse 26. *Great of flesh*— The most extensive idolaters. Bene vasatis-longa mensura incognita nery-Juv. Sat. 9:34. This is the allusion.

Verse 27. *Have diminished thine ordinary*— **חוקך** chukkech means here the household provision made for a wife-food, clothing, and money.

Verse 36. *Thy filthiness was poured out*— **נחשתך** nechushtech. As this word signifies a sort of metal, (brass,) it is generally supposed to mean money. They had given money literally to these heathen nations to procure their friendship and assistance; but the word also means verdigris, the poisonous rust of copper or brass. It is properly translated in our version filthiness, poisonous filth. Does it not refer to that venereal virus which is engendered by promiscuous connexions?

Verse 39. *They shall strip thee also of thy clothes-thy fair jewels*— Alluding to a lot common enough to prostitutes, their maintainers in the end stripping them of all they had given them.

Verse 42. *I will be quiet and will be no more angry.*— I will completely abandon thee; have nothing more to do with thee; think no more of thee. When God in judgment ceases to reprehend, this is the severest judgment.

Verse 43. *Thou hast not remembered the days of thy youth*— Thy former low beginning, when God made thee a people, who wast no people. He who maintains not a proper recollection of past mercies is not likely to abide steadfast in the faith. Ingratitude to God is the commencement, if not the parent, of many crimes.

Verse 44. *As is the mother, so is her daughter.*— כַּאֲמֵה בְּתָהּ keimmah bittah, “As the mother, her daughter.” As is the cause, so is the effect. As is the breeding, so is the practice. A silken purse cannot be made out of a swine’s ear. What is bred in the bone seldom comes out of the flesh. All such proverbs show the necessity of early holy precepts, supported by suitable example.

Verse 46. *Thine elder sister is Samaria, she and her daughters that dwell at thy left*— It is supposed that the prophet by Sodom in this place means the Israelites that dwelt beyond Jordan, in the land or the Moabites and Ammonites; or rather of the Moabites and Ammonites themselves. Literally, Sodom could not be called the younger sister of Jerusalem, as it existed before Jerusalem had a name. In looking east from Jerusalem, Samaria was on the left, and Sodom on the right hand; that is, the first was on the north, the second on the south of Jerusalem.

Verse 49. *This was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom*— If we are to take this place literally, Sodom was guilty of other crimes besides that for which she appears to have been especially punished; in addition to her unnatural crime, She is charged with pride, luxury, idleness, and uncharitableness; and these were sufficient to sink any city to the bottomless pit.

Verse 52. *They are more righteous than thou*— תְּצַדְקֵנָה מִמֶּךָ tetsuddaknah mimmech, “They shall be justified more than thou.” They are less guilty in the sight of God, for their crimes were not accompanied with so many aggravations. This phrase casts light on Luke 18:14: “This

man went down to his house justified rather than the other.” Less blame in the sight of God was attached to him. He always had fewer advantages, and now he was a true penitent; while the other was boasting of what he had done, and what he had not done.

Verse 60. *I will remember my covenant*— That is, the covenant I made with Abraham in the day of thy youth, when in him thou didst begin to be a nation.

Verse 61. *Thy sisters, thine elder and thy younger*— The Gentiles, who were before the Jews were called, and after the Jews were cast off, are here termed the elder and younger sister. These were to be given to Jerusalem for daughters; the latter should be converted to God by the ministry of men who should spring out of the Jewish Church. The former, who were patriarchs, etc., profited by the Lamb who was slain from the foundation of the world. Among the latter the Gospel was preached, first by Christ and his apostles, and since by persons raised up from among themselves.

But not by thy covenant.— This was the ancient covenant, the conditions of which they broke, and the blessings of which they forfeited; but by that new covenant, or the renewal to the Gentiles of that covenant that was made originally with Abraham while he was a Gentile, promising that in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed; that covenant which respected the incarnation of Christ, and was ratified by the blood of his cross.

Verse 63. *When I am pacified toward thee*— This intimates that the Jews shall certainly share in the blessings of the Gospel covenant, and that they shall be restored to the favor and image of God. And when shall this be? Whenever they please. They might have enjoyed them eighteen hundred years ago; but they would not come, though all things there then ready. They may enjoy them now; but they still choose to shut their eyes against the light, and contradict and blaspheme. As they do not turn to the Lord, the veil still continues on their hearts. Let their elder brethren pray for them.

For a key to the principal metaphors in this chapter, the reader is referred

to the note on the thirteenth verse, which, if he regard not, he will neither do justice to himself nor to the prophet. The whole chapter is a tissue of invective; sharp, cutting, and confounding; every where well sustained, in every respect richly merited; and in no case leaving any room to the delinquent for justification or response.

CHAPTER 17

This chapter begins with a new allegory or parable, 1-10; to which an explanation is immediately subjoined, 11-21. In the remaining verses the prophet, by a beautiful metaphor, makes an easy and natural transition to the Messiah, and predicts the security, increasing prosperity, and ultimate universality of his kingdom, 22-24. From the beauty of its images, the elegance of its composition, the perspicuity of its language, the rich variety of its matter, and the easy transition from one part of the subject to another, this chapter forms one of the most beautiful and perfect pieces of its kind that can possibly be conceived in so small a compass; and then the unexpected change from objects that presented nothing to the view but gloom and horror, to a prospect of ineffable glory and beauty, has a most happy effect. Every lowering cloud is dispelled, and the fields again smile in the beams of midday. The traveler, who this moment trembled as he looked around for shelter, now proceeds on his way rejoicing.

NOTES ON CHAP. 17

Verse 2. Son of man, put forth a riddle— *Riddle*, [AS] or [A.S.], *Anglo-Saxon*, from [A.S.] to divine; a thing that must be curiously investigated and sifted, to find out the meaning; and hence, riddle, a sort of coarse sieve to clean corn, to separate coarse chaff and straws from the pure grain. An instrument formerly used for divination. This is not far removed from the Hebrew חִדָּה chidah, from חָדַד chad, to penetrate; not that which penetrates the mind, but which we must penetrate to find out the sense.

Verse 3. A great eagle— Nebuchadnezzar. See Jeremiah 48:40; 49:22; Daniel 7:4. And see here, ver. 12, where it is so applied.

Great wings— Extensive empire.

Long-winged— Rapid in his conquests.

Full of feathers— Having multitudes of subjects.

Divers colors— People of various nations.

Came unto Lebanon— Came against Judea.

The highest branch— King Jehoiachin he took captive to Babylon.

The cedar— The Jewish state and king.

Verse 4. *The top of his young twigs*— The princes of Judah.

A land of traffic— Chaldea.

A city of merchants— Babylon; for which this city was the most celebrated of all the cities of the east. Its situation procured it innumerable advantages; its two rivers, the Tigris and Euphrates, and the Persian Gulf, gave it communication with the richest and the most distant nations.

Verse 5. *The seed of the land*— Zedekiah, brother of Jehoiachin.

Planted it in a fruitful field— Made him king of Judea in place of his brother.

Placed it by great waters— Put him under the protection of Babylon, situated on the confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates.

And set it as a willow tree— Made him dependent on this city of great waters, as the willow is on humidity.

Verse 6. *A spreading vine of low stature*— The Jewish state having then no height of dominion, it must abide under the wings or branches of the Chaldean king.

Those branches turned toward him, and the roots-under him— Zedekiah

was wholly dependent on Nebuchadnezzar, both for his elevation to the throne, and his support on it.

Verse 7. *Another great eagle*— Pharaoh-hophra, or Apries, king of Egypt.

With great wings— Extensive dominion.

And many feathers— Numerous subjects.

Did bend her roots— Looked to him for support in her intended rebellion against Nebuchadnezzar.

Verse 8. *It was planted in a good soil*— Though he depended on Babylon, he lived and reigned as Nebuchadnezzar's vicegerent in the land of Judea.

Verse 9. *Shall it prosper?*— Shall Zedekiah succeed in casting off the yoke of the king of Babylon, to whom he had sworn fealty?

Shall he not pull up the roots— Nebuchadnezzar will come and dethrone him.

And cut off the fruit— The children of Zedekiah.

The leaves— All the nobles; all shall perish with Zedekiah.

Verse 10. *Shall-utterly whither*— The regal government shall be no more restored. Zedekiah shall be the last king, and the monarchy shall finally terminate with him.

Verse 12. *Know ye not what these things mean?*— They are explained in this and the following verses.

Verse 14. *That the kingdom might be base*— Have no political consequence, and at last sink into a miserable government under Gedaliah.

Verse 15. *Sending his ambassadors into Egypt*— Zedekiah must have sent his ambassadors into Egypt, between the sixth month of his sixth year, and the fifth month of his seventh year. Compare chap. 8:1, with chap. 20:1. — See Newcome.

Verse 16. *In the midst of Babylon he shall die.*— His eyes were put out; he was carried to Babylon, and never returned.

Verse 18. *Seeing he despised the oath*— This God particularly resents. He had bound himself by oath, in the presence of Jehovah, to be faithful to the covenant that he made with Nebuchadnezzar, and he took the first opportunity to break it; therefore he shall not escape.

Verse 20. *I will spread my net upon him*— See the note on chap. 12:13.

Verse 21. *All his fugitives*— All who attempted to escape with him, and all that ran to Egypt, etc., shall fall by the sword.

Verse 22. *I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar*— I will raise up another monarchy, which shall come in the line of David, namely, the Messiah; who shall appear as a tender plant, as to his incarnation; but he shall be high and eminent; his Church, the royal city, the highest and purest ever seen on the face of the earth.

Verse 23. *In the mountain of the height of Israel*— He shall make his appearance at the temple, and found his Church at Jerusalem.

Shalt bring forth boughs— Apostles, evangelists, and their successors in the Gospel ministry.

And bear fruit— Multitudes of souls shall be converted by their preaching.

And under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing— All the nations of the earth shall receive his Gospel.

In the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell.— Trust in him

alone for salvation, and be saved in their trusting.

Verse 24. *All the trees of the field shall know*— All the people of Israel and of Chaldea.

I the Lord have brought down the high tree— Have dethroned Jehoiachin.

Have exalted the low tree— Put Zedekiah, brother of Jehoiachin, in his place.

Have dried up the green tree— Zedekiah, who had numerous children, but who were all slain before his eyes at Riblah.

And have made the dry tree to flourish— Have raised up a rod out of the stem of Jesse, the family of David being then apparently dried up and extinct. This was the promised Messiah, of the increase and government of whose kingdom and peace there shall be no end; upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order and establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth, even for ever. THE ZEAL OF THE LORD OF HOSTS WILL PERFORM THIS.

The high and green tree, says Newcome, refers to Nebuchadnezzar; the low and the dry tree, to the Jews.

CHAPTER 18

The Jews, in Ezekiel's time, complained of God's dealing hardly with them in punishing them for the sins of their forefathers, 1, 2; their temporal calamities having been long threatened as the consequence of the national guilt, (Jeremiah 15:4, etc. ;) and, from the general complexion of this chapter, it appears that the Jews so interpreted the second commandment of the Decalogue and other passages of like import, as if the sins of the forefathers were visited upon the children, independently of the moral conduct of the latter, not only in this world, but in that which is to come. To remove every foundation for such an unworthy idea of the Divine government, God assures them, with an oath, that he had no respect of persons, 3, 4; strongly intimating that the great mysteries in Providence, (mysterious only on account of the limited capacity of man,) are results of the most impartial administration of justice; and that this would be particularly manifested in the rewards and punishments of another life; when every ligament that at present connects societies and nations together shall be dissolved, and each person receive according to his work, and bear his own burden. This is illustrated by a variety of examples: such as that of a just or righteous man, 5-9; his wicked son, 10-13; and again the just son of this wicked person, 14-20. Then a wicked man repenting, and finding mercy, whose former wickedness shall be no impediment to his salvation, 21-23; and a righteous man revolting, and dying in his sins, whose former righteousness shall be of no avail, 24. The conduct of the Divine Providence is then vindicated, 25-29; and all persons, without any exception, most earnestly exhorted to repentance, 30, 31; because the Lord hath no pleasure in the death of the sinner, 32. As the whole of this chapter is taken up with the illustration of a doctrine nearly connected with the comfort of man, and the honor of the Divine government, the prophet, with great propriety, lays aside his usual mode of figure and allegory, and treats his subject with the utmost plainness and perspicuity.

NOTES ON CHAP. 18

Verse 2. *The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge?*— We have seen this proverb already, Jeremiah 31:29, etc., and have considered its general meaning. But the subject is here proposed in greater detail, with a variety of circumstances, to adapt it to all those cases to which it should apply. It refers simply to these questions: How far can the moral evil of the parent be extended to his offspring? And, Are the faults and evil propensities of the parents, not only transferred to the children, but punished in them? Do parents transfer their evil nature, and are their children punished for their offenses?

Verse 3. *As I live, saith the Lord God, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel.*— I will now, by this present declaration, settle this question for ever. And hence God has sworn to what follows. After this, who will dare to doubt the judgment pronounced?

Verse 4. *All souls are mine*— Equally so; I am the Father of the spirits of all flesh, and shall deal impartially with the whole.

The soul that sinneth, it shall die.— None shall die for another's crimes, none shall be saved by another's righteousness. Here is the general judgment relative to the righteousness and unrighteousness of men, and the influence of one man's state on that of another; particularly in respect to their moral conduct.

Verse 5. *If a man be just, and do that which is lawful and right*— If he be just or holy within, and do what is according to law and equity. What is meant by this, is immediately specified.

Verse 6. 1. *Hath not eaten upon the mounttains*— Idolatrous worship was generally performed on mountains and hills; and those who offered sacrifices feasted on the sacrifice, and thus held communion with the idol.

2. *Neither hath lifted up his eyes to the idols*— Has paid them no

religious adoration; has trusted in them for nothing, and has not made prayer nor supplication before them.

3. *Neither hath defiled his neighbor's wife*— Has had no adulterous connection with any woman; to which idolatrous feasts and worship particularly led.

4. *Neither hath come nigh to a menstruous woman*— Has abstained from the use of the marriage-bed during the periodical indisposition of his wife. This was absolutely forbidden by the law; and both the man and the woman who disobeyed the command were to be put to death, Leviticus 20:18. For which Calmet gives this reason: “It has been believed, and experience confirms it, that the children conceived at such times are either leprous, or monsters, or deformed by their diminutiveness, or by the disproportion of their members.” There are other reasons for this law, should those of the learned commentator be found invalid.

Verse 7. 5. *Hath not oppressed any*— Has not used his power or influence to oppress, pain, or injure another.

6. *Hath restored to the debtor his pledge*— Has carefully surrendered the pawn or pledge when its owner came to redeem it. As the pledge is generally of more worth than that for which it is pledged, an unprincipled man will make some pretense to keep it; which is highly abominable in the sight of God.

7. *Hath spoiled none by violence*— Either by robbery or personal insult. For a man may be spoiled both ways.

8. *Hath given his bread to the hungry*— Has been kind-hearted and charitable; especially to them that are in the deepest want.

9. *Hath covered the naked with a garment*— Has divided both his bread and his clothing with the necessitous. These are two branches of the same root.

Verse 8. 10. *Hath not given forth upon usury*— בַּנֶּשֶׁךְ לֹא יֵת beneshech

lo yitten. נשך nasach signifies to bite; usury is properly so termed, because it bites into and devours the principal. Usury signifies, with us, exacting unlawful interest for money; and taking the advantage of a man's necessities to advance him cash on exorbitant profit. This bites the receiver in his property, and the lender in his salvation.

11. *Neither hath taken any increase*— In lending has not required more than was lent; and has not taken that product of the cash lent, which was more than the value for its use. This may be a part of the tenth article.

12. *That hath withdrawn his hand from iniquity*— Never associates with those who act contrary to justice and equity; his hand or influence being never found among evil workers.

13. *Hath executed true judgment between man and man*— Being neither swayed by prejudice, fear, nor favor.

These thirteen points concern his social and civil relations.

Verse 9. *Hath walked in my statutes*— Not only acknowledging them to be right, but acting according to them. Especially in every thing that relates to my worship, changing nothing, neglecting nothing.

And hath kept my judgments, to deal truly— Has attended to my Divine direction, both with respect to things forbidden, and things commanded. These concern men in their religious conduct.

He is just— צדיק הוא tsaddik hu. He is a righteous man; he has given to all their due; he has abstained from every appearance of evil, and done that which was lawful and right in the sight of God.

He shall surely live— He has lived to me, and he shall live with me.

Verse 10. *If he beget a son*— Who is the reverse of the above righteous character, according to the thirteen articles already specified and explained.

Verse 13. *Shall he then live?*— Because his father was a righteous man,

shall the father's holiness be imputed to him? No!

He shad surely die; his blood shall be upon him.— He shall suffer for his own crimes.

Verse 14. *Now, lo, if he beget a son that seeth all his father's sins-and considereth*— Lays to heart the evil of his father's life, and the dreadful consequences of a life of rebellion against God.

And doeth not such like— Is quite a different man in moral feeling and character; and acts up to the thirteen points already laid down.

Verse 17. *He shall not die for the iniquity of his father*— He shall no more be affected by his father's crimes, than his father was benefited by his grandfather's righteousness.

Verse 20. *The soul that sinneth, it shall die.*— Hitherto we have had to do with the simple cases or the righteous and the wicked; of him who lived and died a holy man, and of him who lived and died a wicked man. But there are two cases behind: 1. That of the wicked man, who repents and turns to God. 2. That of the righteous man, who backslides, and does not return to God by repentance. On both these cases God decides thus:—

Verse 21. *But if the wicked will turn from all his sins*— And afterwards walk according to the character of the righteous already specified shall he find mercy, and be for ever saved? YES.

Verse 22. *All his transgressions*— Shall be so completely forgiven by God's mercy, that they shall not be even mentioned to him; and if he live and die in this recovered state, he shall live with God to all eternity. And why? Hear the reason:—

Verse 23. *Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die?*— No! That is foreign to him whose name is love, and whose nature is mercy. On the contrary he “wills that he should return from his evil ways and live.”

And if God can have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, he cannot

have made a decree to abandon him to the evil of his nature, and then damn him for what he could not avoid: for as God can do nothing with which he is not pleased, so he can decree nothing with which he is not pleased. But he is “not pleased with the death of a sinner,” therefore he cannot have made a decree to bring him to this death.

Verse 24. *When the righteous turneth away from his righteousness—*

Here is the second case. Can a man who was once holy and pure fall away so as to perish everlastingly? YES. For God says, “If he turn away from his righteousness;” not his self-righteousness, the gloss of theologians: for God never speaks of turning away from that, for, in his eyes, that is a nonentity. There is no righteousness or holiness but what himself infuses into the soul of man, and as to self-righteousness, i.e., a man’s supposing himself to be righteous when he has not the life of God in his soul, it is the delusion of a dark and hardened heart; therefore it is the real righteous principle and righteous practice that God speaks of here. And he tells us, that al man may so “turn away from this,” and so “commit iniquity,” and “act as the wicked man,” that his righteousness shall be no more mentioned to his account, than the sins of the penitent backslider should be mentioned to his condemnation; and “in the sin that he” this once righteous man, “hath sinned, and in the trespass that he hath trespassed, in them shall he die.” O, how awful a termination of a life once distinguished for righteousness and true holiness! So then, God himself informs us that a righteous man may not only fall foully, but fall finally. But to such righteous persons the devil will ever preach, “Ye shall not surely die; ye shall be as God.” Touch, taste, and handle; ye cannot ultimately fall. Thus we find, by the manner of treating these two cases, that God’s way is equal, ver. 25; just, merciful, and impartial. And to prove this, he sums up his conduct in the above cases, in the following verses, 26-29. And then, that the “wicked may not die in his sins,” and that the “backslider may return and find mercy,” he thus exhorts:—

Verse 30. *Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions—*

There is still life; still a God that has no pleasure in the death of a sinner. one who is ever ready to give his Holy Spirit to all them that ask him; therefore “repent and turn, so iniquity shall not be your ruin.”

Verse 31. *Cast away*— With a holy violence, dash away every transgression and incentive to it.

Make you a new heart— Call upon God for it, and he will give it: for as sure as you earnestly call on God through Christ to save you, so surely you shall be saved; and the effect will so speedily follow, that God is pleased to attribute that in some sort to yourselves, which is done by his grace alone; because ye earnestly call upon him for it, come in the right way to receive it, and are determined never to rest till you have it.

For why will ye die— Who should you go to hell while the kingdom of God is open to receive you? Why should you be the devil's slaves, when ye may be Christ's freemen! **WHY WILL YE DIE?** Every word is emphatic. Why-show God or man one reason. Will-obstinacy alone, — a determination not to be saved, or a voluntary listlessness about salvation, — can prevent you. Ye-children of so many mercies, fed and supported by a kind God all your life; ye, who are redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ; ye, who have made many promises to give up yourselves to God; ye, who have been dedicated to the ever-blessed Trinity, and promised to renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh; why will YE die? Die! — what is this? A separation from God and the glory of his power for ever! Die! — forfeiting all the purposes for which your immortal souls were made! Die-to know what the worm is that never dieth, and what that fire is which is never quenched! Why will ye die?

Verse 32. *For I have no pleasure*— God repeats what he had so solemnly declared before. Can ye doubt his sincerity? his ability? his willingness? the efficacy of the blood of his covenant?

Wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye.— Reader, now give God thy heart.

Though every man comes into the world with a fallen nature—a soul infected with sin, yet no man is damned on that account. He who refuses that grace which pardons sin and heals infected nature, who permits the evil principle to break out into transgression, and continues and dies in his

iniquity and sin, and will not come unto Christ that he may have life; he, and he only, goes to perdition. Nor will the righteousness of a parent or relation help his sinful soul: no man can have more grace than is necessary to save himself; and none can have that, who does not receive it through Christ Jesus. It is the mercy of God in Christ which renders the salvation of a sinner possible; and it is that mercy alone which can heal the backslider. The atoning blood blots out all that is past; the same blood cleanses from all unrighteousness. Who believes so as to apply for this redemption? Who properly thanks God for having provided such a Savior?

CHAPTER 19

This chapter contains two beautiful examples of the parabolic kind of writing; the one lamenting the sad catastrophe of Jehoahaz and Jehoiakim, 1-9, and the other describing the desolation and captivity of the whole people, 10-14. In the first parable, the lioness is Jerusalem. The first of the young lions is Jehoahaz, deposed by the king of Egypt; and the second lion is Jehoiakim, whose rebellion drew on himself the vengeance of the king of Babylon. In the second parable the vine is the Jewish nation, which long prospered, its land being fertile, its princes powerful, and its people flourishing; but the judgments of God, in consequence of their guilt, had now destroyed a great part of the people, and doomed the rest to captivity.

NOTES ON CHAP. 19

Verse 1. *Moreover take thou up a lamentation*— Declare what is the great subject of sorrow in Israel. Compose a funeral dirge. Show Be melancholy fate of the kings who proceeded from Josiah. The prophet deplores the misfortune of Jehoahaz and Jehoiakim, under the figure of two lion whelps, which were taken by hunters, and confined in cages. Next he shows the desolation of Jerusalem under Zedekiah, which he compares to a beautiful vine pulled up by the roots, withered, and at last burned. Calmet justly observes, that the style of this song is beautiful, and the allegory well supported throughout.

Verse 2. *What is thy mother? A lioness*— Judea may here be the mother; the lioness, Jerusalem. Her lying down among lions, her having confederacy with the neighboring kings; for lion here means king.

Verse 3. *She brought up one of her whelps*— Jehoahaz, son of Josiah, whose father was conquered and slain by Pharaoh-necho, king of Egypt.

It learned to catch the prey— His reign was a reign of oppression and

cruelty. He made his subjects his prey, and devoured their substance.

Verse 4. *The nations also heard of him*— The king of Egypt, whose subjects were of divers nations, marched against Jerusalem, took Jehoahaz prisoner, and brought him to Egypt. Thus:—

He was taken in their pit— Here is an allusion to those trap-pits digged in forests, into which the wild beasts fall, when the huntsmen, surrounding a given portion of the forest, drive the beasts in; by degrees narrowing the inclosure, till the animals come to the place where the pits are, which, being lightly covered over with branches and turf, are not perceived, and the beasts tread on them and fall in. Jehoahaz reigned only three months before he was dethroned by the king of Egypt, against whom it is apparent some craft was used, here signified by the pit, into which he fell.

Verse 5. *When she saw that she had waited*— Being very weak, the Jews found that they could not resist with any hope of success; so the king of Egypt was permitted to do as he pleased.

She took another of her whelps Jehoiakim.

And made him a young lion.— King of Judea.

Verse 6. *And he went up and down among the lions*— He became a perfect heathen, and made Judea as idolatrous as any of the surrounding nations. He reigned eleven years, a monster of iniquity, 2 Kings 23:30, etc.

Verse 8. *The nations set against him*— The Chaldeans, Syrians, Moabites, and Ammonites, and the king of Babylon—king of many nations.

He was taken— The city was taken by Nebuchadnezzar; and Jehoiakim was taken prisoner, and sent in chains to Babylon.

Verse 9. *That his voice should no more be heard*— He continued in prison many years, till the reign of Evil-merodach, who set him at liberty, but never suffered him to return to the mountains of Israel. “The unhappy fate of these princes, mentioned ver. 4, 8, 9, is a just subject of

lamentation.”-Newcome.

Verse 10. *Thy mother (Jerusalem) is like a vine in thy blood*— Of this expression I know not what to make. Some think the meaning is “A vine planted by the waters to produce the blood of the grape.” See Deuteronomy 32:14. Others, for **בדמך** bedamecha, in thy blood, would read **ברמו** berimmon, in or at a pomegranate; like a vine planted by or beside a pomegranate-tree, by which it was to be supported. And so the Septuagint and Arabic appear to have read. Calmet reads **כרמך** carmecha, thy vineyard, instead of **בדמך** bedamecha, in thy blood. Here is no change but a **ר** resh for a **ד** daleth. This reading is supported by one of Kennicott’s and one of De Rossi’s MSS.: “Thy mother is like a vine in thy vineyard, planted by the waters.” Though this is rather an unusual construction yet it seems the best emendation. Of the textual reading no sense can be made. There is a corruption somewhere.

Full on branches— Many princes. See next verse.

Verse 11. *She had strong rods*

Chaldea, whither the people have been carried captives; and which, compared with their own land, was to them a dreary wilderness.

Verse 14. *Fire is gone out*— A vindictive and murderous disposition has taken hold:—

Of a rod of her branches } ***Ishmael***— son of Nethaniah, who was of the blood-royal of Judah:—

Hath devoured her fruit— Hath assassinated Gedaliah, slain many people, and carried off others into the country of the Ammonites. But he was pursued by Jonathan, the son of Kareah, who slew many of his adherents, and delivered much of the people.

She hath no strong rod— None of the blood-royal of Judah left. And from that time not one of her own royal race ever sat upon the throne of Israel.

This is a lamentation— This is a most lamentable business.

And shall be for a lamentation.— These predictions shall be so punctually fulfilled, and the catastrophe shall be so complete, that it shall ever remain as a lamentation; as this state of Jerusalem shall never be restored. Even to the present day this, to a Jew, is a subject of mourning.

CHAPTER 20

A deputation of the elders of Israel, as usual, in their distress, came to request Ezekiel to ask counsel of God, 1. In reply to this, God commands the prophet to put them in mind of their rebellion and idolatry: In Egypt, 2-9, in the wilderness, 10-27, and in Canaan, 28-32. Notwithstanding which the Lord most graciously promises to restore them to their own land, after they should be purged from their dross, 33-44. The five last verses of this chapter ought to begin the next, as they are connected with the subject of that chapter, being a prophecy against Jerusalem, which lay to the south of Chaldea, where the prophet then was, and which here and elsewhere is represented under the emblem of a forest doomed to be destroyed by fire, 45-49.

NOTES ON CHAP. 20

Verse 1. *In the seventh year*— Of the captivity of Jeconiah, (see chap. vill. 1,) and the seventh of the reign of Zedekiah.

The fifth month, the tenth day— That is, according to Abp. Usher, Monday, August 27, A.M. 3411.

Certain of the elders of Israel— What these came to inquire about is not known. They were doubtless hypocrites and deceivers, from the manner in which God commands the prophet to treat them. It seems to have been such a deputation of elders as those mentioned chap. 8:1; 14:1.

Verse 3. *I will not be inquired of by you.*— I will not hear you. I will have nothing to do with you.

Verse 4. *Wilt thou judge them*— If thou wilt enter into any discussion with them, show them the abomination of their fathers. The whole chapter is a consecutive history of the unfaithfulness ingratitude, rebellion, and idolatry of the Jews, from the earliest times to that day; and vindicates the

sentence which God had pronounced against them, and which he was about to execute more fully in delivering them and the city into the hands of the Chaldeans.

Verse 5. *I chose Israel*— They did not choose me for their God, till I had chosen them to be my people.

I lifted up mine hand— I bound myself in a covenant to them to continue to be their God, if they should be faithful, and continue to be my people. Among the Jews the juror lifted up his right hand to heaven; which explains Psalm cxliv. 8: “Their right hand is a right hand of falsehood.” This is a form used in England, Scotland, and Ireland.

Verse 6. *To bring them forth of the land of Egypt*— When they had been long in a very disgraceful and oppressive bondage.

A land that I had espied for them— God represents himself as having gone over different countries in order to find a comfortable residence for these people, whom he considered as his children.

Flowing with milk and honey— These were the characteristics of a happy and fruitful country, producing without intense labor all the necessaries and comforts of life. Of the happiest state and happiest place, a fine poet gives the following description:—

Ver erat aeternum, placidique tepentibus auris
Mulcebant Zephyri natos
sine semine flores. Mox etiam fruges tellus inarata ferebat: Nec renovatus
ager gravidis caneat aristis. Flumina jam lactis, jam flumina nectaris ibant:
Flavaque de viridi stillabant ilice mella. OVID’S *Metam.* lib. i., 107.

On flowers unsown soft Zephyr spreads his wing, And time itself was one eternal spring; Ensuing years the yellow harvest crowned, The bearded blade sprang from the untilled ground, And laden unrenewed the fields were found. Floods were with milk, and floods with nectar filled, And honey from the sweating oaks distilled.

In the flourishing state of Judea every mountain was cultivated as well as

the valleys. Among the very rocks the vines grew luxuriantly.

Verse 7. *Cast ye away-the abominations*— Put away all your idols; those incentives to idolatry that ye have looked on with delight.

Verse 8. *They did not-cast away*— They continued attached to the idolatry of Egypt; so that, had I consulted my justice only, I should have consumed them even in Egypt itself. This is a circumstance that Moses has not mentioned, namely, their provoking God by their idolatry, after he had sent Moses and Aaron to them in Egypt.

Verse 9. *But I wrought for my name's sake*— I bare with them and did not punish them, lest the heathen, who had known my promises made to them, might suppose that I had either broken them through some caprice, or was not able to fulfill them.

Verse 10. *I caused them to go forth*— Though greatly oppressed and degraded, they were not willing to leave their house of bondage. I was obliged to force them away.

Verse 11. *I gave them my statutes*— I showed them what they should do in order to be safe, comfortable, wise, and happy; and what they should avoid in order to be uninjured in body, mind, and possessions. Had they attended to these things, they should have lived by them. They would have been holy, healthy, and happy.

Verse 12. *I gave them my Sabbaths*— The religious observance of the Sabbath was the first statute or command of God to men. This institution was a sign between God and them, to keep them in remembrance of the creation of the world, of the rest that he designed them in Canaan, and of the eternal inheritance among the saints in light. Of these things the Sabbath was a type and pledge.

Verse 13. *But the house of Israel rebelled*— They acted in the wilderness just as they had done in Egypt; and he spared them there for the same reason. See ver. 9.

Verse 15. *I lifted up my hand*— Their provocations in the wilderness were so great, that I vowed never to bring them into the promised land. I did not consume them, but I disinherited them. See the note on ver. 5.

Verse 18. But I said unto their children These I chose in their fathers' stead; and to them I purposed to give the inheritance which their fathers by disobedience lost.

Verse 22. *I withdrew mine hand*— I had just lifted it up to crush them as in a moment; for they also were idolatrous, and walked in the steps of their fathers.

Verse 25. *I gave them also statutes that were not good*— What a foolish noise has been made about this verse by critics, believers and infidels! How is it that God can be said “to give a people statutes that were not good, and judgments whereby they could not live?” I answer, in their sense of the words, God never gave any such, at any time, to any people. Let any man produce an example of this kind if he can; or show even the fragment of such a law, sanctioned by the Most High! The simple meaning of this place and all such places is, that when they had rebelled against the Lord, despised his statutes, and polluted his Sabbaths—in effect cast him off, and given themselves wholly to their idols, then he abandoned them, and they abandoned themselves to the customs and ordinances of the heathen. That this is the meaning of the words, requires no proof to them who are the least acquainted with the genius and idioms of the Hebrew language, in which God is a thousand times said to do, what in the course of his providence or justice he only permits to be done.

Verse 26. *I polluted them in their own gifts*— I permitted them to pollute themselves by the offerings which they made to their idols. Causing their children to pass through the fire was one of those pollutions; but, did God ever give them a statute or judgment of this kind? No. He ever inveighs against such things, and they incur his heaviest displeasure and curse. See on ver. 31.

Verse 29. *What is the high place*— **מה הבמה** mah habbamah, “what is the high place?” What is it good for? Its being a high place shows it to be a

place of idolatry. I called it **במה** bamah, to mark it with infamy; but ye continue to frequent it, even while it is called **במה** bamah, to the present day!

Verse 31. *Ye pollute yourselves*— This shows the sense in which God says, ver. 26, “I polluted them in their own gifts.” They chose to pollute themselves, and I permitted them to do so. See on verses 25, 26.

Verse 32. *And that which cometh into your mind*— Ye wish to be naturalized among idolaters, and make a part of such nations. But this shall not be at all; you shall be preserved as a distinct people. Ye shall not be permitted to mingle yourselves with the people of those countries: even they, idolaters as they are, will despise and reject you. Besides, I will change your place, restore your captivity; yet not in mercy, but in fury poured out; and reserve you for sorer evils, ver. 34.

Verse 35. *I will bring you into the wilderness of the people*— I will bring you out of your captivity, and bring you into your own land which you will find to be a wilderness, the consequence of your crimes.

There will I plead with you— There I will be your king, and rule you with a sovereign rule; and the dispensations of my justice and mercy shall either end you or mend you.

Verse 37. *I will cause you to pass under the rod*— This alludes to the custom of tithing the sheep. I take it from the rabbins. The sheep were all penned; and the shepherd stood at the door of the fold, where only one sheep could come out at once. He had in his hand a rod dipped in vermilion; and as they came out, he counted one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine; and as the tenth came out, he marked it with the rod, and said, “This is the tenth;” and that was set apart for the Lord.

I will bring you into the bond of the covenant— You shall be placed under the same obligations as before, and acknowledge your selves bound; ye shall feel your obligation, and live according to its nature.

Verse 38. *I will purge out from among you the rebels*— The incorrigibly

wicked I will destroy; those who will not receive him whom I have appointed for this purpose as the Savior of Israel. And I will gather you who believe out of all the countries where you sojourn, and bring you into your own land; but those of you who will not believe—will not receive the Son of David to reign over you, shall never enter into the land of Israel, but die in your dispersions. This is what the contradicting and blaspheming Jews of the present day have to expect. And thus, both of you shall know that he is Jehovah, fulfilling his threatenings against the one, and his promises to the other.

Verse 39. *Go ye, serve ye every one his idols*— Thus, God gave them statutes that were not good, and judgments whereby they could not live, by thus permitting them to take their own way, serve their gods, and follow the maxims and rites of that abominable worship.

Verse 40. *For in mine holy mountain*— The days shall come in which all true ISRAELITES shall receive HIM whom I have sent to be the true sacrifice for the life of the world; and shall bring to Jerusalem—the pure Christian Church, their offerings, which I will there accept, for they will give me thanks for my unspeakable gift.

Verse 42. *And ye shall know*— Shall acknowledge that I am Jehovah.

Verse 43. *And there shall ye remember your ways*— Ye shall be ashamed of your past conduct, and of your long opposition to the Gospel of your salvation.

These promises may, in a certain limited sense, be applied to the restoration from the Babylonish captivity; but they must have their proper fulfillment when the Jews shall accept Jesus as their Savior, and in consequence be brought back from all their dispersions to their own land.

Verse 46. *Set thy face toward the south*— Towards Judea, which lay south from Babylon, or Mesopotamia, where the prophet then dwelt.

The forest of the south field— The city of Jerusalem, as full of inhabitants as the forest is of trees.

Verse 47. *I will kindle a fire*— I will send war, “and it shall devour every green tree,” the most eminent and substantial of the inhabitants; and every dry tree, the lowest and meanest also.

The flaming flame shall not be quenched— The fierce ravages of Nebuchadnezzar and the Chaldeans shall not be stopped till the whole land is ruined.

All faces from the south to the north shall be burned— From the one end of the land to the other there shall be nothing but fear, dismay, terror, and confusion, occasioned by the wide-wasting violence of the Chaldeans. Judea lay in length from north to south.

Verse 48. *All flesh*— All the people shall see that this war is a judgment of the Lord.

It shall not be quenched.— Till the whole land shall be utterly ruined.

Verse 49. *Ah Lord God*— O my God, consider my situation; who will believe what I shall say? They put the evil day far from them.

Doth he not speak parables?— **הלא ממשל משלים הוא** halo memashshel meshalim hu, “Is not he a maker of parables?” Is it not his custom to deal in enigmas? His figures are not to be understood; we should not trouble ourselves with them. We are not obliged to fathom his meaning; and perhaps after all it does not refer to us, or will not be accomplished in our time, if it even respect the land. Thus they turned aside what might have done them good, and rejected the counsel of God against themselves.

By dividing the word with our neighbor we often lose the benefit both of threatenings and promises. They voluntarily shut their own eyes; and then God, in judgment, sealed them up in darkness.

CHAPTER 21

The prophet goes on to denounce the fate of Jerusalem and Judea; using signs of vehement grief, to denote the greatness of the calamity, 2-7. He then changes the emblem to that of a sharp and bright sword, still denoting the same sad event, 8-17; and, becoming yet more explicit, he represents the king of Babylon, who was to be employed by God in this work, as setting out to take vengeance on both the Jews and the Ammonites, for joining with Egypt in a confederacy against him. He is described as standing at the parting of the roads leading to the respective capitals of the Jews and Ammonites; and doubting which to attack first, he commits the decision of the matter to his arts of divination, performed by mingling arrows inscribed with the names of the different nations or cities, and then marching against that whose name was written on the arrow first drawn from the quiver. In this case the name Jerusalem comes forward; and therefore he proceeds against it, 18-24. History itself could scarcely be more explicit than this prophecy. The profane prince Zedekiah as then declared to be given up by God, and his kingdom devoted to utter destruction, for that breach of oath of which the prophet foretells he should be guilty, 25-27. The remaining verses form a distinct prophecy relating to the destruction of the Ammonites, which was fulfilled about five years after the destruction of Jerusalem, 28-32.

NOTES ON CHAP. 21

Verse 2. *Set thy face toward Jerusalem*— This is a continuation of the preceding prophecy; and in this chapter the prophet sets before them, in the plainest language, what the foregoing metaphors meant, so that they could not complain of his parables.

Verse 3. *Behold, I am against thee*— Dismal news! When God is against us, who can be for us?

And will draw forth my sword— War.

And will cut off from thee— The land of Judea.

The righteous and the wicked.— All shall be removed from thee. Some shall be cut off—removed by the sword; shall be slain in battle, or by the pestilence; and some shall be cut off—die by the famine; and some shall be cut off—removed from the land by captivity. Now, among the two latter classes there might be many righteous as well as wicked. And when all the provisions were consumed, so that there was no more bread in the city, during the siege by Nebuchadnezzar, the righteous must have suffered as well as the wicked; for they could not be preserved alive, but by miracle, when there was no bread; nor was their perishing for want any loss to them, because the Lord would take them straight to his glory. And however men in general are unwilling to die, yet there is no instance, nor can there be, of any man's complaint that he got to heaven too soon. Again, if God had permitted none to be carried off captive but the wicked, the case of these would be utterly hopeless, as there would be none to set a good example, to preach repentance, to reprove sin, or to show God's willingness to forgive sinners. But God, in his mercy, permitted many of the righteous to be carried off also, that the wicked might not be totally abandoned, or put beyond the reach of being saved. Hence, both Ezekiel and Daniel, and indeed several others, prophets and righteous men, were thus cut off from the land, and carried into captivity. And how much was God's glory and the good of men promoted by this! What a seed of salvation was sown, even in the heathen countries, by thus cutting off the righteous with the wicked! To this we owe, under God, many of the Psalms, the whole of the Book of Ezekiel, all the prophecies of Daniel, the bright example of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, the decrees passed in favor of the religion of the true God by Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus, Darius, etc. And to this dispensation of God's merciful providence we owe the Books and example of Ezra and Nehemiah. Where then is the injustice, so loudly declaimed against, of God's thus cutting off from the land of Judea the righteous with the wicked? The righteous were not cut off for the crimes of the wicked, (see chap. xviii.) nor were these crimes visited upon them, yet several of them shared in the common calamity, but none perished. Those that were removed by a violent death, (and I believe we shall find few such,) got a speedier entrance into eternal glory.

Verse 4. *From the south to the north*— The whole land shall be ravaged from one end to the other.

Verse 5. *It shall not return any more*.— That is, till all the work that I have designed for it is done. Nor did it; for Nebuchadnezzar never rested till he had subdued all the lands from the south to the north, from the Euphrates to the Nile.

Verse 6. *Sigh-with the breaking of thy loins*— Let thy mourning for this sore calamity be like that of a woman in the pains of travail.

Verse 7. *Wherefore sighest thou?*— The prophet was a sign unto them. His sighing and mourning showed them how they should act.

All knees shall be weak as water— See the note on chap. 7:17.

Verse 10. *It contemneth the rod of my son*— “It,” the sword of Nebuchadnezzar, “contemneth the rod,” despises the power and influence of my son-Israel, the Jewish people: “Out of Egypt have I called MY SON.”

As every tree.— As all the stocks, kindreds, and nations, over which I have already given him commission. Can the rod of Israel be spared, when the trees of Assyria, Egypt, etc., have been cut down?

Verse 11. *This sword is sharpened*— It is prepared for the slaughter, it is furbished; from the French, foubir, to polish, brighten. He shall have splendid victories every where. Some complain of corruption in the original in this place; but I think without sufficient reason.

Verse 12. *Smite-upon thy thigh*.— See on Jeremiah 31:19. So HOMER, II. 15:ver. 113:—

ὡς εἶπεν αὐτὰρ ἀρῆς θαλερῶ πεπληγέτο μῆρῳ
 χερσὶ καταπρηνεσσ',
 ολοφυρομένος δὲ προσηυδα.

*“She spake; and, with expanded arms his thighs
 smiting, thus sorrowful the god exclaimed.”*

COWPER.

Verse 13. *Because it is a trial*— This will be a trial of strength and skill between the Chaldeans and the Jews; and a trial of faith and patience to the righteous.

And what if the sword, (Nebuchadnezzar,) condemn even the rod?— Overthrow Zedekiah? It will do so; for the regal government of Judea shall be no more. Or, it is tried; that it the sword. Nebuchadnezzar has already shown himself strong and skillful.

Verse 14. *Let the sword be doubled the third time*— The sword has been doubled, and it shall come the third time. Nebuchadnezzar came against Judea THRICE. 1. Against Jehoiakim. 2. Against Jeconiah. 3. Against Zedekiah. The sword had already been doubled; it is to come now the third time, i.e., against Zedekiah.

The sword of the slain— חרב חללים chereb chalalim, “the sword of the soldiers,” of the Chaldeans. So in the next clause, היא חרב חלל הגדול hi chereb chalal haggadol, “it is the sword of that great soldier,” that eminent king and conqueror. This is the meaning of the word חלל chalal, that is so ill rendered in almost every place of its occurrence, in our Version. See Dr. Kennicott.

Verse 15. *Wrapped up*— It is not a blunt sword, it is carefully sharpened and preserved for the slaughter.

Verse 16. *Go thee one way or other*— Thou shalt prosper, O sword, whithersoever thou turnest; against Ammon, or Judea, or Egypt.

Verse 19. *Appoint thee two ways*— Set off from Babylon, and lay down two ways, either of which thou mayest take; that to the right, which leads to Jerusalem; or that to the left which leads to Rabbath of the Ammonites, ver. 20. But why against the Ammonites? Because both they and the Moabites were united with Zedekiah against the Chaldeans, (see Jeremiah 27:3,) though they afterwards fought against Judea, chap. 12:6.

Verse 21. *For the king of Babylon stood at the parting of the way*— He was in doubt which way he should first take; whether to humble the Ammonites by taking their metropolis, Riblath, or go at once against Jerusalem. In this case of uncertainty, he made use of divination. And this was of three kinds: 1. By arrows. 2. By images or talismans. 3. By inspecting the entrails of a sacrifice offered on the occasion.

1. He made bright his arrows. This might be after the manner in which the divination is still practiced among the Arabs. These arrows were without head or wing. They took three. On one they wrote, Command me, Lord. On the second, Forbid me, Lord. The third was blank. These were put in a bag, and the querist put in his hand and took one out. If it was Command me, he set about the business immediately; if it was Forbid me, he rested for a whole year; if it was the blank one, he drew again. On all occasions the Arabs consulted futurity by such arrows. See D’Herbelot, under the word ACDAH.

2. As to the images, the Hebrew calls them **תְּרָפִים** teraphim. See the note on Genesis 31:19.

3. And as to the liver, I believe it was only inspected to see whether the animal offered in sacrifice were sound and healthy, of which the state of the liver is the most especial indication. When the liver is sound, the animal is healthy; and it would have been a bad omen to any who offered sacrifice, to find that the animal they had offered to their gods was diseased; as, in that case, they would have taken for granted that the sacrifice was not accepted.

Verse 22. *At his right hand was the divination for Jerusalem*— He had

probably written on two arrows; one, Jerusalem; the other, Riblath; the third, left blank. He drew, and that on which Jerusalem was written came to his hand; in consequence of which he marched immediately against that city. It was ripe for destruction; and had he marched before or after, it would have fallen; but he never considered himself as sure of the conquest till now.

Verse 23. *To them that have sworn oaths*— To Zedekiah and his ministers, who had bound themselves by the oath of the Lord to be faithful to the Chaldeans, and to pay them the promised tribute. The oaths may refer, farther, to the alliances formed with the Egyptians, Ammonites, and others. They will not believe that Nebuchadnezzar shall succeed against them, while they expect the powerful assistance of the Egyptians.

Verse 25. *And thou profane wicked prince of Israel*— Zedekiah, called here profane, because he had broken his oath; and wicked, because of his opposition to God and his prophet.

Whose day is come— Who in a short time shalt be delivered into the hands of thy enemies.

Verse 26. *Exalt him that is low*— Give Gedaliah the government of Judea.

Abase him that is high— Depose Zedekiah—remove his diadem, and take off his crown.

Verse 27. *I will overturn*— I will utterly destroy the Jewish government. Perverted will I make it. See the margin.

Until he come whose-is— **משפט** mishpat, the judgment; i.e., till the coming of the son of David, the Lord Jesus; who, in a mystic and spiritual sense, shall have the throne of Israel, and whose right it is. See the famous prophecy, Genesis 49:10, and Luke 1:32. The **עוה** avah, which we translate overturn, is thrice repeated here; to point out, say the rabbins, the three conquests of Jerusalem, in which Jehoiakim, Jeconiah, and Zedekiah were overthrown.

Verse 28. *Concerning the Ammonites*— They had reproached and insulted Judea in its low estate, see chap. 25: This prophecy against them was fulfilled about five years after the taking of Jerusalem. See Joseph. Ant. lib. 10:c. 11; and Jeremiah xxvii., xlvi., xlix.; Ezekiel xxv.

Verse 30. *I will judge thee*— This seems to refer to Nebuchadnezzar, who, after his return from Jerusalem, became insane, and lived like a beast for seven years; but was afterwards restored, and acknowledged the Lord.

Verse 32. *Thou shalt be no more remembered*— The empire of the Chaldeans was destroyed, and the power transferred to the Persians; the Persian empire was destroyed, and given to the Greeks; the Grecian empire was destroyed, and given to the Mohammedans; and the destruction of the Mohammedans is at no great distance.

CHAPTER 22

This chapter contains a recital of the sins of Jerusalem, 1-12; for which God threatens it with severe judgments, 13-16, in order to purify it from the dross, 17-22. And as the corruption is general, pervading prophets, priests, princes, and people; so, it is declared, shall be the punishment, 23-31.

NOTES ON CHAP. 22

Verse 2. *Wilt thou judge the bloody city*— Pronounce the sentence of death against the murderers.

Show her all her abominations.— And a most revolting and dreadful catalogue of these is in consequence exhibited.

Verse 3. *Her time may come*— Till now, it was my long-suffering; she has fulfilled her days-completed the time of her probation; has not mended, but is daily worse; therefore her judgment can linger no longer.

Verse 4. *Thou art become guilty in thy blood*— Thou art guilty of blood.

Verse 5. *Those that be near*— Both distant as well as neighboring provinces consider thee the most abandoned of characters; and through thee many have been involved in distress and ruin.

Verse 6. *Behold, the princes*— Ye are a vile and murderous people, and your princes have been of the same character. Like people, like prince.

Verse 7. *In thee have they set light*— The children do not reverence their parents. Parental affection and filial respect do not exist among you. The stranger is not only not succoured, but he is oppressed. The widows and fatherless are vexed by wrongs and exactions.

Verse 8. *Thou hast despised*— All my ordinances are not only neglected, but treated with contempt; and my Sabbaths profaned. There is not only no power of godliness among you, but there is no form.

Verse 9. *In thee are men that carry tales*— Witnesses that will swear any thing, even where life is concerned.

They eat upon the mountains— Sacrifice to idols, and celebrate their festivals.

Verse 10. *In thee have they discovered*— They are guilty of the most abominable incest and unnatural lust.

On thee have they humbled— In their unholy and unnatural connexions, they have not abstained from those set apart because of their infirmities. The catalogue of crimes that follow is too plain to require comment.

Verse 16. *Thou shalt know that I am the Lord.*— I shall so deal with and punish thee, that thou shalt be obliged to own the vindictive hand of a sin-avenging God.

Verse 18. *The house of Israel is to me become dross*— They are all like base metal-brass, tin, iron, and lead alloyed together with silver. Ye must be put in the furnace, and subjected to the most intense fire, till your impurities are consumed away. No ordinary means will avail any thing; the most violent must be resorted to.

Verse 19. *I will gather you*— Jerusalem is represented here as the fining pot; all the people are to be gathered together in it, and the Chaldean fire is to knelt the whole. And God will increase thy sufferings: as the refiner blows the fire with his bellows, so God will blow upon you with the fire of his wrath, ver. 21.

Verse 24. *Thou art the land that is not cleansed*— Thou art like a country where there is no rain, either to cleanse the garments, or fertilize the ground.

Verse 25. *There is a conspiracy*— The false prophets have united together to say and support the same things; and have been the cause of the destruction of souls, and the death of many, so that widows, through their means, are multiplied in thee.

Verse 26. *Her priests*— Even they whose lips should preserve knowledge, have not instructed the people: they have violated my law, not only in their private conduct, but in their careless and corrupt manner of serving in my temple.

Verse 27. *Her princes*— Are as bad as her priests; they are rapacious, and grievously oppress the people by unjust impositions in order to increase their revenues.

Verse 28. *Her prophets*— Even those who profess themselves to be my prophets, have been unfaithful in the discharge of their office; have soothed the people in their sins, and pretended to have oracles of peace and safety when I had not spoken to them.

Verse 29. *The people*— All that have power or authority have abused it; vexed and oppressed the poor, the needy, and the stranger.

Verse 30. *I sought for a man*— I saw that there was a grievous breach made in the moral state and feeling of the people, and I sought for a man that would stand in the gap; that would faithfully exhort, reprove and counsel with all long-suffering and doctrine. But none was to be found!

Verse 31. *Therefore*— Because of the profligacies already mentioned; because of the false worship so generally practiced; because of the false prophets tolerated; because of the unholy and profane priesthood; because of the oppressive princes; because of the unfaithful and deceiving prophets; because of the oppressions of petty officers; and because of the total corruption of manners in all ranks, places, offices, etc.:—

Have I poured out mine indignation-consumed them with the fire of my wrath— Considering the above, has there not been sufficient reason why I should abandon such a people, and pour out upon them such a destructive

storm of calamities?

CHAPTER 23

The idolatries of Samaria and Jerusalem are represented in this chapter by the bad practices of two common harlots, for which God denounces severe judgments against them, 1-49. See the sixteenth chapter, where the same metaphor is enlarged upon as here, it being the prophets view to exude the utmost detestation of the crime against which he inveighs.

NOTES ON CHAP. 23

Verse 2. *Son of man, there were two women*— All the Hebrews were derived from one source, Abraham and Sarah; and, till the schism under Rehoboam, formed but one people: but as these ten tribes and a half separated from Judah and Benjamin, they became two distinct people under different kings; called the kingdom of Judah, and the kingdom of Israel. They are called here, because of their consanguinity, two sisters. The elder, Samaria, (for there was the seat of government for the kingdom of Israel,) was called אהלה *aholah*, “a tent.” The younger, Judah, was called אהל־יבה *aholibah*, “my tent is in her,” because the temple of God was in Jerusalem, the seat of the government of the kingdom of Judah.

Verse 5. *And Aholah played the harlot*— Without entering into detail here, or following the figures, they both became idolatrous, and received the impure rites of the Egyptians, Assyrians, and Chaldeans, of which connection the prophet speaks here as he did in chap. xvi., which see.

In this chapter there are many of what we would call indelicate expressions, because a parallel is run between idolatry and prostitution, and the circumstances of the latter illustrate the peculiarities of the former. In such cases, perhaps, the matter alone was given to the prophet, and he was left to use his own language, and amplify as he saw good. Ezekiel was among the Jews what Juvenal was among the Romans, — a rough reprover of the most abominable vices. They both spoke of things as they found

them; stripped vice naked, and scourged it publicly. The original is still more rough than the translation; and surely there is no need of a comment to explain imagery that is but too generally understood. I have said enough on chap. 16., and to that I must refer the reader. It is true that there are a few things here in the shade that might be illustrated by anatomy; and it would not be difficult to do it: but they are not necessary to salvation, and I shall not take off the covering. They were sufficiently understood by those for whose use they were originally designed.

Verse 6. *Clothed with blue*— The purple dye was highly valued among the ancients, and at first was only used by kings, at last it was used among the military, particularly by officers of high rank in the country.

Verse 14. *Men pourtrayed upon the wall*— See on chap. 8:10.

Verse 20. *She doted upon their paramours*— פלגשיהם pillagsheyhem, their harlots or concubines. Anciently harlot meant in our language either the male or female prostitute.

Whose flesh is as the flesh of asses— See on chap. 16:25.

Verse 23. *Pekod, and Shoa, and Koa*— פקוד ושוע וקוע. These names have been thought to designate certain people bordering on the Chaldeans; but no geographer has ever been able to find them out.

In our old translations these names were considered appellatives-rulers, mighty men, and tyrants. Others, following the literal import of the words, have translated, visiting, shouting and retreating. Others have applied them to the habits of the Chaldean soldiers. Pekod signifying the muster or review of armies; Shoa, the magnificence of their uniform and arms; and Koa, the marks or embroidery of the clothes of the captains and generals. Grotius thought that they might be names of contiguous nations: Pekod, the Bactrians; Shoa, a people of Armenia; and Boa, the Medes. I have nothing to add that would satisfy myself, or be edifying to my readers.

Verse 25. *Shall take away thy nose*— A punishment frequent among the Persians and Chaldeans, as ancient authors tell. Adulteries were punished

in this way; and to this Martial refers:—

Quis tibi persuasit nares abscindere moecheo?

“Who has counselled thee to cut off the adulterer’s nose?”

Women were thus treated in Egypt. See Calmet.

Verse 26. *They shall also strip thee*— See on chap. 16:39.

Verse 32. *Thou shalt drink of thy sister’s cup*— Thou shalt be ruined and desolated as Samaria was.

Verse 34. *Thou shalt-pluck off thine own breasts*— Thou shalt tear them; a frequent action in extreme sorrow and desolation. Weeping, tearing the bosom, and beating the breasts.

Tunc vero rupique sinus, et pectora planxi.

OVID’S Ep. 5.

Verse 38. *They have defiled my sanctuary*— By placing idols there.

Verse 40. *Thou didst wash thyself, paintedst thy eyes, and deckedst thyself with ornaments.*— This is exactly the way in which a loose female in Bengal adorns herself to receive guests. She first bathes, then rubs black paint around her eyes, and then covers her body with ornaments. —
WARD’S Customs.

Verse 41. *And satest upon a stately bed*— Hast raised a stately altar to thy idols; probably alluding to that which Ahaz ordered to be made, after the similitude of that which he saw at Damascus. The bed here is in allusion to the sofas on which the ancients were accustomed to recline at their meals; or to the couches on which they place Asiatic brides, with incense pots and sweetmeats on a table before them.

Verse 42. *And a voice of a multitude*— This seems to be an account of an

idolatrous festival, where a riotous multitude was assembled, and fellows of the baser sort, with bracelets on their arms and chapters on their heads, performed the religious rites.

Verse 45. *And the righteous men*— אַנְשִׁים צְדִיקִים anashim tsaddikim. The Chaldeans, thus called because they are appointed by God to execute judgment on these criminals.

Verse 47. *Shall stone them with stones*— As they did adulteresses under the law. See Leviticus 20:10; Deuteronomy 22:22, compared with John 8:3.

Verse 48. *Thus will I cause lewdness to cease*— Idolatry; and from that time to the present day the Jews never relapsed into idolatry.

Verse 49. *Ye shall bear the sins of your idols*— The punishment due to your adultery; your apostasy from God, and setting up idolatry in the land.

CHAPTER 24

The prophet now informs those of the captivity of the very day on which Nebuchadnezzar was to lay siege to Jerusalem, (compare Jeremiah 52:4,) and describes the fate of that city and its inhabitants by a very apt similitude, 1-14. As another sign of the greatness of those calamities the prophet is forbidden to mourn for his wife, of whom he is to be deprived; intimating thereby that the sufferings of the Jews should be so astonishing as to surpass all expressions of grief; and that private sorrow however affectionate and tender the object, ought to be absorbed in the public calamities, 15-18. The prophet, having farther expressed his prediction in plain terms, intimates that he was to speak to them no more till they should have the news of these prophecies having been fulfilled, 19-27.

NOTES ON CHAP. 24

Verse 1. *The ninth year*— This prophecy was given in the ninth year of Zedekiah, about Thursday, the thirtieth of January, A.M. 3414; the very day in which the king of Babylon commenced the siege of Jerusalem.

Verse 3. *Set on a pot*— The pot was Jerusalem; the flesh, the inhabitants in general; every good piece, the thigh and the shoulder, King Zedekiah and his family; the bones, the soldiers; and the setting on the pot, the commencement of the siege. The prophet was then in Mesopotamia; and he was told particularly to mark the day, etc., that it might be seen how precisely the spirit of prophecy had shown the very day in which the siege took place. Under the same image of a boiling pot, Jeremiah had represented the siege of Jerusalem, chap. 1:13. Ezekiel was a priest; the

its contentions, divided counsels, and disunion be the means of increasing its miseries, רתח רתחיה rattach rethacheyha, let it bubble its bubbling; something like that of the poet:—

*“Bubble, bubble, toil and trouble:
Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.”*

Very like the noise made by ebullition, when a pot of thick broth, “sleek and slab,” is set over a fierce fire. Such was that here represented in which all the flesh, the fat and the bones were to be boiled, and generally dissolved together.

Verse 6. *Let no lot fall upon it.*— Pull out the flesh indiscriminately; let no piece be chosen for king or priest; thus showing that all should be involved in one indiscriminate ruin.

Verse 7. *For her blood is in the midst of her*— She gloried in her idol sacrifices; she offered them upon a rock, where the blood should remain evident; and she poured none upon the ground to cover it with dust, in horror of that moral evil that required the blood of an innocent creature to be shed, in order to the atonement of the offender’s guilt. To “cover the blood of the victim,” was a command of the law, Leviticus 17:13; Deuteronomy 12:24.

Verse 8. *That it might cause fury*— This very blood shall be against them, as the blood of Abel was against Cain.

Verse 10. *Heap or wood*— Let the siege be severe, the carnage great, and the ruin and catastrophe complete.

Verse 13. *In thy filthiness is lewdness*— זמה zimmah, a word that denominates the worst kinds of impurity; adultery, incest, etc., and the purpose, wish, design, and ardent desire to do these things. Hers were not accidental sins, they were abominations by design, and they were the worse in her, because God had cleansed her, had separated the Israelites from idolatry and idolatrous nations, and by his institutions removed from them all idolatrous incentives. But they formed alliances with the heathen,

and adopted all their abominations; therefore God would not spare them. See ver. 14.

Verse 16. Behold, I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes— Here is an intimation that the stroke he was to suffer was to be above all grief; that it would be so great as to prevent the relief of tears.

Curae leves loquuntur, graviores silent,

is a well-accredited maxim in such cases. Superficial griefs affect the more easily moved passions; great ones affect the soul itself, in its powers of reasoning, reflecting, comparing, recollecting, etc., when the sufferer feels all the weight of wo.

Neither shall thy tears run down.— *τουτο γαρ ιδιον των οφθαλμων εν τοις μεγαλοις κακοις εν μεν γαρ ταις μετριαις συμφοραις αφθονως τα δακρυα καταρρει, εν δε τοις υπερβαλλουσι δεινοις φευγει και τα δακρυα και προδιδωσι και τους αφθαλμους* Achill. Tat. lib. 3. c. 11. For this is the case with the eyes in great calamities: in light misfortunes tears flow freely, but in heavy afflictions tears fly away, and betray the eyes.

Verse 17. Make no mourning— As a priest, he could make no public mourning, Leviticus 21:1, etc.

Bind the tire of thine head— This seems to refer to the high priest's bonnet; or perhaps, one worn by the ordinary priests: it might have been a black veil to cover the head.

Put on thy shoes upon thy feet— Walking barefoot was a sign of grief.

Cover not thy lips— Mourners covered the under part of the face, from the nose to the bottom of the chin.

Eat not the bread of men.— *לחם אנשים* lechem anashim, “the bread of miserable men,” i.e., mourners; probably, the funeral banquet.

Verse 18, *At even my wife died*— The prophet's wife was a type of the city, which was to him exceedingly dear. The death of his wife represented the destruction of the city by the Chaldeans; see ver. 21, where the temple is represented to be the desire of his eyes, as his wife was, ver. 16.

Verse 19. *Wilt thou not tell us*— In the following verses he explains and applies the whole of what he had done and said.

Verse 27. *In that day shall thy mouth be opened*— what is, When some one who shall have escaped from Jerusalem, having arrived among the captives, shall inform them of the destruction of the city, the temple, the royal family, and the people at large; till then he might suppress his tears and lamentations. And we find from chap. 33:21, that one did actually escape from the city, and informed the prophet and his brethren in captivity that the city was smitten.

Thus he was not only a prophet to foretell such things, but he was also a sign or portent, shadowing them out by circumstances in his own person and family; and thus the prediction, agreeing so perfectly with the event, proved that the previous information was from the Lord.

CHAPTER 25

This chapter contains threatenings of the heavy judgments of God against the Ammonites, 1-7; Moabites, 8-11; Edomites, 12-14; and Philistines, 15-17; on account of their hatred to his people, and their insulting them in the time of their distress. These prophecies were fulfilled by the instrumentality of Nebuchadnezzar, about five years after the destruction of Jerusalem. The same events were predicted by several of the other prophets, as may be seen from the citation of parallel texts in the margin.

NOTES ON CHAP. 25

Verse 1. *The word of the Lord*— The chronological order of this chapter is after chap. 33:21, etc. See Abp. Newcome.

Verse 2. *Set thy face against the Ammonites*— We have already seen, chap. 21:19, etc., that when Nebuchadnezzar left Babylon he was in doubt whether he should besiege Riblath, the capital of the Ammonites, or Jerusalem, the capital of the Jews, first: and having used his divination. he was determined, by the result, to attack Jerusalem the first. He did so and the Ammonites, seeing the success of his arms, made friends with him, and exulted in the ruin of the Jews. God resents this, and predicts their downfall with that of Edom, Moab, and the Philistines. The fulfillment of this prediction is not noted in Scripture: but Josephus tells us, that about five years after the taking of Jerusalem, Nebuchadnezzar turned his arms against the Ammonites and Moabites, and afterwards against Egypt; and having subdued those nations, he returned to Babylon. Joseph. Antiq., 50:x., c. 2: Berosus states, as quoted by Josephus, contra App., that Nebuchadnezzar subdued Syria, Arabia, Phoenicia, and Egypt: and consequently, that he had brought under his dominion the Ammonites, Moabites, and Idumeans, who were included among the Philistines. See Calmet.

Verse 4. *Will deliver thee to the men of the east*— Probably the Scenite Arabs, Ishmaelites, and people of Kedar, who seized upon the provinces of the vanquished Ammonites, etc. The following description suits this people only, living on fruits, the milk of their flocks, using camels, etc. Some think the people of the east mean the Chaldeans.

Verse 7. *I will cause thee to perish*— Except in history, the name of the Ammonites does not now exist.

Verse 8. *Moab and Seir do say*— Seir means the Idumeans. It appears that both these, with the Ammonites, had made a league with Zedekiah, Jeremiah 27:3, which they did not keep; and it is supposed that they even joined with the Chaldeans.

Verse 9. *I will open the side*— קתפ ketheph, the shoulder, the strongest frontier place. Beth-jeshimoth, Baal-meon, and Kiriathaim were strong frontier towns of Moab.

Verse 10. *That the Ammonites*— The Syriac has, “That Rabbah of the sons of Ammon be not remembered.”

Verse 12. *Because that Edom hath dealt*— The Edomites were the most inveterate enemies of the Jews from the very earliest times, and ever did all that they could to annoy them.

Verse 13. *I will make it desolate from Teman*— Teman and Dedan were both cities of the Moabites, and apparently at each extremity of the land.

Verse 14. *I will lay my vengeance upon Edom*— God will not allow men to insult those whom he has cast down. His judgment is sufficient; to add more is an insult to God.

By the hand of my people Israel— This was fulfilled by the Maccabees, who not only defeated them and brought them under complete subjection, but obliged them to receive circumcision, Joseph. Antiq. 50:xiii., c. 17; 1 Macc. 5:65; 2 Macc. 10:16.

Verse 15. *Because the Philistines*— They were as inimical to the Jews as the Ammonites, etc., were. Nebuchadnezzar punished them because they had assisted the Tyrians during the time he was besieging their city.

I will cut off the Cherethims— See the note on 2 Samuel 8:18.

The remnant of the sea coasts.— The different seignories of the Philistines inhabited the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, from Judea to Egypt. For other matters relative to these prophecies, see the passages in the margin.

CHAPTER 26

This prophecy, beginning here and ending in the twentieth verse of the twenty-eighth chapter, is a declaration of the judgments of God against Tyre, a very famous commercial city of antiquity, which was taken by Nebuchadnezzar after an arduous siege of thirteen years. The prophet begins with introducing Tyre insulting Jerusalem, and congratulating herself on the prospect of accession to her commerce now that this city was no more, 1, 2. Upon which God denounces utter destruction to Tyre, and the cities depending on her, 3-6. We have then a particular account of the person raised up in the course of the Divine providence to accomplish this work. We see, as it were, his mighty hosts, (which are likened to the waves of the sea for their multitude,) raising the mounds, setting the engines, and shaking the walls; we hear the noise of the horsemen, and the sound of their cars; we see the clouds of smoke and dust; we see the sword bathed in blood, and hear the groans of the dying. Tyre, (whose buildings were very splendid and magnificent, and whose walls were one hundred and fifty feet in height, with a proportionable breadth,) immediately disappears; her strong (and as she thought impregnable) towers are thrown down; and her very dust is buried in the sea. Nothing remains but the bare rock, 7-14. The scene is then varied. The isles and adjacent regions, by a very strong and beautiful figure, are represented to be shaken, as with a mighty earthquake by violent concussion occasioned by the fall of Tyre. The groans of the dying reach the ears of the people inhabiting these regions. Their princes, alarmed for themselves and grieved for Tyre, descend from their thrones, lay aside their robes, and clothe themselves with-sackcloth?-no, but with trembling! Arrayed in this astonishing attire, the prophet introduces them as a chorus of mourners, lamenting Tyre in a funeral song or dirge, as customary on the death of renowned personages. And pursuing the same image still farther, in the person of God, he performs the last sad office for her. She is brought forth from her place in solemn pomp; the pit is dug for her; and she is buned, to rise no more, 15-21. Such is the prophecy concerning Tyre, comprehending both the city on the continent and that on the island, and most punctually fulfilled in regard to both.

That on the continent was razed to the ground by Nebuchadnezzar, B.C. 572, and that on the island by Alexander the Great, B.C. 332. And at present, and for ages past, this ancient and renowned city, once the emporium of the world, and by her great naval superiority the center of a powerful monarchy, is literally what the prophet has repeatedly foretold it should be, and what in his time was, humanly speaking, so highly improbable—a BARE rock, a place to spread nets on!

NOTES ON CHAP. 26

Verse 1. *The eleventh year*— This was the year in which Jerusalem was taken; the eleventh of the captivity of Jeconiah, and the eleventh of the reign of Zedekiah. What month we are not told, though the day is mentioned. There have been many conjectures about this, which are not of sufficient consequence to be detailed.

Verse 2. *Tyrus hath said*— From this it would appear that Jerusalem had been taken, which was on the fourth month of this year; but it is possible that the prophet speaks of the event beforehand.

She is broken that was the gates of the people— Jerusalem, a general emporium.

I shall be replenished— The merchandise that went to Jerusalem will come to me, (to Tyre.)

Verse 3. *Will cause many nations to come up against thee*— We have already seen that the empire of the Chaldeans was composed of many different provinces, and that Nebuchadnezzar's army was composed of soldiers from different nations: these may be the people meant; but I doubt whether this may not refer to the different nations which in successive ages fought against Tyre. It was at last finally destroyed in the sixteenth century of the Christian era.

Verse 4. *I will also scrape her dust from her*— I will totally destroy her fortifications, and leave her nothing but a barren rock, as she was before.

This cannot refer to the capture of Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar. It flourished long after his time.

Verse 5. *A place for the spreading of nets*— A place for the habitation of some poor fishermen, who spent the fishing season there, and were accustomed to dry their nets upon the rocks. See on ver. 11.

Verse 6. *And her daughters*— The places dependent on Tyre. As there were two places called Tyre, one on the main land, and the other on a rock in the sea, opposite to that on the main land, sometimes the one seems to be spoken of, and sometimes the other. That on the land, Palaetyre, was soon taken; but that in the sea cost Nebuchadnezzar thirteen years of siege and blockade. The two formed only one city, and one state.

Verse 7. *Nebuchadnezzar-king of kings*— An ancient title among those proud Asiatic despots [P] shahinshah and padshah, titles still in use.

Verse 8. *Thy daughters in the field*— This seems to be spoken of Palaetyre, or Tyre on the main land; for forts, mounts, engines of war, horses, and chariots could not be brought to act against the other.

Verse 12. *And they shall lay thy stones and thy timber and thy dust in the midst of the water.*— This answers to the taking of Tyre by Alexander; he actually took the timbers, stones, rubbish, etc. of old Tyre, and filled up the space between it and new Tyre, and thus connected the latter with the main land; and this he was obliged to do before he could take it.

Verse 14. *Thou shalt be built no more*— If this refer to Nebuchadnezzar's capture of the city, old Tyre must be intended: that was destroyed by him, and never rebuilt. But I doubt whether the whole of this prophecy do not refer to the taking of Tyre by Alexander, three hundred years after its capture by Nebuchadnezzar. Indeed it may include more recent conquests of this important city. It went through a variety of vicissitudes till 1289, when it and the neighboring towns were sacked and ravaged by the Mamelukes. Mr. Maundrell, who visited this place, says, "it is a Babel of broken walls, pillars, vaults, etc., there being not so much as one entire house left! Its present inhabitants are only a few poor

wretches, harbouring themselves in the vaults, and subsisting chiefly on fishing; who seem to be preserved in this place by Divine Providence as a visible argument how God has fulfilled his word concerning Tyre, that it should be the top of a rock, a place for fishers to dry their nets on.”

Verse 15. *The isles shake at the sound of thy fall*— All those which had traded with this city, which was the grand mart, and on which they all depended. Her ruin involved them all, and caused general wailing.

Verse 16. *The princes of the sea*— The chief maritime states, such as Leptis, Utica, Carthage, Gades, etc. See Calmet.

Verse 17. *Wast strong in the sea*— The strength of Tyre was so great, that Alexander despaired of being able to reduce it unless he could fill up that arm of the sea that ran between it and the main land. And this work cost his army seven months of labor.

Verse 20. *And I shall set glory in the land of the living*.— Judea so called, the land of the living God.

Verse 21. *Yet shalt thou never be found again*— This is literally true; there is not the smallest vestige of the ancient Tyre, that which was erected on the main land. Even the ground seems to have been washed away; and the new Tyre is in nearly a similar state. I think this prophecy must be extended to the whole duration of Tyre. If it now be found to be in the state here described, it is sufficient to show the truth of the prophecy. And now it is found precisely in the state which the above prophetic declarations, taken according to the letter, point out! No word of God can ever fall to the ground.

Notwithstanding the former destructions, Tyre was a place of some consequence in the time of St. Paul. There was a Church there, (see Acts 21:3, 5t.

CHAPTER 27

This chapter may be considered as the second part of the prophecy concerning Tyre. The prophet pursues his subject in the manner of those ancient lamentations or funeral songs, in which the praeficiae or mourning women first recounted whatever was great or praiseworthy in the deceased, and then mourned his fall. Here the riches, glory, and extensive commerce of Tyre are enlarged upon, 1-25. Her downfall is then described in a beautiful allegory, executed in a few words, with astonishing brevity, propriety, and perspicuity, 26; upon which all the maritime and commercial world are represented as grieved and astonished at her fate, and greatly alarmed for their own, 27-36. Besides the view which this chapter gives of the conduct of Providence, and the example with which it furnishes the critic and men of taste of a very elegant and highly finished piece of composition, it likewise affords the antiquary a very curious and interesting account of the wealth and commerce of ancient times. And to the mind that looks for “a city that hath foundations,” what a picture does the whole present of the mutability and inanity of all earthly things! Many of the places mentioned in ancient history have, like Tyre, long ago lost their political consequence; the geographical situation of others cannot be traced; they have sunk in the deep waters of oblivion; the east wind hath carried them away.

NOTES ON CHAP. 27

Verse 2. *Take up a lamentation for Tyrus*— This is a singular and curious chapter. It gives a very circumstantial account of the trade of Tyre with different parts of the world, and the different sorts of merchandise in which she trafficked. The places and the imports are as regularly entered here as they could have been in a European custom-house.

Verse 3. *The entry of the sea*— Tyre was a small island, or rather rock, in the sea, at a short distance from the main land. We have already seen that

there was another Tyre on the main land; but they are both considered as one city.

Verse 4. *Thy builders have perfected thy beauty.*— Under the allegory of a beautiful ship, the prophet, here and in the following verses, paints the glory of this ancient city. Horace describes the commonwealth of Rome by the same allegory, and is as minute in his description, Carm. lib. 1:Od. xiv:—

*O navis, referent in mare te novi
Fluctus? O quid agis? Fortiter occupa
Portum. Nonne video, ut
Nudum remigio latus,
Et malus celeri saucius Africo,
Antennaeque gemant? ac sine funibus
Vix durare carinae Possint imperiosius
AEquor! non tibi sunt integra lintea;
Non Di, quos iterum pressa votes malo:
Quamvis Pontica pinus,
Sylvae filia nobilis,
Jactes et genus, et nomen inutile
Nil pictis timidus navita puppibus
Fidit. Tu, nisi, ventis
Debes ludibrium, cave.*

*Unhappy vessel, shall the waves again
Tumultuous bear thee to the faithless main?
What, would thy madness thus with storms to sport?
Cast firm your anchor in the friendly port.
Behold thy naked decks, the wounded mast,
And sail-yards groan beneath the southern blast.
Nor, without ropes, thy keel can longer brave
The rushing fury of the imperious wave:
Torn are thy sails; thy guardian gods are lost,
Whom you might call, in future tempests tost.
What, though majestic in your pride you stood,
A noble daughter of the Pontic wood,*

*You now may vainly boast an empty name,
Of birth conspicuous in the rolls of fame.
The mariner, when storms around him rise,
No longer on a painted stern relies.
Ah! yet take heed, lest these new tempests sweep,
In sportive rage, thy glories to the deep.*

FRANCIS.

I give this as a striking parallel to many passages in this chapter.

Verse 5. *Fir trees of Senir*— Senir is a mountain which the Sidonians called Sirion, and the Hebrews Hermon, Deuteronomy 3:9. It was beyond Jordan, and extended from Libanus to the mountains of Gilead.

Verse 6. *Of the oaks of Bashan*— Some translate alder, others the pine.

The company of the Ashurites— The word אַשְׁרִים asherim is by several translated boxwood. The seats or benches being made of this wood inlaid with ivory.

Isles of Chittim— The Italian islands; the islands of Greece; Cyprus. Calmet says Macedonia is meant.

Verse 7. *Fine linen*— שֶׁשׁ shesh, cotton cloth. In this sense the word is generally to be understood.

To be thy sail— Probably the flag-ensign or pennant, is meant.

Blue and purple from the isles of Elishah— Elis. a part of the Peloponnesus.

Verse 8. *Zidon and Arvad*— Or Arad. Two powerful cities on the Phoenician coast, in the neighborhood of Tyre, from which Tyre had her sailors; and the best instructed of her own inhabitants were her pilots or steersmen.

Verse 9. *The ancients of Gebal*— This was a city of Phoenicia, near Mount Libanus, Joshua 13:5. It was called Biblos by the Greeks.

Thy calkers— Those who repaired their vessels; paying, as it is termed, pitched hemp into the seams, to prevent the water from oozing through.

To occupy thy merchandise.— That is, to be thy agents or factors.

Verse 10. *They of Persia*— Lud, the Lydians; Phut, a people of Africa, see Genesis 10:6. From these places they had auxiliary troops; for as they traded with the then known world, were rich, and could afford to give good pay, they no doubt had soldiers and sailors from every part. Skilful and desperate men will go any where after their price.

Verse 11. *The Gammadims were in thy towers*— Some think these were a people of Phoenicia; others, that tutelar images are meant; others, that the word expresses strong men, Who acted as guards. The Vulgate reads Pygmaei, the pygmies, who were fabled to be a little people of a cubit in height, from גָּמַד gomed. a cubit; and are are told that this little people were celebrated for their wars with the cranes; but nothing of this kind can enter into this description. Probably a people inhabiting the promontories of Phoenicia are here intended; and their hanging their shields upon the walls is a proof that soldiers are meant, and persons of skill and prowess too.

Verse 12. *Tarshish was thy merchant*— After having given an account of the naval and military equipment of this city, he now speaks of the various places and peoples with whom the Tyrians traded, and the different kinds of merchandise imported from those places.

By Tarshish some understand the Carthaginians; some think Tartessus, near the straits of Gibraltar, is meant; others, Tharsis in Cilicia. The place was famous for all the useful metals, silver, iron, tin, and lead. All these they might have had from Britain.

Verse 18. *Javan, Tubal, and Meshech*— The Ionians, the Tybarenians, and the Cappadocians, or Muscovites.

They traded the persons of men— That is, they trafficked in slaves. The bodies and souls of men were bought and sold in those days, as in our degenerate age. With these also they traded in brazen vessels.

Verse 14. *Togarmah*— The Sarmatians. Some think Cappadocia. With these they dealt in horses, mules, and horsemen; or probably draught horses and war horses are intended.

Verse 15. *The men of Dedan*— Dedan was one of the descendants of Abraham by Keturah, and dwelt in Arabia, Genesis 25:3. Ivory and ebony might come from that quarter. By way of distinction ivory is called both in Hebrew שֵׁן shen, and in Arabic [A] shen, the TOOTH, as that beautiful substance is the tooth of the elephant.

Verse 16. *Syria*— These were always a mercantile people. For the precious stones mentioned here see the notes on Exodus 28:17.

Verse 17. *Judah, and the land of Israel-traded in thy market wheat*— The words have been understood as articles of merchandise, not names of places. So the Jews traded with the Tyrians in wheat, stacte, balsam, honey, oil, and resin.

Verse 18. *Damascus wine of Helbon*— Now called by the Turks Haleb, and by us Aleppo.

White wool.— Very fine wool: wool of a fine quality. Some think Milesian wool is meant.

Verse 19. *Dan also and Javan*— It is probable that both these words mean some of the Grecian islands.

Going to and fro— They both took and brought-imported and exported: but מֵאוּזַל meuzal, from uzal, may be a proper name. What place is signified I cannot tell, unless it be Azal, a name, according to Kamoos, of the capital of Arabia Felix.

Verse 20. *Dedan*— Possibly the descendants of Dedan, son of Raamah, see Genesis 10:7.

In precious clothes for chariots.— Either fine carpets, or rich housings for horses, camels, etc., used for riding.

Verse 21. *Arabia, and all the princes of Cedar*— Arabia Deserta, on the confines of the Dead Sea. The Kedarenes inhabited the same country. These brought lambs, rams, and goats for the consumption of the city.

Verse 22. *Sheba and Raamah*— Inhabitants of Arabia Felix, at the entrance of the Persian Gulf, who were famous for their riches and spices.

Verse 23. *Haran*— In Mesopotamia; well known in Scripture.

Canneh— Or Chalane, see Genesis 10:10. It is supposed to be a cape or port of Arabia Felix, on the Indian Sea.

Eden— Equally famous: supposed to have been situated near the confluence of the Tygris and Euphrates.

Sheba— Different from that in ver. 22. This was probably near the country of the Edomites.

Asshur— Perhaps the Assyrians.

Chilmad— Possibly Cholmadora, on the Euphrates. Ptol. lib. v.. cap. 15. For several of these places, and the persons from whom they derived their names, see Genesis x., and the notes there; and see Calmet.

Verse 24. *These were thy merchants in all sorts of things*— The above people traded with the Tyrians in a great variety of the most valuable merchandise: blue or purple cloth, boxes of cedar, covered with skins, and bound with silken cords, and sealed with an engraved seal, finely cut, etc. See the Chaldee.

Verse 25. *The ships of Tarshish*— The ships of Tharsis, in Cilicia, were

the chief of those which traded with thee.

Verse 26. *Thy rowers have brought thee into great waters*— Tyre is still considered under the allegory of a ship; and all the vessels of different nations trading with her are represented as towing her into deep waters—bringing her into great affluence. But while in this state, a stormy east wind, or a destructive wind, meaning the Chaldeans, arises, and dashes her to pieces! See the ode from Horace, already quoted on ver. 4.

Verse 27. *Thy riches*— This vast ship, laden with all kinds of valuable wares, and manned in the best manner, being wrecked, all her valuables, sailors, officers, etc., went to the bottom.

Verse 28. *The cry of thy pilots*.— When the ship was dashed against the rocks by the violence of the winds and the waves, and all hope of life was taken away, then a universal cry was set up by all on board. I have heard this cry, and nothing more dismal can be imagined, when the ship by a violent tempest is driving among rocks on a lee shore. Then “All lost! cut away the boat!” is more dreadful than the cry of fire at midnight.

Verse 30. *Shall cry bitterly*— All that were on the land, seeing this dreadful sight, a gallant ship perishing with all her men and goods, are represented as setting up a dismal cry at this heart-rending sight. But what must they have felt who were on board? Reader, wert thou ever shipwrecked? Wert thou ever in a hurricane on a lee rocky shore, where the helm had lost its power, and the sails were rendered useless? Dost thou remember that apparently last moment, when the ship drove up to the tremendous rocks, riding on the back of a mountainous surge? Then what was the universal cry? Hast thou ever heard any thing so terrific? so appalling? so death and judgment-like? No. It is impossible. These are the circumstances, this is the cry, that the prophet describes; disorder, confusion, dismay, and ruin. And this is a scene which the present writer has witnessed, himself a part of the wretched, when all hope of life was taken away, the yawning gulf opened, and nothing presented itself to support body or soul but that GOD who gave to both their being, and ultimately rescued him and his forlorn companions from one of the worst of deaths, by heaving the ship from the rocks by the agency of a

tremendous receding wave. My soul hath these things still in remembrance, and therefore is humbled within me.

Verse 32. *What city is like Tyrus*— This, to the end of the chapter, is the lamentation.

Verse 36. *Shall hiss at thee*— שֶׂרֶקוּ shareku, shall shriek for thee. This powerfully expresses the sensation made on the feelings of the spectators on the shore when they saw the vessel swallowed up.

CHAPTER 28

The first part of this chapter relates to a King of Tyre, probably the same who is called in the Phoenician annals Ithobalus. He seems to have been a vain man, who affected Divine honors. The prophet treats his foolish pretensions with severe irony, and predicts his doom, 1-10. He then takes up a funeral dirge and lamentation over him, in which his former pomp and splendor are finely contrasted with his fall, in terms that seem frequently to allude to the fall of Lucifer from heaven, (Isaiah 14.,) 11-19. The overthrow of Sidon, the mother city of Tyre, is next announced, 20-23; and the chapter concludes with a promise to the Jews of deliverance from all their enemies, and particularly of their restoration from the Babylonish captivity, 24-26.

NOTES ON CHAP. 28

Verse 2. Say unto the prince of Tyrus— But who was this prince of Tyrus? Some think Hiram; some, Sin; some, the devil; others, Ithobaal, with whom the chronology and circumstances best agree. Origen thought the guardian angel of the city was intended.

I am a god— That is, I am absolute, independent, and accountable to none. He was a man of great pride and arrogance.

Verse 3. Thou art wiser than Daniel— Daniel was at this time living, and was reputable for his great wisdom. This is said ironically. See chap. 14:14; 26:1.

Verse 5. By thy great wisdom— He attributed every thing to himself; he did not acknowledge a Divine providence. As he got all by himself, so he believed he could keep all by himself, and had no need of any foreign help.

Verse 7. I will bring strangers upon thee— The Chaldeans.

Verse 9. *Wilt thou yet say before him that slayeth thee*— Wilt thou continue thy pride and arrogance when the sword is sheathed in thee, and still imagine that thou art self-sufficient and independent?

Verse 10. *The deaths of the uncircumcised*— Two deaths, temporal and eternal. Ithobaal was taken and killed by Nebuchadnezzar.

Verse 12. *Thou sealest up*— This has been translated, “Thou drawest thy own likeness.” “Thou formest a portrait of thyself; and hast represented thyself the perfection of wisdom and beauty.” I believe this to be the meaning of the place.

Verse 13. *Thou hast been in Eden*— This also is a strong irony. Thou art like Adam, when in his innocence and excellence he was in the garden of Eden!

Every precious stone was thy covering— For a description of these stones see the note on Exodus 28:17.

Verse 14. *Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth*— The irony is continued; and here he is likened to the CHERUB that guarded the gates of Paradise, and kept the way of the tree of life; or to one of the cherubs whose wings, spread out, covered the mercy-seat.

Thou mast upon the holy mountain of God— The irony is still continued; and now he is compared to Hoses, and afterwards to one of the chief angels, who has walked up and down among the stones of fire; that is, thy floors have been paved with precious stones, that shone and sparkled like fire.

Lucan, describing the splendor of the apartments of Cleopatra, queen of Egypt, speaks in pearly a similar language:—

*Nec summis crustata domus, sectisque nitebat
Marmoribus, stabatque sibi non segnis achates,
Purpureusque lapis, totusque effusus in aula
Calcabatur onyx;*

Pharsal. lib. x.

Rich as some fane by slavish zealots reared,

as the angels, as the cherubim, thou must have had thy sanctuaries; but thou hast defiled them: and as Adam, thou hast polluted thy Eden, and hast been expelled from Paradise.

Verse 19. *Thou shalt be a terror*— Instead of being an object of adoration thou shalt be a subject of horror, and at last be destroyed with thy city, so that nothing but thy name shall remain. It was entirely burnt by Alexander the Great, as it had been before by Nebuchadnezzar.

Verse 22. *I am against thee, O Zidon*— Sidon for a long time had possessed the empire of the sea and of all Phoenicia, and Tyre was one of its colonies; but in process of time, the daughter became greater than the mother. It seems to have been an independent place at the time in which Tyre was taken; but it is likely that it was taken by the Chaldeans soon after the former.

Verse 23. *And the wounded*— חלל chalal, the soldiery. All its supports shall be taken away, and its defenders destroyed.

Verse 24. *There shall be no more a pricking brier*— Nothing to excite Israel to idolatry when restored from their captivity. Perhaps there is an allusion to Jezebel, daughter of Ethbaal, king of Sidon, and wife to Ahab, king of Israel, who was the greatest curse to Israel, and the universal restorer of idolatry in the land, see 1 Kings 16:31. Sidon being destroyed, there would come no encourager of idolatry from that quarter.

Verse 25. *When I shall have gathered the house of Israel*— In their long captivity, God had been preparing the land for them so as to make it a safe dwelling; and hence he executed judgments on all the heathen nations round about by means of the Chaldeans. Thus Tyre and Sidon were destroyed, as were the Ammonites and others who had been the inveterate enemies of the Jews. Judgment first began at his own house, then proceeded to the heathen nations; and when they were brought down, then he visited and redeemed his people. Thus God's ways are proved to be all equal; partialities and caprices belong not to him.

CHAPTER 29

This and the three following chapters foretell the conquest of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar, which he accomplished in the twenty-seventh year of Jehoiachin's captivity. The same event is foretold by Jeremiah, chap. 46:13, etc. The prophecy opens with God's charging the king of Egypt (Pharaoh-hophra) with the same extravagant pride and profanity which were in the preceding chapter laid to the charge of the prince of Tyre. He appears, like him, to have affected Divine honors; and boasted so much of the strength of his kingdom, that, as an ancient historian (Herodotus) tells us, he impiously declared that God himself could not dispossess him. Wherefore the prophet, with great majesty, addresses him under the image of one of those crocodiles or monsters which inhabited that river, of whose riches and revenue he vaunted; and assures him that, with as much ease as a fisherman drags the fish he has hooked, God would drag him and his people into captivity, and that their carcasses should fall a prey to the beasts of the field and to the fowls of heaven, 1-7. The figure is then dropped; and God is introduced denouncing, in plain terms, the most awful judgments against him and his nation, and declaring that the Egyptians should be subjected to the Babylonians till the fall of the Chaldean empire, 8-12. The prophet then foretells that Egypt, which was about to be devastated by the Babylonians, and many of the people carried into captivity, should again become a kingdom; but that it should never regain its ancient political importance; for, in the lapse of time, it should be even the BASEST of the kingdoms, a circumstance in the prophecy most literally fulfilled, especially under the Christian dispensation, in its government by the Mameluke slaves, 13-16. The prophecy, beginning at the seventeenth verse, is connected with the foregoing, as it relates to the same subject, though delivered about seventeen years later. Nebuchadnezzar and his army, after the long siege of Tyre, which made every head bald by constantly wearing their helmets, and wore the skin off every shoulder by carrying burdens to raise the fortifications, were disappointed of the spoil which they expected, by the retiring of the inhabitants to Carthage. God, therefore, promises him Egypt for his reward, 17-20. The chapter concludes with a prediction of

the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, 21.

NOTES ON CHAP. 29

Verse 1. *In the tenth year— Of Zedekiah; and tenth of the captivity of Jeconiah. The ten month, in the twelfth day of the month—* Answering to Monday, the first of February, A.M. 3415.

Verse 2. *Set thy face against Pharaoh king of Egypt—* This was Pharaoh-hophra or Pharaoh-apries, whom we have so frequently met with in the prophecies of Jeremiah, and much of whose history has been given in the notes.

Verse 3. *The great dragon—* הַתַּנִּים hattan nim should here be translated crocodile, as that is a real animal, and numerous in the Nile; whereas the dragon is wholly fabulous. The original signifies any large animal.

The midst of his rivers— This refers to the several branches of the Nile, by which this river empties itself into the Mediterranean. The ancients termed them septem ostia Nili, “the seven mouths of the Nile.” The crocodile was the emblem of Egypt.

Verse 4. *I will put hooks in thy jaws—* Amasis, one of this king’s generals, being proclaimed king by an insurrection of the people, dethroned Apries, and seized upon the kingdom; and Apries was obliged to flee to Upper Egypt for safety.

I will cause the fish-to stick unto thy scales— Most fish are sorely troubled with a species of insect which bury their heads in their flesh, under their scales, and suck out the vital juices. The allusion seems to be to this. Pharaoh was the crocodile; the fish, the common people; and the sticking to his scales, the insurrection by which he was wasted and despoiled of his kingdom.

Verse 5. *I will leave thee thrown into the wilderness—* Referring to his being obliged to take refuge in Upper Egypt. But he was afterwards taken

prisoner, and strangled by Amasis. Herod. lib. 2:s. 169.

Verse 6. *They have been a staff of reed*— An inefficient and faithless ally. The Israelites expected assistance from them when Nebuchadnezzar came against Jerusalem; and they made a feint to help them, but retired when Nebuchadnezzar went against them. Thus were the Jews deceived and ultimately ruined, see ver. 7.

Verse 10. *From the tower of Syene*— ממגדל מונה mimmigdol seveneh, “from Migdol to Syene.” Syene, now called Essuan, was the last city in Egypt, going towards Ethiopia. It was famous for a well into which the rays of the sun fell perpendicularly at midday.

Verse 12. *Shall be desolate forty years*— The country from Migdol or Magdolan, which was on the isthmus between the Mediterranean and the Red Sea, was so completely ruined, that it might well be called desert; and it is probable that this desolation continued during the whole of the reign of Amasis, which was just forty years. See Herod. lib. 3:c. 10; and see Calmet.

Verse 13. *Will I gather the Egyptians*— It is probable that Cyrus gave permission to the Egyptians brought to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar, to return to their own country. And if we reckon from the commencement of the war against Pharaoh-hophra by Nebuchadnezzar, to the third or fourth year of Cyrus, the term will be about forty years.

Verse 14. *Into the land of Pathros*— Supposed to mean the Delta, a country included between the branches of the Nile, called ד delta, from its being in the form of the Greek letter of that name. It may mean the Pathrusim, in Upper Egypt, near to the Thebaid. This is most likely.

Shall be there a base kingdom.— That is, it shall continue to be tributary. It is upwards of two thousand years since this prophecy was delivered, and it has been uninterruptedly fulfilling to the present hour. 1. Egypt became tributary to the Babylonians under Amasis. 2. After the ruin of the Babyionish empire, it became subject to the Persians. 3. After the Persians, it came into the hands of the Macedonians. 4. After the

Macedonians it fell into the hands of the Romans. 5. After the division of the Roman empire it was subdued by the Saracens. 6. About A.D. 1250, it came into the hands of the Mameluke slaves. 7. Selim, the ninth emperor of the Turks, conquered the Mamelukes, A.D. 1517, and annexed Egypt to the Ottoman empire, of which it still continues to be a province, governed by a pacha and twenty-four beys, who are always advanced from servitude to the administration of public affairs. So true is it that Egypt, once so glorious, is the basest of kingdoms. See Newton on the prophecies.

Verse 17. *The seven and twentieth year*— That is, of the captivity of Jeconiah, fifteen years after the taking of Jerusalem; about April 20, 3432. The preceding prophecy was delivered one year before the taking of Jerusalem; this, sixteen years after; and it is supposed to be the last which this prophet wrote.

Verse 18. *Caused his army to serve a great service against Tyrus*— He was thirteen years employed in the siege. See Joseph. Antiq. lib. 10:c. 11. In this siege his soldiers endured great hardships. Being continually on duty, their heads became bald by wearing their helmets; and their shoulders bruised and peeled by carrying baskets of earth to the fortifications, and wood, etc., to build towers, etc.

Yet had he no wages, nor his army— The Tyrians, finding it at last impossible to defend their city, put all their wealth aboard their vessels, sailed out of the port, and escaped for Carthage; and thus Nebuchadnezzar lost all the spoil of one of the richest cities in the world.

Verse 20. *I have given him the land of Egypt for his labor*— Because he fulfilled the designs of God against Tyre, God promises to reward him with the spoil of Egypt.

Verse 21. *Will I cause the horn of the house of Israel to bud*— This may refer generally to the restoration; but particularly to Zerubbabe1, who became one of the leaders of the people from Babylon. Or it may respect Daniel, or Mordecai, or Jeconiah, who, about this time, was brought out of prison by Evil-merodach, and afterwards kindly treated.

CHAPTER 30

This chapter describes, with great force and elegance, the ruin of Egypt and all her allies by the Chaldeans under Nebuchadnezzar, 1-11; with an amplification of the distress of the principal cities of Egypt on that occasion, 12-19. The remaining verses are a short prophecy relating to the same event, and therefore annexed to the longer one preceding, although this was predicted sooner, 20-26.

NOTES ON CHAP. 30

Verse 2. *Howl ye, Wo worth the day!*— My Old MS. Bible, — Soule gee, woo woo to the day! **הַיְלִילוּ הַה לַיּוֹם** heylilu, had laiyom! “Howl ye, Alas for the day!” The reading in our present text is taken from Coverdale’s Bible, 1536. The expressions signify that a most dreadful calamity was about to fall on Egypt and the neighboring countries, called here the “time of the heathen,” or of the nations; the day of calamity to them. They are afterwards specified, Ethiopia, Libya, Lydia, and Chub, and the mingled people, probably persons from different nations, who had followed the ill fortune of Pharaoh-hophra or Pharaoh-apries, when he fled from Amasis, and settled in Upper Egypt.

Verse 5. *Lydia*— This place is not well known. The Ludim were contiguous to Egypt, Genesis 11:13.

Chub— The Cubians, placed by Ptolemy in the Mareotis. But probably instead of **וְכֹב** vechub, “and Chub,” we should read **וְכָל** vechol, “and ALL the men of the land,” etc. The Septuagint adds “the Persians and the Cretans.”

Verse 7. *Shall be desolate*— All these countries shall be desolated, and the places named shall be chief in these desolations.

Verse 9. *Messengers go forth from me in ships*— Ships can ascend the Nile up to Syene or Essuan, by the cataracts; and when Nebuchadnezzar's vessels went up, they struck terror into the Ethiopians. They are represented here as the "messengers of God."

Verse 12. *I will make the rivers dry*— As the overflowing of the Nile was the grand cause of fertility to Egypt, the drying it up, or preventing that annual inundation, must be the cause of dearth, famine, etc. By rivers, we may understand the various canals cut from the Nile to carry water into the different parts of the land. When the Nile did not rise to its usual height these canals were quite dry.

Verse 13. *Their images to cease out of Noph*— Afterwards Memphis, and now Cairo or Kahira. This was the seat of Egyptian idolatry; the place where Apis was particularly worshipped.

No more a prince of the land of Egypt— Not one, from that time to the present day. See the note on chap. 29:14.

Verse 14. *I will make Pathros desolate*— See the preceding chapter, ver. 14.

Zoan— Tanis, the ancient capital of Egypt.

No.— Diospolis, or Thebes, the city of Jupiter.

Verse 15. *My fury upon Sin*— Pelusium, a strong city of Egypt, on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea.

Verse 16. *Noph*— Cairo or Kahira; see ver. 13.

Verse 17. *Aven*— Or On, the famous Heliopolis, or city of the sun.

Pibeseth— Bubastum or Bubaste, by a slight alteration of the letters. It is situated on the eastern branch of the Nile, towards Arabia.

Verse 18. *Tehaphnehes*— Called also Tahapanes, Jeremiah 2:16. This is

the Pelusian Daphne.

Break there the yokes— The sceptres. Nebuchadnezzar broke the scepter of Egypt when he confirmed the kingdom to Amasis, who had rebelled against Apries.

Verse 20. *In the eleventh year, in the first month, in the seventh day*— This was the eleventh year of the captivity of Jeconiah, and the date here answers to April 26, A.M. 3416; a prophecy anterior by several years to that already delivered. In collecting the writings of Ezekiel, more care was taken to put all that related to one subject together, than to attend to chronological arrangement.

Verse 21. *I have broken the arm of Pharaoh*— Perhaps this may refer to his defeat by Nebuchadnezzar, when he was coming with the Egyptian army to succor Jerusalem.

Verse 22. *I will cause the sword to fall out of his hand*.— When the arm is broken, the sword will naturally fall. But these expressions show that the Egyptians would be rendered wholly useless to Zedekiah, and should never more recover their political strength. This was the case from the time of the rebellion of Amasis.

Verse 26. *I will scatter the Egyptians*— Several fled with Apries to Upper Egypt; and when Nebuchadnezzar wasted the country, he carried many of them to Babylon. See on chap. 29:12.

CHAPTER 31

This very beautiful chapter relates also to Egypt. The prophet describes to Pharaoh the fall of the king of Nineveh, (see the books of Nahum, Jonah, and Zephaniah,) under the image of a fair cedar of Lebanon, once exceedingly tall, flourishing, and majestic, but now cut down and withered, with its broken branches strewed around, 1-17. He then concludes with bringing the matter home to the king of Egypt, by telling him that this was a picture of his approaching fate, 18. The beautiful cedar of Lebanon, remarkable for its loftiness, and in the most flourishing condition, but afterwards cut down and deserted, gives a very lately painting of the great glory and dreadful catastrophe of both the Assyrian and Egyptian monarchies. The manner in which the prophet has embellished his subject is deeply interesting; the colouring is of that kind which the mind will always contemplate with pleasure.

NOTES ON CHAP. 31

Verse 1. *In the eleventh year*— On Sunday, June 19, A.M. 3416, according to Abp. Usher; a month before Jerusalem was taken by the Chaldeans.

Verse 3. *Behold, the Assyrian was a cedar*— Why is the Assyrian introduced here, when the whole chapter concerns Egypt? Bp. Lowth has shown that אֲשׁוּר עֵרֵז ashshur erez should be translated the tall cedar, the very stately cedar; hence there is reference to his lofty top; and all the following description belongs to Egypt, not to Assyria. But see on ver. 11.

Verse 4. *The waters made him great*— Alluding to the fertility of Egypt by the overflowing of the Nile. But waters often mean peoples. By means of the different nations under the Egyptians, that government became very opulent. These nations are represented as fowls and beasts, taking shelter under the protection of this great political Egyptian tree, ver. 6.

Verse 8. *The cedars in the garden of God*— Egypt was one of the most eminent and affluent of all the neighboring nations.

Verse 11. *The mighty one of the heathen*— Nebuchadnezzar. It is worthy of notice, that Nebuchadnezzar, in the first year of his reign, rendered himself master of Nineveh, the capital of the Assyrian empire. See Sedar Olam. This happened about twenty years before Ezekiel delivered this prophecy; on this account, Ashshur, ver. 3, may relate to the Assyrians, to whom it is possible the prophet here compares the Egyptians. But see on ver, 3.

Verse 13. *Upon his ruin shall all the fowls*— The fall of Egypt is likened to the fall of a great tree; and as the fowls and beasts sheltered under its branches before, ver. 6, so they now feed upon its ruins.

Verse 14. *To the end that none of all the trees*— Let this ruin, fallen upon Egypt, teach all the nations that shall hear of it to be humble, because, however elevated, God can soon bring them down; and pride and arrogance, either in states or individuals, have the peculiar abhorrence of God. Pride does not suit the sons of men; it made devils of angels, and makes fiends of men.

Verse 15. *I caused Lebanon to mourn for him*— All the confederates of Pharaoh are represented as deploring his fall, ver. 16, 17.

Verse 17. *They also went down into hell with him*— Into remediless destruction.

Verse 18. *This is Pharaoh*— All that I have spoken in this allegory of the lofty cedar refers to Pharaoh, king of Egypt, his princes, confederates, and people. Calmet understands the whole chapter of the king of Assyria, under which he allows that Egypt is adumbrated; and hence on this verse he quotes:—

Mutato nomine, de te fabula narratur.

What is said of Assyria belongs to thee, O Egypt.

CHAPTER 32

The prophet goes on to predict the fall of the king of Egypt, under the figure of an animal of prey, such as a lion or crocodile, caught, slain, and his carcass left a prey to the fowls and wild beasts, 1-6. The figure is then changed; and the greatness of his fall (described by the darkening of the sun, moon, and stars) strikes terror into all the surrounding nations, 7-10. The prophet adds, that the overthrow of the then reigning Egyptian dynasty was to be effected by the instrumentality of the king of Babylon, who should leave Egypt so desolate, that its waters, (alluding to the metaphor used in the second verse,) should run as pure and smooth as oil, without the foot of man or the hoof of a beast to disturb them, 11-16. A beautiful, nervous, and concise description of a land ruined and left utterly desolate. In the remaining part of the chapter the same event is portrayed by one of the boldest figures ever attempted in any composition, and which at the same time is executed with astonishing perspicuity and force. God is introduced ordering a place in the lower regions for the king of Egypt and his host, 17, 18. The prophet delivers his message, pronounces their fate, and commands those who buried the slain to drag him and his multitudes to the subterraneous mansions, 19, 20. At the tumult and commotion which this mighty work occasions, the infernal shades are represented as roused from their couches to learn the cause. They see and congratulate the king of Egypt, on his arrival among them, 21. Pharaoh being now introduced into this immense subterraneous cavern, (see the fourteenth chapter of Isaiah, where a similar imagery is employed,) the prophet leads him all around the sides of the pit; shows him the gloomy mansions of former tyrants, tells their names as he goes along; beautifully contrasts their former pomp and destructive ambition, when they were a terror to the surrounding states, with their present most abject and helpless condition; declares that all these oppressors of mankind have not only been cut off out of the land of the living, but have gone down into the grave uncircumcised, that is, they have died in their sins, and therefore shall have no resurrection to eternal life; and concludes with showing Pharaoh the place destined for him in the midst of the uncircumcised, and of them that have been slain

by the sword, 22-32. This prophetic ode may be considered as a finished model in that species of writing which is appropriated to the exciting of terror. The imagery throughout is sublime and terrible; and no reader of sensibility and taste can accompany the prophet in this funeral procession, and visit the mansions of Hades, without being impressed with a degree of awe nearly approaching to horror.

NOTES ON CHAP. 32

Verse 1. *In the twelfth year, in the twelfth month, in the first day of the month*— On Wednesday, March 22, the twelfth year of the captivity of Jeconiah, A.M. 3417.

Instead of the twelfth year, five of Kennicott's MSS., and eight of De Rossi's, read **בַּעֲשֵׂתֵי עֶשְׂרֵה** in the eleventh year. This reading is supported by the Syriac; and is confirmed by an excellent MS. of my own, about four hundred years old.

Verse 2. *Thou art like a young lion-and thou art as a whale in the seas*— Thou mayest be likened to two of the fiercest animals in the creation; to a lion, the fiercest on the land; to a crocodile, **תַּנִּינִים** tannin, (see chap. 29:3,) the fiercest in the waters. It may, however, point out the hippopotamus, as there seems to be a reference to his mode of feeding. He walks deliberately into the water over head, and pursues his way in the same manner; still keeping on his feet, and feeding on the plants, etc., that grow at the bottom. Thus he fouls the water with his feet.

Verse 5. *And fill the valleys with thy height.*— Some translate, with the worms, which should proceed from the putrefaction of his flesh.

Verse 6. *The land wherein thou swimmest*— Egypt; so called, because intersected with canals, and overflowed annually by the Nile.

Verse 7. *I will cover the heaven*— Destroy the empire.

Make the stars thereof dark— Overwhelm all the dependent states.

I will cover the sun— The king himself.

And the moon shall not give her light.— The queen may be meant, or some state less than the kingdom.

Verse 8. *And set darkness upon thy land*— As I did when a former king refused to let my people go to the wilderness to worship me. I will involve thee, and thy house, and thy people, and the whole land, in desolation and wo.

Verse 9. *I will also vex the hearts*— Even the remote nations, who had no connection with thee, shall be amazed at the judgments which have fallen upon thee.

Verse 14. *Cause their rivers to run like oil*— Bring the whole state into quietness, there being no longer a political hippopotamus to foul the waters-to disturb the peace of the country.

Verse 15. *Shall be destitute of that whereof it was full*— Of corn, and all other necessaries of life.

Verse 17. *In the twelfth year*— Two of Kennicott's MSS., one of De Rossi's, and one of my own, (that mentioned ver. 1.) have, in the ELEVENTH year; and so has the Syriac, as before. This prophecy concerns the people of Egypt.

Verse 18. *Cast them down*— Show them that they shall be cast down. Proclaim to them a casting down prophecy.

Verse 19. *Whom dost thou pass in beauty?*— How little does it signify, whether a mummy be well embalmed, wrapped round with rich stuff, and beautifully painted on the outside, or not. Go down into the tombs, examine the niches, and see whether one dead carcass be preferable to another.

Verse 21. *Out of the midst of hell*— שְׁאוֹל sheol, the catacombs, the

place of burial. There is something here similar to Isaiah 14:9, where the descent of the king of Babylon to the state of the dead is described.

Verse 22. *Asshur is there*— The mightiest conquerors of the earth have gone down to the grave before thee; there they and their soldiers lie together, all slain by the sword.

Verse 23. *Whose graves are set in the sides of the pit*— Alluding to the niches in the sides of the subterranean caves or burying-places, where the bodies are laid. These are numerous in Egypt.

Verse 24. *There is Elam*— The Elamites, not far from the Assyrians; others think that Persia is meant. It was invaded by the joint forces of Cyaxares and Nebuchadnezzar.

Verse 26. *There is Meshech, Tubal*— See on chap. 27:13.

Verse 27. *Gone down to hell with their weapons of war*— Are buried in their armor and with their weapons lying by their sides. It was a very ancient practice, in different nations, to bury a warrior's weapons in the same grave with himself.

Verse 29. *There is Edom*— All the glory and pomp of the Idumean kings, who also helped to oppress the Israelites, are gone down into the grave. Their kings, princes, and all their mighty men lie mingled with the uncircumcised, not distinguished from the common dead:

*“Where they an equal honor share,
Who buried or unburied are.
Where Agamemnon knows no more
Than Irus, he condemned before.
Where fair Achilles and Thersites lie,
Equally naked, poor, and dry.”*

Verse 30. *There be the princes of the north*— The kings of Media and Assyria, and all the Zidonians—the kings of Tyre, Sodom, and Damascus. See Calmet.

Verse 31. *Pharaoh shall see them*— Pharaoh also, who said he was a god, shall be found among the vulgar dead.

And shalt be comforted— Shall console himself, on finding that all other proud boasters are in the same circumstances with himself. Here is a reference to a consciousness after death.

Verse 32. *I have caused my terror in the land of the living*— I have spread dismay through Judea, the land of the living God, where the living oracles were delivered, and where the upright live by faith. When Pharaoh-necho came against Josiah, defeated, and slew him at Megiddo, fear and terror were spread through all the land of Judea; and the allusion here is probably to that circumstance. But even he is now laid with the uncircumcised, and is no more to be distinguished from the common dead.

Much of the phraseology of this chapter may be illustrated by comparing it with Isaiah 14., where see the notes, which the intelligent reader will do well to consult.

CHAPTER 33

The prophet, after having addressed several other nations, returns now to his own; previously to which he is told, as on a former occasion, the duty of a watchman, the salvation or ruin of whose soul depends on the manner in which he discharges it. An awful passage indeed; full of important instruction both to such as speak, and to such as hear, the word of God, 1-9. The prophet is then directed what answer to make to the cavils of infidelity and impiety; and to vindicate the equity of the Divine government by declaring the general terms of acceptance with God to be (as told before, chap. xviii.) without respect of persons; so that the ruin of the finally impenitent must be entirely owing to themselves, 10-20. The prophet receives the news of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, about a year and four months after it happened, according to the opinion of some, who have been led to this conjecture by the date given to this prophecy in the twenty-first verse, as it stands in our common Version: but some of the manuscripts of this prophet consulted by Dr. Kennicott have in this place the ELEVENTH year, which is probably the genuine reading. To check the vain confidence of those who expected to hold out by possessing themselves of its other fastnesses, the utter desolation of all Judea is foretold, 21-29. Ezekiel is informed that among those that attended his instructions were a great number of hypocrites, against whom he delivers a most awful message. When the Lord is destroying these hypocrites, then shall they know that there hath been a prophet among them, 30-33.

NOTES ON CHAP. 33

Verse 2. Son of man-if the people of the land take a man— The first ten verses of this chapter are the same with chap. 3:17-22; and to what is said there on this most important and awful subject I must refer the reader. Here the PEOPLE choose the watchman; there, the Lord appoints him. When God chooses, the people should approve.

Verse 10. *If our transgressions and our sins be upon us*— They are upon us, as a grievous burden, too weighty for us to bear: how then can we live under such a load?

We pine away in them— In such circumstances how consoling is that word: “Come unto me, all ye who are heavy laden, and I will give you rest!”

Verse 11. *As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked*— From this to the twentieth verse inclusive is nearly the same with chap. 18., on which I wish the reader to consult the notes.

Verse 13. *If he trust to his own righteousness, and commit iniquity*— If he trust in his acting according to the statutes and ordinances of religion, and according to the laws relative to rights and wrongs among men, and in other respects commit iniquity, he shall die for it.

Verse 19. *He shall live thereby*— “The wages of sin is death;” the “gift of God is eternal life.” It is a miserable trade by which a man cannot live; such a trade is sin.

Verse 21. *In the twelfth year of our captivity, in the tenth month, in the fifth day of the month*— Instead of the twelfth year, the eleventh is the reading of seven of Kennicott’s MSS., one of De Rossi’s, and the Syriac. My own, mentioned in the preceding chapter, reads with the present text. This was on Wednesday, Jan. 25, A.M. 3416 or 3417.

One that had escaped out of Jerusalem— After it had been taken by the Chaldeans.

Came unto me, saying, THE CITY IS SMITTEN.— This very message God had promised to the prophet, chap. 24:26.

Verse 22. *My mouth was opened*— They had now the fullest evidence that I had spoken from the Lord. I therefore spoke freely and fully what Good delivered to me, chap. 24:27.

Verse 24. *Abraham was one*— If he was called to inherit the land when he was alone, and had the whole to himself, why may we not expect to be established here, who are his posterity, and are many? They wished to remain in the land and be happy after the Chaldeans had carried the rest away captives.

Verse 25. *Ye eat with the blood*— Abraham was righteous, ye are unrighteous. Eating of blood, in any way dressed, or of flesh from which the blood had not been extracted, was and is in the sight of God abominable. All such practices he has absolutely and for ever forbidden. Let the vile blood-eaters hear and tremble. See the note on Acts 15:20, and the passages in the margin.

Verse 26. *Ye stand upon your sword*— Ye live by plunder, rapine, and murder. Ye are every way impure; and shall ye possess the land? No.

Verse 27. *They that are in the wastes*— He seems to speak of those Jews who had fled to rocks, caves, and fortresses, in the mountains; whose death he predicts, partly by the sword, partly by wild beasts, and partly by famine.

Verse 30. *The people still are talking against thee*— ⲧⲃ bach should be rather translated, “concerning thee,” than “against thee;” for the following verses show that the prophet was much respected. The Vulgate translates, de te; the Septuagint, περι σου, “concerning thee,” both right.

Talking by the walls and in the doors of the houses is not a custom peculiar to the Copts, mentioned by Bp. Pococke, it is a practice among idle people, and among those who are resting from their work, in every country, when the weather permits. Gossiping in the inside of the house is not less frequent, and much more blamable.

Verse 31. *As the people cometh*— As they are accustomed to come on public days, Sabbaths, etc.

With their mouth they show much love— They respected the prophet, but would not bend themselves to follow his precepts. They loved earthly

things, and did not relish those of heaven.

Verse 32. *As a very lovely song*— They admired the fine voice and correct delivery of the prophet; this was their religion, and this is the whole of the religion of thousands to the present day; for never were itching ears so multiplied as now.

Verse 33. *When this cometh to pass-then shall they know that a prophet hath been among them.*— What I have predicted, (and it is even now at the doors,) then they will be convinced that there was a prophet among them, by whose ministry they did not profit as they ought.

CHAPTER 34

The prophet is commanded to declare the dreadful judgments of God against the covetous shepherds of Israel, who feed themselves, and not their flocks; by which emblem the priests and Levites are intended, who in Ezekiel's time were very corrupt, and the chief cause of Israel's apostasy and ruin, 1-10. From this gloomy subject the prophet passes to the blessedness of the true Israel of God under the reign of DAVID, the Great Shepherd of the sheep, our Lord Jesus Christ being named after this prince by a figure exceedingly frequent in the sacred oracles, of putting the type for the antitype, 11-31.

NOTES ON CHAP. 34

Verse 2. *Prophecy against the shepherds of Israel*— The shepherds include, first, the priests and Levites; secondly, the kings, princes, and magistrates. The flock means the whole of the people. The fat and the wool, the tithes and offerings, the taxes and imposts. The reprehensible feeding and clothing with these, as to the priests and Levites, the using these tithes and offerings, not to enable them the better to fulfill the work of the ministry, but to pamper their own bodies, and support them in an idle voluptuous life; and in reference to the state, the employing the taxes and imposts, not for the support and administration of justice and good government, but to subsidize heathen powers, and maintain their own luxury and idolatrous prodigality.

Verse 3. *Ye eat the fat*— I think החלב *hacheleb* should be translated the milk, and so most of the Versions understand it. Or they lived on the fat sheep, and took the wool of all.

“The priests,” says Calmet, “ate the tithes, the first-fruits, and the offerings of the people; the princes received the tributes and imposts and instead of instructing and protecting them, the latter took away their lives by the cruelties they practiced against them: the former destroyed their

souls by the poison of their doctrine, and by their bad example. The fat sheep point out the rich to whom these pastors often disguised the truth, by a cruel condescension and complaisance.”

Verse 4. *The diseased have ye not strengthened*— No person is fit for the office of a shepherd, who does not well understand the diseases to which sheep are incident, and the mode of cure. And is any man fit for the pastoral office, or to be a shepherd of souls, who is not well acquainted with the disease of sin in all its varieties, and the remedy for this disease, and the proper mode of administering it, in those various cases? He who does not know Jesus Christ as his own Savior, never can recommend him to others. He who is not saved, will not save.

Neither have ye healed that which was sick— The prophet first speaks of the general disease; next, of the different kinds of spiritual infirmity.

Neither have ye bound up that which was broken— If a sheep have broken a leg, a proper shepherd knows how to set the bones, and splint and bind it till the bones knit and become strong. And the skillful spiritual pastor knows, if one of the flock be overtaken in a fault, how to restore such. Those sudden falls, where there was not a strong propensity to sin, are, to the soul, as a broken bone to the body.

Neither have ye brought again— A proper shepherd loves his sheep: he feels interested for their welfare; he acquaints himself with them all, so that he knows and can distinguish each. He knows also their number, and frequently counts to see that none is missing; if one be lost or strayed, he goes immediately and seeks it; and as he is constantly on the watch, it cannot have strayed far before he is apprised of its absence from the flock; and the less it has strayed, the sooner it is found and brought back to the fold.

The shepherds of Israel knew nothing about their flock; they might have been diseased, infirm, bruised, maimed, their limbs broken, strayed, and lost; for they watched not over them. When they got fat sheep and wool for their table and their clothing, they regarded nothing else; as they considered the flock given them for their own use, and scarcely ever

supposed that they were to give any thing in return for the milk and the wool.

But with force and with cruelty— Exacting tithes and dues by the strong arm of the law, with the most ungodly feeling; and with a cruelty of disposition that proved it was the fat and the wool they sought, and not the safety or comfort of the flock.

Verse 5. *And they were scattered*— There was no discipline kept up; and the flock, the Church, became disorganized, and separated from each other, both in affection and fellowship. And the consequence was, the grievous wolves, false and worldly interested teachers, seized on and made a prey of them. Of the communion of saints such shepherds know nothing, farther than that it makes a part of the common creed.

Verse 6. *My sheep wandered through all the mountains*— They all became idolaters, and lost the knowledge of the true God. And could it be otherwise while they had such pastors?

“Himself a wanderer from the narrow way; His silly sheep, no wonder that they stray!”

Reader, if thou be a minister, a preacher, or a person in holy orders, or pretended holy orders, or art one pretending to holy orders, look at the qualifications of a good shepherd as laid down by the prophet.

1. He professes to be a shepherd, and to be qualified for the office.
2. In consequence he undertakes the care of a flock. This supposes that he believes the great Bishop of souls has called him to the pastoral office; and that office implies that he is to give all diligence to save the souls of them that hear him.

HIS QUALIFICATIONS

1. He is skillful; he knows the disease of sin and its consequences; for the Eternal Spirit, by whom he is called, has convinced him of sin, of

righteousness, and of judgment.

2. He knows well the great remedy for this disease, the passion and sacrificial death of the Lord Jesus Christ.

3. He is skillful, and knows how to apply this remedy.

4. The flock over which he watches is, in its individuals, either, — 1. Healthy and sound. 2. Or, in a state of convalescence, returning to health. 3. Or, still under the whole power of the general disease. 4. Or, some are dying in a state of spiritual weakness. 5. Or, some are fallen into sin, and sorely bruised and broken in their souls by that fall. 6. Or, some have been driven away by some sore temptation or cruel usage. 7. Or, some have wandered from the flock, are got into strange pastures, and are perverted by erroneous doctrines. Or, 8. Some wolf has got among them, and scattered the whole flock. Now, the true shepherd, the pastor of God's choosing, knows:—

1. How to keep the healthy in health; and cause them to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ.

2. How to nourish, feed, and care for the convalescent, that they may be brought into a state of spiritual soundness.

3. How to reprove, instruct, and awaken those who are still under the full power of the disease of sin.

4. How to find out and remove the cause of all that spiritual weakness of which he sees some slowly dying.

5. How to deal with those who have fallen into some scandalous sin, and restore them from their fall.

6. How to find out and turn aside the sore temptation or cruel usage by which some have been driven away.

7. How to seek and bring back to the fold those who have strayed into

strange pastures, and have had their souls perverted by erroneous doctrines; and knows also how, by a godly discipline, to preserve him in the flock, and keep the flock honourably together.

8. How to oppose, confound, and expel the grievous wolf, who has got among the flock, and is scattering them from each other, and from God. He knows how to preach, explain, and defend the truth. He is well acquainted with the weapons he is to use, and the spirit in which he is to employ them.

In a word, the true shepherd gives up his life to the sheep; spends and is spent for the glory of God; and gives up his life for the sheep, in defense of them, and in laboring for their welfare. And while he is thus employed, it is the duty of the flock to feed and clothe him; and see that neither he nor his family lack the necessaries and conveniencies of life. The laborer is worthy of his meat. He who does not labor, or, because of his ignorance of God and salvation, cannot labor, in the word and doctrine, deserves neither meat nor drink; and if he exact that by law, which he has not honestly earned by a proper discharge of the pastoral function, let him read this chapter, and learn from it what a fearful account he shall have to give to the chief Shepherd at the great day; and what a dreadful punishment shall be inflicted on him, when the blood of the souls lost through his neglect or inefficiency is visited upon him! See the notes on chap. 3:17, etc.

Verse 7. *Therefore, ye shepherds, (ye bad and wicked shepherds,) hear the word of the Lord*— In the preceding character of the good shepherd the reader will find, by reversing the particulars, the character of a bad shepherd; and therefore I may be excused from entering into farther detail.

Verse 10. *I will-cause them to cease from feeding the flock*— God, in this country, unpriested a whole hierarchy who fed not the flock, but ruled them with force and cruelty; and he raised up a new set of shepherds better qualified, both by sound doctrine and learning, to feed the flock. Let these be faithful, lest God cause them to cease, and raise up other feeders.

Verse 12. *Cloudy and dark day*.— Times of general distress and persecution; in such times the shepherd should be especially watchful.

Verse 13. *I will-feed them upon the mountains*— When I bring back the people from their captivity, I will raise up to them a holy and diligent priesthood, who shall in all places give them sound instruction. But this, and some of the following promises, belong to the Christian Church, as we shall find below.

Verse 16. *I will destroy the fat and the strong*— I will destroy those cruel and imperious shepherds who abuse their authority, and tyrannize over the flock.

Verse 17. *And as for you, O my flock*— After having spoken to the shepherds, he now addresses the flock.

I judge between cattle and cattle— Between false and true professors; between them that have only the form and them that have the power of godliness; between the backslider in heart and the upright man.

Verse 18. *Have eaten up the good pasture*— Arrogate to yourselves all the promises of God, and will hardly permit the simple believer to claim or possess any token of God's favor.

Ye must foul the residue with your feet

from the texts marked in the margin we understand that Jesus Christ alone is meant, as both Old and New TESTAMENTS agree in this. And from this one Shepherd all Christian ministers must derive their authority to teach, and their grace to teach effectually.

By the kind providence of God it appears that he has not permitted any apostolic succession to be preserved, lest the members of his Church should seek that in an uninterrupted succession which must be found in the HEAD alone. The papists or Roman Catholics, who boast of an uninterrupted succession, which is a mere fable that never was and never can be proved, have raised up another head, the POPE. And I appeal to themselves, in the fear of God, whether they do not in heart and in speech trace up all their authority to him, and only compliment Christ as having appointed Peter to be the first bishop of Rome, (which is an utter falsity, for he was never appointed to such an office there, nor ever held such an office in that city, nor, in their sense, any where else;) and they hold also that the popes of Rome are not so much Peter's successors as God's vicars; and thus both God and Peter are nearly lost sight of in their papal enumerations. With them the authority of the Church is all in all; the authority of Christ is seldom mentioned.

Verse 24. *I the Lord will be their God, and my Servant David a Prince*— Here we find God and his Christ are all in all in his Church, and Jesus is still PRINCE among them; and to him the call and qualifications of all genuine pastors belong, and from him they must be derived. And he has blotted out what is called uninterrupted succession, that every Christian minister may seek and receive credentials from himself. Here is the grand reason why the uninterrupted succession cannot be made out. And here is the proof also that the Church that pretends to it, and builds upon it, must be a false Church; for it is founded on a falsity; an uninterrupted succession which does not exist either in history or in fact.

Verse 25. *I will make with them a covenant of peace*— The original is emphatic: **וְכָרַטְתִּי לָהֶם בְּרִית שְׁלוֹם** vecharatti lahem berith shalom, “And I will cut with them the peace covenant;” that is, a covenant sacrifice, procuring and establishing peace between God and man, and between man and his fellows. I need not tell the reader that the cutting

refers to the ancient mode of making covenants. The blood was poured out; the animal was divided from mouth to tail, exactly in two; the divisions placed opposite to each other; the contracting parties entered into the space, going in at each end, and met in the middle, and there took the covenant oath. He is the Prince of peace, and through him come glory to God in the highest, and peace and good will to men upon earth.

And will cause the evil beasts to cease— These false and ravenous pastors. Christ purges them out of his Church, and destroys that power by which they lorded it over God's heritage.

Verse 26. *The shower to come down*— The Holy Spirit's influence.

There shall be showers of blessing.— Light, life, joy, peace, and power shall be manifest in all the assemblies of Christ's people.

Verse 29. *I will raise up-a plant of renown*— **מַטֵּעַ לֶשֶׁם** *matta leshem*, “a plantation to the name;” to the name of CHRIST. A Christian Church composed of men who are Christians, who have the spirit of Christ in them, and do not bear his name in vain. I believe the words might be applied to the Christian Church; but that Christ may be called a plant or plantation here, — as he is elsewhere called a branch and a rod, Isaiah 4:2; 11:1; so Jeremiah 23:5; 35:15, — is most probable. He is the Person of name, **לֶשֶׁם** *leshem*, JESUS; the Savior, CHRIST; the Anointer, long spoken of before he was manifested in the flesh, and since the daily theme in the Church militant. It is he who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, no other name being given under heaven among men by which we can be saved; he who has a name above every name, and at whose name every knee shall bow; through whose name, by faith in his name, the diseased are healed; and in whose name all our prayers and supplications must be presented to God to make them acceptable. This is the Person of NAME!

They shall be no more consumed with hunger— For this glorious plant of name is the Bread of life; and this is broken in all the assemblies of his people where his name is properly proclaimed.

Verse 31. *And ye my flock*— That is, under the allegory of a flock of sheep, I point out men; under that of a pasture, my Church, and under that of a shepherd, the Messiah, through whom I am become your God. And he who is your God is **אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה** Adonai Jehovah, the selfexistent Being; the Governor and Director, as well as the Savior and Judge of men.

CHAPTER 35

The prophet having formerly predicted the ruin of Edom, the same with Seir, (chap. 25:12,) now resumes and pursues the subject at greater length, intimating, as did also Isaiah, (chap. 21:11, 12,) that though other nations should recover their liberty after the fall of the Babylonian monarchy, the Edomites should continue in bondage for their very despiteful behavior towards the children of Israel in the day of their calamity, 1-15.

NOTES ON CHAP. 35

Verse 2. *Set thy face against Mount Seir*— That is, against the Edomites. This prophecy was probably delivered about the time of the preceding, and before the destruction of Idumea by Nebuchadnezzar, which took place about five years after.

Calmet supposes that two destructions of Idumea are here foretold; one by Nebuchadnezzar, and the other by the Jews after their return from their captivity.

Verse 3. *Most desolate.*— Literally, “A desolation and a wilderness.”

Verse 5. *A perpetual hatred*— The Edomites were the descendants of Esau; the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob. Both these were brothers; and between them there was contention even in the womb, and they lived generally in a state of enmity. Their descendants kept up the ancient feud: but the Edomites were implacable; they had not only a rooted but perpetual enmity to the Israelites, harassing and distressing them by all possible means; and they seized the opportunity, when the Israelites were most harassed by other enemies, to make inroads upon them, and cut them off wherever they found them.

To afflict the afflicted is cruel. This is scarcely of man, bad as he is. He

must be possessed by the malignant spirit of the devil, when he wounds the wounded, insults over the miseries of the afflicted, and seeks opportunities to add affliction to those who are already under the rod of God.

Verse 6. *Blood shall pursue thee*— Thou lovest blood, and thou shalt have blood. It is said that Cyrus and two hundred thousand men were slain in an ambush by Thomyris, queen of the Scythians, and that she cut off his head, and threw it into a vessel filled with blood, with this severe sarcasm:—

*Satia te sanguine quem sitisti, Cyre.
“O Cyrus, now satisfy thyself with blood.”*

Hence, the figure:—

*“Sarcasmus, with this biting taunt doth kill:
Cyrus, thy thirst was blood, now drink thy fill.”*

Verse 9. *Perpetual desolations*— Thou shalt have perpetual desolation for thy perpetual hatred.

Verse 10. *These two nations*— Israel and Judah. The Idumeans thought of conquering and possessing both; and they would have succeeded, but only the Lord was there; and this spoiled their projects, and blasted their hopes.

Verse 12. *They are laid desolate, they are given us to consume*.— They exulted in seeing Judea overrun; and they rejoiced in the prospect of completing the ruin, when the Chaldeans had withdrawn from the land.

Verse 13. *Thus with your mouth ye have boasted against me*— Ye have said you would enter into those lands, and take them for your inheritance; though ye knew that God had promised them to the Israelites, and that you should never have them for your portion.

Verse 14. *When the whole earth rejoiceth*— When the whole land shall rejoice in the restoration of the Jews, I will make thee desolate. Probably

this refers to the time of the Maccabees.

Verse 15. *So will I do unto thee*— Others shall rejoice in thy downfall as thou hast rejoiced at their downfall.

This whole chapter strongly inculcates this maxim: Do as thou wouldst be done by; and what thou wouldst not have done to thee, do not to others. And from it we learn that every man may, in some sort, be said to make his own temporal good or evil; for as he does to others, God will take care to do to him, whether it be evil or good, weal or wo. Would you not be slandered or backbitten? Then do not slander nor backbite. Wouldst thou wish to live in peace? Then do not disturb the peace of others. Be merciful, and thou shalt obtain mercy.

CHAPTER 36

The Edomites or Idumeans, during the Babylonish captivity, took possession of the mountainous parts of Judea, and the fortresses which commanded the country, intending to exclude the Jews if ever they should return from their captivity. The prophet therefore, by a beautiful personification, addresses the mountains of Israel; and, ascribing to them passions and emotions similar to those of his own breast, consoles them with the prospect of being soon rid of those usurping foes; of being freed from the dishonor of idols under which they groaned; and of flourishing again in their ancient glory under their rightful owners, 1-15. The idolatry and other sins of the Jews are then declared to be the cause of their captivity and dispersion, 16-20; from which however they are promised a deliverance in terms of great force and beauty, 21-38. This chapter contains also, under the type of the happy condition of the Israelites after their restoration from the Babylonish captivity, a glorious prophecy of the rich blessings of the Gospel dispensation.

NOTES ON CHAP. 36

Verse 1. *Prophecy unto the mountains of Israel*— This is a part of the preceding prophecy though it chiefly concerns the Jews. In it they are encouraged to expect a glorious restoration, and that none of the evil wishes of their adversaries should take place against them.

Verse 2. *Because the enemy hath said*— The Idumeans thought they would shortly be put in possession of all the strong places of Israel; the ancient high places shall be ours.

Verse 4. *Therefore-thus saith the Lord God to the mountains, etc.*— They shall neither possess mountain nor valley, hill nor dale, fountain nor river; for though in my justice I made you desolate, yet they shall not profit by your disasters. See ver. 5-7.

Verse 8. *For they are at hand to come.*— The restoration of the Jews is so absolutely determined that you may rest assured it will take place; and be as confident relative to it, as if you saw the different families entering into the Israelitish borders. It was near at hand in God's determination, though there were about fifty-eight of the seventy years unelapsed.

Verse 9. *Ye shall be tilled and sown*— The land shall be cultivated as it formerly was, when best peopled and at peace.

Verse 11. *I will multiply upon you man and beast*— The agriculturalist and the beast of burden.

And will do better unto you than at your beginnings— I agree with Calmet, that it would be difficult to show the literal fulfillment of this prophecy from the days of Zerubbabel to the birth of Christ. The colouring is too high for that period; and the whole falls in better with Gospel than with Jewish times.

Verse 17. *When the house of Israel dwelt in their own land*— Had they continued faithful to me, they had never been removed from it: but they polluted it with their crimes; and I abhorred the land on that account, and gave both them and it up to the destroyers.

Verse 20. *And when they entered unto the heathen*— So bad were they, and so deeply fallen, that they profaned the Lord's name among the heathen; and, on their account, the true God was blasphemed. These, say they, are the people of Jehovah! O what an abominable people are these! and what a being must that God be who can have and own such for his people!

Verse 23. *I will sanctify my great name*— By changing your hearts and your conduct, I shall show my hatred to vice, and my love to holiness: but it is not for your sakes, but for my holy name's sake, that I shall do you good in your latter days.

Verse 24. *I will take you from among the heathen*— This does not relate to the restoration from Babylon merely. The Jews are at this day scattered

in all Heathen, Mohammedan, and Christian countries. From these they are to be gathered, and brought to repossess their own land.

Verse 25. Then-at the time of this great restoration-win I sprinkle clean water upon you-the truly cleansing water; the influences of the HOLY SPIRIT typified by water, whose property it is to cleanse, whiten, purify, refresh, render healthy and fruitful.

From all your filthiness— From every sort of external and internal abomination and pollution.

And from all your idols— False gods, false worship, false opinions, and false hopes.

Will I cleanse you.— Entirely separate you.

Verse 26. *A new heart also will I give you*— I will change the whole of your infected nature; and give you new appetites, new passions; or, at least, the old ones purified and refined. The heart is generally understood to mean all the affections and passions.

And a new spirit will I put within you— I will renew your minds, also enlighten your understanding, correct your judgment, and refine your will, so that you shall have a new spirit to actuate your new heart.

I will take away the stony heart— That heart that is hard, impenetrable, and cold; the affections and passions that are unyielding, frozen to good, unaffected by heavenly things; that are slow to credit the words of God. I will entirely remove this heart: it is the opposite to that which I have promised you; and you cannot have the new heart and the old heart at the same time.

And I will give you a heart of flesh.— One that can feel, and that can enjoy; that can feel love to God and to all men, and be a proper habitation for the living God.

Verse 27. *And I will put my Spirit within you*— To keep the heart of

flesh alive, the feeling heart still sensible, the loving heart still happy. I will put my Spirit, the great principle of light, life, and love, within you, to actuate the new spirit, and to influence the new affections and passions; that the animal spirit may not become brutish, that the mental powers become not foolish. I will put my Spirit within you, so that as the new spirit may influence the new heart, so will MY SPIRIT influence YOUR new spirit, that each may have a proper mover; and then all will be pure, regular, and harmonious, when passion is influenced by reason, and reason by the Holy Ghost.

And the cause shall be evidenced by the effects; for I will cause you to walk in my statutes-not only to believe and reverence my appointments relative to what I command you to perform; but ye shall walk in them, your conduct shall be regulated by them. "And ye shall keep my judgments;" whatsoever I enjoin you to avoid. And ye shall do them-ye shall not only avoid every appearance of evil, but keep all my ordinances and commandments unblamably.

Here is the salvation that God promises to give to restored Israel; and here is the salvation that is the birthright of every Christian believer: the complete destruction of all sin in the soul, and the complete renewal of the heart; no sin having any place within, and no unrighteousness having any place without.

"But where are they that are thus saved?" Ans. Wherever true Christians are to be found. "But I know many true Christians that have not this salvation, but daily mourn over their evil hearts?" Ans. They may be sincere, but they are not true Christians; i.e., such as are saved from their sins; the true Christians are those who are filled with the nature and Spirit of Christ. But I will ask a question in my turn: "Do those you mention think it a virtue to be always mourning over their impurities?" Most certainly. Then it is a pity they were not better instructed. It is right they should mourn while they feel an impure heart; but why do they not apply to that blood which cleanses from all unrighteousness, and to that Spirit which cleanses the very thoughts of the heart by his inspiration? Many employ that time in brooding and mourning over their impure hearts, which should be spent in prayer and faith before God, that their impurities

might be washed away. In what a state of nonage are many members of the Christian Church!

Verse 28. *Ye shall be my people*— Wholly given up to me in body, soul, and spirit.

And I will be your God.— To fill you with love, joy, peace, meekness, gentleness, longsuffering, fidelity and goodness, to occupy your whole soul, and gratify your every desire.

Verse 29. *I will also save you from all your uncleanness*— I repeat it; “I WILL save you from all your sins.”

Verse 30. *Ye shall receive no more reproach of famine*— Ye shall be daily and hourly fed with the bread that endures unto eternal life. “But will not those get proud, who are thus saved, if there be any such? and will they not undervalue the blood of the covenant, for then they shall not need it?” Ans. Hear what the Lord saith:—

Verse 31. *Then shall ye remember your own evil ways*— Ye shall never forget that ye were once slaves of sin, and sold under sin; children of the wicked one; heirs to all God’s curses, with no hope beyond hell. Such cleansed people never forget the horrible pit and the miry clay out of which they have been brought. And can they then be proud? No; they loathe themselves in their own sight. They never forgive themselves for having sinned against so good a God, and so loving a Savior. And can they undervalue HIM by whose blood they were bought, and by whose blood they were cleansed? No! That is impossible: they now see Jesus as they ought to see him; they see him in his splendor, because they feel him in his victory and triumph over sin. To them that thus believe he is precious, and he was never so precious as now. As to their not needing him when thus saved from their sins, we may as well say, as soon may the creation not need the sustaining hand of God, because the works are finished! Learn this, that as it requires the same power to sustain creation as to produce it, so it requires the same Jesus who cleansed to keep clean. They feel that it is only through his continued indwelling, that they are kept holy, and happy, and useful. Were he to leave them the original darkness and

kingdom of death would soon be restored.

Verse 35. This land that was desolate by sin, is become like the garden of Eden by righteousness. — Satan’s blast is removed; God’s blessing has taken place.

Verse 36. *Then the heathen*— They shall see how powerful Jehovah is, and how fully he saves those who come unto and worship him.

Verse 37. *Thus saith the Lord God*— In answer to the question, “Who shall have such blessings?” we say, they that pray, that seek earnestly, that strive to enter in at the strait gate. “Thus saith the Lord, I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel.” Neither Jew nor Gentile shall be thus saved who do not earnestly pray to God; and for this thing; for this complete salvation; this setting up of the kingdom of Christ upon earth, and particularly in their own souls.

Verse 38. *As the holy flock*— The Church of Christ, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.

The flock of Jerusalem— The Jerusalem that is from above, the city of the living God, the place where his Majesty dwells. As they came in ancient times to the solemn national feasts so shall they come when they have fully returned unto the Lord, and received his salvation by Christ Jesus.

I do not ask my reader’s pardon for having considered this most beautiful chapter as relating, not to the restoration from the Babylonish captivity, but to the redemption under the new covenant by Jesus Christ. There is no period of the Jewish history from that time until now, to which it can be applied. It must belong to the Ggospel dispensation, and if the Jews will still refuse, contradict, and blaspheme, let no Christian have any fellowship with them in their opposition to this Almighty Savior. Let none be indifferent to his salvatton; let all plead his promises; and let the messengers of the Churches proclaim to the Christian world a FREE, a FULL, and a PRESENT SALVATION! And may great grace rest upon themselves, and upon all their flocks!

CHAPTER 37

This chapter treats of the same subject with the preceding, in a beautiful and significant vision. Under the emblem of the open valley being thickly strewed with very dry bones is represented the hopeless state of the Jews when dispersed throughout the provinces of the Chaldean empire. But God, contrary to every human probability, restores these bones to life, thereby prefiguring the restoration of that people from the Babylonish captivity, and their resettlement in the land of their forefathers, 1-14. The prophet then makes an easy and elegant transition to the blessedness of the people of God under the Gospel dispensation, in the plenitude of its manifestation, when the genuine converts to Christianity, the spiritual Israel, shall be no longer under the domination of heathen and anti-christian rulers, but shall be collected together into one visible kingdom, and constitute but one flock under one Shepherd, 15-28. The vision of the dry bones reviving is considered by some as having a remote view to the general resurrection.

NOTES ON CHAP. 37

Verse 1. *The hand of the Lord was upon me*— The prophetic influence was communicated.

And carried me out in the spirit— Or, And the Lord brought me out in the spirit; that is, a spiritual vision, in which all these things were doubtless transacted.

The valley which was full of bones— This vision of the dry bones was designed, first, as an emblem of the then wretched state of the Jews; secondly, of the general resurrection of the body.

Verse 3. *Can these bones live?*— Is it possible that the persons whose bones these are can return to life?

Verse 4. *Prophecy upon these bones*—; Declare to your miserable countrymen the gracious designs of the Lord; show them that their state, however deplorable, is not hopeless.

Verse 5. *Behold, I will cause breath*— רוח ruach signifies both soul, breath, and wind; and sometimes the Spirit of God. Soul is its proper meaning in this vision, where it refers to the bones: “I will cause the SOUL to enter into you.”

Verse 6. *I will lay sinews upon you*— Observe the progress: 1. Here are the bones. 2. The ligaments, called here sinews, are to be added in order to unite the bones, that the skeleton might be complete. 3. The flesh (the whole muscular system, the subjacent and superjacent muscles, including the arterial and venous system) clothes this skeleton. 4. The skin (the dermis and epidermis, or cutis and cuticle) envelops the whole of these muscles or flesh; and now these bodies are in the state that the body of Adam was before it received the animal and intellectual principle from God. 5. There was no breath in them—they had not yet received their souls. 6. The wind, רוח ruach, the soul, came into them. They were endued with animal and intellectual life; and they arose and evidenced a complete restoration to life, and began to perform its functions, ver. 10.

Verse 9. *Prophecy unto the wind*— רוח ruach. Address thyself to the soul, and command it to enter into these well-organized bodies, that they may live.

Come from the four winds— SOULS, come from all parts where ye are scattered; and reanimate these bodies from; which ye have been so long separated. The four winds signify all parts-in every direction. Literally it is, “Souls, come from the four souls;” “Breath, come from the four breaths;” or, “Wind, come from the four winds.” But here רוח ruach has both of its most general meanings, wind or breath, and soul.

Verse 11. *These bones are the whole house of Israel*— That is, their state is represented by these bones; and their restoration to their own land is represented by the revivification of these bones.

Verse 12. *I will open your graves*— Here is a pointed allusion to the general resurrection; a doctrine properly credited and understood by the Jews, and to which our Lord refers, John 5:25, 28, 29: “The hour is coming when they that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and come forth.”

And cause you to come up out of your graves— I am determined that ye shall be restored; so that were ye even in your graves, as mankind at the general resurrection, yet my all-powerful voice shall call you forth.

Verse 13. *When I have opened your graves*— When I shall have done for you what was beyond your hope, and deemed impossible, then shall ye know that I am Jehovah.

Verse 14. *And shall put my Spirit*— רוחי *ruchi*. Here רוח *ruach* is taken for the Holy Ghost. They were living souls, animal and intellectual beings, when they had received their souls, as mentioned above: but they could only become spiritual, holy, and obedient creatures by the Spirit of God actuating their spirits. See the notes on chap. 36:25-27.

THREE degrees or processes have been remarked in this mystic vision. When the prophet was commanded to prophesy—to foretell, on the authority of God, that there should be a restoration to their own land:—

1. There was a noise, which was followed by a general shaking, during which the bones became arranged and united.
2. The flesh and skin came upon them, so that the dry bones were no longer seen.
3. The spirit or soul came into them, and they stood up perfectly vivified.

Perhaps these might be illustrated by three periods of time, which marked the regeneration of the Jewish polity.

1. The publication of the edict of Cyrus in behalf of the Jews, which

caused a general shaking or stir among the people, so that the several families began to approach each other. and prepare for their return to Judea, Ezra 1:2, 3. But though partially restored, they were obliged to discontinue the rebuilding of their temple.

2. The edict published by Darius in the second year of his reign, Ezra 4:23, 24, which removed the impediments thrown in the way of the Jews. Ezra 6:6, 7, etc.

3. The mission of Nehemiah, with orders from Artaxerxes to complete the building of the temple and the city, Nehemiah 2:7, etc. Then the Jews became a great army, and found themselves in sufficient force to defend themselves and city against all their enemies.

As to the spiritual uses of this curious vision, I must leave them to preachers. I have given the literal meaning, and what the different parts refer to; and if they found their observations on these, they may profit their hearers.

Verse 16. *Son of man, take thee one stick*— The two sticks mentioned in this symbolical transaction represented, as the text declares the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah, which were formed in the days of Rehoboam, and continued distinct till the time of the captivity. The kingdom of Judah was composed of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, with the Levites; all the rest went off in the schism with Jeroboam, and formed the kingdom of Israel. Though some out of those tribes did rejoin themselves to Judah, yet no whole tribe ever returned to that kingdom. Common sufferings in their captivity became the means of reviving a kinder feeling; and to encourage this, God promises that he will reunite them, and restore them to their own land; and that there shall no more be any divisions or feuds among them. To represent this in such a way as would make it a subject of thought, reflection, and inquiry, the prophet is ordered to take the two sticks mentioned above, to write on them the distinguishing names of the divided kingdoms, and then by a notch, dovetail, glue, or some such method, to unite them both before the people. He did so, and on their inquiry, showed them the full meaning of this symbolical action.

Verse 19. *The stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim*—

Jeroboam, the first king of the ten tribes, was an Ephraimite. Joseph represents the ten tribes in general; they were in the hand of Ephraim, that is, under the government of Jeroboam.

Verse 22. *I will make them one nation*— There was no distinction after the return from Babylon.

And one king shall be king to them all— Politically speaking they never had a king from that day to this; and the grand junction and government spoken of here must refer to another time—to that in which they shall be brought into the Christian Church with the fullness of the Gentiles; when JESUS, the King of kings and Lord of lords, shall rule over all.

Verse 24. *And David my servant shall be King*— That this refers to Jesus Christ, see proved, chap. 34:23.

Verse 25. *The land that I have given unto Jacob my servant*— Jacob means here the twelve tribes; and the land given to them was the whole land of Palestine; consequently, the promise states that, when they return, they are to possess the whole of the Promised Land.

Verse 26. *Covenant of peace*— See this explained chap. 34:25.

Verse 27. *By tabernacle*— Jesus Christ, the true tabernacle, in whom dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

CHAPTER 38

The sublime prophecy contained in this and the following chapter relates to Israel's victory over Gog, and is very obscure. It begins with representing a prodigious armament of many nations combined together under the conduct of Gog, with the intention of overwhelming the Jews, after having been for some time resettled in their land subsequent to their return from the Babylonish captivity, 1-9. These enemies are farther represented as making themselves sure of the spoil, 10-13. But in this critical conjuncture when Israel, to all human appearance, was about to be swallowed up by her enemies, God most graciously appears, to execute by terrible judgments the vengeance threatened against these formidable adversaries of his people, 14-16. The prophet, in terms borrowed from human passions, describes, with awful emphasis, the fury of Jehovah as coming up to his face; and the effects of it so dreadful, as to make all the animate and inanimate creation tremble, and even to convulse with terror the whole frame of nature, 17-23.

NOTES ON CHAP. 38

Verse 2. *Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog—*

This is allowed to be the most difficult prophecy in the Old Testament. It is difficult to us, because we know not the king nor people intended by it: but I am satisfied they were well known by these names in the time that the prophet wrote.

I have already remarked in the introduction to this book that there are but two opinions on this subject that appear to be at all probable: 1. That which makes GOG Cambyses, king of Persia; and, 2. That which makes him ANTIOCHUS EPIPHANES, king of Syria. And between these two (for one or other is supposed to be the person intended) men are much divided.

Calmet, one of the most judicious commentators that ever wrote on the Bible, declares for Cambyses; and supports his opinion, in opposition to

all others, by many arguments.

Mr. Mede supposes the Americans are meant who were originally colonies of the Scythians who were descendants of Magog, son of Japheth. Houbigant declares for the Scythians, whose neighbors were the people of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal, that is the Russians, Muscovites, and Tybareni or Cappadocians. Several eminent critics espouse this opinion. Rabbi David Kimchi says the Christians and Turks are meant: and of later opinions there are several, founded in the ocean of conjecture. Calmet says expressly, that GOG is Cambyses, king of Persia, who on his return from the land of Egypt, died in Judea. The Revelation David Martin, pastor of the Waloon church at Utrecht, concludes, after examining all previous opinions, that Antiochus Epiphanes, the great enemy on the Israelites, is alone intended here; and that Gog, which signifies covered, is an allusion to the well-known character of Antiochus, whom historians describe as an artful, cunning, and dissembling man. See Daniel 8:23, 25; 11:23, 27, 32. Magog he supposes to mean the country of Syria. Of this opinion the following quotation from Pliny, Hist. Nat., lib. v., c. 23, seems a proof; who, speaking of Coele-Syria, says *Coele habet Apamiam Marsyia amne divisam a Nazarinorum Tetrarchia. Bambycem quam alio nomine Hierapolis vocatur, Syris vero Magog.* “Coele-Syria has Apamia separated from the tetrarchy of the Nazarenes by the river Marsyia; and Bambyce, otherwise called Hierapolis; but by the Syrians, MAGOG.”

I shall at present examine the text by this latter opinion.

Chief prince of Meshech and Tubal— These probably mean the auxiliary forces, over whom Antiochus was supreme; they were the Muscovites and Cappadocians.

Verse 4. *I will turn thee back*— Thy enterprise shall fail.

Verse 5. *Persia*— That a part of this country was tributary to Antiochus, see 1 Macc. 3:31.

Ethiopia, and Libya— That these were auxiliaries of Antiochus is evident

from Daniel 11:43: “The Libyans and Ethiopians shall be at his steps.”

Verse 6. *Gomer, and all his bands; the house of Togarmah*— The Cimmerians anti Turcomanians, and other northern nations. — Calmet.

Verse 8. *In the latter years thou shalt come*— This was fulfilled about four hundred years after. — Martin. The expedition of Cambyses against Egypt was about twelve years after the return of the Jews from Babylon. — Calmet.

Verse 9. *Thou shalt ascend and come like a storm*— It is observable that Antiochus is thus spoken of by Daniel, chap. 11:40: The king of the north-Antiochus, shall come against him (the king of the south is the king of Egypt) like a whirlwind.

Verse 10. *Shall things come into thy mind, and thou shalt think an evil thought*— Antiochus purposed to invade and destroy Egypt, as well as Judea; see Daniel 11:31, 32, 36. This Calmet interprets of Cambyses, his cruelties in Egypt, and his evil design to destroy the Israelites.

Verse 12. *To take a spoil-and a prey*— When Antiochus took Jerusalem he gave the pillage of it to his soldiers, and spoiled the temple of its riches, which were immense. See Joseph. WAR, B. 1:C. 1.

Verse 13. *Sheba, and Dedan*— The Arabians, anciently great plunderers; and Tarshish, the inhabitants of the famous isle of Tartessus, the most noted merchants of the time. They are here represented as coming to Antiochus before he undertook the expedition, and bargaining for the spoils of the Jews. Art thou come to take a spoil, to carry away silver and gold, cattle and goods?

Verse 16. *When I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog*— By the defeat of his troops under Lysias, his general. 1 Mac. 3:32, 33, etc., and chap. 6:6.

Verse 17. *Art thou he of whom I have spoken in old time*— This prophecy concerning Antiochus and the Jews was delivered about four hundred years before the events took place. — Martin. Calmet maintains

that Cambyses is spoken of, and refers to ancient prophecies, especially Isaiah 14., 15., 16:20, 21.

Verse 21. *I will call for a sword against him*— Meaning Judas Maccabeus, who defeated his army under Lysias, making a horrible carnage. — Martin. Cambyses had no wars in the mountains of Israel.

Verse 22. *Great hailstones, fire, and brimstone*.— These are probably figurative expressions, to signify that the whole tide of the war should be against him, and that his defeat and slaughter should be great. Abp. Newcome supposes all the above prophecy remains yet to be fulfilled. Where such eminent scribes are divided, who shall decide!

CHAPTER 39

The prophet goes on to denounce the Divine judgments against Gog and his army, 1-7; and describes their dreadful slaughter, 8-10, and burial, 11-16, in terms so very lofty and comprehensive, as must certainly denote some very extraordinary interposition of Providence in behalf of the Jews. And to amplify the matter still more, the prophet, with peculiar art and propriety, delays the summoning of all the birds and beasts of prey in nature to feast on the slain, (in allusion to the custom of feasting on the remainder of sacrifices,) till after the greater multitudes are buried; to intimate that even the remainder, and as it were the stragglers of such mighty hosts, would be more than sufficient to satisfy their utmost rapacity, 17-20. The remaining verses contain a prediction of the great blessedness of the people of God in Gospel times, and of the stability of the kingdom of Christ, 21-29. It will be proper to remark that the great northern expedition against the natural Israel, described in this and the preceding chapter, is, from its striking resemblance in the main particulars, put by the writer of the Apocalypse, (chap. 20:7-10,) for a much more formidable armament of a multitude of nations in the four quarters of the earth against the pure Christian Church, the MYSTICAL Israel; an event still extremely remote, and which it is thought shall immediately precede the destruction of the world by fire, and the general judgment.

NOTES ON CHAP. 39

Verse 2. *And leave but the sixth part of thee*— The margin has, strike thee with six plagues; or, draw thee back with a hook of six teeth.

Verse 3. *I will smite thy bow out of thy left hand*— The Persians whom Antiochus had in his army, chap. 38:5, were famous as archers, and they may be intended here. The bow is held by the left hand; the arrow is pulled and discharged by the right.

Verse 6. *I will send a fire on Magog*— On Syria. I will destroy the Syrian troops.

And among them that dwell carelessly in the isles— The auxiliary troops that came to Antiochus from the borders of the Euxine Sea. — Martin.

Verse 7. *In the midst of my people Israel*— This defeat of Gog is to be in Israel: and it was there according to this prophecy, that the immense army of Antiochus was so completely defeated.

Ands I will not let them pollute my holy name any more— See on 1 Macc. 1:11, etc., how Antiochus had profaned the temple, insulted Jehovah and his worship, etc. God permitted that as a scourge to his disobedient people; but now the scourger shall be scourged, and he shall pollute the sanctuary no more.

Verse 9. *And shall set on fire-the weapons*— The Israelites shall make bonfires and fuel of the weapons, tents, etc., which the defeated Syrians shall leave behind them, as expressive of the joy which they shall feel for the destruction of their enemies; and to keep up, in their culinary consumption, the memory of this great event.

They shall burn them with fire seven years— These may be figurative expressions, after the manner of the Asiatics, whose language abounds with such descriptions. They occur every where in the prophets. As to the number seven it is only a certain for an indeterminate number. But as the slaughter was great, and the bows, arrows, quivers, shields, bucklers, handstaves, and spears were in vast multitudes, it must have taken a long time to gather them up in the different parts of the fields of battle, and the roads in which the Syrians had retreated, throwing away their arms as they proceeded; so there might have been a long time employed in collecting and burning them. And as all seem to have been doomed to the fire, there might have been some found at different intervals and burned, during the seven years here mentioned. Mariana, in his History of Spain, lib. xi., c. 24, says, that after the Spaniards had given that signal overthrow to the Saracens, A.D. 1212 they found such a vast quantity of lances, javelins, and such like, that they served them for four years for fuel. And probably these

instruments obtained by the Israelites were used in general for culinary firewood, and might literally have served them for seven years; so that during that time they should take no wood out of the fields, nor out of the forests for the purpose of fuel, ver. 10.

Verse 11. *The valley of the passengers on the east of the sea*— That is, of Gennesareth, according to the Targum. The valley near this lake or sea is called the Valley of the Passengers, because it was a great road by which the merchants and traders from Syria and other eastern countries went into Egypt; see Genesis 37:17, 25. See Calmet here.

There shall they bury Gog and all his multitude— Some read, “There shall they bury Gog, that is, all his multitude.” Not Gog, or Antiochus himself, for he was not in this battle; but his generals, captains, and soldiers, by whom he was represented. As to Hamon-gog, we know no valley of this name but here. But we may understand the words thus: the place where this great slaughter was, and where the multitudes of the slain were buried, might be better called Hamon-gog, the valley of the multitude of God, than the valley of passengers; for so great was the carnage there, that the way of the passengers shall be stopped by it. See the text.

Verse 12. *And seven months*— It shall require a long time to bury the dead. This is another figurative expression; which, however, may admit of a good deal of literal meaning. Many of the Syrian soldiers had secreted themselves in different places during the pursuit after the battle, where they died of their wounds, of hunger, and of fatigue; so that they were not all found and buried till seven months after the defeat of the Syrian army. This slow process of burying is distinctly related in the three following verses, and extended even to a bone, ver. 15; which, when it was found by a passenger, the place was marked, that the buriers might see and inter it. Seven months was little time enough for all this work; and in that country putrescency does not easily take place: the scorching winds serving to desiccate the flesh, and preserve it from decomposition.

Verse 17. *Gather yourselves to my sacrifice*— This is an allusion to a custom common in the east: when a sacrifice is made, the friends and neighbors of the party sacrificing are invited to come and feast on the

sacrifice.

Verse 18. *Ye shall-drink the blood of the princes of the earth*— I need not mention the custom of the Scandinavians: they were accustomed to drink the blood of their enemies out of the skulls of the dead. But this is spoken of fowls and beasts here—rams, lambs, and goats. The feast shall be as grateful and as plenteous to the fowls and beasts, as one made of the above animals, the fattest and best of their kind, (because fed in the fertile fields of Bashan,) would be to the guests of him who makes a sacrifice.

Verse 19. *And ye shall eat fat-and drink blood*— Who shall eat and drink, etc.? Not the Jews: though Voltaire says they ate human flesh, and are invited here by the prophet to eat the flesh and drink the blood of their enemies; which is a most unprincipled falsehood. It is the fowls and the beasts that God invites, ver. 17: “Speak to every feathered fowl, and to every beast of the field, assemble yourselves—that ye may eat flesh and drink blood;” nor are the persons altered in all these verses, 17-20: so the assertion of Voltaire is either through brutish ignorance or Satanic malice.

Verse 25. *Now will I bring again the captivity of Jacob*— Both they and the heathen shall know that it was for their iniquity that I gave them into the hands of their enemies: and now I will redeem them from those hands in such a way as to prove that I am a merciful God, as well as a just God.

Verse 26. *After that they have borne their shame*— After they shall have borne the punishment due to a line of conduct which is their shame and reproach, viz. idolatry.

Verse 27. *When I have-gathered them*— Antiochus had before captured many of the Jews, and sold them for slaves; see Daniel 11:33.

Verse 28. *And have left none of them any more there.*— All that chose had liberty to return; but many remained behind. This promise may therefore refer to a greater restoration, when not a Jew shall be left behind. This, the next verse intimates, will be in the Gospel dispensation.

Verse 29. *For I have poured out my Spirit*— That is, I will pour out my

Spirit; see the notes on chap. 36:25-29, where this subject is largely considered. This Spirit is to enlighten, quicken, purify, and cleanse their hearts; so that, being completely changed, they shall become God's people, and be a praise in the earth. Now, they are a proverb of reproach; then, they shall be eminently distinguished.

A NEW PLAN OF THE TEMPLE AT JERUSALEM

For an explanation of this plan, and of the accompanying map of the division of the Land of Canaan, see at the end of chap. 48.

[Drawing of the Plan of the Temple]

[Drawing of Divison of the Land of Canaan]

CHAPTER 40

The prophecy or vision, which begins here, continues to the end of the Book. The Temple of Jerusalem lying in ruins when Ezekiel had this vision, (for its date as the fourteenth year after the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar,) the Jews needed consolation. If they were not promised a restoration of the temple, they would not feel so great an interest in returning home. It is thought by some that no model of Solomon's Temple had remained. To direct them, therefore, in the dimensions, parts, order, and rules of their new temple might be one reason why Ezekiel is so particular in the description of the old; to which the new was conformable in figure and parts, though inferior in magnificence, on account of the poverty of the nation at the time. Whatever was august or illustrious in the prophetic figures, and not literally fulfilled in or near their own times, the ancient Jews properly considered as belonging to the time of the Messiah. Accordingly, upon finding that the latter temple fell short of the model of the temple here described by Ezekiel, they supposed the prophecy to refer, at least in part, to the period now mentioned. And we, who live under the Gospel dispensation, have apostolical authority for the assertion that the temple and temple worship were emblematic of Christ's Church, frequently represented in the New Testament under the metaphor of a temple, in allusion to the symmetry, beauty, and firmness of that of Solomon; to its orderly worship; and to the manifestations it held of the Divine Presence. This chapter commences with the time, manner, and end of the vision, 1-5. We have next a description of the east gate, 6-19, the north gate, 20-22, and the south gate, 24-31. A farther description of the east gate, 32-34, and of the north gate, 35-38. Account of the eight tables, 39-43; of the chambers, 44-47; and of the porch of the temple, 48, 49.

NOTES ON CHAP. 40

Verse 1. *In the five and twentieth year of our captivity*— According to the date here given, this prophecy was delivered on Tuesday, April 20,

A.M. 3430, in the twenty-fifth year of the captivity of Jeconiah, and fourteen years after the taking of Jerusalem.

The temple here described by Ezekiel is, in all probability, the same which he saw before his captivity, and which had been burned by the Chaldeans fourteen years before this vision. On comparing the Books of Kings and Chronicles with this prophet, we shall find the same dimensions in the parts described by both; for instance, the temple, or place which comprehended the sanctuary, the holy place, and the vestibule or porch before the temple, is found to measure equally the same both in Ezekiel and the Kings. Compare 1 Kings 6:3-16, with chap. 41:2, etc. The inside ornaments of the temple are entirely the same; in both we see two courts; an inner one for the priests, and an outer one for the people. Compare 1 Kings 6:29-36; 2 Chronicles 4:9; and Ezekiel 41:16, 17, and 48:7-10. So that there is room to suppose that, in all the rest, the temple of Ezekiel resembled the old one; and that God's design in retracing these ideas in the prophet's memory was to preserve the remembrance of the plan, the dimensions, the ornaments, and whole structure of this Divine edifice; and that at the return from captivity the people might more easily repair it, agreeably to this model. The prophet's applying himself to describe this edifice was a motive of hope to the Jews of seeing themselves one day delivered from captivity, the temple rebuilt, and their nation restored to its ancient inheritance. Ezekiel touches very slightly upon the description of the temple or house of the Lord, which comprehended the holy place or sanctuary, and which are so exactly described in the Books of Kings. He dwells more largely upon the gates, the galleries, and apartments, of the temple, concerning which the history of the kings had not spoken, or only just taken notice of by the way.

This is the judgment of Calmet; and although every Biblical critic is of the same opinion, yet more labor is spent on rebuilding this temple of Ezekiel than was spent on that built by Solomon! The Jesuits, Prada and Vililalpand, have given three folio volumes on this temple, with abundance of cuts, where the different parts are exhibited after the finest models of Grecian and Roman architecture! But still the building is incomplete. Now, of what consequence is all this to the Christian, or to any other reader? I confess I see not. While, then, we have the exact dimensions and accurate

description in 1 Kings and 2 Chronicles, of that built by Solomon, in imitation of which this plan by Ezekiel was drawn, we need not be very solicitous about the manner of measuring and describing used by the prophet; as, when we have labored through the whole, we have only the measurements and description of that built by Solomon, and delineated by a hand not less faithful in the First Book of Kings, chap. 6., and 2 Chronicles 2., 3., 4., 5:and 6.

As the prophet knew that the Chaldeans had utterly destroyed the temple, he thought it necessary to preserve an exact description of it, that on their restoration the people might build one on the same model. As to allegorical meanings relative to this temple, I can say nothing: God has given no data by which any thing of this kind can be known or applied; and as to those who have labored in this way, perhaps “Solomon’s Temple Spiritualized, by John Bunyan,” is equally good with their well-intended inventions. Those who wish to enter much into the particulars of this temple must have recourse to the more voluminous expositors, who on this subject seem to have thought that they could never say enough. See also the accompanying map.

Verse 2. *Set me upon a very high mountain*— Mount Moriah, the mount on which Solomon’s temple was built, 2 Chronicles 3:1.

Verse 3. *A man, whose appearance was like-brass*— Like bright polished brass, which strongly reflected the rays of light. Probably he had what we would term a nimbus or glory round his head. This was either an angel; or, as some think, a personal appearance of our blessed Lord.

Verse 4. *Declare all that thou seest to the house of Israel*— That they may know how to build the second temple, when they shall be restored from their captivity.

Verse 5. *A measuring reed of six cubits long*— The Hebrew cubit is supposed to be about twenty and a half inches; and a palm, about three inches more; the length of the rod about ten feet six inches.

The breadth-one reed; and the height, one reed.— As this wall was as

broad as it was high, it must have been a kind of parapet, which was carried, of the same dimensions, all round the temple. See AAAA in the plan.

Verse 6. *Went up the stairs thereof*— As the temple was built upon an eminence, there must have been steps on the outside, opposite to each door, to ascend by. And it appears there were steps to go up from one court to another, see ver. 22, 26, 34, 37; and also from the court of the priests to the sanctuary, ver. 49. See MMMMM in the plan.

Verse 7. *And every little chamber was one reed*— These were the chambers of the buildings which were within the inclosure of the temple round the court, and these chambers appear to have been numerous. See the map, which has been carefully copied from that of Calmet.

Verse 9. *The porch of the gate*— See account of the gates in the plan.

Verse 15. *Fifty cubits.*— The length of the building. See MMMMM in the plan.

Verse 17. *The outward court*— This was the court of the people.

Verse 21. *And the little chambers thereof were three, etc.*— See the plan.

Arches— Porch. The arch was not known at this period.

Verse 24. According to these measures. The same measures that had been used at the eastern court.

Verse 30. *And the arches round about were five and twenty cubits long*— That the five cubits broad should be read twenty-five is evident from verses 21, 25, 29, 33, and 36, The word **ועשרים** veesrim, twenty, has probably been lost out of the text. Indeed the whole verse is wanting in two of Kennicott's MSS., one of De Rossi's, and one of mine, (Cod. B.) It has been added in the margin of mine by a later hand. It is reported to have been anciently wanting in many MSS.

Verse 39. *The porch of the gate*— The north gate of the court of the priests. See Q in the plan.

Two tables— Some say of marble. See dddd in the plan.

Verse 41. Four tables! These were in the porch of the north gate, in the court of the priests: on them they slew, flayed, and cut up the victims. See dddd in the plan.

Verse 47. *He measured the court*— This was the court of the priests. See FFF in the plan.

Verse 48. *Breadth of the gate*— It is evident that the gate was a bivalve, or had folding doors. The length of the porch was twenty cubits. Josephus says the vestibule was twenty cubits long and ten broad. Antiq. lib. 8:3, 2.

Verse 49. *By the steps*— This was a flight of steps that led to the temple; there were eight steps in each flight. See YY in the plan.

CHAPTER 41

In this chapter the prophet gives us a circumstantial account of the measures, parts, chambers, and ornaments of the temple, 1-26.

NOTES ON CHAP. 41

Verse 1. *To the temple*— He had first described the courts and the porch. See chap. 40.

Verse 2. *The breadth of the door*— This was the door, or gate, of the sanctuary, (see gates 3, in the plan,) and this doorway was filled up with folding gates. The measurements are exactly the same as those of Solomon's temple. See 1 Kings 6:2, 17.

Verse 4. *The length thereof, twenty cubits*— This is the measurement of the sanctuary, or holy of holies. See G in the plan. This also was the exact measurement of Solomon's temple, see 1 Kings 6:20. This, and the other resemblances here, sufficiently prove that Ezekiel's temple and that of Solomon were on the same plan; and that the latter temple was intended to be an exact resemblance of the former.

Verse 6. *The side chambers were three*— We find by Joseph. Antiq. 8:3, 2, that round Solomon's temple were chambers three stories high, each story consisting of thirty chambers. It is supposed that twelve were placed to the north of the temple, twelve to the south, and six to the east.

Entered into the wall— The beams were admitted into the outer wall, but they rested on projections of the inner wall.

Verse 7. *An enlarging, and a winding about*— Perhaps a winding staircase that widened upward as the inner wall decreased in thickness; this wall being six cubits thick; as high as the first story, five from the floor of the second story to that of the third, and four from the floor to the

ceiling of the third story: and thus there was a rest of one cubit in breadth to support the stories. — Newcome.

Verse 9. *The thickness of the wall*— See LLL in the plan.

The place of the side chambers— A walk, or gallery of communication along the chambers, five cubits broad, ver. 11.

Verse 11. *And the doors*— See the plan, aa. bb.

Verse 12. *The length thereof ninety cubits*.— The temple, with the buildings which surrounded it, was eighty-one cubits long; add ten cubits for the vestibule, or five for the breadth of the separate place, and five for its wall; in all, ninety cubits. See the plan, LHIL. By the separate place I suppose the temple itself is meant.

Verse 13. *So he measured the house*— The temple, taken from the wall which encompassed it from the western side to the vestibule, was one hundred and one cubits; five for the separate place, nine for the wall and the chambers attached to the temple, sixty for the sanctuary and the holy place, ten for the vestibule, and twelve for the two great walls on the west and east of the temple; in all, one hundred and one cubits, See the plan, GHI.

Verse 14. *The breadth of the face of the house*— That is, the front. See the plan, FRR.

Verse 18. *A palm tree was between a cherub and a cherub*— That is, the palm trees and the cherubs were alternated; and each cherub had two faces, one of a lion and the other of a man; one of which was turned to the palm tree on the right, the other to the palm tree on the left.

Verse 20. *From the ground unto above the door*— The temple was thirty cubits high, 1 Kings 6:2, the gate was fourteen cubits, chap. 40:48. The palm trees and the cherubim were the same height as the gate or door. The windows were above the door.

Verse 22. *The altar of wood*— This was the altar of incense, and was covered with plates of gold.

Verse 25. *There were thick planks*— The wood, or planks, were thick and strong; for the cherubim and palm trees were carved in relief out of their substance, and unless they had been of considerable thickness, this could not have been done.

CHAPTER 42

This chapter gives us a description of the priests' chambers and their use, with the dimensions of the holy mount on which the temple stood, 1-20.

NOTES ON CHAP. 42

Verse 1. *He brought me forth into the utter court*— He brought him out from the temple into the court of the priests. This, in reference to the temple, was called the outer court; but the court of the people was beyond this.

Verse 4. *A walk of ten cubits' breadth inward*— This seems to have been a sort of parapet.

Verse 14. *They shall lay their garments wherein they minister*— The priests were not permitted to wear their robes in the outer court. These vestments were to be used only when they ministered; and when they had done, they were to deposit them in one of the chambers mentioned in the thirteenth verse.

Verses 16-19. *He measured the east-north-south-west side*— Each of which was five hundred reeds: and, as the building was square, the area must have been nearly thirteen thousand paces. No wonder this was called a city. See chap. 40:2.

Verse 20. *It had a wall round about-to make a separation between the sanctuary and the profane place.*— The holy place was that which was consecrated to the Lord; into which no heathen, nor stranger, nor any in a state of impurity, might enter. The profane place was that in which men, women, Gentiles, pure or impure might be admitted. Josephus says War, lib. vi., c. 14, that in his time there was a wall built before the entrance three cubits high, on which there were posts fixed at certain distances, with inscriptions on them in Latin and Greek, containing the laws which

enjoined purity on those that entered; and forbidding all strangers to enter, on pain of death. See Calmet.

CHAPTER 43

The glory of the Lord is represented as returning to the temple, 1-6; where God promises to fix his residence, if the people repent and forsake those sins which caused him to depart from them, 7-12. Then the measures of the altar, and the ordinances relating to it, are set down, 13-27.

NOTES ON CHAP. 43

Verse 2. *The glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east*— This was the chariot of cherubim, wheels, etc., which he saw at the river Chebar. And this glory, coming from the east, is going to enter into the eastern gate of the temple, and thence to shine out upon the whole earth. Is there not a mystery here? All knowledge, all religion, and all arts and sciences, have traveled, according to the course of the sun, FROM EAST TO WEST! From that quarter the Divine glory at first came; and thence the rays of Divine light continue to diffuse themselves over the face of the earth. From thence came the Bible, and through that the new covenant. From thence came the prophets, the apostles, and the first missionaries, that brought the knowledge of God to Europe, to the isles of the sea, and to the west first, and afterwards to these northern regions.

Verse 5. *The spirit took me up*— And, to follow this thought for a moment, how many men has this heavenly Spirit taken up; filled them with his own influence, and sent them to every country, and nation, and tongue, and people, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God, and to preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ! What spiritual temples have been raised, beautified, and filled with the glory of God! And this light is shining and burning more and more unto the perfect day, when the whole earth shall be filled with the glory of God!

Verse 7. *Son of man, the place of my throne*— The throne refers to his majesty; the soles of his feet, to his condescension in dwelling among men.

Where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel— The tabernacle and temple were types of the incarnation of Jesus Christ: “Destroy THIS TEMPLE, and after three days I will raise it up;—but this he spake of the temple of his body;” John 2:19, 21. And in THAT TEMPLE “dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.” Into this immaculate humanity did the glory of the Supreme God enter; and thus, “God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself.” And this Jesus is Immanuel, GOD with Us. In him we find united the ineffable majesty of God, with the abjectness of man. He humbled himself in human nature, not only to bear the form of a servant, but to suffer death upon the cross as a malefactor slave! But by these means he has purchased eternal redemption for us; and the spiritual Israel, who find redemption in his blood, shall be raised up wherever his holy name shall be proclaimed; and shall not, like the old apostate Israel, defile that great name by idolatry or a life of wickedness, but they shall show forth the virtues of Him who has called them from darkness into his marvellous light.

Verse 8. *In their setting of their threshold*— They had even gone so far as to set up their idol altars by those of Jehovah; so that their abominable idols were found in the very house of God! therefore, “he consumed them in his anger.”

Verse 9. *Now let them put away their whoredom*— Their idolatry.

And the carcasses of their kings— It appears that God was displeased with their bringing their kings so near his temple. David was buried in the city of David, which was on Mount Zion, near to the temple; and so were almost all the kings of Judah; but God requires that the place of his temple and its vicinity shall be kept unpolluted; and when they put away all kinds of defilement, then will he dwell among them.

Verse 10. *Show the house to the house of Israel*— Show them this holy house where the holy God dwells, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities. Their name, their profession, their temple, their religious services, all bound them to a holy life; all within them, all without them, should have been holiness unto the Lord. But alas! they have been bound by no ties, and they have sinned against all their obligations; nevertheless,

let them measure the pattern, let them see the rule by which they should have walked, and let them measure themselves by this standard, and walk accordingly.

Verse 11. *And if they be ashamed*— If, in a spirit of true repentance, they acknowledge their past transgressions, and purpose in his help never more to offend their God, then teach them every thing that concerns my worship, and their profiting by it.

Verse 12. *This is the law of the house*— From the top of the mountain on which it stands, to the bottom, all round about, all shall be holy; no buildings shall be erected in any part, nor place nor spot be appropriated to a common use; all shall be considered as being most holy.

Verse 13. *The cubit is a cubit and a hand breadth*— It is the same cubit by which all the previous admeasurements were made, and was a hand breadth or four inches longer than the Babylonian cubit.

Verse 15. *So the altar*— **ההר אֵל** haharel, “the mount of God.”

And from the altar— **ומהארזל** umihaariel, “and from the lion of God.” Perhaps the first was a name given to the altar when elevated to the honor of God, and on which the victims were offered to him, and the second, the lion of God, may mean the hearth, which might have been thus called, because it devoured and consumed the burnt-offerings, as a lion does his prey. See on Isaiah 29:1.

Verse 17. *And the settle*— The ledge on which the priests walked round the altar, see ver. 14. By these settles or ledges the altar was narrowed towards the top. “The ascent shall look toward the east;” this ascent was an inclined plane. But these settles, or more properly ledges, as Bp. Newcome translates, may be thus computed. The altar itself was ten feet high and twenty broad; the same as that of Solomon, 2 Chronicles 4:1.

Cubits

For the base, ver. 13, is in height. 1

From the surface of the base to the first ledge, ver. 1 1

From the lower ledge to the upper, ver. 14.	4
From the upper ledge to the ariel or hearth, ver. 15,	4
In all	10

And as to the breadth, the upper ledge, ver. 17, was	14
Add a cubit on each side for the higher ledge, ver. 14, latter pa	2
Add a cubit on each side for the lower ledge, ver. 14, former p	2
Add a cubit on each side for the base, ver. 13,	2
In all	20

The altar of burnt-offerings, described Exodus 27:1; 38:1, was smaller than this, because it was to be removed from place to place with the tabernacle. This was designed for a permanent temple. See Bp. Newcome on this chapter.

Verse 19. *The priests-that be of the seed of Zadok*— It was this Zadok that was put in the place of Abiathar, by Solomon, 1 Kings 2:35, in whose family the priesthood had continued ever since.

Verse 25. *Seven days shalt thou prepare*— These are, in general, ordinances of the LAW; and may be seen by consulting the parallel passages. All these directions are given that they might follow them, when they should be put in possession of their own land. For in several cases the prophet enters into particulars, as if he had supposed that the book of the law had perished.

CHAPTER 44

This chapter gives an account of the glory of God having returned to the temple, 14. The Jews reprov'd for suffering idolatrous priests to pollute it with their ministrations, 5-8. Ordinances respecting the conduct of the priests, and the maintenance due to them, 9-31.

NOTES ON CHAP. 44

Verse 1. *The outward sanctuary*— In opposition to the temple itself, which was the inner sanctuary.

Verse 2. *This gate shall be shut*— It was not to be opened on ordinary occasions, nor at all on the week days: but only on the Sabbaths and the new moons. See the account of the gates (4) in the explanation of the plan.

This verse has been adduced by the Roman Catholics to prove the perpetual virginity of the mother of our Lord; and it may be allowed to be as much to the purpose as any other that has been brought to prove this very precarious point, on which no stress should ever be laid by any man. Mary was a virgin when she brought forth Jesus.

Verse 5. *Mark well, and behold*— Take notice of every thing; register all so fully that thou shalt be able to give the most minute information to the children of Israel.

Verse 7. *The fat and the blood*— These never went into common use; they were wholly offered to God. The blood was poured out; the fat consumed.

Because of all your abominations.— Several MSS. of Kennicott's and De Rossi's read their abominations, referring to the strangers mentioned before.

Verse 10. *And the Levites that are gone away far from me*— This refers to the schism of Jeroboam, who, when he set up a new worship, got as many of the priests and Levites to join him in his idolatry as he could. These, on the return from the captivity, should not be permitted to perform the functions of priests in the new temple; but they might be continued as keepers of all the charge of the house—be treasurers, guards of the temple, porters, etc.; see ver. 11-15. The whole of these passages refer to the period of time when the second temple was built.

Verse 16. *Come near to my table*— To place the shew-bread there, and to burn incense on the golden altar in the holy of holies.

Verse 17. *No wool shall come upon them*— The reason is plain; wool is more apt than linen to contract dirt and breed insects; linen breeds none; besides, this is a vegetable, and the other an animal substance. It was an ancient maxim, that whatever was taken from a dead body was impure in matters of religion, and should not be permitted to enter into the temple. The Egyptian priests always wore linen on their bodies, and shoes of matting or rushes on their feet. The Mohammedans never write the Koran upon vellum or skin of any kind, as they would consider that as a defilement.

Verse 20. *Neither shall they shave their heads*— The priests of Isis shaved their heads close to the skin; the priests of Budhoo do so still, their ordinances oblige them to shave their heads every tenth day. To let the hair grow long would have been improper; therefore the Lord commands them to poll-cut the hair short, but not to shave.

Verse 22. *Neither shall they take for their wives a widow*— This was prohibited to the high priest only, by Moses, Leviticus 21:13, 14.

Verse 25. *And they shall come at no dead person to defile themselves*— Touching the dead defiles a Hindoo now, as it formerly did a Jew; and they must bathe to become clean again.

Verse 28. *I am their inheritance*— Those who affect to form their ecclesiastical matters on the model of the Jewish Church have with one

consent left this out of the question. They will not live on the free-will offerings of the people; but must have vast revenues, and these secured to them by law. That every minister of God should be supported by the altar I grant; but I think, instead of that method of paying the parochial clergy which I see is so much objected to, and breeds so much dissension between the pastors and their flocks, it would be better, on these accounts, to assign them a portion of land adequate to their supply, or let the state maintain them as it does its other officers. In Israel God was their inheritance and their possession; but they had the breast and shoulder of all sin-offerings and trespass-offerings, and all dedicated things were theirs; and they had a portion of all the dough that was prepared for bread. These were considered as the Lord's property, and these he gave to them; and this is always implied in the Lord's being their inheritance and their possession. They had a plentiful support.

Hitherto tithes have been thought the best mode of paying the clergy, and providing for the poor of each parish; but these matters have undergone such alterations since the time of their institution, that some emendation of the system is at present absolutely necessary.

There should be a public acknowledgment of God in every nation, and this should be provided for by the state in a way the least burdensome to the people, that all may rejoice in the benefit. Happy the nations that have a Bible so correct, and a Liturgy so pure, as those in the British empire! In such cases, a religion established by the state is an unutterable blessing to the nation; only keep it to the Bible, and to the Liturgy, and all, under God, will be well; but when the sermon is against these, all is bad.

CHAPTER 45

The several portions of land appointed for the sanctuary, 1-5, the city, 6, and the prince, 7, 8. Regulations concerning the weights and measures, 9-12; with ordinances respecting the provisions for the ordinary and extraordinary sacrifices, 13-25.

NOTES ON CHAP. 45

Verse 1. *When ye shall divide by lot*— That is, when on your repossessing your land, every family settles according to the allotment which they formerly had; for it is certain that the land was not divided afresh by lot after the Babylonish captivity. The allotment mentioned and described here was merely for the service of the temple, the use of the priests, and the prince or governor of the people. A division of the whole land is not intended.

Verse 2. *Of this there shall be for the sanctuary*— See the plan, A.

Verse 3. *And of this measure*— See the plan, A, B, C, D, E.

Verse 4. *The holy portion*— See the plan, A.

Verse 5. *And the five and twenty thousand*— See the plan, B.

Verse 6. *Ye shall appoint*— See the plan, FF.

Verse 7. *A portion shall be for the prince*— נָשִׂיא *nasi*, he who had the authority of chief magistrate; for there was neither king nor prince among the Jews after the Babylonish captivity. For these allotments and divisions, see the plan, EE, FF, GG.

Verse 8. *My princes shall no more oppress ny people*— By exorbitant taxes to maintain profligate courts, or subsidize other powers to help to

keep up a system of tyranny in the earth. The former princes even robbed the temple of God to give subsidies to other states.

Verse 9. *Take away your exactions from my people*— This is the voice of God to all the rulers of the earth.

Take away your exactions; do not oppress the people; they are mine. Abolish all oppressive taxes.

Verse 10. *Ye shall have just balances*— This appreciation of weights, measures, and money was intended to show them that they must not introduce those to which they had been accustomed in the captivity, but those which God had prescribed to their forefathers. See the notes on the parallel places.

Verse 16. *All-this oblation for the prince*— A present or offering to the prince.

Verse 18. *Thou shalt take a young bullock-and cleanse the sanctuary.*— There is nothing of this in the Mosaic law; it seems to have been a new ceremony. An annual purification of the sanctuary may be intended.

Verse 20. *For him that is simple*— That wants understanding to conduct himself properly.

Verse 25. *In the seventh month*— He shall do at the feast of tabernacles the same things that he was desired to do on the passover. The prince should offer the same number of victims, of the same quality, and with the same ceremonies, as during the above seven days. The offerings were, sin-offerings, burnt-offerings, and peace-offerings.

CHAPTER 46

Ordinances of worship prescribed for the prince and for the people, 1-15; and the gifts he may bestow on his sons and servants, 16-18. A description of the courts appointed for boiling or baking any part of the holy oblations, 19-24.

NOTES ON CHAP. 46

Verse 4. *The burnt-offerings that the prince shall offer*— The chief magistrate was always obliged to attend the public worship of God, as well as the priest, to show that the civil and ecclesiastical states were both under the same government of the Lord; and that no one was capable of being prince or priest, who did not acknowledge God in all his ways. It is no wonder that those lands mourn, where neither the established priest nor the civil magistrate either fear or love God. Ungodly priests and profligate magistrates are a curse to any land. In no country have I found both so exemplary for uprightness, as in Britain.

Verse 7. *According as his hand shall attain unto*— According to his ability, to what the providence of God has put in his hand, i.e., his power. This proportion of offerings is different from that prescribed by the Mosaic law, Numbers 15:4-12.

Verse 9. *He that entereth in by the way of the north, etc.*— As the north and the south gates were opposite to each other, he that came in at the north must go out at the south; he that came in at the south must go out at the north. No person was to come in at the east gate, because there was no gate at the west; and the people were not permitted to turn round and go out at the same place by which they came in; for this was like turning their backs on God, and the decorum and reverence with which public worship was to be conducted would not admit of this. Besides, returning by the same way must have occasioned a great deal of confusion, where so many people must have jostled each other, in their meetings in different parts of

this space.

Verse 10. *And the prince in the midst of them*— Even he shall act in the same way: he must also go straight forward, and never turn his back to go out at the same gate by which he entered. The prince and the people were to begin and end their worship at the same time.

Verse 13. *Thou shalt prepare it every morning*.— The evening offering is entirely omitted, which makes an important difference between this and the old laws. See Exodus 29:31-46.

Verse 17. *To the year of liberty*— That is, to the year of jubilee, called the year of liberty, because there was then a general release. Ali servants had their liberty, and all alienated estates returned to their former owners.

Verse 19. *He brought me thorough the entry*— The prophet had entered by the north gate of the court of the priests, where he had seen, a little before, the glory of the Lord, and where he had received all those directions from chap. 44:4, 5, to this chapter. From that gate, (see plan Q.) he entered the vestibule by a gate which was by the side of the apartments of the priests, which were along this aisle, (see S.) to the right of the vestibule towards the west. At the extremity of a row of chambers, he remarked, at the west, the place where they boiled the flesh of the sin-offerings, (see T.) They did not boil there the flesh of all sorts of victims, there were other kitchens appointed for that, (see PP:) but that only which could not be eaten but in the outer court, and by the priests which were sanctified; such were the parts of the offerings for sins of commission and ignorance, and the offerings of flour with which they were accompanied.

Verse 20. *The trespass-offering*— Part of this, and of the sin-offering, and the flour-offering was the portion of the priests. See Numbers 18:9, 10.

Verse 23. *It was made with boiling places*— These were uncovered apartments, where they kept fires for dressing those parts of the peace-offerings, which were made in the temple by individuals through a principle of devotion. On these their families and their friends feasted; and

portions were sent to the poor, the widows, and the orphans. And thus the spirit of devotion was the means of preserving the spirit of mercy, charity, and benevolence in the land. How true is that word, "Godliness is profitable for all things."

CHAPTER 47

The vision of the holy waters issuing out of the temple, and their virtue; an emblem of the power of God's grace under the Gospel, capable of healing all but the incorrigibly impenitent, represented by the marshy ground that cannot be healed, 1-12. Also a description of the several divisions of the Holy Land indiscriminately shared betwixt Jews and proselytes; to denote that in after times the privileges now enjoyed by the Jews should be also extended to the Gentiles, 13-23.

NOTES ON CHAP. 47

Verse 1. *Behold, waters issued out from under the threshold*—Ezekiel, after having made the whole compass of the court of the people, is brought back by the north gate into the courts of the priests; and, having reached the gate of the temple, he saw waters which had their spring under the threshold of that gate, that looked towards the east; and which passing to the south of the altar of burnt-offerings on the right of the temple, ran from the west to the east, that they might fall into the brook Kidron, and thence be carried into the Dead Sea. Literally, no such waters were ever in the temple; and because there were none, Solomon had what is called the brazen sea made, which held water for the use of the temple. It is true that the water which supplied this sea might have been brought by pipes to the place: but a fountain producing abundance of water was not there, and could not be there, on the top of such a hill; and consequently these waters, as well as those spoken of in Joel 3:18, and in Zechariah 14:8, are to be understood spiritually or typically; and indeed the whole complexion of the place here shows, that they are thus to be understood. Taken in this view, I shall proceed to apply the whole of this vision to the effusion of light and salvation by the outpouring of the Spirit of God under the Gospel dispensation, by which the knowledge of the true God was multiplied in the earth; and have only one previous remark to make, that the farther the waters flowed from the temple, the deeper they grew.

With respect to the phraseology of this chapter, it may be said that St. John had it particularly in view while he wrote his celebrated description of the paradise of God, Revelation 22: The prophet may therefore be referring to the same thing which the apostle describes, viz., the grace of the Gospel, and its effects in the world.

Verse 2. *There ran out waters*— מַיִם מִפְּכִיָּם *mayim mephaccim*, the waters seem to have been at first in small quantity; for the words imply that they oozed or dropped out. They were at first so small that they came guttatim, drop by drop; but they increased so, that they became a river in which one could swim.

Verses 3-5. He measured a thousand cubits, — the waters were to the ANKLES; a thousand more, — the waters were to the KNEES; a thousand more, — they became a RIVER that could not be forded. The waters were risen, and they were waters to SWIM in.

I. This may be applied to the gradual discoveries of the plan of salvation, — 1. In the patriarchal ages. 2. In the giving of the law. 3. In the ministry of John the Baptist. And, 4. In the full manifestation of Christ by the communication of the Holy Ghost.

II. This vision may be applied also to the growth of a believer in the grace and knowledge of God. There is- 1. The seed of the kingdom. 2. The blade from that seed. 3. The ear out of that blade. And, 4. The full corn in that ear.

III. It may be applied to the discoveries a penitent believer receives of the mercy of God in his salvation. He is- 1. A little child, born of God, born from above, and begins to taste the bread of life, and live on the heavenly food. 2. He grows up and increases in stature and strength, and becomes a young man. 3. He becomes matured in the Divine life, and has his spiritual senses exercised so as to become a father in Christ. In other words, the grace of God appears to come drop by drop; it is given as it can be used; it is a seed of light, and multiplies itself. The penitent at first can scarcely believe the infinite goodness of his Maker; he however ventures to follow on with the conducting angel, the minister of the Gospel, in his

descriptions of the plenitude of that salvation, provided in that living Temple in which alone the well-spring of life is to be found. 4. In thus following on to know the Lord he finds a continual increase of light and life, till at last he is carried by the streams of grace to the ocean of eternal mercy; then

“Plunged in the Godhead’s deepest sea, And lost in his immensity.”

IV. These waters may be considered as a type of the progress which Christianity shall make in the world. 1. There were only a few poor fishermen. 2. Afterwards many Jews. 3. Then the Gentiles of Asia Minor and Greece. 4. The continent and isles of Europe. And, 5. Now spreading through Africa, Asia, and America, at present these waters are no longer a river, but an immense sea; and the Gospel fishers are daily bringing multitudes of souls to Christ.

Verse 9. *Every thing-whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live*— Life and salvation shall continually accompany the preaching of the Gospel; the death of sin being removed, the life of righteousness shall be brought in.

There shall be a very great multitude of fish— On the above plan this must refer to genuine converts to the Christian faith; true believers, who have got life and salvation by the streams of God’s grace. The apostles were fishers of men; converts were the fish caught. See below. As the waters flow into the DEAD Sea, where no fish, it is said, can live, its waters must be healed, that is, made capable of preserving life; and so its nature be thus far most surprisingly altered.

Verse 10. *The fishers shall stand upon it*— On the above plan of interpretation these must mean-1. The apostles of our Lord Jesus. 2. The preachers of the everlasting Gospel. See Matthew 4:19.

From En-gedi— At the southern extremity of the Dead Sea.

Unto En-eglaim— At the northern extremity of the same.

Their fish shall be according to their kinds— Every kind of fish, and the fish all excellent of their kinds. All nations, and kindreds, and people shall be called by the Gospel; it shall not be an excluding system like that of Judaism, for its Author tasted death for every man.

Verse 11. *The miry places*— “Point out,” says Calmet, “the schismatics and hereties who do not live by the Spirit of Jesus Christ, but separate from his Church; and the evil Christians who dishonor that Church, of which they are corrupt members.” A description applicable to the Roman Catholic Church, that is both schismatic and heretic from the Church of Jesus Christ, which is built on the foundation of the prophets and apostles, Jesus himself being the chief corner stone; for the Church of Rome, leaving this foundation, is now built on the foundation of councils and traditions, and lying miracles; the popes in their succession being its only corner stones.

Verse 12. *Shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade*— A description that suits the righteous, who are still producing—1. The fruits of faith. 2. The fruits of the Spirit. 3. The fruits of love to God, obedience to his holy will, and love to all men. Benevolence, mercy, charity, kindness, etc.

The leaf thereof for medicine.— See Revelation 22:1-5. Even the leaves, the holy profession of the righteous, is a spiritual medicine. Righteousness is thus encouraged in the world. The profession points out the salvation, as it shows the nature and sufficiency of that salvation; for a just creed contains all the articles of the Christian faith.

Verse 13. *Joseph shall have two portions*.— That is, In Ephraim and Manasseh, his two sons, who each had a separate inheritance.

Verse 15. *The way of Hethlon, us men go to Zedad*.— Probably Hethlon is the same as Cuthlon, a city of Syria, between Antioch and Laodicea, according to Antoninus. Some of these places are not known; but see the same kind of division, Numbers 34:7-12.

Verse 16. *Hamath*— Emesa or Amesa, in Syria. — Calmet.

Berothah— Berytus, now Baruth or Beeroth, which David took from Hadarezer, king of Syria, 2 Samuel 8:8; but these things are very uncertain.

Sibraim— Sabarim or Sepharvaim, according to the Syriac, between Hamath and Damascus.

Hazar-hatticon— The middle Hazar; or middle village, as the margin.

Hauran.— The city Aurana, and the district Auranitis, are in the north-east limit of the Holy Land.

Verse 17. *The border from the sea*— The north border eastward is ascertained ver. 15, 16; here it is shown how far it extends itself northward.

Hazar-enan— The village of Enan, Numbers 34:9, placed to the north of Caesarea Philippi. Ziphron, see Numbers 34:9, called Zaphion by the Syriac.

Verse 18. *The east sea*— The same as the Dead Sea.

Verse 19. *Tamar*— Called Hazazon Tamar, or Engedi, 2 Chronicles 20:2.

The river— Besor, which runs into the sea near Gaza.

Verse 20. *The great sea*— The Mediterranean.

From the border— The southern border, mentioned ver. 19.

Verse 22. *And to the strangers that sojourn*— In former divisions of the land, no place was given to strangers; but in this division, (which seems to have no other reference than to the Gospel, for literally such a division never took place,) the strangers are to have an inheritance; intimating the calling of the Gentiles into the Church of Christ, to an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. Glory be to God for his unspeakable gift! Amen. Amen.

CHAPTER 48

This chapter contains a description of the several portions of the land belonging to each tribe, together with the portion allotted to the sanctuary, city, suburb, and prince, 1-29; as also the measure and gates of the new city, 30-35.

NOTES ON CHAP. 48

Verse 1. *Now these are the names of the tribes.*— See the division mentioned Numbers 34:7-12, which casts much light upon this.

Verse 9. *The oblation*— This was a portion of land twenty-five thousand cubits in length, by ten thousand broad; in the center of which was the temple, which must be destined for the use of the priests, the Levites, and the prince.

Verse 15. *And the five thousand that are left*— The territory of the Levites was twenty-five thousand square cubits, ver. 20, But their city was only four thousand five hundred square cubits, see ver. 13 and 16; there remained, therefore, ten thousand cubits square to be divided, of which five thousand cubits in breadth, by twenty-five thousand in length, on the east and west sides, were reserved for a sort of second city; or for suburbs where laymen might dwell who were employed by those priests and Levites who lodged in the temple and in the city, ver. 18. And another space of one thousand cubits in breadth, by twenty-five thousand in length, which extended only from north to south, was for fields and gardens appointed for the support of those lay servants. On which we may remark, there was no cultivated land between the portion of the Levites and that of the prince, but only on the east and west sides. See chap. 45:6, and the map FF.

Verse 21. *And the residue-for the prince*— His portion was alongside that of the Levites, from west to east; these were on each side twenty-five

thousand cubits in length, from the east to the west. by twelve thousand five hundred cubits in breadth from north to south. The space both above and below was equal, between the tribe of Judah and that of Benjamin to north and south; and the portion of the Levites, which had Judah and Benjamin to the north and south, and the portion of the prince to the east and to the west. See the map.

Verse 28. *From Tamar-in Kadesh*— The former was on the south of the Dead Sea; and the latter, or Kadesh-Barnea, was still farther south, and at the extremity of the portion of Gad, which was the most southern tribe, as Dan was the most northern.

Verse 30. *These are the goings out*— Each of the four sides of the city was four thousand five hundred cubits long. There were three gates on each side, as mentioned below; and the whole circumference of the city was eighteen thousand cubits. See the map, plan B. dddd.

The rector of New Haven College, in New England, supposes the preceding representations to refer to the happy state of the Church in what is called the Millennium. Leaving this period out of the question, the following observations are worthy of notice:—

“The Jews, for whom this vision was intended, would conceive their country to be divided to the twelve tribes, in lots of a regular and mathematical form; and not confused or intermixed, as in Joshua’s time. Their city laid out larger than before; and exactly foursquare, with regular suburbs; the temple and appendages much more commodious for their sacrifices, and the habitations of the priests and Levites regularly formed round about the temple. So that this whole plan of the division of the country, laying out of the city, temple, and all the appendages, appears to be perfectly regular and uniform, as if it were drawn all at one time, and by one hand, who had power to effect it; and therefore conveyed to the Jews the most complete idea they were capable of conceiving of the most perfect church, commonwealth, city, temple, and conveniences, for Divine worship. I. The Holy Land, as described chap. 47:and 48., according to the original grant, being about two hundred and fifty miles long, north and south, and about one hundred and fifty miles wide, is divided, by parallel

lines east and west, to the twelve tribes, each of them having a portion twenty miles wide. Only between Judah and Benjamin there is a holy portion near ten miles wide; in the middle of which is the holy oblation, twenty-five thousand cubits; that is, about ten miles square for the priests, Levites, city, and temple, chap. 45:1; 48:8; the two ends are for the prince, chap. 45:7, etc. II. The holy oblation, lying in the middle of the holy portion, is twenty-five thousand cubits square, which is near ten miles; of which ten thousand cubits, or four miles, are taken off from the north side for a habitation for the priests, and as much for the Levites on the south side, chap. 45:4, 5, and 48:20; and five thousand cubits in the middle for the city portion, chap. 45:6; in the middle of which is the city, four thousand five hundred cubits square, which is nearly two miles, chap. 48:15, 16. Round about this is left two hundred and fifty cubits, near thirty rods, for suburbs, ver. 17. The remaining ten thousand cubits on the east side, and the ten thousand cubits on the west side, are for the profit of those who serve the city, out of all the tribes, ver. 18, 19. The sanctuary is in the midst of the city, chap. 48:8. III. The sanctuary or temple, and its appendages, were entirely surrounded with a wall six cubits high and six cubits thick, chap. 40:5; and five hundred cubits long on each side, chap. 42:15, etc., and 45:2. In the middle square stands the temple, which was surrounded by a wall one hundred cubits long on each side, chap. 41:13, and six cubits thick, chap. 41:6. The side-chambers on the outside four cubits, ver. 6. The Holy of Holies, at the west end, was twenty cubits square on the inside, ver. 4. The holy place or outer court at the east end, was forty cubits, ver. 12. The length of the porch on the north side was twenty cubits; the breadth was eleven cubits, chap. 40:49; and the width of the separate place on the south side twenty cubits. On each side of the temple, towards the four gates in the outer wall, stood two courts, eight in the whole, each one hundred cubits square, chap. 40:19, 23, 27. In each of these were thirty-six little chambers or buildings, about six cubits square, viz., six at the entrance of the gate, chap. 40:7, 17, 20, etc., and thirty on the pavement, ver. 17, etc., which were for lodgings for the priests, for hanging up their garments, and their part of the sacrifices, chap. 42:13.”

Calmet has constructed a map to show the position of the tribes, and the quantum of space each was to possess. As this will give a better view of the subject than any written description can, I have inserted one

constructed for this work, which, consulting the places said to be connected with the possessions of the different tribes, shows that the tribes did not all possess the same quantum of space, five of the southern tribes possessing only one half as much as those of the north.

Verse 35. *The name of the city from that day shall be, The Lord is there.*— It would have been better to have retained the original words:—

יהוה שמה YEHOVAH SHAMMAH.

This is an allusion to the shechinah, or symbol of the Divine Presence, which was in the first, but most certainly was not in the second temple; but Ezekiel tells us that the Divine Presence should be in the city of which he speaks; and should be there so fully and so powerfully, that it should give name to the city itself; and that the very name, Jehovah shammah, should remind all men of the supereminently glorious Being who had condescended to make this city his habitation.

Two points must be considered here: — 1. That the prophet intended that, when they should be restored, they should build the temple, and divide the land as he here directs, if the thing could be found to be practicable. 2. That he had another temple, another holy city, another Promised Land, in view. The land of Immanuel, the city of the New Jerusalem; and his temple, the Christian Church, which is the house of the living God, 1 Tim. 3:15, in which the presence of Christ shall ever be found; and all its inhabitants, all that believe on his name, shall be temples of the Holy Ghost. Nor can there be any reasonable doubt that the prophet here, by the Spirit of God, not only points out the return of the Israelites from the Babylonish captivity, and what was to befall them previously to the advent of Jesus Christ; but also the glorious spread of the Gospel in the earth, and the final conversion of the tribes of Israel by the preaching of that Gospel.

In conclusion, I think it necessary to state, that there are but few of the prophets of the Old Testament who have left a more valuable treasure to the Church of God than Ezekiel. It is true, he is in several places obscure; but there is a great proportion of the work that is in the highest degree

edifying; and several portions that for the depth of the salvation predicted, and the accuracy and minuteness of the description, have nothing equal to them in the Old Testament Scriptures. On such portions, I have felt it my duty to be very particular, that I might be able to point out spiritual beauties and excellencies in this book which are beyond all praise; while I passed slightly over prophecies and symbols which I did not fully understand; but have left to time, by the fulfillment of the events, to prove to successive generations with what heavenly wisdom this much neglected prophet has spoken. And I take this opportunity to recommend this book to the serious perusal of every pious man; and while he wonders at the extent of the wisdom by which Ezekiel has fathomed the depth of so many Divine mysteries, let him give God the glory for this additional testimony to the unsearchable riches of Christ, and that plenary salvation which he has purchased for, and freely offers to, the vilest of the vile, and to the whole of the descendants of Adam.

MASORETIC NOTES.

Number of verses, 1, 273. Middle verse, chap. 26:1. Masoretic sections, 29.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PLAN OF EZEKIEL'S TEMPLE

As I utterly despair of making the prophet's description of this temple intelligible without a plan, I have introduced one drawn up with great labor and skill by Dom. August. Calmet, where the measurements, distances, gates chambers, courts, inclosures, etc., are all carefully entered as far as they could possibly be ascertained from Ezekiel's description; which, it must be allowed, though wondrously circumstantial, is in several respects obscure. But by referring to the places, both in Kings and Chronicles, as well as in this prophet, where the same things are mentioned, this obscurity will be considerably diminished, if not entirely removed. At the same time, for a description of the temple in general, I beg leave to refer the reader to 1 Kings 6., at the end, where this subject is considered at large.

THE PLAN

[*Let it be observed that the Hebrew cubit is about twenty inches and a half.*]

AAAA The first inclosure, or wall of six hundred cubits i.e., one thousand and twenty-five royal feet in length on each side, chap. 45:2; and six cubits or ten feet three inches high, and as many in breadth, chap. 40:5.

BBBB The court of the Gentiles, or first court fifty cubits in breadth, or eighty-five feet five inches, chap. 40:2.

CCCC The outward wall of the court of Israel, or inclosure, five hundred cubits square, i.e. eight hundred and fifty-four feet two inches. This wall might be thirty cubits high, taken from the level of the threshold of the gate.

DDDD The court of Israel, one hundred cubits, or one hundred and seventy feet ten inches broad, chap. 40:19.

EEEE The outer wall, or inclosure of the court of the priests, two hundred cubits, or three hundred and forty-one feet eight inches square, is supposed to be thirty cubits, or fifty-one feet three inches in height.

FFF The court of the priests, one hundred cubits, or one hundred and seventy feet ten inches square, chap. 40:7; 41:14, 15.

G The Sanctuary, or Holy of Holies, twenty cubits, or thirty-four feet two inches square, chap. 41:4; 1 Kings 6:2.

H The holy place, forty cubits long by twenty broad, or sixty-eight feet two inches long by thirty-four feet two inches broad, chap. 41:2, and 1 Kings 6:2.

I The vestibule or porch, twenty cubits in breadth, by ten (or according to Ezekiel, eleven) cubits in length, i.e., thirty-four feet two inches long by

seventeen feet one inch broad, chap. 40:48; 1 Kings 6:3.

K The altar of burnt-offerings, twelve cubits, or twenty feet six inches square, according to Ezekiel, chap. 43:12, 13, etc., or ten cubits high by twenty broad, i.e., seventeen feet one inch high, and thirty-four feet two inches broad, according to 2 Chronicles 4:1.

LLL The wall of separation which encompassed the Temple, and the altar of burntofferings, of which the Scriptures do not give the dimensions. It was twenty cubits from the buildings in the court of the priests, and five from the Temple, chap. 41:9, 10. Josephus makes it three cubits high, Antiq. lib. 8:c. 2.

MMMMMM Gates of the court of Israel, and of the court of the priests, all of the same dimensions, chap. 40:1, 22, 36. Each of the porches was fifty cubits long, i.e., eighty-five feet five inches (as much as the depth of the aisles, chap. 40:15) and twenty-five cubits, or forty-two feet eight inches and a half in breadth in the opening, and sixty cubits high, i.e., one hundred and two feet six inches, chap. 40:14. On each side of the porches there were three chambers, each six cubits square, chap. 40:6. And the separations between the three chambers were five cubits in thickness, chap. 40:6.

NNNNNNNN Galleries around the court of Israel, chap. 40: I place there thirty pillars on a line of two hundred cubits in length, which is the same proportion as those given for one hundred cubits long, 1 Kings 7:2-4, for the court of the palace of Solomon.

OOOOOOOO Chambers or apartments round the court of Israel; there were thirty on both sides of the gate, or fifteen on each side, chap. 40:17.

PPPP The kitchens of the Temple, forty cubits, or sixty-eight feet four inches long by thirty cubits, or fifty-one feet three inches broad, chap. 45:21-24.

Q The north gate of the court of the priests, where the victims were prepared, and where they slew the animals designed for sacrifice, chap.

40:38, 39.

RRRR Galleries around the court of the priests, chap. 42:3.

SSSSS Apartments continued round the court of the priests. The aisle, which was to the south of the eastern gate, was for the priests employed as guards of the Temple, chap. 40:45. The aisle on the north side of the said gate was appointed for the singers, chap. 40:44; the aisle that was on the eastern side of the south gate was for the priests employed about the altar, chap. 40:46; the aisles which were to the west of the north gate and of the south gate, contained the halls where the priests ate, chap. 42:13.

TT The kitchens of the court of the priests were those where they dressed the trespass-offering, sin-offering, and the meat-offerings, forty cubits, or sixty-eight feet four inches long, and thirty cubits, or fifty-one feet five inches broad, chap. 46:20. He speaks only of that on the north.

VVVV Flights of steps which led to the court of the people. In each flight there were seven steps, chap. 40:22-26.

XXX Flights of steps which led to the court of the priests; in each there were eighty steps, chap. 40:31, 34, 37.

YY A flight of steps which led to the porch of the Temple, eight steps in each, chap. 40:49.

aaa Chambers about the Temple, thirty-three in number, Ezekiel makes them four cubits in breadth, chap. 41:5; but in 1 Kings 6:5, 6, they are stated to be five cubits in the lower stage, six in the second, and seven in the third.

bb Flights of steps opposite to the chambers, which were continued round the temple, chap. 41:7, and 1 Kings 6:8.

c The steps of the altar of burnt-offerings turned toward the east, chap. 43:15, 16.

dddd Tables of hewn stone, which were in the portico of the north gate of the priests' court, where they slew, flayed, and cut up the victims. Each table was one and a half cubits square, chap. 40:38, 39-41.

The great walls of the temple were all six cubits, or ten feet three inches thick. These walls were: 1. That which formed the first inclosure; 2. The wall of the court of Israel; 3. The wall of the court of the priests; and, 4. The walls of the Temple. But the outward wall of the thirty-three chambers, which were round the holy place and the sanctuary, was only five cubits broad, and fifteen high; i.e., eight feet six inches and a half in thickness, and twenty-five feet seven inches and a half in height, chap. 41:9, 12.

All the gates of the two courts, that of Israel and that of the priests, are of the same dimensions. The wall where was the opening was six cubits, or ten feet three inches in thickness. The gate was eight cubits, or thirteen feet eight inches wide; and the opening of the gate was one cubit, and the gate was thirteen cubits, or twenty-two feet two inches and a half high, chap. 40:9, 11.

The western gate of the Temple is not mentioned by Ezekiel, because, according to his plan, the king's palace was not to be near the temple; and consequently this gate, which was the gate of the king, did not exist. But this was not followed, as we find that, after the return from Babylon, there were gates on the western side of the Temple, according to Josephus; and before the captivity the western gate did most certainly exist, see chap. 43:8; 2 Kings 11:6; 16:18; 1 Chronicles 9:24; 26:16, 18.

1. The gate of the porch of the holy place was fourteen cubits wide, i.e., twenty-three feet eleven inches, chap. 40:48; 1 Kings 6:3.

2. The gate of the holy place was ten cubits, or seventeen feet one inch wide, chap. 41:1, 2.

3. The gate of the sanctuary was six cubits or ten feet three inches wide. The wall of the separation was only two cubits, chap. 41:1, 3.

4. The east gate of the court of the priests was shut all the week, and was not opened but on the Sabbath and new moons, according to Ezekiel. It was there that the king had his seat, a sort of tribunal, chap. 44:2-4; 46:1, 2, etc.

Calmet observes, with respect to his plan, that he assigns only two galleries to the apartments which were around the court of Israel; but those which were around the court of the priests had three, chap. 42:3, 5, 6. There is another difference between the palace (atrium) of the court of the priests, and that of the court of Israel. The walls of the first were built with three rows of hewn stones and one of cedar alternately, 1 Kings 6:36; but this is not said to be the same in the structure of the outward court, or that of the people.

In the Old Testament we find no mention of the court of the Gentiles. Only two courts are mentioned there, one of the priests, the other of the people; one the inner, the other the outer court; but it is certain that such a court did exist, and is here marked BBBB.

The height of the aisles, or apartments that were around the two courts, is not mentioned any where in the Scriptures, but they are here fixed at thirty cubits; for the temple was not higher, neither was Solomon's palace. See 1 Kings 7:2.

EXPLANATION OF THE PLAN FOR THE DIVISION OF THE LAND OF CANAAN, ACCORDING TO EZEKIEL'S VISION, CHAP. 48.

A The Temple of the Lord, five hundred cubits square, chap. 45:2.

BB The city of the Levites, four thousand five hundred cubits square, and eighteen thousand in compass, chap. 48:16.

cccc Suburbs of the city of the Levites, two hundred and fifty cubits in breadth, chap. 48:17.

dddd The twelve gates of the Levitical city, four on each side, chap. 48:31-34.

EE City of the lay persons or workmen employed in the service of the priests and of the Levites, five thousand broad by twenty-five thousand cubits long, chap. 45:6.

FF Cultivated ground for the maintenance of the lay artisans, chap. 48:16.

GG Portion of the prince of Israel, twenty-five thousand cubits long by twelve thousand five hundred broad, chap. 48:21.

The whole extent of the land from Kadesh-barnea south to Hethlon or Hamath north, was about two hundred and twenty miles, its mean breadth about one hundred.

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK

OF THE

PROPHET DANIEL

DANIEL is said to have descended from the royal family of David; and he appears to have been carried into Babylon when very young, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim king of Judah, A.M. 3398, B.C. 602, or 606 before the vulgar era. He and his three fellowcaptives, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, being likely youths, were chosen to be about the king's court, and were appointed to have an education suitable to the employments for which they were destined. As they had been carefully bred up in the Mosaic institutions, they regulated their conduct by them, even in the court of a heathen king, where they were in the capacity of slaves; hence, though ordered to be fed from the royal table, they would not touch that food, because the Chaldeans ate of meat forbidden by the Mosaic law, and probably even that which might be dominated clean became defiled by having been sacrificed to idols before it was prepared for common use. At their earnest request, the officer under whose care they were placed permitted them to use vegetables only; and finding that they grew healthy and strong by this aliment, did not oblige them to use the portion sent from the king's table.

Daniel appears to have been instructed in all the wisdom of the Chaldeans, which was at that time greatly superior to the learning of the ancient Egyptians; and he was soon distinguished in the Babylonish court, as well for his wisdom and strong understanding as for his deep and steady piety.

His interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the variously compounded metallic image raised his credit so high at the court that he was established governor of the province of Babylon, and made chief of all

the Magians, or wise men in that country. The chief facts and incidents of his history are so particularly woven throughout the book bearing his name, and undoubtedly written by himself, that they need not be detailed here.

The reputation of Daniel was so great, even in his lifetime, that it became a proverb. "Thou art wiser than Daniel," said Ezekiel ironically to the king of Tyre, Ezekiel 28:3; and by the same prophet God ranks him among the most holy and exemplary of men, when he declares, speaking relative to Jerusalem, which had been condemned to destruction, "Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own lives by their righteousness," Ezekiel 14:14, 20.

Josephus, *Ant. lib. x., c. 12*, says that God bestowed many favors on him: that he was advanced to the rank of the most considerable prophets; that he enjoyed the favor of princes, and the affection of the people during his life; and that after his death his memory became immortal. He observes also that, in the complexion of his predictions, he differs widely from all other prophets; they foretold scarcely any thing but disastrous events; on the contrary, he predicts the most joyous events, and fixes the times of accomplishment with more circumstantial precision than they did. And this is so true, that we cannot help thinking that God had given this eminent man a greater degree of light to fix the times when his predictions should issue, than he had given in general to all his predecessors, who simply declared the mind of God in relation to things future, without attempting to indicate the distance of time in which they should be fulfilled. There are but very few exceptions to this either in Isaiah or Jeremiah. And in this respect the prophecy of the seventy weeks of Daniel exceeds all that have gone before, as the incidents and transactions relative to its fulfillment were so various, and yet so fixed and declared six hundred years before the time, that when the time came in which they were predicted to take place, they were expected, and occurred exactly according to the prediction, and the expectations founded upon it. This prophet therefore, far from occupying a lower place among divinely inspired men, deserves to be placed in the front rank with all those who have been most distinguished among the men who have partaken most largely of the prophetic gift.

The rabbins have endeavored to degrade Daniel, and have placed his prophecies among the hagiographa, books which they consider to possess a minor degree of inspiration; and it is probable that he meets with this treatment from them because his prophecies are proofs too evident that Jesus Christ is the true Messiah, and that he came at the very time that Daniel said the Prince Messiah should come. But the testimony and sayings of such men are infinitely overpowered by the testimony of Ezekiel, which has been produced above; and the testimony of our LORD, who gives him the title of prophet, Matthew 24:15, without the slightest intimation that he was to wear this title with abatement.

It is very probable that Daniel did not return at the general restoration from the Babylonish captivity. At that time, if alive, he must have been an old man; and it is most likely that he finished his days in Babylon, though some Asiatic authors hold that he returned to Judea with Ezra, came back afterward to Persia, and died in the city of Susa.

Josephus speaks of his skill in architecture, *Antiq. lib. x., c. 12*, and that he built a famous tower at Ecbatane or Susa, which remained to his time, and was so exquisitely finished that it always appeared as if newly built. In this tower or palace the kings of Persia were interred; and in consideration of its founder, the guard of it was always chosen from the Jews.

Daniel is famous among the orientalisists. The author of the *Tareekh Muntekheb* says that Daniel flourished in the time of Lohorasp, king of Persia; and consequently in that of Ceresh, of Cyrus, who gave him the government of Syria; that he taught these two princes the knowledge of the true God; that he preached the true faith through the whole of the Babylonian Irak; and was, on the death of Nebuchadnezzar, sent by Bahman, (Artaxerxes Longimanus,) son of Asfendiar, who then reigned in Persia, into Judea; and that, having returned, he died at Shouster, or Susa, the capital of Persia, where he lies interred.

Some have supposed that the Zoraster or Zeradusht of the Persians is a confused picture of the Prophet Daniel. The account given by Abul Pharaje, in his fifth dynasty, may be considered favorable to this opinion.

He says, “Zeradusht, author of the Magiouseiah Magism, or sect of the worshippers of fire, flourished in the reign of Cambasous, (Cambyses;) that he was a native of the province of Adherbigian, or Media, or, according to others, of Assyria; that he foretold to his disciples the coming of the Messiah, who should be pointed out by a star which should appear in the day time at his birth; that they should have the first information of his advent; that he should be born of a virgin; and that they should present him with gifts; because he is the WORD that made the heavens.” See Poccocke’s Abul Pharajius, p. 83 of the Arabic, and 54 of the Latin.

D’Herbelot, on this account, makes the following remark: “We may see by these words of the historian, that the prophesy of Balaam was pretty generally known throughout the east, and that the Magi, who came to worship our Lord, were the true Magians of Persia, and not Arab kings.”

The account given by Abul Pharaje makes Daniel and Zeradusht contemporary, and thus far is favorable to the opinion that the history of former may be dismissed under that of the latter. There have been several Zorasters, of whom many fables are told; and no wonder, when the persons themselves are generally fabulous.

The Asiatics make him the inventor of [A] remel, or geomancy; and among them he passes for the author of a work entitled Assoul ol Tabeer, “The Principles of the Interpretation of Dreams.” I have in my own library a very ancient work which pretends to be drawn from this, and is entitled Somnia Daniel; it was printed in the infancy of printing, but without date; small 4to. There is an Arabic work in the French king’s library, No. 410, entitled Odhmet al Mancoul, an Danial an Nabi, “The Traditionary Predictions of Daniel the Prophet;” which is said to contain many falsities, built on the foundation of Daniel’s prophecies; but it has never been given to the public, and I have no other notice of it than the above from D’Herbelot. But although all these are curious from their antiquity, yet they are doubtless impostures.

Abul Pharaje, in his history of the dynasties, says, that the seventy weeks of Daniel are to be dated from the twentieth year of [A] Ardsheer Dirazdest, the Artaxerxes Longimanus of the Greeks, (called Bahman above,) and the same to whom Nehemiah was [A]

sakee, or cup-bearer. Other orientalist are of the same opinion. This shall be considered more at large when we come to the prophecy itself. Artaxerxes had the name of Longimanus, or Long-handed, from the great extent of his dominions.

Daniel cannot be ranked among the Hebrew poets: his book is all in prose; and it is written partly in Hebrew, and partly in Chaldee. The Chaldee, or Syro-Chaldaic part, begins with מלכא לעלמי חייי malka lealmin chei, "O king, live for ever!" and continues to the end of the seventh chapter.

In the interpretation of his prophecies I have endeavored to follow the best critics and chronologists; and, without an extended comment, to give in as short a space as possible the meaning of every place. On the metallic images and seventy weeks I have been obliged to be more prolix, as these are of too much importance to be slightly handled. It is not my province to enter into the controversy about the date when the seventy weeks commence; even they who disagree so much from each other on this point come so near to the general issue that the difference is immaterial.

The chronology of the several events mentioned in this book Calmet endeavors to fix as follows:—

A.M.

3398. Daniel led captive to Babylon, chap. 1:1-7.

3399. Death of Nabopolassar, father of Nebuchadnezzar.

3401. Jehoiakim revolts against Nebuchadnezzar, 2 Kings 24:1.

3402. Dream of the compound statue, Daniel 2:1, etc. Daniel and his

companions promoted to honor at court. Birth of Cyrus, son of Cambyses and Mandane.

3405. Jehoiakim is taken and put to death by the Chaldeans. Jeconiah is raised to his throne, but reigns only three months and ten days. Zedekiah, last king of Judah, succeeds; and reigns eleven years.

3416. Taking of Jerusalem, and destruction of the temple, 1 Chronicles 36.

3434. Return of Nebuchadnezzar to Babylon after his great conquests in Phoenicia, Juudea, Egypt, etc. His dream of the great tree, chap. 4:7, etc.

3435. He becomes insane, which lasts for seven years, chap. 4:32, 33.

3442. He becomes sane, and re-ascends the throne. The golden image set up. The three Hebrews cast into the fiery furnace, chap. 2: Death of Nebuchadnezzar after a reign of forty-three years, according to Berosus. Evil-Merodach succeeds him, and reigns two years. — Berosus. He sets Jeconiah at liberty, Jeremiah 52:31.

3444. Belshazzar his son succeeds, Daniel 7:1. Daniel's vision of the four beasts, representing the four great empires, chap. vii.

3457. End of the Babylonish captivity declared by Cyrus, in the first year of his reign, 2 Chronicles 36:22, and Ezra 1:1; but afterward interrupted. See below.

3485. Termination of Jeremiah's seventy years under Darius Hystaspes, who gives orders to continue the rebuilding of the temple.

3550. Commencement of the seventy weeks, chap. 9:94. Nehemiah returns to Jerusalem, Nehemiah 2:1-6.

In this chronology Calmet differs from Usher.

As a writer, this prophet is simple, yet pure and correct: and he is so conscientious that he relates the very words of those persons whom he introduces as speaking. He writes Hebrew where what he delivers is a bare narrative; but he relates in Chaldee the conversations which he had with the wise men and the kings; and in the same language he relates Nebuchadnezzar's edict, which he made after Daniel had interpreted his dream concerning the great metalline image. This is a proof of his great and conscientious accuracy; and exhibits this prophet in a most advantageous point of view. Daniel writes both Hebrew and Chaldee with great purity.

This book divides itself into two parts. Part I is historical, and is contained in the six former chapters. Part 2: is prophetical, and occupies the other six.

THE BOOK

OF THE

PROPHET DANIEL

Chronological Notes relative to the commencement of Daniel's prophesying

- Year from the Creation, according to Archbishop Usher, 3397.
- Year of the Jewish era of the world, 3154.
- Year from the Deluge, 1741.
- Second year of the forty-third Olympiad.
- Year from the building of Rome, according to the Varronian or generally received account, 147.
- Year from the building of Rome, according to Cato and the Fasti Consulares, 146.
- Year from the building of Rome, according to Polybius the historian, 145.
- Year from the building of Rome, according to Fabius Pictor, 411.
- Year of the Julian Period, 4107.
- Year of the era of Nabonassar, 141.
- Year from the foundation of Solomon's temple, 397.
- Year since the destruction of the kingdom of Israel by Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, 114.
- Fourth year after the first Sabbatic year after the seventeenth Jewish jubilee, according to Helvicus.
- Year before the birth of Christ, 603.
- Year before the vulgar era of Christ's nativity, 607.
- Cycle of the Sun, 19.
- Cycle of the Moon, 3.

- Tenth year of Tarquinius Priscus, the fifth king of the Romans.
- Nineteenth year of Cyaxares or Cyaraxes, the fourth king of Media.
- Forty-fourth year of Archidamus, king of Lacedaemon, of the family of the Proclidae.
- First year of Leon, king of Lacedaemon, of the family of Eurysthenidae.
- Thirteenth year of Alyattes II., king of Lydia, and father of the celebrated Croesus.
- Thirty-fourth year of Philip, the sixth king of Macedon.
- Eleventh year of Pharaoh-necho, called Necus by Herodotus. This king was the immediate predecessor of Psammis; and Psammis was succeeded by the celebrated Pharaoh-hophra, called also Apries.
- Eighth year of Ithobalus, king of the Tyrains, according to Helvicus.
- Third year (ending) of Jehoiakim, king of Judah; for the principal part of A.M. 3397 corresponded to the fourth year of this prince.

CHAPTER 1

This chapter begins with giving a short account of Nebuchadnezzar's conquest of Judea, when Jehoiakim became tributary to him; and consequently the seventy years' captivity and vassalage began, 1, 2. On this expedition (taking Egypt in his way) the king of Babylon set out towards the end of the third year of Jehoiakim, but did not take Jerusalem before the ninth month of the year following. Hence the seeming discrepancy between Daniel and Jeremiah, (Jeremiah 25:1,) the one computing from the time of his setting out on the expedition, and the other from the time in which the purpose of it was accomplished. We have next an account of the manner in which Daniel and his companions were brought up at the king's court, 3-7. They reject the daily provision of meat granted by the king, lest they should be defiled, and are allowed to live on pulse, 8-16. Their great proficiency in the wisdom of that time, 17-20. Daniel flourishes till the reign of Cyrus the Persian, 21.

NOTES ON CHAP. 1

Verse 1. *In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim*— This king was raised to the throne of Judea in the place of his brother Jehoahaz, by Pharaoh-necho, king of Egypt, 2 Kings 23:34-36, and continued tributary to him during the first three years of his reign; but in the fourth, which was the first of Nebuchadnezzar, Jeremiah 25:1, Nebuchadnezzar completely defeated the Egyptian army near the Euphrates, Jeremiah 46:2; and this victory put the neighboring countries of Syria, among which Judea was the chief, under the Chaldean government. Thus Jehoiakim, who had first been tributary to Egypt, became now the vassal of the king of Babylon, 2 Kings 24:1.

At the end of three years Jehoiakim rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar, who, then occupied with other wars, did not proceed against Jerusalem till three years after, which was the eleventh and last of Jehoiakim, 2 Kings

23:36.

There are some difficulties in the chronology of this place. Calmet takes rather a different view of these transactions. He connects the history thus: Nabopolassar, king of Babylon, finding that one of his lords whom he had made governor of Coelesyria and Phoenicia had revolted from him, and formed an alliance with the king of Egypt, sent Neubuchadnezzar his son, whom he invested with the authority of king, to reduce those provinces, as was customary among the easterns when the heir presumptive was sent on any important expedition or embassy. This young prince, having quelled the insurrection in those parts, marched against Jerusalem about the end of the third or beginning of the fourth year of the reign of Jehoiakim, king of Judah. He soon took the city, and put Jehoiakim in chains with the design of carrying him to Babylon; but, changing his mind, he permitted him to resume the reins of government under certain oppressive conditions. At this year, which was A.M. 3398, the seventy years of the Babylonish captivity commence. Nabopolassar dying in the interim, Nebuchadnezzar was obliged to return speedily to Babylon, leaving his generals to conduct the Jewish captives to Babylon, among whom were Daniel and his companions.

Verse 2. *Part of the vessels of the house of God*— He took the richest and finest of them for the service of his god Bel, and left what were necessary for carrying on the public worship of Jehovah, (for he did not attempt to alter the civil or religious constitution of Judea;) for leaving Jehoiakim on the throne, he only laid the land under tribute. The Chaldeans carried these sacred vessels away at three different times. 1. In the war spoken of in this place. 2. In the taking of Jerusalem and Jeconiah a few months after, 2 Kings 24:13. 3. Eleven years after, under the reign of Zedekiah, when the city and temple were totally destroyed, and the land ruined, 2 Kings 25:8-16.

The land of Shinar— This was the ancient name of Babylon. See Genesis 11:2.

The treasure house of his god.— This was Bel, who had a splendid temple in Babylon, and was the tutelar god of the city and empire.

Verse 3. *Master of his eunuchs*— This word eunuchs signifies officers about or in the palace whether literally eunuchs or not.

Verse 4. *Children*— ילדים yeladim, youths, young men; and so the word should be rendered throughout this book.

Skilled in all wisdom— Rather, persons capable of every kind of literary accomplishment, that they might be put under proper instruction. And as children of the blood and of the nobles were most likely, from the care usually taken of their initiatory education, to profit most by the elaborate instruction here designed, the master of the eunuchs, the king's chamberlain, was commanded to choose the youths in question out of such.

Verse 5. *A daily provision*— Athenaeus, lib. iv., c. 10, says: The kings of Persia, (who succeeded the kings of Babylon, on whose empire they had seized,) were accustomed to order the food left at their own tables to be delivered to their courtiers.

So nourishing them three years— This was deemed a sufficient time to acquire the Chaldee language, and the sciences peculiar to that people. I suppose they had good introductory books, able teachers, and a proper method; else they would have been obliged, like us, to send their children seven years to school, and as many to the university, to teach them any tolerable measure of useful and ornamental literature! O how reproachful to the nations of Europe, and particularly to our own, is this backward mode of instruction. And what is generally learned after this vast expense of time and money? A little Latin, Greek, and mathematics; perhaps a little moral philosophy; and by this they are entitled, not qualified, to teach others, and especially to teach the people the important science of salvation! To such shepherds, (and there are many such,) the hungry sheep look up, and are not fed; and if all are not such, no thanks to our plan of national education.

Verse 6. *Now among these*— There were no doubt several noble youths from other provinces: but the four mentioned here were Jews, and are

supposed to have all been of royal extraction.

Verse 7. *Unto whom the prince of the eunuchs gave names*— This change of names, Calmet properly remarks, was a mark of dominion and authority. It was customary for masters to impose new names upon their slaves; and rulers often, on their ascending the throne, assumed a name different from that which they had before.

דניאל DANIEL signifies “God is my Judge.” This name they changed into **בלמשאצר** BELTESHATTSAR; in Chaldee, “The treasure of Bel,” or “The depository of the secrets (or treasure) of Bel.”

הנניה HANANIAH signifies, “The Lord has been gracious to me,” or “He to whom the Lord is gracious.” This name was changed into **שדרך** SHADRACH, Chaldee, which has been variously translated: “The inspiration of the sun;” “God the author of evil, be propitious to us;” “Let God preserve us from evil.”

מישאל MISHAEL signifies “He who comes from God.” Him they called **מישך** MESHACH, which In Chaldee signifies, “He who belongs to the goddess Sheshach,” a celebrated deity of the Babylonians, mentioned by Jeremiah, chap. 25:26.

עזריה AZARIAH, which signifies “The Lord is my Helper,” they changed into **אבד נגו** ABED-NEGO, which in Chaldee is “the servant of Nego,” who was one of their divinities; by which they meant either the sun, or the morning star; whether Jupiter or Venus.

The vicious pronunciation of this name should be carefully avoided; I mean that which lays the accent on the first syllable, and hurries so the end, without attending to the natural division of the word Abed-Nego.

Verse 8. *But Daniel-would not defile himself*— I have spoken of this resolution in the introduction. The chief reasons why Daniel would not eat meat from the royal table were probably these three: — 1. Because they ate unclean beasts, which were forbidden by the Jewish law. 2. Because

they ate, as did the heathens in general, beasts which had been strangled, or not properly blooded. 3. Because the animals that were eaten were first offered as victims to their gods. It is on this account that Athenaeus calls the beasts which here served up at the tables of the Persian kings, **ἕρπια**, victims, lib. 4:c. 10, p. 145.

Verse 11. *Then said Daniel to Melzar*— Melzar was an officer under Ashpenaz, whose office it was to attend to the food, clothing, etc., of these royal captives. Others think **מלצר** meltsar, master of the inn or hotel, the name of an office.

Verse 12. *Give us pulse to eat*— **הזרעים** hazzeraim, seeds or grain, such as barley, wheat, rye, and peas, etc. Though a vegetable diet might have produced that healthiness of the system in general, and of the countenance particularly, as mentioned here; yet we are to understand that there was an especial blessing of God in this, because this spare diet was taken on a religious account.

Verse 17. *As for these four children*— Young men or youths. Our translation gives a false idea.

In all visions and dreams.— That is, such as are Divine; for as to dreams in general, they have as much signification as they have connection, being the effects of the state of the body, of the mind, or of the circumstances of the dreamer. A dream may be considered supernatural, if it have nothing preposterous, nothing monstrous, and nothing irregular. If the whole order and consequences of the things be preserved in them, from beginning to end, then we may presume they are supernatural. In such dreams Daniel had understanding.

Verse 18. *Now at the end of the days*— That is, at the end of three years, ver. 5.

Verse 19. *And among them all*— All the young noble captives from different nations.

Therefore stood they before the king.— It appears that only four were

wanting.

Verse 20. *Magicians and astrologers*— Probably the same as philosophers and astronomers among us.

Verse 21. *The first year of king Cyrus*.— That is, to the end of the Chaldean empire. And we find Daniel alive in the third year of Cyrus, see chap. 10:1.

CHAPTER 2

Nebuchadnezzar, in the second year of his reign, (or in the fourth, according to the Jewish account, which takes in the first two years in which he reigned conjointly with his father,) had a dream which greatly troubled him; but of which nothing remained in the morning but the uneasy impression. Hence the diviners, when brought in before the king, could give no interpretation, as they were not in possession of the dream, 1-13. Daniel then, having obtained favor from God, is made acquainted with the dream, and its interpretation, 14-19; for which he blesses God in a lofty and beautiful ode, 20-23; and reveals both unto the king, telling him first the particulars of the dream, 24-35, and then interpreting it of the four great monarchies. The then existing Chaldean empire, represented by the head of gold, is the first; the next is the Medo-Persian; the third, the Macedonian or Grecian; the fourth, the Roman, which should break every other kingdom in pieces, but which in its last stage, should be divided into ten kingdoms, represented by the ten toes of the image, as they are in another vision (chap. vii.) by the ten horns of the fourth beast. He likewise informs the king that in the time of this last monarchy, viz., the Roman, God would set up the kingdom of the Messiah; which, though small in its commencement, should ultimately be extended over the whole earth, 36-45. Daniel and his three friends, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, (named by the prince of the eunuchs, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego,) are then promoted by the king to great honor, 46-49.

NOTES ON CHAP. 2

Verse 1. *The second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar*— That is, the second year of his reigning alone, for he was king two years before his father's death. See the notes on chap. 1:1. This was therefore the fifth year of his reign, and the fourth of the captivity of Daniel.

Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams wherewith his spirit was troubled— The dream had made a deep and solemn impression upon his mind; and,

having forgotten all but general circumstances, his mind was distressed.

Verse 2. *The magicians*—**חַרְטֻמִּים** chartummim. See the note on Genesis 41:8.

The astrologers—**אַשְׁשַׁפִּים** ashshaphim. Perhaps from **נָשַׁף** nashaph, to breathe, because they laid claim to Divine inspiration; but probably the persons in question were the philosophers and astronomers among the Babylonians.

The sorcerers—**מְכַשְׁפִּים** mechashshephim. See the note on Deuteronomy 18:10, and on Exodus 22:18, and Leviticus 19:31, where several of these arts are explained.

The Chaldeans— Who these were is difficult to be ascertained. They might be a college of learned men, where all arts and sciences were professed and taught. The Chaldeans were the most ancient philosophers of the world; they might have been originally inhabitants of the Babylonian Irak; and still have preserved to themselves exclusively the name of Chaldeans, to distinguish themselves from other nations and peoples who inhabited the one hundred and twenty provinces of which the Babylonish government was composed.

Verse 4. *Then spake the Chaldeans to the king in Syriac*—**אַרְמִית** aramith, the language of Aram or Syria. What has been generally called the Chaldee.

O king, live for ever—**מַלְכָּא לְעַלְמֵי חַיִּי** Malca leolmin cheyi. With these words the Chaldee part of Daniel commences; and continues to the end of the seventh chapter. These kinds of compliments are still in use in the East Indies. A superior gives a blessing to an inferior by saying to him, when the latter is in the act of doing him reverence, “Long life to thee.” A poor man, going into the presence of a king to solicit a favor, uses the same kind of address: O father, thou art the support of the destitute; mayest thou live to old age! — WARD’S Customs.

Verse 5. *Ye shall be cut in pieces*— This was arbitrary and tyrannical in the extreme; but, in the order of God’s providence, it was overruled to serve the most important purpose.

Verse 8. *That ye would gain the time*— The king means either that they wished to prolong the time that he might recollect it, or get indifferent about it; or that they might invent something in the place of it; or make their escape to save their lives, after having packed up their valuables. See ver. 9.

Verse 10. *There is not a man upon the earth*— The thing is utterly impossible to man. This was their decision: and when Daniel gave the dream, with its interpretation, they knew that the spirit of the holy gods was in him. So, even according to their own theology, he was immeasurably greater than the wisest in Babylon or in the world.

Verse 13. *They sought Daniel and his fellows*— As the decree stated that all the wise men of Babylon should be slain, the four young Hebrews, being reputed among the wisest, were considered as sentenced to death also.

Verse 14. *Captain of the king’s guard*— Chief of the king’s executioners or slaughter men. Margin, רב תבאיא *rab tabachaiya*, chief of the butchers, he that took off the heads of those whom the king ordered to be slain, because they had in any case displeased him. “Go and bring me the head of Giaffer.” The honorable butcher went and brought the head in a bag on a dish. It was Herod’s chief butcher that brought the head of John the Baptist in a dish to the delicate daughter of Herodias. This was the custom of the country. No law, no judge, no jury. The will or caprice of the king governed all things. Happy England! know and value thy excellent privileges!

Verse 16. *That he would give him time*— That is, that he might seek unto God for a revelation of the thing. The Chaldeans dared not even to promise this; they would only pledge themselves for the interpretation, provided the king would furnish the dream. Daniel engages both to find the lost dream, and to give the proper interpretation.

Verse 18. *That they would desire mercies*— For this Daniel had requested a little time; and doubtless both he and his three companions prayed incessantly till God gave the wished for revelation; but whether it was given that same sight, we do not know.

Verse 19. *Then was the secret revealed-in a night vision*.— Daniel either dreamed it, or it was represented to his mind by an immediate inspiration.

Verse 20. *Wisdom and might are his*— He knows all things, and can do all things.

Verse 21. *He changeth the times*— Time, duration, succession are his, and under his dominion. It is in the course of his providence that one king is put down, and another raised up; and therefore he can distinctly tell what he has purposed to do in the great empires of the earth.

Verse 23. *I thank thee and praise thee*— No wonder he should feel gratitude, when God by this merciful interference had saved both the life of him and his fellows; and was about to reflect the highest credit on the God of the Jews, and on the people themselves.

Verse 24. *Destroy not the wise men*— The decree was suspended till it should be seen whether Daniel could tell the dream, and give its interpretation.

Verse 27. *Cannot the wise men*— Cannot your own able men, aided by your gods, tell you the secret? This question was necessary in order that the king might see the foolishness of depending on the one, or worshipping the other.

The soothsayers— One of our old words: “The tellers of truth:” but גזרין gazerin is the name of another class of those curious artists, unless we suppose it to mean the same as the CHALDEANS, ver. 2. They are supposed to be persons who divined by numbers, amulets, etc. There are many conjectures about them, which, whatever learning they show, cast little light upon this place.

Verse 28. *There is a God in heaven*— To distinguish him from those idols, the works of men's hands; and from the false gods in which the Chaldeans trusted.

In the latter days.— A phrase which, in the prophets, generally means the times of the Messiah. God is about to show what shall take place from this time to the latest ages of the world. And the vision most certainly contains a very extensive and consecutive prophecy; which I shall treat more largely at the close of the chapter, giving in the mean time a short exposition.

Verse 31. *A great image*— Representing the four great monarchies.

Verse 32. *Head was of fine gold*— The Babylonish empire, the first and greatest.


Breast and his arms of silver— The Medo-Persian empire, under Cyrus, etc.

His belly and his thighs of brass— The Macedonian empire, under Alexander the Great, and his successors.

Verse 33. *His legs of iron*— The Roman government.

His feet part of iron and part of clay.— The same, mixed with the barbaric nations, and divided into ten kingdoms. See at the end of the chapter.

Verse 34. *A stone was cut out*— The fifth monarchy; the spiritual kingdom of the Lord Jesus, which is to last for ever, and diffuse itself over the whole earth.

Verse 35. *The stone-became a great mountain*— There is the kingdom  eben, of the stone, and the kingdom of the mountain. See at the end at the chapter.

Verse 37. *The God of heaven*— Not given by thy own gods, nor acquired

by thy own skill and prowess; it is a Divine gift.

Power— To rule this kingdom.

And strength— To defend it against all foes.

And glory.— Great honor and dignity.

Verse 38. *Thou art this head of gold*— See on ver. 31-34, and at the end.

Verse 44. *A kingdom which shall never be destroyed*— The extensive and extending empire of Christ.

Shall not be left to other people— All the preceding empires have swallowed up each other successively; but this shall remain to the end of the world.

Verse 45. *The dream is certain*— It contains a just representation of things as they shall be.

And the interpretation thereof sure.— The parts of the dream being truly explained.

Verse 46. *The king-fell upon his face*— Prostrated himself: this was the fullest act of adoration among the ancients.

Worshipped Daniel— Supposing him to be a god, or Divine being. No doubt Daniel forbade him; for to receive this would have been gross idolatry.

Verse 47. *Your God is a God of gods*— He is greater than all others.

And a Lord of kings— He governs both in heaven and earth.

Verse 48. *Made Daniel a great man*— By, 1. Giving him many rich gifts. 2. By making him governor over the whole province of Babylon. And, 3. By making him the chief or president over all the wise men.

Verse 49. *Daniel requested of the king, and he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego over the affairs of the province of Babylon*— He wished his three companions promoted, who had shared his anxieties, and helped him by their prayers. They all had places of trust, in which they could do much good, and prevent much evil.

Daniel sat in the gate of the king.— That is, was the chief officer in the palace; and the greatest confidant and counselor of the king. But whatever his influence and that of his friends was, it extended only over the province of Babylon; not through the empire.

A DISCOURSE ON NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DREAM,

chap. 2:41-45.

I shall now consider this most important vision more at large, and connect it with a portion of the previous history of the Jewish people.

The kingdoms of Israel and Judah after a series of the most unparalleled ingratitude and rebellion, against displays of mercy and benevolence, only equaled by their rebellions, were at last, according to repeated threatenings, given over into the hands of their enemies. The inhabitants of the former country were subdued and carried away captives by the Assyrians; and those of the latter, by the Chaldeans.

The people of Israel never recovered their ancient territories; and were so disposed of by their conquerors, that they either became amalgamated with the heathen nations, so as to be utterly undistinguishable; or they were transported to some foreign and reclude place of settlement, that the land of their residence, though repeatedly sought for and guessed at, has for more than two thousand years been totally unknown.

Judah, after having been harassed by the Chaldeans, Egyptians, and others, was at last invaded by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon; Jerusalem besieged and taken; and Jehoiachin the king, who had before become tributary to the Babylonians, with his mother, wives, officers of state, and chief military commanders, princes, and mighty men of valor, to the

amount of ten thousand; and all the artificers, smiths, etc., to the number of one thousand, with all that were fit for war, he carried captives to Babylon; leaving only the poorest of the people behind, under the government of Mattaniah, son of the late king Josiah, and uncle to Jehoiachin; and, having changed his name to Zedekiah, gave him a nominal authority as king over the wretched remains of the people. Zedekiah, after having reigned nine years, rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar, who, coming against Jerusalem with all his forces, besieged it; and having reduced it to the last extremity by famine, and made a breach in the walls, took the city, pillaged and destroyed the temple by fire, slew the sons of Zedekiah before his face, then put out his eyes, and carried him bound in brazen fetters to Babylon, 2 Kings, chap. 24:and 25. Thus, the temple of GOD, the most glorious building ever laid on the face of the earth, was profaned, pillaged, and burnt, with the king's palace, and all the houses of the Jewish nobility, in the eleventh year of Zedekiah, — the nineteenth of Nebuchadnezzar, — the first of the forty-eight Olympiad, — the one hundred and sixtieth current year of the era of Nabonassar, — four hundred and twenty-four years, three months, and eight days from the time in which Solomon laid its foundation stone!

In the same month in which the city was taken, and the temple burnt, Nebuzar-adan, commander in chief of the Babylonish forces, carried off the spoils of the temple, with the Jewish treasures, and the principal part of the residue of the people; and brought them also to Babylon. And thus Judah was carried away out of her own land, four hundred and sixty-eight years after David began to reign over it; from the division under Rehoboam, three hundred and eighty-eight years; from the destruction of the kingdom of Israel, one hundred and thirty-four years; in the year of the world, three thousand four hundred and sixteen; and before the nativity of our Lord, five hundred and eighty-eight.

In the fourth year of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, A.M. 3397, B.C. 607, Nebuchadnezzar, having besieged Jerusalem, and made its king tributary, carried away a number of captives; and among them was the Prophet Daniel, then in his youth, who became, for his wisdom, and knowledge of future events, very eminent at Babylon; and, with some other Jewish captives, great favorites of Nebuchadnezzar the king; who made Daniel

president of all the wise men of his city. It was in the second year of the reign of this king, that a circumstance occurred which, though at first it threatened the destruction of the prophet, finally issued in the increase of his reputation and celebrity.

As prophecy is one of the strongest proofs of the authenticity of what professes to be a Divine revelation, God endued this man with a large portion of his Spirit, so that he clearly predicted some of the most astonishing political occurrences and changes which have ever taken place on the earth; no less than the rise, distinguishing characteristics, and termination of the FOUR great monarchies or empires, which have been so celebrated in all the histories of the world. And as the Babylonian, under which he then lived, was one of these monarchies, and was shortly to be absorbed by the Medo-Persian, which was to succeed it, he made Nebuchadnezzar, the then reigning monarch, by means of a most singular dream, the particulars of which he had forgotten, the instrument that appeared to give birth to a prediction, in which the ruin of his own empire was foretold; as well as other mighty changes which should take place in the political state of the world, for at least the term of one thousand years next ensuing. Nor did the prophetic Spirit in this eminent man limit his predictions to these; but showed at the same time the origin and nature of that FIFTH monarchy, which, under the great King of kings, should be administered and prevail to the end of time.

The dream itself, with its interpretation, and the exact and impressive manner in which the predictions relative to the four great monarchies have been fulfilled, and those which regard the fifth monarchy are in the course of being accomplished, are the subjects to which I wish to call the reader's most serious and deliberate attention.

This image, so circumstantially described from the thirty-eighth to the forty-fourth verse, was, as we learn from the prophet's general solution, intended to point out the rise and fall of four different empires and states; and the final prevalence and establishment of a fifth empire, that shall never have an end, and which shall commence in the last days, ver. 28; a phrase commonly used in the prophets to signify the times of the Messiah, and in the New Testament, his advent to judge the world.

Before we proceed to particular parts, we may remark in general, that the whole account strongly indicates:—

1. The especial providence of God in behalf of the Jews at that time. For, although suffering grievously because of their sins, being deprived of both their political and personal liberty, God shows them that he has not abandoned them; and the existence of a prophet among them is a proof of his fatherly care and unremitted attention to their eternal welfare.

2. The particular interference of God to manifest the superiority of his truth, to wean an idolatrous nation from their vanity and superstition, and lead them to that God who is the fountain of truth, the revealer of secrets, and the governor of all things.

And, 3. The direct inspiration of God immediately teaching his servant things which could be known only to God himself, and thus showing the Babylonians that his prophets had spoken by an unerring Spirit; that the Jews were the depositaries of the true religion; that HE was the only true God; and as he was omniscient, so he was omnipotent; and the things which his wisdom had predicted, his power could and would accomplish.

The sum of the account given in this chapter is the following:—

1. Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, in the second year of his reign, about A.M. 3401, and B.C. 603, had a remarkable dream, which, although it made a deep impression on his mind, yet, on his awakening, he found it impossible to recollect; the general impression only remaining.

2. He summoned his wise men, astrologers, etc., told them that he had a dream or vision, which he had forgotten; and commanded them to tell him the dream, and give its interpretation.

3. They request the king to tell them the dream; and promise, then, to make known the meaning. This he could not do, having forgotten it; yet he insists on their compliance on pain of death.

4. To tell the king his dream they find impossible; and a decree for the destruction of the wise men of Babylon is issued, in which Daniel and his fellows are included.
5. Daniel, hearing of it, speaks to Arioch, captain of the king's guard or the royal executioner; desires to be brought before the king; and promises to tell the dream, etc.
6. He is introduced; and immediately tells the king what he had dreamed, and shows him its interpretation.

THE DREAM

A vast image, exceedingly luminous, of terrible form, and composed of different substances, appears in a night vision to the king, of which the following is the description:—

- I. Its head was of fine gold.
- II. Its breast and arms of silver.
- III. Its belly and thighs of brass.
- IV. Its legs of iron, and its feet and toes of iron and clay. While gazing on this image he sees:—
- V. A stone cut out of a mountain without hands, which smites the image on its feet, and dashes it all to pieces; and the gold, and silver, brass, iron, and clay become as small and as light as chaff.
- VI. A wind carries the whole away, so that no place is found for them.
- VII. The stone becomes a great mountain, and fills the earth.

In order to explain this, certain DATA must be laid down.

1. This image is considered a political representation of as many different

governments, as it was composed of materials; and as all these materials are successively inferior to each other, so are the governments in a descending ratio.

2. The human figure has been used, both by historians and geographers, to represent the rise, progress, establishment, and decay of empires, as well as the relative situation and importance of the different parts of the government. Thus Florus, in the proaemium to his Roman history, represents the Romans under the form of a human being, in its different stages, from infancy to old age, viz.

Si quis ergo populum Romanum quasi hominem consideret, totamque ejus aetatem percenseat, ut COEPERIT, utque ADOLEVERIT, ut quasi ad quemdam JUVENTAE florem pervenerit; ut postea velut CONSENUERIT, quatuor gradus progressusque ejus inveniet.

1. Prima aetas sub Regibus fuit, prope ducentos quinquaginta per annos, quibus circum ipsam matrem suam cum finitimis luctatus est. Haec erit ejus INFANTIA.

2. Sequens a Bruto, Collatinoque consulibus, in Appium Claudium, Quinctiumque Fulvium consules, ducentos quinquaginta annos habet, quibus Italiam subegit. Hoc fuit tempus viris armisque exercitatissimi! ideo quis ADOLESCENTIAM dixerit.

3. Dehinc ad Caesarem Augustum, ducenti quinquaginta anni, quibus totum orbem pacavit. Hic jam ipsa JUVENTA Imperii, et quasi quaedam robusta MATURITAS.

4. A Caesare Augusto in saeculum, nostrum, sunt non multo minus anni ducenti, quibus inertia Caesarum quasi CONSENUIT atque DECOXIT. 50:An. Flori PROOEM.

1. INFANCY; first stage-under KINGS, from Romulus to Tarquinius Superbus; about two hundred and fifty years.

2. YOUTH; second stage-under CONSULS, from Brutus and Collatinus to

Appius Claudius and M. Fulvius; about two hundred and fifty years.

3. MANHOOD; third stage-the empire from the conquest of Italy to Caesar Augustus; about two hundred and fifty years.

4. OLD AGE; fourth stage-from Augustus, through the twelve Caesars, down to A.D. 200; about two hundred years.

Geographers have made similar representations, The Germanic empire, in the totality of its dependent states, has been represented by a map in the form of a man; different parts being pointed out by head, breast, arm, belly, thighs, legs, feet, etc., according to their geographical and political relation to the empire in general.

3. Different metals are used to express different degrees of political strength, excellence, durability, etc.

4. Clay, earth, dust, are emblems of weakness, instability, etc.

5. Mountains express, in Scripture, mighty empires, kingdoms, and states.

6. Stone signifies Jesus Christ, Genesis 49:24; "From thence" (of the posterity of Jacob) "is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel." That our blessed Lord, "the good shepherd," John 10:11-17, is here intended, will appear most plainly from the following passages; Isaiah 8:14: "And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a STONE Of stumbling and for a ROCK of offense to both the houses of Israel." Isaiah 28:16: "Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a STONE, a tried STONE, a precious corner STONE, a sure foundation; he that believeth shall not make haste." 1 Peter 2:4, 6, 8. Collate these with Psalm 118:22: "The STONE which the builders refused is become the head STONE of the corner." Matthew 21:42; Mark 12:10; Luke 20:17; Acts 4:11; in which latter quotations the whole is positively applied to Christ; as also 1 Peter 2:4-8: "To whom coming as unto a living STONE," etc.; who seems to have all the preceding passages in view. See also Isaiah 2:2: "The mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains," etc.

7. This stone is said to be cut out without hands, ver. 34. Without hands signifies that which is spiritual. So 2 Corinthians 5:1, a house not made with hands means a spiritual building.

EXPLANATION

The Chaldean empire, called the Assyrian in its commencement, the Chaldean from the country, the Babylonish from its chief city.

I. HEAD OF GOLD. This was the first monarchy, begun by Nimrod, A.M. 1771, B.C. 2233, and ending with the death of Belshazzar, A.M. 3466, B.C. 538, after having lasted nearly seventeen hundred years. In the time of Nebuchadnezzar it extended over Chaldea, Assyria, Arabia, Syria, and Palestine. HE, Nebuchadnezzar, was the head or gold.

II. BREASTS AND ARMS OF SILVER. The Medo-Persian empire; which properly began under Darius the Mede, allowing him to be the same with Cyaxares, son of Astyages, and uncle to Cyrus the great, son of Cambyses. He first fought under his uncle Cyaxares, defeated Neriglissar, king of the Assyrians, and Craesus, king of the Lydians; and, by the capture of Babylon, B.C. 538, terminated the Chaldean empire. On the death of his father Cambyses, and his uncle Cyaxares, B.C. 536, he became sole governor of the Medes and Persians, and thus established a potent empire on the ruins of that of the Chaldeans.

III. BELLY AND THIGHS OF BRASS. The Macedonian or Greek empire, founded by Alexander the Great. He subdued Greece, penetrated into Asia, took Tyre, reduced Egypt, overthrew Darius Codomanus at Arbela, Oct. 2, A.M. 3673, B.C. 331, and thus terminated the Persian monarchy. He crossed the Caucasus, subdued Hyrcania, and penetrated India as far as the Ganges; and having conquered all the countries that lay between the Adriatic sea and this river, the Ganges, he died A.M. 3681, B.C. 323; and after his death his empire became divided among his generals, Cassander, Lysimachus, Ptolemy, and Seleucus. CASSANDER had Macedon and Greece; LYSIMACHUS had Thrace, and those parts of Asia which lay on the Hellespont and Bosphorus; PTOLEMY had Egypt, Lybia, Arabia, Palestine, and Coelesyria; SELEUCUS had Babylon, Media, Susiana, Persia, Assyria,

Bactria, Hyrcania, and all other provinces, even to the Ganges. Thus this empire, founded on the ruin of that of the Persians, “had rule over all the earth.”

IV. LEGS OF IRON, AND FEET AND TOES OF IRON AND CLAY. I think this means, in the first place, the kingdom of the LAGIDAE, in Egypt; and the kingdom of the SELEUCIDAE, in Syria. And, secondly, the ROMAN empire, which was properly composed of them.

1. PTOLEMY LAGUS, one of Alexander’s generals, began the new kingdom of Egypt, A.M. 3692, B.C. 312, which was continued through a long race of sovereigns, till A.M. 3974, B.C. 30; when Octavius Caesar took Alexandria, having in the preceding year defeated Anthony and Cleopatra at the battle of Actium, and so Egypt became a Roman province. Thus ended the kingdom of the Lagidae, after it had lasted two hundred and eighty-two years.

2. SELEUCUS NICATOR, another of Alexander’s generals, began the new kingdom of Syria, A.M. 3692, B.C. 312, which continued through a long race of sovereigns, till A.M. 3939, B.C. 65, when Pompey dethroned Antiochus Asiaticus, and Syria became a Roman province after it had lasted two hundred and forty-seven years.

That the two legs of iron meant the kingdom of the Lagidae and that of the Seleucidae, seems strongly intimated by the characters given in the text. “And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron. Forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things; and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise,” ver. 40. 1. The iron here not only marks the strength of these kingdoms, but also their violence and cruelty towards the people of God. History is full of the miseries which the kings of Egypt and Syria inflicted on the Jews. 2. It is said that these legs should break in pieces and bruise. How many generals and princes were destroyed by Seleucus Nicator, and by Ptolemy, son of Lagus! Seleucus, particularly, could not consider himself secure on his throne till he had destroyed Antigonus, Nicanor, and Demetrius; and Ptolemy endeavored to secure himself by the ruin of Perdiccas, and the rest of his enemies. 3. The dividing of the kingdom, the iron and clayey mixture of the feet, point out

the continual divisions which prevailed in those empires; and the mixture of the good and evil qualities which appeared in the successors of Seleucus and Ptolemy; none of them possessing the good qualities of the founders of those monarchies; neither their valor, wisdom, nor prudence. 4. The efforts which these princes made to strengthen their respective governments by alliances, which all proved not only useless but injurious, are here pointed out by their mingling themselves with the seed of men. "But they shall not cleave one to another," ver. 43. Antiochus Theos, king of Syria, married both Laodice and Berenice, daughters of Ptolemy Philadelphus, king of Egypt. Antiochus Magnus, king of Syria, gave his daughter Cleopatra to Ptolemy Epiphanes, king of Egypt; but these marriages, instead of being the means of consolidating the union between those kingdoms, contributed more than any thing else to divide them, and excite the most bloody and destructive wars.

In chap. 7:7, the prophet, having the same subject in view, says, "I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it," and in chap. 8:22: "Now that being broken," the horn of the rough goat, the Grecian monarchy, "whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power." These and other declarations point out those peculiar circumstances that distinctly mark the kingdom of the Seleucidae, and that of the Lagidae; both of which rose out of the Macedonian or Grecian empire, and both terminated in that of the Romans.

2. These TWO LEGS OF IRON became absorbed in the Roman government, which also partook of the iron nature; strong, military, and extensive in its victories; and by its various conquests united to and amalgamated with itself various nations, some strong, and some weak, so as to be fitly represented in the symbolical image by feet and toes, partly of iron and partly of clay. Thus, as the Lagidae and Seleucidae arose out of the wreck of the Grecian empire; so the Roman empire arose out of their ruin. But the empire became weakened by its conquests; and although, by mingling themselves with the seed of men, that is, by strong leagues, and matrimonial alliances, as mentioned above they endeavored to secure a

perpetual sovereignty, yet they did not cleave to each other, and they also were swallowed up by the barbarous northern nations; and thus terminated those four most powerful monarchies.

V. "A stone cut out of the mountain without hands."

1. That Jesus Christ has been represented by a stone, we have already seen; but this stone refers chiefly to his Church, which is represented as a spiritual building which he supports as a foundation stone, connects and strengthens as a corner stone, and finishes and adorns as a top stone! He is called a stone also in reference to the prejudice conceived against him by his countrymen. Because he did not come in worldly pomp they therefore refused to receive him; and to them he is represented as a stone of stumbling, and rock of offense.

2. But here he is represented under another notion, viz., that of a stone projected from a catapult, or some military engine, which smote the image on its feet; that is, it smote the then existing government at its foundation, or principles of support; and by destroying these, brought the whole into ruin.

3. By this stroke the clay, the iron, the brass, the silver, and the gold were broken to pieces, and became like chaff which the wind carried away. Now we have already seen that the Roman empire, which had absorbed the kingdoms of the Lagidae and Seleucidae, was represented by the legs of iron, and feet and toes of iron and clay; but as we find that not only the iron and clay, but also the brass, silver, and gold were confounded and destroyed by that stroke, it follows that there was then remaining in and compacted with the Roman government, something of the distinguishing marks and principles of all the preceding empires; not only as to their territorial possessions, but also as to their distinctive characteristics. There were at the time here referred to in the Roman empire, the splendor of the CHALDEANS, the riches of the PERSIANS, the discipline of the GREEKS, and the strength of the EGYPTIAN and SYRIAN governments, mingled with the incoherence and imbecility of those empires, kingdoms, and states which the Romans had subdued. In short, with every political excellence, it contains the principles of its own destruction, and its persecution of the

Church of Christ accelerated its ruin.

4. As the stone represents Christ and his governing influence, it is here said to be a kingdom, that is, a state of prevailing rule and government; and was to arise in the days of those kings or kingdoms, ver. 44. And this is literally true; for its rise was when the Roman government, partaking of all the characteristics of the preceding empires, was at its zenith of imperial splendor, military glory, legislative authority, and literary eminence. It took place a few years after the battle of Actium, and when Rome was at peace with the whole world, September 2, B.C. 31.

5. This stone or government was cut out of the mountain, arose in and under the Roman government, Judea being, at the time of the birth of Christ, a Roman province.

6. It was cut out without hands; probably alluding to the miraculous birth of our Lord, but particularly to the spiritual nature of his kingdom and government, in which no worldly policy, human maxims, or military force were employed; for it was not by might nor power, but by the Spirit of the Lord of hosts.

Two things may be here distinguished: 1. The government or kingdom of the **STONE**. 2. The government or kingdom of the **MOUNTAIN**.

1. The kingdom of the **STONE** smites, breaks to pieces, and destroys all the other kingdoms, till no vestige of them remains, and till the whole earth is subdued by it.

2. The kingdom of the **MOUNTAIN** fills, and continues to govern, all that has been thus subdued, maintaining endless peace and righteousness in the earth.

First, The stone began to strike the image, when the apostles went out into every part of the Roman empire, pulling down idolatry, and founding Christian Churches.

Secondly, But the great blow was given to the heathen Roman empire by

the conversion of Constantine, just at the time when it was an epitome of the four great monarchies, being under the government of FOUR EMPERORS at once, A.D. 308: CONSTANTIUS, who governed Gaul, Spain, and Britain; GALERIUS, who had Illyricum, Thrace and Asia; SEVERUS, who had Italy and Africa; and MAXIMIN, who had the East and Egypt.

1. The conversion of Constantine took place while he was in Gaul, A.D. 312, by the appearance of a luminous cross in the sky above the sun, a little after noon-day, with this inscription, *εν τούτω νικα*, “By this conquer;” Euseb. De Vit. Const. lib. 1:cap. 28. In A.D. 324 he totally defeated Licinius, who had shared the empire with him, and became sole emperor. He terminated the reign of idolatry in A.D. 331, by an edict ordering the destruction of all the heathen temples. This made CHRISTIANITY the religion of the empire.

2. The stroke which thus destroyed idolatry in the Roman empire is continual in its effects; and must be so till idolatry be destroyed over the face of the earth, and the universe filled with the knowledge of Christ.

3. This smiting has been continued by all the means which God in his providence and mercy has used for the dissemination of Christianity, from the time of Constantine to the present: and particularly now, by means of the British and Foreign Bible society, and its countless ramifications, and by the numerous missionaries sent by Christian societies to almost every part of the globe. Thus far the kingdom of the stone.

In ver. 44, the kingdom of the stone, grown into a great mountain and filling the whole earth, is particularly described by various characters.

1. It is a kingdom which the God of heaven sets up. That this means the whole dispensation of the Gospel, and the moral effects produced by it in the souls of men and in the world, needs little proof; for our Lord, referring to this and other prophecies in this book, calls its influence and his Gospel the kingdom of God, and the kingdom of heaven; showing thereby that it is a kingdom not of this world-not raised by human ambition, the lust of rule, or military conquest; but a spiritual kingdom, raised and maintained by the grace of God himself in which he himself lives and rules governing by his

own laws, influencing and directing by his own Spirit; producing, not wars and contentions, but glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and good will among men.

2. This is called the kingdom of heaven, because it is to be a counterpart of the kingdom of glory. The kingdom of God, says the apostle, is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, (Romans 14:17;) righteousness, without any sin; peace, without inward disturbance; joy, without any mental unhappiness. An eternity of righteousness, peace, and spiritual joy constitutes HEAVEN; nor can we conceive in that state any thing higher or more excellent than these.

3. This kingdom shall never be destroyed: it is the everlasting Gospel, and the work of the everlasting GOD. As it neither originates in nor is dependent on the passions of men, it cannot be destroyed. All other governments, from the imperfection of their nature, contain in them the seeds of their own destruction. Kings die, ministers change, subjects are not permanent; new relations arise, and with them new measures, new passions, and new projects; and these produce political changes, and often political ruin. But this government, being the government of GOD, cannot be affected by the changes and chances to which mortal things are exposed.

4. This kingdom shall not be left to other people. Every dispensation of God, prior to Christianity, supposed another by which it was to be succeeded. 1. Holy patriarchs and their families were the first people among whom the kingdom of God was found. 2. Hebrews, in Egypt and in the wilderness, were the next. 3. Jews, in the promised land, were a third denomination. 4. And after the division of the kingdoms, captivity, and dispersion of the Jews, the Israel of God became a fourth denomination. 5. Under the Gospel, CHRISTIAN is the name of the people of this kingdom. Every thing in the construction of the Gospel system, as well as its own declarations, shows that it is not to be succeeded by any other dispensation: its name can never be changed; and CHRISTIAN will be the only denomination of the people of God while sun and moon endure. All former empires have changed, and the very names of the people have changed with them. The Assyrians were lost in the Chaldeans and Babylonians; the Babylonians were lost in the Medes; the Medes in the

Persians; the Persians in the Greeks; and the Greeks in the Syrians and Egyptians; these in the Romans; and the Romans in the Goths, and a variety of other nations. Nor does the name of those ancient governments, nor the people who lived under them, remain on the face of the earth in the present day! They are only found in the page of history. This spiritual kingdom shall never be transferred, and the name of its subjects shall never be changed.

5. It shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms; that is, the preaching and influence of Christianity shall destroy idolatry universally. They did so in the Roman empire, which was the epitome of all the rest. But this was not done by the sword, nor by any secular influence. Christians wage no wars for the propagation of Christianity; for the religion of Christ breathes nothing but love to God, and peace and good will to all mankind. The sum of the Gospel is contained in these words of Christ: “God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life—for the Son of man is not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save.”

For his own cause, God fights in the course of his providence. He depresses one, and exalts another; but permits not his own people to join with him in the infliction of judgments. It is by his own Spirit and energy that his kingdom is propagated and maintained in the world; and by the same his enemies are confounded. All false religions, as well as falsified and corrupted systems of Christianity, have had recourse to the sword, because they were conscious they had NO GOD, no influence but what was merely human.

6. The kingdom of Christ breaks in pieces and consumes all other kingdoms; that is, it destroys every thing in every earthly government where it is received, that is opposed to the glory of God and the peace and happiness of men, and yet in such a way as to leave all political governments unchanged. No law or principle in Christianity is directed against the political code of any country. Britain is Christian without the alteration of her Magna Charta or her constitution. All the other empires, kingdoms, and states on the face of the earth, may become Christian and preserve their characteristic forms of political government. If there be in

them any thing hostile to Christianity, and the peace and happiness of the subject, the WIND of God-the Divine Spirit, will fan or winnow it away, so that no more place shall be found for it. But this he will do in the way of his ordinary providence; and by his influence on their hearts, dispose truly Christianized rulers to alter or abrogate whatever their laws contain inimical to the mild sway of the scepter of Christ.

7. And it shall stand for ever. This is its final characteristic. It shall prevail over the whole world; it shall pervade every government; it shall be the basis of every code of laws; it shall be professed by every people of the earth: "The Gentiles shall come to its light, and kings to the brightness of its rising." The whole earth shall be subdued by its influence, and the whole earth filled with its glory.

8. The actual constitution, establishment, and maintenance of this kingdom belong to the LORD; yet he will use human means in the whole administration of his government. His WORD must be distributed, and that word must be PREACHED. Hence, under God, BIBLES and MISSIONARIES are the grand means to be employed in things concerning his kingdom. BIBLES must be printed, sent out, and dispersed; MISSIONARIES, called of God to the work, and filled with the Divine Spirit, must be equipped, sent out, and maintained; therefore expenses must necessarily be incurred. Here the people now of the kingdom must be helpers. It is THE duty, therefore, of every soul professing Christianity to lend a helping hand to send forth the Bible; and wherever the Bible is sent, to send a missionary, full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, to enforce its truths.

9. The duration of the kingdom of the mountain upon earth. The world has now lasted nearly six thousand years, and a very ancient tradition has predicted its termination at the close of that period. Its duration has been divided into three grand periods, each comprising two thousand years, which should be closed by a period without terminating limits; and these have been supposed to have their types in the six days' work of the creation, and the seventh day, called Sabbath or rest.

1. There have been two thousand years from the creation without any written revelation from God; this was called the patriarchal dispensation.

2. There have been two thousand years under the law, where there has been a written revelation, a succession of prophets, and a Divine ecclesiastical establishment. This has been termed the Mosaic dispensation.

3. One thousand eight hundred and twenty-nine years have passed since the true epoch of the nativity of our blessed Lord; and this is called the Gospel or Christian dispensation, which is now within one hundred and seventy-one years of closing its two thousand!

According to the ancient tradition there were, 1. Two thousand years void; that is, without the law. 2. Two thousand years under the law. And, 3. Two thousand years under the Messiah. And at the termination of the third the endless Sabbath should commence. The comments on this ancient tradition go on to state, that at the termination of each day's work of the creation it was said, The evening and the morning were the first, second, third, fourth, fifth, and sixth day; but when the Sabbath is introduced, and God is said to rest from his work, and to have hallowed this day, there is no mention of the evening and the morning being the seventh day. That is left without termination; and therefore a proper type of the eternal Sabbath, that rest which remains for the people of God.

And are we indeed so near that time when the elements of all things shall be dissolved by fervent heat; when the heavens shall be shrivelled up like a scroll, and the earth and all it contains be burned up? Is the fifth empire, the kingdom of the stone and the kingdom of the mountain, so near its termination? Are all vision and prophecy about to be sealed up, and the whole earth to be illuminated with the bright beams of the Sun of righteousness? Are the finally incorrigible and impenitent about to be swept off the face of the earth by the besom of destruction while the righteous shall be able to lift up their heads with ineffable joy, knowing their final redemption is at hand? Are we so near the eve of that period when "they who turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever?" What sort of persons should we then be in all holy conversation and godliness? Where is our zeal for God? Where the sounding of our bowels over the perishing nations who have not yet come

under the yoke of the Gospel? Multitudes of whom are not under the yoke, because they have never heard of it; and they have not heard of it, because those who enjoy the blessings of the Gospel of Jesus have not felt (or have not obeyed the feeling) the imperious duty of dividing their heavenly bread with those who are famishing with hunger, and giving the water of life to those who are dying of thirst. How shall they appear in that great day when the conquests of the Lion of the tribe of Judah are ended; when the mediatorial kingdom is delivered up unto the Father, and the Judge of quick and dead sits on the great white throne, and to those on his left hand says, "I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink." I say, How shall they appear who have made no exertions to tell the lost nations of the earth the necessity for preparing to meet their God; and showing them the means of doing it, by affording them the blessings of the Gospel of the grace of God? Let us beware lest the stone that struck the motley image, and dashed it to pieces, fall on us, and grind us to powder.

Bibles are sent out by millions into heathen countries; but how shall they hear without a preacher; and how shall they understand the things which they read, unless those who know the things of God teach them? Let us haste, then, and send missionaries after the Bibles. God is mightily at work in the earth: let us be workers together with him, that we receive not the grace of God in vain. He that giveth to those poor (emphatically POOR, for they are without God in the world, and consequently without the true riches) lendeth unto the Lord; and let him look what he layeth out, and it shall be paid unto him again. For "he that converteth a sinner from the error of his ways shall save a soul from death, and hide a multitude of sins." God does not call on us to shake hands with all secular, social, and family comfort, and bid farewell to the whole; and go to the heathen with the glad tidings of great joy: but he loudly calls on us to assist in sending those who, in the true spirit of sacrifice, the love of Christ constraining them, say, "Here are we! O Lord, send Us." Let these servants of God run to and fro; that by their ministry knowledge may be increased. Amen.

CHAPTER 3

Nebuchadnezzar, having erected an image, whose height (including probably a very high pedestal) was sixty cubits, and the breadth six, ordered a numerous assembly, which he had convened, to fall down and worship it; threatening, at the same time, that whosoever refused should be cast into a fiery furnace, 1-7; a punishment not uncommon in that country, (see Jeremiah 29:22.) Daniel's three companions, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, who were present, being observed to refrain from this idolatrous worship, were accused before the king; who, in great wrath, commanded them to comply with his orders on pain of death, 8-15. But these holy men, with the greatest composure and serenity, expressed their firm resolution not to worship his gods or his images, whatever might be the consequence, 16-18. Upon which the king, unaccustomed to have his will opposed, in the height of his wrath, ordered the furnace to be made seven times hotter than usual, and these men to be cast into it, bound by the most mighty of his army, who were killed by the flame in the execution of this service, 19-23. On this occasion God literally performed his promise by Isaiah, (Isaiah 43:2:) "When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee;" for an angel of God, appearing in the furnace, protected these young men, and counteracted the natural violence of the fire; which, only consuming the cords with which they were bound, left them to walk at liberty, and in perfect safety, in the midst of the furnace. The king, astonished at this prodigy, called to them to come out of the furnace, and blessed God for sending an angel to deliver his servants; and commanded all his subjects, upon pain of death, not to speak irreverently of the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, who were promoted to great power and honor, 24-30. A striking example of the interposition of Providence in favor of true and inflexible piety.

NOTES ON CHAP. 3

Verse 1. *Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold*— It is supposed that the history given here did not occur till the close, or near the end, of Nebuchadnezzar's reign. For it was after his insanity, as we see chap. 4:33-36, and this happened near the close of his reign. The authorized version, which is followed in the margin, fixes the date of this event seventeen years earlier, and ten years before the king's insanity. A few observations on this image may be necessary:—

1. It is not likely that this image was in human form—the dimensions show the improbability of this; for what proportion is there between sixty cubits (ninety feet) in length, and six cubits (nine feet) in breadth?

2. It is not likely that this image was all of gold; for this would have required more of this precious metal than the whole province of Babylon could produce; for as I suppose the sixty cubits apply to the perpendicular altitude, so I take it for granted that the six cubits intend the diameter. Now a column of gold of this height in diameter, upon the supposition that the pillar was circular, contains five thousand seven hundred and twenty-five and a half cubic feet; and as there are nineteen thousand avoirdupois ounces in a cubic foot, the weight of the whole pillar would be eight million two hundred and sixty-two thousand eight hundred and six pounds, ten ounces of gold.

3. It might have been a pillar on which an image of the god Bel was erected. The image itself might be of gold, or more probably gilt, that is, covered with thin plates of gold, and on this account it might be called the golden image; and most probably the height of the image may be confounded with the height of the pillar. Or perhaps it was no more than a pillar, on the sides of which their gods and sacred emblems were engraven, surmounted with Bel on the top.

The plain of Dura— The situation of this place is not exactly known; there was a town or city called Dura, or Doura, in Mesopotamia, near the Tigris.

Verse 2. Sent to gather together the princes— It is not easy to show what these different offices were, as it is difficult to ascertain the meaning of the Chaldee words. Parkhurst analyzes them thus:—

The PRINCES— אַחַשְׁדַּרְפַּנַּיָא achashdarpnaiya, from אַחַשׁ ACHASH, great or eminent, and דַּר dar, “to go about freely,” and פַּנִּים panim, “the presence.” Satraps or privy counsellors who had free access to the presence of the king.

The GOVERNORS— סִגְנַיָא signaiya, lieutenants or viceroys, for סַגַּן sagan, among the Hebrews, was the name of the high priest’s deputy.

The CAPTAINS— פַּחַוַּתָא pachavatha, from פָּחַח pach, to extend, because set over those provinces that had been annexed to the kingdom by conquest. Pashas—This word and office are still in use in Asiatic countries. By corruption we pronounce bashaw.

The JUDGES— אַדַּרְגַּזַּרַיָא adargazeraiya, from אַדַּר adar, noble or magnificent, and גַּזַּר gazar, to decree. The nobles, the assistants to the king in making laws, statutes, etc. The same probably in Babylon, as the House of Lords in England.

The TREASURERS— גַּדְבַּרַיָא gedaberaiya, from גַּנַּז ganaz, (the ז zain being changed into ד daleth, according to the custom of the Chaldee,) to treasure up, and בַּר bar, pure. Those who kept the current coin, or were over the mint; the treasurers of the exchequer in Babylon.

The COUNSELLORS— דֵּתְבַרַיָא dethaberaiya, from דַּתְּ dath, a statute, and בַּר bar, “to declare the meaning of the law;” for in all ages and countries there has been what is termed the glorious uncertainty of the law; and therefore there must be a class of men whose business it is to explain it. What a pity that law cannot be tendered to the people as other sciences are, in plain, unsophisticated, and intelligible terms, and by persons whose business it is to show what is just and right, and not pervert truth,

righteousness, and judgment.

The SHERIFFS— **תִּפְתָּיָא** tiptayē, from **תַּפַּת** taphath, in Hebrew, **שַׁפַּת** shaphath, “to set in order.” Probably civil magistrates.

And all the rulers of the provinces— All other state or civil officers, not only to grace the solemnity, but to maintain order. My old Bible renders them: Satrapis, or wise men. Magistratis. Jugis. Duykis, Tyrauntis, or stronge men. Prefectis, and alle the Princes of Cuntreese.

Verse 4. Then a herald cried aloud— **כַּרוּזָא קָרָא בַחַיִל** carozā kara bechayil, “a crier ealled with might.” A bedel cried mightili. — Old MS. Bible.

Verse 5. The sound of the CORNET— There is not less difficulty in ascertaining the precise meaning of these musical instruments than there is in the offices in ver. 2. **קַרְנָא** karna, here translated cornet, is the common blowing horn, which makes a deep and hollow sound, as well as one shrill and piercing.

FLUTE— **מִשְׂרוּקִיתָא** mashrokitha, from **שַׂרַק** sharak, to whistle, shriek. A wind instrument which made a strong and shrill noise, such as the hautbois or clarionet.

HARP— **קִיתְרֹס** kithros, cytharus; **κιθαρα**. Some kind of stringed instrument. It seems to be formed from the Greek word.

SACKBUT— **סַבְכָּא** sabbecha. The Greek has it **σαμβουκη**, from which our word sackbut, from **Κβο** sabach, to interweave; probably on account of the number of chords, for it seems to have been a species of harp.

PSALTERY— **פְּסַנְתֵּרִי** pesanterin; Greek, **ψαλτηριον**. A stringed instrument, struck with a plectrum; that called santeer in Egypt is probably the same. Dr. Russel says: “It is a large triangle, and has two bottoms two inches from each other, with about twenty catguts of different sizes.” It was the ancient psalterium, and most probably the

same as David's harp.

DULCIMER— סומפנייה sumponeyah; Greek, συμφωνεῖα. Probably a kind of tambour, tambourine, or tomtom drum. It does not mean the same as the Greek symphonia, which signifies a concert or harmony of many instruments, for here one kind of instrument only is intended.

All kinds of music— כל זני זמרא col zeney zemara, the whole stock, or band, of music; the preceding being the chief, the most common, and the most sonorous. My old MS. Bible has, Trumpe, and Pipe, and Harpe: Sambuke, Santrie, and Synfonye, and al kynde of musykes.

Verse 6. Shall the same hour— This is the first place in the Old Testament where we find the division of time into hours. The Greeks say that Anaximander was the inventor. He had it probably from the Chaldeans, among whom this division was in use long before Anaximander was born.

Be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.— This was an ancient mode of punishment among the Chaldeans, if we may credit the tradition that Abram was cast into such a fire by this idolatrous people because he would not worship their idols.

Verse 8. Accused the Jews.— That is, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego. The other Jews were left unnoticed; and probably at this time Daniel was too high to be touched; but we may rest assured that he was not found among these idolaters, see ver. 12.

Verse 16. We are not careful— We have no need to put thee to any farther trouble; we have made up our minds on this subject, and have our answer ready: Be it known unto thee, WE WILL NOT SERVE THY GODS. This was as honest as it was decisive.

Verse 17. If it be so— Thou mayest cast us into the furnace; the terror of it has no effect on our minds to induce us to alter the resolution we have taken, nor shall the fire change our purpose. We serve a God who is able to deliver us. Should he not, we are equally determined; but we are satisfied

that in some way or other he will deliver us out of thy hand. Thy power cannot affect us in the kingdom of our God to which we shall ascend from thy furnace, should he permit the fire to kindle upon us. “Render to Caesar the things which are Caesar’s,” is a maxim of Jesus Christ; but when Caesar arrogates to himself the things that are the Lord’s, then, and in such cases, his authority is to be resisted. God does not desire Caesar’s things; Caesar’s must not have the things of God.

Verse 19. *Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury*— How strange is this, after having had so many proofs of the supremacy of Jehovah! He had seen how God poured contempt upon his authority in the case of the three Hebrews, and yet he will try his strength once more! How infatuated is man!

Seven times more— As hot as it could be made. Seven expresses the great intensity of the heat.

Verse 20. *The most mighty men*— The generals, or chief officers of his army; not strong men, there was no need of such.

Verse 21. *Their hats*— This word, hat, is found only in this place in the Old Testament. The word סַרְבַּל *sarbal* properly means an outer garment. Herodotus, who lived about one hundred years after Daniel, says, “the dress of the Babylonians consisted of a tunic of linen reaching down to the feet; over this a tunic of woollen; and over all a white short cloak or mantle, γλαυδιον; and on their heads they wore turbans, μιτρησι.” Following this, Mr. Parkhurst translates the verse thus: “Then these three men were bound [בסַרְבַּלֵיהֶן *besarbaleyhon*] in their CLOAKS, [פְּמִישֵׁיהֶן *patesheyhon*] their TURBANS, [וּכְרַבְלַתְהֶן *vecharbelatheyhon*] and in their UPPER (woollen) TUNICS, [וּלְבוּשֵׁיהֶן *ulebusheyhon*] and their UNDER (linen) TUNICS.” And as, according to this interpretation, their סַרְבַּלֵי *sarbalay* were their outermost garments, we see the propriety with which it is observed at ver. 27 that these were not changed by the fire.

Verse 23. *And these three men-fell down bound*— There is a most evident want of connection between this and the following verse; and it is

between these verses that the apocryphal Song of the Three Children, as it is called, has been inserted by St. Jerome and others; but with this note: Quae sequuntur in Hebraeis voluminibus non reperi; “What follows I have not found in the Hebrew books.” And then begins, “They walked in the midst of the flame, praising God, and blessing the Lord.” The Septuagint and Arabic read the twenty-fourth verse thus: “Then Nebuchadnezzar heard them singing praise, and was astonished.” To connect the two verses Houbigant adds two verses found in the Vulgate, which are the forty-ninth and the twenty-third: “But an angel of the Lord went down with Azariah and his companions into the furnace, and drove out the flame of fire from the furnace; and they walked in the midst of the furnace.” This verse (the forty-ninth) has been added to show the reason of Nebuchadnezzar’s astonishment, and also to account for the appearance of a fourth person in the furnace, as in ver. 25.

Verse 25. *Is like the Son of God.*— A most improper translation. What notion could this idolatrous king have of the Lord Jesus Christ? for so the place is understood by thousands. בר אלהי bar elahin signifies a son of the gods, that is, a Divine person or angel; and so the king calls him in ver. 28: “God hath sent his ANGEL, and delivered his servants.” And though even from this some still contend that it was the Angel of the covenant, yet the Babylonish king knew just as much of the one as he did of the other. No other ministration was necessary; a single angel from heaven was quite sufficient to answer this purpose, as that which stopped the mouths of the lions when Daniel was cast into their den.

Verse 27. *Upon whose bodies the fire had no pouter*— The heathens boasted that their priests could walk on burning coals unhurt; and Virgil mentions this of the priests of Apollo of Soracte:—

*Summe Deum, sancti custos Soractis Apollo!
Quem primi colimus, cui pineus ardor acervo
Pascitur; et medium, freti pietate, per ignem
Cultores multa premimus vestigia pruna.*

VIRG. AEn. 11:785.

*O Phoebus, guardian of Soracte's woods
 And shady hills; a god above the gods;
 To whom our natives pay the rites divine,
 And burn whole crackling groves of hallowed pine;
 Walk through the fire in honor of thy name,
 Unhurt, unsinged, and sacred from the flame.*

PITTS.

But Varro tells us that they anointed the soles of their feet with a species of unguent that preserved them from being burnt. Very lately a female showed many feats of this kind, putting red hot iron upon her arms, breasts, etc., and passing it over her hair without the slightest inconvenience; but in the case of the three Hebrews all was supernatural, and the king and his officers well knew it.

Verse 28. *Blessed be the God of Shadrach, etc.*— Here is a noble testimony from a heathen. And what produced it? The intrepidly pious conduct of these three noble Jews. Had they been time-servers, the name of the true God had not been known in Babylon. What honor does the Lord put on them that are steadfast in the faith!

Verse 29. *Speak any thing amiss*— Though by the decree the king does not oblige the people to worship the true God, yet he obliges them to treat him with reverence.

Verse 30. *Then the king promoted, etc.*— He restored them to the offices which they held before the charge of disobedience and treason was brought against them.

At the end of this verse the Septuagint add, “And he advanced them to be governors over all the Jews that were in his kingdom.” This may be the meaning of the latter verse. They were more likely to be set over the Jews than over the Chaldeans.

CHAPTER 4

Nebuchadnezzar, after having subdued all the neighboring countries, and greatly enriched and adorned his own, became so intoxicated with his prosperity, as to draw down upon himself a very remarkable judgment, of which this chapter gives a particular account, in the very words of the edict or proclamation which the Babylonish monarch issued on his restoration to the throne. This state document begins with Nebuchadnezzar's acknowledging the hand of God in his late malady, 1-3. It then gives an account of the dream of Nebuchadnezzar, which portended the loss of his kingdom and reason for seven years, on account of his pride and arrogance, 4-18. So it was explained by Daniel, 19-27, and so it was verified by the event, 28-33. It then recites how, at the end of the period fixed by the God of heaven for the duration of his malady, the Chaldean monarch became sensible of his dependence on the Supreme Being, and lifted up his eyes to heaven in devout acknowledgment of the sovereign majesty of the King of kings, the Ruler of the earth, whose dominion alone is universal, unchangeable, and everlasting, 34-37.

NOTES ON CHAP. 4

Verse 1. *Nebuchadnezzar the king, unto all people*— This is a regular decree, and is one of the most ancient on record; and no doubt was copied from the state papers of Babylon. Daniel has preserved it in the original language.

Verse 2. *I thought it good to show*— A part of the decree was a recital of the wonders wrought by the hand of the true God in his kingdom and on his person.

Verse 3. *How great are his signs!*— There are no preternatural signs like his! His wonders-miraculous interferences, are mighty-they surpass all

everlasting; and every generation is a proof of his all-governing influence. These are very fine sentiments, and show how deeply his mind was impressed with the majesty of God.

Verse 4. *I-was at rest*— I had returned to my palace in Babylon after having subdued Syria, Phoenicia, Judea, Egypt, and Arabia. It was probably these great conquests that puffed him up with pride, and brought that chastisement upon him which he afterwards describes. See the dream of the emblematical tree explained.

Verse 5. *I saw a dream*— See this dream circumstantially explained in the following verses.

Verse 10. *I saw-a tree*— This vision Nebuchadnezzar says made him afraid. What a mercy it is that God has hidden futurity from us! Were he to show every man the lot that is before him, the misery of the human race would be complete.

Great men and princes are often represented, in the language of the prophets, under the similitude of trees; see Ezekiel 17:5, 6; 31:3, etc.; Jeremiah 22:15; Psalm 1:3; 37:35.

Verse 13. *A watcher and a holy one*— These are both angels; but, according to the Chaldean oracles, of different orders. They appear, according to their opinions, to be a kind of judges of human actions who had the power of determining the lot of men; see ver. 17.

Verse 14. *Hew down the tree*— As the tree was to be cut down, the beasts are commanded to flee away from under his branches. His courtiers, officers, etc., all abandoned him as soon as his insanity appeared; but he soon fled from the society of men.

Verse 15. *Leave the stump*— Let him not be destroyed, nor his kingdom alienated.

Verse 16. *Let his heart be changed*— Let him conceive himself to be a beast, and act as such, herding among the beasts of the field.

Let seven times pass over him.— Let him continue in this state for seven years. I knew a man who was thus changed in his heart-in his imagination. He believed himself to be a bear, and would imitate the ursal growl, etc.; and the case did not appear to be hypochondriacal. Whether he ever came to sound mind, I know not.

Verse 17. *This matter is by the decree of the watchers*— See on ver. 13.

The Most High ruleth— He never leaves the government of the world to man, to second causes, or to fortuitous occurrences. What are thus called are his agents; they are no moving causes.

And setteth up-the basest of men.—

***“Tyrants and kings from Jove proceed
Those are permitted, these decreed.”***

The throne ennobles no man: to be properly filled, the man must be noble. Some of the greatest and some of the meanest of men have sat on the throne. Kings differ in education, seldom in intellect, from the common mass of men; the power and authority are from God. The king himself may be given either in mercy or in wrath. When James 2 ruled this kingdom, it might well be said, God hath set up over it the basest of men. His successor was one of the best. The former nearly ruined it both in a civil and religious point of view; the latter was the means of restoring it in both these respects.

Verse 19. *Daniel-was astonied for one hour*— He saw the design of the dream, and he felt the great delicacy of interpreting it. He was not puzzled by the difficulties of it. He felt for the king, and for the nation; and with what force and delicacy does he express the general portent; “The dream to them that hate thee, and the interpretation thereof to thine enemies!”

Verse 20. *The tree that thou sawest*— The dream is so fully interpreted in the following verses that it needs no comment.

Verse 26. *Thy kingdom shall he sure unto thee*— No new king was set up; Evil-merodach his son was regent during his father's insanity.

Verse 27. *Break off thy sins by righteousness*— Do justice. Thou hast been an oppressive man; show mercy to the poor, many of whom have been made such by thyself: witness the whole nation of the Jews. He was to cease from his sins-repent and bring forth fruits meet for repentance, in order that he might find mercy at the hand of God.

Verse 30. *Is not this great Babylon*— Here his heart was inflated with pride; he attributed every thing to himself, and acknowledged God in nothing. The walls, hanging gardens, temple of Bel, and the royal palace, all built by Nebuchadnezzar, made it the greatest city in the world.

Verse 31. *While the word was in the king's mouth*— How awful to a victorious and proud king: "Thy kingdom is departed from thee!" All thy goods and gods are gone in a moment!

Verse 32. *They shall make thee, etc.*— Thou shalt be made to eat grass as oxen. The madness that fell upon him induced him to forsake society, and to run to the woods and deserts, where he lived like a wild beast, his hairs growing long and thick, so as to be a substitute for clothing; and his nails strong and hooked, that he might the better climb trees and grub up the ground, in order to get roots and earth-nuts. It was the mercy of God that thus clothed and accoutred him. His case seems much like that of the maniac in the Gospel, whose dwelling was among the tombs and in the mountains, and who shunned the society of men.

Verse 36. *My reason returned*— Every thing was fulfilled that was exhibited by the dream and its interpretation. It is very likely that this unfortunate king had so concealed himself that the place of his retreat was not found out; and the providence of God had so watched over every thing, that, on his return to his palace, he found his counselors and his lords, who received him gladly, and cleaved to and served him as they had formerly done.

Verse 37. *Now I-praise and extol*— It is very probable that

Nebuchadnezzar was a true convert; that he relapsed no more into idolatry, and died in the faith of the God of Israel. It is supposed that he lived seventeen years after his restoration. But the authorized Version, which is followed in the margin, states the date of this decree to be B.C. 563, the year preceding Nebuchadnezzar's death.

CHAPTER 5

In the commencement of this chapter we are informed how Belshazzar, the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar, when rioting in his palace, and profaning the severed vessels of the temple, 1-4, was suddenly terrified with the appearance of the fingers of a man's hand, which wrote a few words on the wall before him, 5, 6. The wise men and astrologers were immediately called in to show the king the interpretation; but they could not so much as read the writing, because (as Houbigant and others have conjectured) though the words are in the Chaldee tongue, yet they were written in the Samaritan or ancient Hebrew characters, with which the wise men of Babylon were very probably unacquainted, as the Jews were at that time a despised people, and the knowledge of their language not a fashionable attainment, 7-9. Daniel, who had been so highly esteemed by Nebuchadnezzar for his superior wisdom, appears to have been altogether unknown to Belshazzar, till the queen (the same who had been the wife of Nebuchadnezzar according to the general opinion, or the queen consort according to others) had informed him, 10-12. Upon the queen's recommendation, Daniel is called in, 13-16; who boldly tells this despotic king, that as he had not benefited by the judgments inflicted on his grandfather, but gave himself up to pride and profanity, and had added to his other sins an utter contempt for the God of the Jews by drinking wine out of the sacred vessels of Jehovah in honor of his idols, 17-23; the Supreme Being, the Ruler of heaven and earth, had written his condemnation in three words, MENE, TEKEL, PERES, 24, 25; the first of which is repeated in the copies containing the Chaldean original; but all the ancient Versions, except the Syriac, are without this repetition. Daniel then gives the king and his lords the fearful import of the writing, viz., that the period allotted for the duration of the Chaldean empire was now completed, (see Jeremiah 25:12-14,) and that the kingdom was about to be transferred to the Medes and Persians, 26-28. However unwelcome such an interpretation must have been to Belshazzar, yet the monarch, overwhelmed with its clearness and certainty, commanded the prophet to be honored, 29. And that very night the prediction was fulfilled, for the king was slain, 30, and the city taken

by the Medes and Persians, 31. This great event was also predicted by Isaiah and Jeremiah; and the manner in which it was accomplished is recorded by Herodotus and Xenophon.

NOTES ON CHAP. 5.

Verse 1. *Belshazzar the king made a great feast*— This chapter is out of its place, and should come in after the seventh and eighth. There are difficulties in the chronology. After the death of Nebuchadnezzar, Evil-merodach his son ascended the throne of Babylon. Having reigned about two years, he was slain by his brother-in-law, Neriglissar. He reigned four years, and was succeeded by his son Laborosoarchod, who reigned only nine months. At his death Belshazzar the son of Evil-merodach, was raised to the throne, and reigned seventeen years, and was slain, as we read here, by Cyrus, who surprised and took the city on the night of this festivity. This is the chronology on which Archbishop Usher, and other learned chronologists, agree; but the Scripture mentions only Nebuchadnezzar, Evil-merodach, and Belshazzar, by name; and Jeremiah, 27:7, expressly says, “All nations shall serve him (Nebuchadnezzar,) and his son (Evil-merodach,) and his son’s son (Belshazzar,) until the very time of his land come;” i.e., till the time in which the empire should be seized by Cyrus. Here there is no mention of Neriglissar nor Laborosoarchod; but as they were usurpers, they might have been purposely passed by. But there remains one difficulty still: Belshazzar is expressly called the son of Nebuchadnezzar by the queen mother, ver. 11: “There is a man in thy kingdom, in whom is the spirit of the holy gods: and in the days of THY FATHER light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him: whom the king NEBUCHADNEZZAR THY FATHER, the king, I say, thy father, made master of the magicians.” The solution of this difficulty is, that in Scripture the name of son is indifferently given to sons and grandsons, and even to great grandsons. And perhaps the repetition in the above verse may imply this: “The king, Nebuchadnezzar thy father, the king thy father.” The king thy father’s father, and consequently thy grandfather. If it have not some such meaning as this, it must be considered an idle repetition. As to the two other kings, Neriglissar and Laborosoarchod, mentioned by Josephus and

Berosus, and by whom the chronology is so much puzzled, they might have been some petty kings, or viceroys, or satraps, who affected the kingdom, and produced disturbances, one for four years, and the other for nine months; and would in consequence not be acknowledged in the Babylonish chronology, nor by the sacred writers, any more than finally unsuccessful rebels are numbered among the kings of those nations which they have disturbed. I believe the only sovereigns we can acknowledge here are the following: 1. Nabopolassar; 2. Nebuchadnezzar; 3. Evil-merodach 4. Belshazzar; and with this last the Chaldean empire ended.

To a thousand of his lords— Perhaps this means lords or satraps, that were each over one thousand men. But we learn from antiquity that the Persian kings were very profuse in their entertainments; but it does not follow that the Chaldeans were so too. Besides, one thousand lords and their appropriate attendants would have been very inconvenient in a nocturnal assembly. The text, however, supports the common translation. Literally, “Belshazzar the king made bread for his lords a thousand; and against the thousand he drank wine.” That is, say some, he was a very great drinker.

Verse 2. *Whiles he tasted the wine*— He relished it, got heated by it, and when WINE got fully in, WIT went wholly out; and in consequence he acted the profane part of which we immediately read.

Verse 4. *And praised the gods of gold*— They had gods of all sorts, and of all metals; with wooden gods, and stone gods, beside!

Verse 5. *Fingers of a man’s hand*— The fingers were collected about the style or pen as in the act of writing.

Verse 6. *The king’s countenance was changed*— Here is a very natural description of fear and terror. 1. The face grows pale; 2. The mind becomes greatly agitated; 3. Pains seize on the lower part of the back and kidneys; 4. A universal tremor takes place, so that the knees smite against each other; 5. And lastly, either a syncope takes place, or the cry of distress is uttered, ver. 7: “The king cried.”

Verse 7. *Whosoever shall read this writing*— He knew it must be some awful portent, and wished to know what.

Verse 8. *They could not read the writing*— Because it was in the pure Hebrew, not the Chaldean character. See below.

Verse 10. *The queen-came*— This is generally allowed to have been the widow of Nebuchadnezzar; if so, she was the queen Amiyt, daughter of Astyages, sister of Darius the Mede, and aunt of Cyrus, according to Polyhistor, cited by Cedrenus. See Calmet. Others think that Nitocris was the person who is said to be queen when Cyrus took the city; and is stated to have been a lady of eminent wisdom and discretion, and to have had the chief direction of the public affairs. She was the mother of Labynithus; and, if this be the same as Belshazzar, she must be the person here introduced.

Verse 11. *Nebuchadnezzar thy father*— See the note on ver. 1.

Verse 16. *Disolve doubts*— Untie knots-unbind what is bound. An expression used in the east to signify a judge of eminent wisdom and skill.

Verse 17. *Let thy gifts be to thyself*— They could be of little use to any, as the city was in a few hours to be taken and pillaged.

Verse 18. *Nebuchadnezzar thy father*— Or grandfather, as the margin reads, ver. 2. See the notes on ver. 1.

Verse 19. *Whom he would he slew*— The genuine character of a despot, whose will is the only rule of his conduct.

Verse 20. *He was deposed from his kingly throne*— Became insane; and the reins of government were taken out of his hands.

Verse 22. *Hast not humbled thine heart*— These judgments and mercies have had no good effect upon thee.

Verse 23. *But hast lifted up thyself against the Lord*— And the highest evidence of this rebellion was, the profaning the sacred vessels of the Lord's house.

Verse 24. *Then was the part of the hand sent*— This was the filling up of the cup of thy iniquity; this last act made thee ripe for destruction.

Verse 25. *And this is the writing*— Had the words been written in the Chaldean character, every wise man there, every one that could read the alphabet of his own language, could have read and interpreted them. Let it be observed, — 1. That the character which we now call Hebrew is the Chaldean character. 2. That the true Hebrew character is that which we call the Samaritan. 3. Daniel could easily read this, for it was the character used by the Jews previously to the Babylonish captivity. 4. It appears that it was simply on account of the strangeness of the character that the Chaldeans could not read it.

I shall set down the words in both characters, by which the least learned reader may see that it was quite possible that one might be well known, while the other might be unintelligible.

Hebrew מנא מנא יקל ופרסי

Samaritan [Samaritan]

In ancient times, no doubt, these letters differed more from each other than they appear to do now; for we know that the Samaritan on ancient coins, though radically the same, differs very much from that now used in printing.

It should be observed, that each word stands for a short sentence; מנא mene signifies NUMERATION; תקל tekkel, WEIGHING; and פרש peres, DIVISION. And so the Arabic translates them. [A] mokeeson, measured; [A] *mewzonon, weighed*; [A] mokesoomon, divided. All the ancient Versions, except the Syriac, read the words simply Mene, Tekel, Phares, as they are explained in the following verses; without the repetition of

Mene, and without the conjunction ך vau and plural termination, ך in, in Peres.

Verse 29. *Clothed Daniel with scarlet*— אַרְגָּמָנָא argevana, more probably with purple. The gold chain about the neck was an emblem of magisterial authority. It is often thus mentioned in Scripture.

Verse 30. *In that night was Belshazzar-slain*.— Xenophon says, he was despatched by two lords, Gadatas and Gobrias, who went over to Cyrus, to avenge themselves of certain wrongs which Belshazzar had done them. We have already seen that Cyrus entered the city by the bed of the Euphrates, which he had emptied, by cutting a channel for the waters, and directing them into the marshy country.

Verse 31. *Darius the Median took the kingdom*— This is supposed to be the same as Cyaxares, son of Astyages and maternal uncle of Cyrus, to whom he gave the throne of Babylon, after himself had had the honor of taking the city.

Daniel speaks nothing of the war that raged between the Babylonians and the Medes; but Isaiah speaks particularly of it, chap. 13., 14., 45., 46., 47.; and so does Jeremiah, chap. 1., 51:I need not add, that it is largely spoken of by profane authors. The Medes and Persians were confederates in the war; the former under Darius, the latter under Cyrus. Both princes are supposed to have been present at the taking of this city. Mandane, daughter of Astyages, was mother of Cyrus, and sister to Cyaxares.

CHAPTER 6

Darius the Median, who succeeded Belshazzar in the kingdom of Babylon, having heard of Daniel's extraordinary wisdom and understanding, constitutes him the chief of the three presidents who were over the whole empire, and purposed also to make him prime minister or viceroy, 1-3. This great partiality of the king towards a stranger of Jewish extraction, and who had been carried captive into Chaldea, raised up a great many enemies to Daniel; and a scheme was even contrived by the presidents and princes to ruin him, 4-15; which succeeded so far that he was cast into a den of lions, but was miraculously delivered, 16-23. Darius, who was greatly displeased with himself for having been entrapped by the governors of the provinces to the prejudice of his faithful minister, is pleased and astonished at this deliverance; punished Daniel's enemies with the same kind of death which they had designed for the prophet; and made a decree that, throughout his dominions, the God of Daniel should be had in the greatest veneration, 24-38.

NOTES ON CHAP. 6

Verse 1. *A hundred and twenty princes*— A chief or satrap over every province which belonged to the Medo-Persian empire. Afterwards we find it enlarged to one hundred and twenty-seven provinces, by the victories of Cambyses and Darius Hystaspes. See Esther 1:1. Josephus reckons three hundred and sixty satrapies or lordships; but this is most probably an exaggeration or mistake.

Verse 2. *Three presidents*— Each having forty of these presidents accountable to him for their administration.

Daniel was first— As being established over that part where was the seat of government. He was confirmed in his offices by Darius.

Verse 3. *The king thought to set him over the whole realm*— Intended to make him grand vizier or emir ul amrim. This partiality of the king made Daniel the object of the other presidents, and the grandees of the kingdom.

Verse 4. *Sought to find occasion against Daniel*— But they found no blemish in his administration, for he was faithful to his king: this was a virtue. But he was also faithful to his God: this they hoped to construe into a crime, and make it the cause of his ruin.

Verse 7. *Whosoever shall ask a petition*— What pretense could they urge for so silly an ordinance? Probably to flatter the ambition of the king, they pretend to make him a god for thirty days; so that the whole empire should make prayer and supplication to him, and pay him Divine honors! This was the bait; but their real object was to destroy Daniel.

Verse 8. *According to the law of the Medes and Persians*— I do not think that this is to be understood so as to imply that whatever laws or ordinances the Medes or Persians once enacted, they never changed them. This would argue extreme folly in legislators in any country. Nothing more appears to be meant than that the decree should be enacted, written, and registered, according to the legal forms among the Medes and Persians; and this one to be made absolute for thirty days. The laws were such among this people, that, when once passed with the usual formalities, the king could not change them at his own will. This is the utmost that can be meant by the law of the Medes and Persians that could not be changed.

Verse 10. *Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed*— He saw what was designed, and he knew whom he served.

His windows being open— He would not shut them to conceal himself, but “kneeled down with his face turned toward Jerusalem, and prayed thrice each day, giving thanks to God as usual.” When the Jews were in distant countries, in prayer they turned their faces towards Jerusalem; and when in Jerusalem, they turned their faces towards the temple. Solomon, in his prayer at the dedication of the temple, 1 Kings 8:48, had entreated God to hear the prayers of those who might be in strange lands, or in captivity, when they should turn their faces towards their own land,

which God gave unto their fathers; and towards the city which he had chosen, and the house which was dedicated to his name. It was in reference to this that Daniel turned his face towards Jerusalem when he prayed.

Verse 12. *Shall be cast into the den of lions*— Either this was the royal menagerie, like that place in the Tower of London, where wild beasts are kept for the king's pleasure, and the public amusement; or they were kept for the purpose of devouring certain criminals, which the laws might consign to that kind of death. This is most likely, from the case before us.

Verse 14. *The king was sore displeased with himself*— And well he might, when through his excessive folly he passed a law that, for its ostensible object, would have been a disgrace almost to an idiot.

And set his heart on Daniel— He strove by every means to get the law annulled. He had no doubt spoken to several of his lords in private, and had gone from one to another till the going down of the sun.

Verse 15. *Then these men assembled*— Having got favorable answers, as we may presume, from many individuals, he called a parliament; but they now collectively joined to urge the execution of the law, not its repeal.

Verse 16. *Then the king commanded*— With a heavy heart he was obliged to warrant this murderous conspiracy. But when passing sentence his last words were affecting: "Thy God, whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee." He is thy God; thou servest him, not occasionally, but continually; therefore "he will deliver thee." Daniel had now the same kind of opportunity of showing his fidelity to God, as his three Hebrew companions before. The lions were not less terrible than the fiery furnace.

Verse 17. *A stone was brought*— All this precaution served the purposes of the Divine Providence. There could be no trick nor collusion here; if Daniel be preserved, it must be by the power of the Supreme God. The same precaution was taken by the Jews, in the case of the burial of our blessed Lord; and this very thing has served as one of the strongest proofs of the certainty of his resurrection and their unmixed wickedness.

Verse 18. *Passed the night fasting*— He neither ate nor drank, had no music to solace, nor sweet odors burnt or brought before him, and he passed the night without sleep. All this points out his great sincerity; and when it is considered that Darius could not be less than sixty-two or sixty-three years of age at this time, it shows more fully the depth of his concern.

Verse 19. *The king arose very early*— By the break of day.

Verse 20. *He cried with a lamentable voice*— His heart, full of grief, affected his speech.

Servant of the living God— The king was convinced that, unless his God saved him, his destruction was inevitable.

Verse 22. *My God hath sent his angel*— Such a one as that who attended Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, in the fiery furnace, and blew aside the flames, so that they could not hurt them.

Before him innocency was found in one— Because I was innocent God has preserved me; and now that I am preserved, my innocence is fully proved.

Verse 23. *No manner of hurt was found upon him*— And why? Because he believed in his God. How mighty is faith? It interests that power in the behalf of the believer by which the sea is dried up, the mountains removed, the dead raised to life, sin forgiven, the heart purified, Satan vanquished, death conquered, and God himself delighted and glorified! See Hebrews 11.

Verse 24. *They brought those men*— It was perfectly just that they should suffer that death to which they had endeavored to subject the innocent; but it was savage cruelty to destroy the women and children who had no part in the transgression.

Verse 25. *Then king Darius wrote*— And the substance of this decree, which was made by a heathen king, was to point out the perfections of the true God, and the fidelity of his devoted servant.

Verse 26. *I make a decree that-men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel*— As in the case of the three Hebrews, chap. 3:29. The true God was known by his servants, and by the deliverances he wrought for them. See his characters in this decree. 1. He is the living God, the Author and Giver of life; all others are dead gods. 2. He is steadfast for ever. All things change; but he is unchangeable. 3. He has a kingdom; for as he made all things, so he governs all things. 4. His kingdom shall not be destroyed. No human power can prevail against it, because it is upheld by his omnipotence. 5. His dominion is without end. It is an everlasting dominion, under an everlasting rule, by an everlasting God. 6. He delivereth them that are in danger and bondage. 7. He rescueth those who have fallen into the hands of their enemies, and implore his succor. 8. He worketh signs in the heavens. 9. And wonders upon earth; showing that both are under his sway, and are parts of his dominion. 10. And to complete all, He hath delivered Daniel. Before our own eyes he has given the fullest proof of his power and goodness, in rescuing his faithful servant from the teeth of the lions. What a fine eulogium on the great God and his faithful servant!

Verse 28. *So this Daniel prospered*— He had served fine kings: Nebuchadnezzar, Evil-merodach, Belshazzar, Darius, and Cyrus. Few courtiers have had so long a reign, served so many masters without flattering any, been more successful in their management of public affairs, been so useful to the states where they were in office, or have been more owned of God, or have left such an example to posterity.

Where shall we find ministers like Samuel and Daniel? None so wise, so holy, so disinterested, so useful, have ever since appeared in the nations of the earth.

CHAPTER 7

The prophet having, in the preceding chapters of this book, related some remarkable events concerning himself and his brethren in the captivity, and given proof of his being enabled, by Divine assistance, to interpret the dreams of others, enters now into a detail of his own visions, returning to a period prior to the transactions recorded in the last chapter. The first in order of the prophet's visions is that of the four beasts, which arose out of a very tempestuous ocean, 1-9; and of one like the Son of man who annihilated the dominion of the fourth beast, because of the proud and blasphemous words of one of its horns, 9-14. An angel deciphers the hieroglyphics contained in this chapter, declaring that the FOUR beasts, diverse one from another, represent the FOUR PARAMOUNT empires of the habitable globe, which should succeed each other; and are evidently the same which were shadowed forth to Nebuchadnezzar by another set of hieroglyphics, (see the second chapter,) 15-26. But for the consolation of the people of God, it is added that, at the time appointed in the counsel of Jehovah, "the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the saints of the Most High;" and that this kingdom shall never be destroyed or transferred to another people, as all the preceding dominations have been, but shall itself stand for ever, 27, 28. It will be proper to remark that the period of a time, times, and a half, mentioned in the twenty-fifth verse as the duration of the dominion of the little horn that made war with the saints, (generally supposed to be a symbolical representation of the papal power,) had most probably its commencement in A.D. 755 or 756, when Pepin, king of France, invested the pope with temporal power. This hypothesis will bring the conclusion of the period to about the year of Christ 2000, a time fixed by Jews and Christians for some remarkable revolution; when the world, as they suppose, will be renewed, the wicked cease from troubling the Church, and the saints of the Most High have dominion over the whole habitable globe. But this is all hypothesis.

NOTES ON CHAP. 7

Verse 1. *In the first year of Belshazzar*— This is the same Belshazzar who was slain at the taking of Babylon, as we have seen at the conclusion of chap. 5. That chapter should have followed both this and the succeeding. The reason why the fifth chapter was put in an improper place was, that all the historic parts might be together, and the prophetic be by themselves; and, accordingly, the former end with the preceding chapter, and the latter with this. The division therefore is not chronological but merely artificial.

Told the sum of the matters.— That he might not forget this extraordinary dream, he wrote down the leading particulars when he arose.

Verse 2. *The four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea*— The idea of strife is taken here from the effects that must be produced, were the east, the west, the north, and the south winds to rise tempestuously, and meet on the surface of the sea. By the great sea, the Mediterranean is meant; and is so called to distinguish it from those lakes called seas by the Hebrews; such as the Sea of Galilee, Dead Sea, Sea of Tiberias, etc.; but even that may refer to Asia, the scene of all these contentions. This dream is the same in meaning, under different emblems, as that of Nebuchadnezzar's metallic image; but in Daniel's dream several circumstances are added. It is supposed that Daniel had this dream about forty-eight years after Nebuchadnezzar had the vision of the great image.

Verse 3. *Four great beasts came up from the sea*— The term sea, in Hebrew יָם yam, from חָמָה hamah, to be tumultuous, agitated, etc., seems to be used here to point out the then known terraqueous globe, because of its generally agitated state; and the four winds striving, point out those predatory wars that prevailed almost universally among men, from the days of Nimrod, the founder of the Assyrian or Babylonish monarchy, down to that time, and in the end gave birth to the four great monarchies which are the subject of this vision.

Diverse one from another.— The people were different; the laws and customs different; and the administration of each differently executed.

Verse 4. *The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings*— Bp. Newton well remarks, that these great beasts, as explained by the angel, ver. 17, are kingdoms. They arise out of a stormy and tempestuous sea; that is, out of the wars and commotions of the world; and they are called great in comparison of other states and kingdoms, and are denominated beasts for their tyrannical and cruel oppression.

These four beasts are indeed monstrous productions; a lion with eagle's wings; a bear with three ribs in its mouth; a leopard with four wings, and four heads; and a beast with ten horns. But such emblems and hieroglyphics were usual among the eastern nations, as may be seen in the monuments of antiquity. A winged lion, and such like fictitious animals, may be seen in many parts of the ruins of Persepolis. Horns are attributed to beasts which naturally have none, being used in hieroglyphic writings for symbols of strength and power. And such figures are supposed to be the symbols of different nations; and are not more strange than many that are still used in heraldry. I believe the science of heraldry arose out of the knowledge gained from the symbols used in the Sacred Writings, and the little acquaintance anciently obtained of the meaning of some of the Egyptian hieroglyphics. Hence our wiverons, griffins, unicorns, with a congeries of natural and unnatural things, split eagles, two-headed swans, etc., etc., etc.

The beast like a lion is the kingdom of the Babylonians; and the king of Babylon is compared to a lion, Jeremiah 4:7; Isaiah 5:29; and is said to fly as an eagle, Jeremiah 48:40; Ezekiel 17:3, 7. The lion is considered the king of the beasts, and the eagle the king of the birds; and therefore the kingdom of Babylon, which was signified by the golden head of the great image, was the first and noblest of all the kingdoms; and was the greatest then in being. The wings of the eagle denote the rapidity with which the lion-Nebuchadnezzar, made his conquests; for in a few years, by his own arms, he brought his empire to such an extent, and raised it to such a degree of eminence, as was truly surprising; and all tended to show with what propriety this eagle-winged lion is here made his emblem.

The wings thereof were plucked— Lydia, Media, and Persia, which had

been provinces of the Babylonish empire, cast off the yoke, and put themselves under kings of their own. Besides, the rapidity of its conquests was stopped by its wars with the Medes and Persians; by whom it was at last conquered, and divided between Darius the Mede and Cyrus the Persian.

And it was lifted up from the earth— That is, the wings were plucked, rendered unfit for farther flight, by which it had before been lifted up from the earth; making its conquests almost with the rapidity of an eagle's flight. In what a short time did Nebuchadnezzar, who is here chiefly intended, conquer Syria, Phoenicia, Judea, Egypt, Arabia, etc.! But on his death the wings were plucked; and no farther extension of the empire took place under Evil-merodach or Belshazzar, till it was lost by the latter, and became divided as we have seen above.

And made stand upon the feet as a man— This I think refers to the taming of Nebuchadnezzar's pride. He had acted like a fierce and ravening lion. God struck him with insanity; he then lived the life of a beast, and had a beast's heart-disposition, and habits. At last God restored him.

And a man's heart was given to it— He became humane, humble, and pious; and in this state he appears to have died.

Verse 5. Another beast-like to a bear— This was the Medo-Persian empire, represented here under the symbol of the bear, as the largest species of these animals was found in Media, a mountainous, cold, and rough country, covered with woods. The Medes and Persians are compared to a bear on account of their cruelty and thirst after blood, a bear being a most voracious and cruel animal; the bear is termed by Aristotle an all-devouring animal; and the Medo-Persians are known to have been great robbers and spoilers. See Jeremiah 51:48-56. The Persians were notorious for the cruelty of their punishments. See Calmet.

Raised up itself on one side— Cyrus arose on the borders of Chaldea, and thus the bear appeared to put itself in the position to attack the lion.

It had three ribs in the mouth of it— As if it had just finished its repast

on some animal that it had seized. Some think three tusks curved like ribs, are meant; others three throats, **עלעי** illin, by which it (Cyrus) had absorbed the three empires of the Babylonians, Medes, and Persians; for these symbolic animals do not so much denote four empires, as four kings. See ver. 17. Others think three row of teeth are meant to denote the triple power of the Medes, Persians, and Babylonians, conjoined. Or the east, north, and south, which were subdued by the Persians. But the ribs being between the teeth of the bear may show how Babylon, Lydia, and Egypt were ground and oppressed by the bear—the Persians; though, as ribs strengthen the body, they were a powerful support to their conquerors.

Verse 6. Another like a leopard-four wings-four heads— This was the Macedonian or Greek empire; and Alexander the Great its king. Alexander and his subjects are fitly compared to a leopard. 1. The leopard is remarkable for its swiftness. Alexander and the Macedonians were very rapid in their conquests. 2. The leopard is a spotted animal; a proper emblem of the various nations, with their various customs and languages, which constituted the Macedonian empire. It may refer to the character of Alexander himself, sometimes mild, at others cruel; sober and drunken; continent and lecherous; having a great power of self-government, and at other times being a slave to his passions. 3. The leopard, though small, is not afraid to attack the lion.

Four wings of a fowl— The Babylonian empire was represented with two wings; and they sufficiently marked the rapidity of Nebuchadnezzar's conquests; but the Macedonian has here four wings; for nothing, in the history of the world, was equal to the conquests of Alexander, who ran through all the countries from Illyricum and the Adriatic Sea to the Indian Ocean and the River Ganges; and in twelve years subdued part of Europe, and all Asia.

The beast had also four heads— Signifying the empire after the death of Alexander, divided between his four generals. Cassander reigning over Macedon and Greece; Lysimachus, over Thrace and Bithynia; Ptolemy, over Egypt; and Seleucus, over Syria.

Dominion was given to it.— It was not owing to the skill, courage, or

valor of Alexander and his troops, that he made those wondrous conquests; the nations were given to him. For, as Bishop Newton says, had he not been assisted by the mighty power of God, how could he, with only thirty thousand men, have overcome Darius with six hundred thousand; and in so short a time have brought the countries from Greece as far as India into subjection?

Verse 7. *I saw-a fourth beast-it had great iron teeth*— This is allowed, on all hands, to be the Roman empire. It was dreadful, terrible, and exceeding strong: it devoured, and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue, that is, the remains of the former kingdoms, with its feet. It reduced Macedon into a Roman province about one hundred and sixty-eight years before Christ; the kingdom of Perpamos about one hundred and thirty-three years; Syria about sixty-five; and Egypt about thirty years before Christ. And, besides the remains of the Macedonian empire, it subdued many other provinces and kingdoms; so that it might, by a very usual figure, be said to devour the whole earth, to tread it down, and break it to pieces; and became in effect, what the Roman writers delight to call it, the empire of the whole world.

It (the fourth beast) was diverse from all the beasts that were before it— Not only in its republican form of government, but also in power and greatness, extent of dominion, and length of duration.

It had ten horns— The ten kingdoms into which the Roman empire was afterwards divided. Calmet says, ten Syrian kings: and he finds them thus: — 1. Seleucus Nicator. 2. Antiochus Soter. 3. Antiochus Theos. 4. Antiochus Callinicus. 5. Seleucus Ceraunus. 6. Antiochus the Great. 7. Seleucus, surnamed Philopater, brother of Antiochus Epiphanes. 8. Laomedon of Mitylene, to whom Syria and Phoenicia had been intrusted. 9. Antigone. And, 10. His son Demetrius, who possessed those provinces, with the title of kings. This is too much like forced work. There are different opinions concerning these ten kings; or rather which they were that constituted this division of the Roman empire. They are reckoned thus: — 1. The Roman senate. 2. The Greeks, in Ravenna. 3. The Lombards in Lombardy. 4. The Buns in Hungary. 5. The Alemans, in Germany. 6. The Franks in France. 7. The Burgundians in Burgundy. 8.

The Saracens in Africa, and a part of Spain. 9. The Goths, in other parts of Spain. 10. And the Saxons, in Britain.

Verse 8. *Another little horn*— Among Protestant writers this is considered to be the popedom.

Before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up— These were probably, 1. The exarchate of Ravenna. 2. The kingdom of the Lombards. And, 3. The state of Rome. The first was given to the Pope, Stephen II., by Pepin, king of France, A.D. 755; and this constituted the pope's temporal princes. The second was given to St. Peter by Charlemagne, in 774. The third, the state of Rome, was vested in the pope, both in spirituals and temporals, and confirmed to him by Lewis the pious. These are the three horns which were plucked up from the roots before the little horn.

Were eyes like the eyes of a man— Intimating cunning and superintendence; for the pope calls himself Episcopus episcoporum, the Overseer of overseers.

And a mouth speaking great things.— Full of boasting; pretending to unlimited jurisdiction; binding and loosing at pleasure; promising to absolve from all sins, present, past, and future; and threatening to send to everlasting destruction all kings, kingdoms, and individuals, who would dare to dispute his power and authority.

Verse 9. *The thrones were cast down*— דָּמִי might be translated erected, so the Vulgate, positi sunt, and so all the versions; but that ours is a proper translation, is sufficiently evident from chap. 3:6, 16, 20; 6:17, etc.; where the original word can be used in no other sense than that of throwing or casting down. There is a reference here to preparations made for a general assize, or to the convocation of the sanhedrin, where the father of the consistory sat with his assessors on each side in the form of a semicircle, and the people stood before them.

The Ancient of days— God Almighty; and this is the only place in the sacred writings where God the Father is represented in a human form.

Verse 10. *A fiery stream issued*— This is not spoken of the final judgment; but of that which he was to execute upon this fourth beast, the Roman empire; and the little boasting horn which is a part of the fourth beast, and must fall when the other falls.

Verse 11. *I beheld then because of the voice (or, the beast will be destroyed because) of the great words which the horn spake-his body destroyed*— When the dominion was taken from the rest of the beasts, their bodies were not destroyed, but suffered to continue still in being; but when the dominion shall be taken away from this beast, his body shall be totally destroyed; because other kingdoms succeeded to those, but no other earthly kingdom shall succeed to this. — Bishop Newton.

Verse 13. *One like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven*— This most certainly points out the Lord Jesus, **בר אנש** bar enosh, the Son of miserable man; who took our nature upon him that he might redeem us unto himself. To prove himself to be the Messiah he applies, before the high priests, these words of the Prophet Daniel to himself Matthew 24:30.

Near before him.— The Ancient of days.

Verse 14. *And there was given him dominion*— This also is applied to our Lord Jesus by himself, after his resurrection, Matthew 28:18.

His dominion is an everlasting dominion— Christianity shall increase, and prevail to the end of the world. See the parallel passages in the margin.

Verse 15. *I Daniel was grieved, etc.*— The words in the original are uncommonly emphatic. My spirit was grieved, or sickened, **בגו נדנה** bego nidneh, within its sheath or scabbard. Which I think proves, 1. That the human spirit is different from the body. 2. That it has a proper subsistence independently of the body, which is only its sheath for a certain time. 3. That the spirit may exist independently of its body, as the sword does independently of its sheath.

Verse 17. *These great beasts-are four kings*— See the preceding verses,

where the following explanations are inserted and illustrated.

Verse 18. *But the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom*— I doubt whether this be the true sense of the original Chaldee, קדשי עליונו ויקבלו מלכותא vikabbelun malcutha kaddishey elyonin, “But the supreme holy ones shall receive the kingdom;” or, “they shall receive the kingdom of the supreme saints.” Properly translated by Montanus, Et suscipient regnum sanctorum altissimorum. Whatever we may think of the patriarchs and the Jews in their best times, there has never been so much holiness of heart possessed, and so much righteousness practiced, as by the genuine disciples of Christ. Christianity alone has provided a full redemption for man. They are the chief saints, and to them God gives the kingdom: and this Gospel dispensation, called often the kingdom of God, and the kingdom of heaven, shall last for ever, during the whole lapse of time; and for ever and ever-throughout eternity, shall they and its blessings endure.

Verse 19. *His nails of brass*— This is not mentioned in the seventh verse, where the description of the beast is given. It might be added, for the first time, by the person who is now explaining the fourth beast. Houbigant thinks it has been lost out of the text: but such loss is not intimated by any MS.; nor does any of the ancient Versions acknowledge this addition in the seventh verse.

Verse 21. *The same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them.*— Those who make Antiochus the little horn, make the saints the Jewish people. Those who understand the popedom by it, see this as referring to the cruel persecutions of the popes of Rome against the Waldenses and Albigenses, and the Protestant Church in general.

Verse 22. *Saints of the Most High*—

To the supereminent saints; see the note on ver. 18.

Verse 25. *He shall speak great words against the Most High*— Sermones quasi Deus loquetur; “He shall speak as if he were God.” So St. Jerome quotes from Symmachus. To none can this apply so well or so fully as to

the popes of Rome. They have assumed infallibility, which belongs only to God. They profess to forgive sins, which belongs only to God. They profess to open and shut heaven, which belongs only to God. They profess to be higher than all the kings of the earth, which belongs only to God. And they go beyond God in pretending to loose whole nations from their oath of allegiance to their kings, when such kings do not please them! And they go against God when they give indulgences for sin. This is the worst of all blasphemies!

And shall wear out the saints— By wars, crusades, massacres, inquisitions, and persecutions of all kinds. What in this way have they not done against all those who have protested against their innovations, and refused to submit to their idolatrous worship? Witness the exterminating crusades published against the Waldenses and Albinenses. Witness John Huss, and Jerome of Prague. Witness the Smithfield fires in England! Witness God and man against this bloody, persecuting, ruthless, and impure Church!

And think to charge tines and laws— Appointing fasts and feasts; canonizing persons whom he chooses to call saints; granting pardons and indulgences for sins; instituting new modes of worship utterly unknown to the Christian Church; new articles of faith; new rules of practice; and reversing, with pleasure, the laws both of God and man. — Dodd.

Until a time and times and the dividing of time.— In prophetic language a time signifies a year; and a prophetic year has a year for each day. Three years and a half (a day standing for a year, as in chap. 9:24) will amount to one thousand two hundred and sixty years, if we reckon thirty days to each month, as the Jews do.

If we knew precisely when the papal power began to exert itself in the antichristian way, then we could at once fix the time of its destruction. The end is probably not very distant; it has already been grievously shaken by the French. In 1798 the French republican army under General Berthier took possession of the city of Rome, and entirely superseded the whole papal power. This was a deadly wound, though at present it appears to be healed; but it is but skinned over, and a dreadful cicatrice

remains. The Jesuits, not JESUS, are now the Church's doctors.

If the papal power, as a horn or temporal power, be intended here, which is most likely, (and we know that that power was given in 755 to Pope Stephen 2. by Pepin, king of France,) counting one thousand two hundred and sixty years from that, we are brought to A.D. 2015, about one hundred and ninety years from the present [A.D. 1825.] But I neither lay stress upon nor draw conclusions from these dates. If the Church of Rome will reform itself, it will then be the true Christian Church, and will never be destroyed. Let it throw aside all that is ritually Jewish, all that is heathen; all that which pretends to be of God, and which is only of man, all doctrines that are not in the Bible; and all rites and ceremonies which are not of the appointment of Christ and his apostles; and then, all hail the once Roman, but now, after such a change, the HOLY, Catholic Church! Every true Protestant would wish rather the reform than the extinction of this Church.

Verse 27. *The kingdom and dominion*— The people of the saints of the Most High, or the people who are the supereminent saints, shall have the kingdom. Whatever name they may be distinguished by among men, these are the people, and theirs is the Church, that no lapse of time shall injure, and no power be able to destroy; but shall last as long as time shall endure.

Verse 28. *The end of the matter*.— So said the expounding angel; and he said so because the purpose of God had determined it. In considering these things, and looking at the evils that shall come upon the world before those auspicious times can take place, I may say with Daniel, My cogitations much troubled me, and my countenance changed in me: but I keep the matter of my conjectures and consequent feelings in my own heart.

CHAPTER 8

This chapter contains Daniel's vision of the ram and he-goat, 1-14; referring, as explained by the angel, to the Persian and Grecian monarchies, 15-26. The little horn mentioned in the ninth verse, (or fierce king, as interpreted in the twenty-third,) is supposed by some to denote Antiochus Epiphanes; but seems more properly to apply to the Roman power in general, by which the polity and temple of the Jews were destroyed, on account of the great transgressions of these ancient people of God; and particularly because of their very obstinate and unaccountable rejection of the glorious doctrines of Christianity, which had been preached among them by Jesus Christ and his apostles, and the truth of which God had attested "by signs and wonders, and by divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost." Daniel is then informed of the two thousand and three hundred prophetic days (that is, years) which must elapse before the sanctuary be cleansed; or, in other words, before righteousness shall prevail over the whole earth. This period is supposed, with considerable probability to have had its commencement when Alexander the Great invaded Asia, in the year before Christ 334. This will bring the close of it to about the end of the SIXTH chiliad of the world; when, as already observed, some astonishing changes are expected to take place in the moral condition of the human race; when the power of Antichrist, both Papal and Mohammedan, shall be totally annihilated, and universal dominion given to the saints of the Most High. The chapter concludes with the distress of Daniel on account of the fearful judgments with which his country should be visited in after ages, 27.

NOTES ON CHAP. 8

Verse 1. *In the third year of the reign of-Belshazzar*— We now come once more to the Hebrew, the Chaldee part of the book being finished. As the Chaldeans had a particular interest both in the history and prophecies

from chap. 2:4 to the end of chap. vii., the whole is written in Chaldee, but as the prophecies which remain concern times posterior to the Chaldean monarchy, and principally relate to the Church and people of God generally, they are written in the Hebrew language, this being the tongue in which God chose to reveal all his counsels given under the Old Testament relative to the New.

Verse 2. *I saw in a vision*— Daniel was at this time in Shushan, which appears to have been a strong place, where the kings of Persia had their summer residence. It was the capital of the province of Elam or the Elymais; which province was most probably added to the Chaldean territories by Nebuchadnezzar; see Jeremiah 49:34, 35. Here was Daniel's ordinary residence; and though here at this time, he, in vision, saw himself on the banks of the river Ulai. This is the same as the river Euleus, which divided Shushan or Susiana from Elymais.

Verse 3. *A ram which had two horns*— In the former vision there were four beasts, pointing out four empires; in this we have but two, as only two empires are concerned here, viz., the Grecian and the Persian. The Babylonish empire is not mentioned; its fate was before decided, and it was now at its close.

By the ram, the empire of the Medes and Persians was pointed out, as explained by the angel Gabriel, ver. 20; and particularly Cyrus, who was the founder of that empire. Cyrus was the son of Cambyses, king of Persia; and grandson of Astyages, king of Media, by his daughter Mandane, who had been given in marriage to Cambyses. Cyrus marrying Roxana, the daughter and only child of his uncle Cyaxares, called in Scripture Ahasuerus, succeeded to both crowns, and thus united Media and Persia. A ram was the symbol of the Persians; and a ram's head with two horns, one higher than the other, appears as such in different parts of the ruins of Persepolis. See the plates of these ruins in the supplement to the seventh volume of the ancient part of the Universal History.

This ram had two horns; that is, two kingdoms, viz., Media and Persia; but one was higher than the other; and the higher came up last. Media, signified by the shorter horn, was the more ancient of the two kingdoms.

Persia, the higher horn, had come up but lately, and was of little historic or political consequence till the time of Cyrus; but in the reigns of this prince and his immediate successors, Persia attained a political consequence greatly superior to that possessed at any time by the kingdom of Media; therefore, it is said to have been the higher, and to have come up last.

Verse 4. *I saw the ram pushing westward*— The Persians, who are signified by the ram, as well as their founder Cyrus, pushed their conquests west, north and south. The principal theater of their wars, says Calmet, was against the SCYTHIANS, northward; against the GREEKS, westward; and against the EGYPTIANS, southward.

He did according to his will— There was no other nation at that time that could stay the progress of the Persian arms.

Verse 5. *Behold, a he-goat*— This was Alexander the Great; and a goat was a very proper symbol of the Grecian or Macedonian people. Bp. Newton very properly observes that, two hundred years before the time of Daniel, they were called AEgeadae, the goats' people; the origin of which name is said to be as follows: Caranus, their first king, going with a multitude of Greeks to seek a new habitation in Macedonia, was advised by an oracle to take the goats for his guides; and afterwards, seeing a herd of goats flying from a violent storm, he followed them to Edessa, and there fixed the seat of his empire, and made the goats his ensigns or standards; and called the place AEge or ASEgea, the goats' town; and the people AEgeadae, the goats' people; names which are derived from *αιξ, αιγος*, a goat. The city AEge or AEgea, was the usual burying-place of the Macedonian kings; and, in reference to this origin, Alexander called his son by Roxana, Alexander AEGus, Alexander the goat. All this shows the very great propriety of the symbol here used.

Came from the west— Europe lies westward of Asia.

On the face of the whole earth— Carrying every thing before him.

Touched not the ground— Seemed to fly from conquest to conquest. By the time Alexander was thirty years of age he had conquered all Asia: and,

because of the rapidity of his conquests, he is represented as a leopard with four wings, in the preceding vision.

A notable horn between his eyes.— This, says the angel, is the first king, ver. 21, that is, the first kingdom of the Greeks in Asia, which was erected by Alexander; and continued some years in his brother Philip Aridaeus, and in his two young sons, Alexander AEGus and Hercules. See Newton.

Verse 6. *And he came to the ram.*— This and the following verse give an account of the overthrow of the Persian empire by Alexander.

And ran unto him in the fury of his power— The conflicts between the Greeks and the Persians were excessively severe. Alexander first vanquished the generals of Darius, at the river Granicus, in Phrygia; he next attacked and totally routed Darius, at the straits of Issus, in Cilicia; and afterwards at the plains of Arbela, in Assyria. One can hardly read these words, says Bp. Newton, “the ram-which I had seen standing by the river, ran unto him in the fury of his power,” without having the image of Darius’ army standing and guarding the river Granicus and of Alexander on the other side, with his forces plunging in swimming across the stream, and rushing on the enemy, with all the fire and fury that can be conceived.

Verse 7. *And brake his two horns*— Subdued Persia and Media; sacked and burnt the royal city of Persepolis, the capital of the Persian empire, and, even in its ruins, one of the wonders of the world to the present day. This he did because “he was moved with choler” against Darius, who had endeavored to draw off his captains with bribes, and had labored to induce some of his friends to assassinate him. Alexander, finding this, would listen to no proposals of peace; and was determined never to rest till he had destroyed Darius and his whole empire. In Media, Darius was seized and made prisoner by some of his own treacherous subjects, and afterwards basely murdered.

There was no power in the ram to stand before him— Alexander’s victories over the Persians were as easy as they were rapid and decisive.

He cast him down to the ground, and stamped upon him— Totally

destroyed the family, and overturned the whole monarchy.

Verse 8. *The he-goat waxed very strong*— He had subdued nearly the whole of the then known world.

The great horn was broken— Alexander died in the height of his conquests, when he was but about thirty-three years of age. His natural brother, Philip Aridaeus, and his two sons, Alexander AEGus and Hercules, kept up the show and name of the Macedonian kingdom for a time; but they were all murdered within fifteen years; and thus the great horn, the Macedonian kingdom, was broken, Alexander's family being now cut off.

And for it came up four notable ones— The regal family being all dead, the governors of provinces usurped the title of kings; and Antigonus, one of them, being slain at the battle of Ipsus, they were reduced to four, as we have already seen. 1. SELEUCUS, who had Syria and Babylon, from whom came the Seleucidae, famous in history. 2. LYSIMACHUS, who had Asia Minor. 3. PTOLEMY, son of Lagus, who had Egypt, from whom sprang the Lagidae. And, 4. CASSANDER, who had Greece and the neighboring countries. These held dominion towards the four winds of heaven. Cassander had the western parts, Lysimachus had the northern regions, Ptolemy possessed the southern countries, and Seleucus had the eastern provinces.

Verse 9. *Out of one of them came forth a little horn*— Some think that Antiochus Epiphanes is meant; but Bp. Newton contends that it is the Roman government that is intended; and although very great at its zenith, yet very little in its rising.

Waxed-great toward the south— The Romans made Egypt a province of their empire, and it continued such for some centuries.

Toward the east— They conquered Syria, and made it a province.

Toward the pleasant land.— Judea, so called Psalm 106:24; Jeremiah 3:19; Daniel 11:16, 41. It is well known that they took Judea, and made it

a province; and afterwards burnt the city and the temple, and scattered the Jews over the face of the earth.

Verse 10. *The host of heaven*— The Jewish hierarchy. The stars, the priests and Levites. The powers or host of heaven are probably intended by our Lord, Matthew 24:29, to signify the whole Jewish hierarchy.

Verse 11. *Even to the prince of the host*— They seemed, in this case, to fight against God himself.

The daily sacrifice was taken away— By the destruction of the city and temple; and has never been restored from that day until now.

Verse 12. *And a host was given him*— That is, power; or perhaps the host of heaven—the priesthood—the whole sacrificial system, by reason of transgression. They had filled up the measure of their iniquities, in rejecting the Lord that bought them; and the daily sacrifice, being no longer of use, was given up with the rest to destruction.

Cast down the truth— Probably the whole Jewish ritual and religion.

Practiced, and prospered.— Prosperity or success followed all their acts.

Verse 13. *One saint speaking, and another saint said*— One angel asked another how long the sanctuary was to be trodden down?

Verse 14. *Unto two thousand and three hundred days*— Though literally it be two thousand three hundred evenings and mornings. Yet I think the prophetic day should be understood here, as in other parts of this prophet, and must signify so many years. If we date these years from the vision of the he-goat, (Alexander's invading Asia,) this was A.M. 3670, B.C. 334; and two thousand three hundred years from that time will reach to A.D. 1966, or one hundred and forty-one years from the present A.D. 1825. This will bring it near to the time mentioned chap. 7:25, where see the note.

Verse 15. *As the appearance of a man.*— Supposed to be the Messiah.

Verse 17. *At the time of the end shall be the vision.*— Or, as Houbigant, “The vision shall have an end at the proper time.”

Verse 20. *The ram which thou sagest*— See this explained under the vision itself, ver. 3, etc.

Verse 22. *But not in his power.*— The four kingdoms which shall arise out of the Macedonian empire shall not be of Alexander’s power or family, nor have his strength and dignity.

Verse 23. *When the transgressors are come to the full*— When the utmost degradation has taken place, by the buying and selling of the high priesthood; for Onias was ejected for a sum of money, to make room for wicked Jason; and Jason again was supplanted for a greater sum by a worse man, if possible, than himself, Menelaus; and the golden vessels of the temple were sold to pay for this sacrilegious purchase. Thus transgressions were come to the full, before the Romans had commission to destroy Jerusalem and its temple, etc.

A king of fierce countenance— The Roman government, as before; for king is often taken for kingdom or empire.

Understanding dark sentences— Very learned and skillful in all things relating to government and its intrigues. The learning of Rome is proverbial to the present time.

Verse 24. *But not by his own power*— The strength of the other kingdoms consisted in themselves; but the Roman empire, as a horn or kingdom of the goat, was not mighty by its own power—was not strong by virtue of the goat, but drew its nourishment and strength from Rome and Italy. There grew the trunk and body of the tree; though the branches extended over Greece, Asia, Syria, and Egypt. — Bp. Newton.

Shall destroy wonderfully— In the taking of Jerusalem by the Romans ninety-seven thousand Jews were made captives, and eleven hundred thousand were slain. So they destroyed this once mighty and holy people!

Verse 26. *He shall cause craft to prosper*— They subdued as many by their diplomatic skill and political intrigues as they did by the sword.

He shall also stand up against the Prince of princes— Against Christ, for it was by the Roman authority that he was condemned to death and crucified; and their persecutions had nearly destroyed the Christian religion; but the house was founded on a rock.

But he shall be broken without hand.— The tide was turned by the invisible hand of God; and thus heathen Rome was overcome, and converted to Christianity.

Verse 26. *The vision of the evening and the morning which was told is true*— That mentioned in ver. 14.

For it shall be for many days.— Not less than two thousand three hundred years!

Verse 27. *Daniel fainted*— To foresee the desolations that were coming on the land, the city, the temple, and the people.

Did the king's business— Transacted the affairs of state that belonged to my department, after having been sick for certain days through the effects of this vision. He had a pious and feeling heart; and he was distressed for the desolations that were coming upon his people.

CHAPTER 9

Daniel, understanding from the prophecies of Jeremiah that the seventy years' captivity was now terminating, pours out his soul in fervent prayer to God, and earnestly supplicates pardon and restoration for his captive people, 1-12. When thus supplicating God in behalf of Israel, the angel Gabriel is sent to inform him of the seventy prophetic weeks, or four hundred and ninety natural years, which should elapse from the date of the edict to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple to the death of the Messiah, 20-27; a prophecy most exactly fulfilled by the event, according to the computation of the best chronologers. Dean Prideaux states the commencement of these seventy prophetic weeks to have been in the month Nisan, in the year of the Julian period 4256, which corresponds with A.M. 3546, B.C. 458, according to the Usherian account. How awfully are the Jews blinded, who, in contradiction to so clear a prophecy, still expect the Messiah who was cut off, and, after suffering, is entered into his glory!

NOTES ON CHAP. 9

Verse 1. *In the first year on Darius*— This is the same Darius the Mede, spoken of before, who succeeded Belshazzar, king of the Chaldeans. See chap. 5:31.

Verse 2. *I Daniel understood by books*— The prophecy referred to here is found Jeremiah 25:12; 29:10. The people must have been satisfied of the Divine inspiration of Jeremiah, or his prophecies would not have been so speedily collected nor so carefully preserved. It appears that there was a copy of them then in Daniel's hands.

Verse 3. *I*

he was very much afflicted, and earnestly besought God to put a speedy end to it; and how earnestly he seeks, his own words show. He prayed, he supplicated, he fasted, he put sackcloth upon his body, and he put ashes upon his head. He uses that kind of prayer prescribed by Solomon in his prayer at the dedication of the temple. See 1 Kings 8:47, 48.

Verse 4. *Keeping the covenant*— Fidelity and truth are characteristics of God. He had never yet broken his engagements to his followers, and was ever showing mercy to men.

Verse 7. *All Israel, that are near, and that are far off*— He prays both for Judah and Israel. The latter were more dispersed, and had been much longer in captivity.

Verse 9. *Mercies and forgivenesses*— From God's goodness flow God's mercies; from his mercies, forgivenesses.

Verse 11. *Therefore the curse is poured upon us*— It is probable that he alludes here to the punishment of certain criminals by pouring melted metal upon them; therefore he uses the word **תִּתַּח** tittach. it is poured out, like melted metal, for this is the proper meaning of the root **נָתַח** nathach.

Verse 14. *The Lord watched upon the evil*— In consequence of our manifold rebellions he hath now watched for an opportunity to bring these calamities upon us.

Verse 17. *And cause thy face to shine*— Give us proof that thou art reconciled to us.

Verse 19. *Thy city and thy people are called by thy name.*— The holy city, the city of the great King. I think it scarcely possible for any serious man to read these impressive and pleading words without feeling a measure of the prophet's earnestness.

Verse 21. *The man Gabriel*— Or the angel Gabriel, who had appeared to me as a man. **ישׁ** ish is the same here as person—the person Gabriel.

Being caused to fly swiftly— God hears with delight such earnest, humble, urgent prayers; and sends the speediest answer. Gabriel himself was ordered on this occasion to make more than usual speed.

Verse 24. *Seventy weeks are determined*— This is a most important prophecy, and has given rise to a variety of opinions relative to the proper mode of explanation; but the chief difficulty, if not the only one, is to find out the time from which these seventy weeks should be dated. What is here said by the angel is not a direct answer to Daniel's prayer. He prays to know when the seventy weeks of the captivity are to end. Gabriel shows him that there are seventy weeks determined relative to a redemption from another sort of captivity, which shall commence with the going forth of the edict to restore and rebuild Jerusalem, and shall terminate with the death of Messiah the Prince, and the total abolition of the Jewish sacrifices. In the four following verses he enters into the particulars of this most important determination, and leaves them with Daniel for his comfort, who has left them to the Church of God for the confirmation of its faith, and a testimony to the truth of Divine revelation. They contain the fullest confirmation of Christianity, and a complete refutation of the Jewish cavils and blasphemies on this subject.

Of all the writers I have consulted on this most noble prophecy, Dean Prideaux appears to me the most clear and satisfactory. I shall therefore follow his method in my explanation, and often borrow his words.

Seventy weeks are determined—The Jews had Sabbatic years, Leviticus 25:8, by which their years were divided into weeks of years, as in this important prophecy, each week containing seven years. The seventy weeks therefore here spoken of amount to four hundred and ninety years.

In ver. 24 there are six events mentioned which should be the consequences of the incarnation of our Lord:—

I. To finish (לכלל *lechalle*, to restrain,) the transgression which was effected by the preaching of the Gospel, and pouring out of the Holy Ghost among men.

II. To make an end of sins; rather **וליהתם חטאות** ulehathem chataoth, “to make an end of sin-offerings,” which our Lord did when he offered his spotless soul and body on the cross once for all.

III. To make reconciliation (**ולכפר** ulechapper, “to make atonement or expiation”) for iniquity; which he did by the once offering up of himself.

IV. To bring in everlasting righteousness, **צדק עלמים** tsedek olamim, that is, “the righteousness, or righteous ONE, of ages;” that person who had been the object of the faith of mankind, and the subject of the predictions of the prophets through all the ages of the world.

V. To seal up (**ולחתם** velachtom, “to finish or complete”) the vision and prophecy; that is, to put an end to the necessity of any farther revelations, by completing the canon of Scripture, and fulfilling the prophecies which related to his person, sacrifice, and the glory that should follow.

VI. And to anoint the Most Holy, **קדש קדשים** kodesh kodashim, “the Holy of holies.” **משיח** mashach, to anoint, (from which comes **משיח** mashiach, the Messiah, the anointed one,) signifies in general, to consecrate or appoint to some special office. Here it means the consecration or appointment of our blessed Lord, the Holy One of Israel, to be the Prophet, Priest, and King of mankind.

Verse 25. From the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem— The foregoing events being all accomplished by Jesus Christ, they of course determine the prophecy to him. And if we reckon back four hundred and ninety years, we shall find the time of the going forth of this command.

Most learned men agree that the death of Christ happened at the passover in the month Nisan, in the four thousand seven hundred and forty-sixth year of the Julian period. Four hundred and ninety years, reckoned back from the above year, leads us directly to the month Nisan in the four thousand two hundred and fifty-sixth year of the same period; the very

month and year in which Ezra had his commission from Artaxerxes Longimanus, king of Persia, (see Ezra 7:9,) to restore and rebuild Jerusalem. See the commission in Ezra, 7:11-26, and Prideaux's Connexions, vol. 2:p. 380.

The above seventy weeks, or four hundred and ninety years, are divided, in ver. 25, into three distinct periods, to each of which particular events are assigned. The three periods are:—

I. Seven weeks, that is, forty-nine years.

II. Sixty-two weeks, that is, four hundred and thirty-four years.

III. One week, that is, seven years.

To the first period of seven weeks the restoration and repairing of Jerusalem are referred; and so long were Ezra and Nehemiah employed in restoring the sacred constitutions and civil establishments of the Jews, for this work lasted forty-nine years after the commission was given by Artaxerxes.

From the above seven weeks the second period of sixty-two weeks, or four hundred and thirty-four years more, commences, at the end of which the prophecy says, Messiah the Prince should come, that is, seven weeks, or forty-nine years, should be allowed for the restoration of the Jewish state; from which time till the public entrance of the Messiah on the work of the ministry should be sixty-two weeks, or four hundred and thirty-four years, in all four hundred and eighty-three years.

From the coming of our Lord, the third period is to be dated, viz., “He shall confirm the covenant with many for one week,” that is seven years, ver. 27.

This confirmation of the covenant must take in the ministry of John the Baptist with that of our Lord, comprehending the term of seven years, during the whole of which he might be well said to confirm or ratify the new covenant with mankind. Our Lord says, “The law was until John;”

but from his first public preaching the kingdom of God, or Gospel dispensation, commenced.

These seven years, added to the four hundred and eighty-three, complete the four hundred and ninety years, or seventy prophetic weeks; so that the whole of this prophecy, from the times and corresponding events, has been fulfilled to the very letter.

Some imagine that the half of the last seven years is to be referred to the total destruction of the Jews by Titus, when the daily sacrifice for ever ceased to be offered; and that the intermediate space of thirty-seven years, from our Lord's death till the destruction of the city, is passed over as being of no account in relation to the prophecy, and that it was on this account that the last seven years are divided. But Dean Prideaux thinks that the whole refers to our Lord's preaching connected with that of the Baptist. **וַחֲצִי** vachatsi, says he, signifies in the half part of the week; that is, in the latter three years and a half in which he exercised himself in the public ministry, he caused, by the sacrifice of himself, all other sacrifices and oblations to cease, which were instituted to signify his.

In the latter parts of ver. 26 and 27 we find the **THIRD PART** of this great prophecy, which refers to what should be done after the completion of these seventy weeks.

Verse 26. And the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary— By the “prince” Titus, the son of Vespasian, is plainly intended; and “the people of that prince” are no other than the Romans, who, according to the prophecy, destroyed the sanctuary, **הַקֹּדֶשׁ** hakkodesh, the holy place or temple, and, as a flood, swept away all, till the total destruction of that obstinate people finished the war.

Verse 27. Alas! for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate— This clause is remarkably obscure. **כַּנַּף שִׁקּוּצִים מְשֹׁמֵם** kenaph shikkutsim meshomem, “And upon the wing of abominations causing amazement.” This is a literal translation of the place; but still there is no determinate sense. A Hebrews MS., written in the thirteenth

century, has preserved a very remarkable reading here, which frees the place from all embarrassment. Instead of the above reading, this valuable MS. has **יְהִי שִׁקּוּץ וּבְהִיכָל** *ubeheychal yihyey shikkuts*; that is, “And in the temple (of the Lord) there shall be abomination.” This makes the passage plain, and is strictly conformable to the facts themselves, for the temple was profaned; and it agrees with the prediction of our Lord, who said that the abomination that maketh desolate should stand in the holy place, Matthew 24:15, and quotes the words as spoken **δια δανιηλ του φροφητου**, by Daniel the prophet. That the above reading gives the true sense, there can be little doubt, because it is countenanced by the most eminent ancient versions.

The Vulgate reads, *Et erit in templo abominatio*, “And in the temple there shall be abomination.”

The Septuagint, **και επι το ιερον βδελυγμα των ερημωσεων**, “And upon the temple there shall be the abomination of desolation.”

The Arabic, “And upon the sanctuary there shall be the abomination of ruin.”

The above reading is celebrated by J. D. Michaelis, *Epist. De Ebdom. Dan.*, p. 120: *Vix insignius exemplum reperiri posse autem, ostensuro in codicibus Hebraeis latere lectiones dignissimas quae eruantur, etc.* “A more illustrious example can, I think, hardly be found, to show that various readings lie hid in Hebrew MSS., which are most worthy of being exhibited.” *Vid. Bib. Hebrews KENNICOTT, Dis. Gen.*

I have only to add that this mode of reckoning years and periods by weeks is not solely Jewish. Macrobius, in his book on Scipio’s dream, has these remarkable words: *Sed a sexta usque ad septimam septimanam fit quidem diminutio, sed occulta, et quae detrimentum suum aperta defectione non prodat: ideo nonnullarum rerumpublicarum hic mos est, ut post sextam ad militiam nemo cogatur; Somn. Scip., lib. 1:c. vi., in fine.* “From the sixth to the seventh week, there is a diminution of strength; but it is hidden, and does not manifest itself by any outward defect. Hence it was the custom in some republics not to oblige a man to go to the wars after the sixth

week, i.e., after forty-two years of age.”

Having now gone through the whole of this important prophecy, and given that interpretation which the original seemed best to warrant, I shall next proceed to notice the principal various readings found in the Collections of Kennicott and De Rossi, with those from my own MSS., which the reader may collate with the words of the common printed text.

Verse 24. חטאות שבעים שבעים נחתך על עמך ועל עיר קדשך. וכלא הפשע ולחתם קדשים, ולכפר עו ולהביא צדק עלמים. ובצלחתם חזו ונביא ולמשה קדש

Verse 25. מ מצא דבר להשיב ולבנות ירושלם ותדע ותשכל. ושבעים ששים ושנים תשוב עד משיח נגיד שבעים שבעה ונבנתה רחוב וחרוץ ובצוק העתים

Verse 26. יכרת משיח ואי לו: ואחרי השבעים ששים ושנים שממות, וקצו בשטף: והעיר והקדש ישחית עם נגיד הבא ועד קץ מלחמה נחרצת

Verse 27. ישבית זבח ומנחה: והגביר ברית לרבים שבוע אחד: ותך על שומם, ועל כנף שקוצים משמם: וחצי השבוע ועד כלה ונחרצה

Of the whole passage Houbigant gives the following translation:—

Verse 24. Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and the city of thy sanctuary:

That sin may be restrained, and transgressions have an end;

That iniquity may be expiated, and an everlasting righteousness brought in;

That visions and prophecies may be sealed up, and the Holy of holies anointed.

Verse 25. Know therefore and understand:—

From the edict which shall be promulgated, to return and rebuild Jerusalem, there shall be seven weeks.

Then it shall be fully rebuilt, with anxiety, in difficult times.

Thence, to the Prince Messiah, there shall be sixty-two weeks.

Verse 26. And after sixty-two weeks the Messiah shall be slain, and have no justice.

Afterwards he shall waste the city and the sanctuary, by the prince that is to come.

And his end shall be in straits; and to the end of the war desolation is appointed.

Verse 27. And for one week he shall confirm a covenant with many; And in the middle of the week he shall abrogate sacrifice and offering; And in the temple there shall be the abomination of desolation, Until the ruin which is decreed rush on after the desolation.

In this translation there are some peculiarities.

Instead of “the street shall be built again, and the wall,” ver. 26, he translates רחוב וחרוץ (with the prefix ב beth instead of ו vau in the latter word,) “it shall be fully (the city and all its walls) rebuilt with anxiety.”

Instead of ואי לו “but not for himself,” he translates, “Nor shall justice be done him; “ supposing that ד “justice” was originally in the verse.

Instead of “the people of the prince,” ver. 26, he translates “by the prince,” using עמ im as a preposition, instead of עם am, “the people.”

Instead of “and for the overspreading,” he translates **ועל כנפ** “in the temple;” following the Septuagint, **αυα επι το ιερον**. This rendering is at least as good as ours: but see the marginal readings here, and the preceding notes.

וּנְבִיא “and the prophet.” The conjunction is omitted by two of Kennicott’s.

וְהִשְׁכִּיל “and understand.” One of my MSS. has **וְהִשְׁכִּיל**.

Verse 25. מִמוּצֵא “from the publication.” One MS. of De Rossi’s omits the **מ** “from,” and instead of either, one of my oldest MSS. has **לְמוּצֵא** “to the publication.”

מְשִׁיחַ “Messiah.” Nine MSS. read the word with the point sheva, which makes it read, in regimine, “the anointed of the prince.” But this is evidently the effect of carelessness, or rather design.

שֶׁבַע “seven.” Two MSS. add the conjunction **ו** vau, “and.”

וּלְבַנוֹת “and to build.” One of mine omits the conjunction.

שֶׁבַע שָׁבוּעִים “seven weeks.” One of Kennicott’s has **שֶׁבַע שָׁבוּעִים** “seventy years.”

וּשְׁבַעִים “and weeks.” One of Kennicott’s has **וּשְׁבַעִים** and a week.”

שִׁשִּׁים “sixty.” A few add the conjunction **ו** vau, “and sixty;” and another has **שֶׁשֶׁ** “six;” and another **שֶׁבַעִים** “seventy.” Wherever this word signifies weeks, two of my oldest MSS. write it full **שְׁבַעִים**. In one of my MSS. **הַשְּׁבַעִים שִׁשִּׁים** are omitted in the text, but added by a later hand in the margin.

וְחַרְוֵץ “and the ditch.” One MS. has **הָעִיר** “the city.” And for **רַחֵב** “street,” one of mine has **רַחֲבֵב** of the same meaning, but more full.

וּבְצוֹק “and in straits,” or anxiety. One MS. without and, as the Vulgate and Septuagint.

Verse 26. וְהַקֹּדֶשׁ “and the holy place or sanctuary.” But two of my most

ancient MSS., and four of Kennicott's, leave out the ו vau, and read הקדש והעיר "and the holy city," or "city of holiness," instead of "the city and sanctuary." In one MS. ו is omitted in והעיר.

וקצו "and its end." One MS. omits the conjunction ו and; one omits the following קץ "the end;" reading thus: "and unto the war." But a more singular reading is that of one of my own MSS. written about A.D. 1136, which has וקיצו "and its summer."

ששים "sixty." But one of Kennicott's MSS. has ששים שבעים "sixty weeks;" and another adds the conjunction, AND sixty.

ישחית shall destroy." But one of De Rossi's has שחת "shall be destroyed."

עם "the people." עם im, "with," is the reading of one of Kennicott's, with the Septuagint, Theodotion, Syriac, Hexapla, Vulgate, and Arabic.

בשטף "with a flood." One MS. has השטף "the flood."

ועל כנף "and upon the wing." Nearly twenty MSS. have ועד "and unto," etc.

Verse 27. ועד קץ "and unto the end." עד "to the end;" and one has ועל "and upon."

קץ "the end." One has עת "the time;" and another both, עת קץ "the time of the end."

ועל כנף שקוצים "and upon the wing (or battlement) abomination." Instead of this, one of the Parisian MSS. numbered three hundred and thirteen in Kennicott's, has ובהיכל יהיה שיקוץ "and in the temple there shall be abomination." See the preceding notes. This is a similar reading to Theodotion, the Vulgate, Septuagint, Syriac, Hexapla, and the Arabic; and is countenanced by our Lord, Matthew 24:15. After all that

has been said on this reading, (which may be genuine, but is less liable to suspicion, as the MS. appears to be the work of some Christian; it is written from the left to the right hand, and is accompanied by the Vulgate Latin,) if this be an attempt to accommodate the Hebrew to the Vulgate, it should be stated that they who have examined this MS. closely, have asserted that there is no evidence that the writer has endeavored to conform the Hebrew to the Latin text, unless this be accounted such. The ancient versions give this reading great credit.

שְׁקֻצִים “abominations.” One of mine has less fully שְׁקֻצִים.

מְשֻׁמָּם “desolation.” One of mine has more fully מְשֻׁמָּם.

וְעַד “and unto,” is wanting in one of mine; וְעַל “and upon” is the reading in one other.

עַל שׁוֹמָם “until the desolation.” שׁוֹמָם “the desolation.” One of mine has שׁוֹמָם without the וּ vau. עַל is wanting; but is added in the margin, by a later hand, in another of these ancient MSS.

I have thus set down almost all the variations mentioned by Kennicott and De Rossi, and those furnished by three ancient MSS. of my own, that the learned reader may avail himself of every help to examine thoroughly this important prophecy. Upwards of thirty various readings in the compass of four verses, and several of them of great moment.

CHAPTER 10

This and the two following chapters give an account of Daniel's last vision, wherein the succession of the Persian and Grecian monarchies is described, together with the wars that should take place between Syria and Egypt under the latter monarchy. The last part of the vision (from chap. 11:36) seems to relate chiefly to the persecutions of the Church in the times of Antichrist, till it be purified from all its pollutions; after which will follow that glorious kingdom of the saints spoken of in the seventh and eighth chapters. This chapter begins with an account of Daniel's fasting and humiliation, 1-3. Then we have a description of the Divine person who appeared to the prophet, not unlike him who appeared to the apostle in the isle of Patmos, 4-21. See Revelation 1:10-16.

NOTES ON CHAP. 10

Verse 1. *In the third year of Cyrus*— Which answers to the first year of Darius the Mede.

The time appointed was long— **וּצְבָא גָדוֹל** vetsaba gadol, but the warfare long; there will be many contentions and wars before these things can be accomplished.

Verse 2. *I was mourning three full weeks.*— The weeks are most probably dated from the time of the termination of the last vision. Calmet proves this by several reasons.

Verse 3. *I ate no pleasant bread*— This fast was rather a general abstinence; living all the while on coarse and unsavory food; drinking nothing but water; not using the bath, and most probably wearing haircloth next the skin, during the whole of the time.

Verse 4. *By the side of Hiddekel*— The same as the Tigris. the great river

of Assyria; as the Euphrates of Syria, and the Nile of Egypt.

Verse 5. *Clothed in linen*— The description is intended to point out the splendor of the garments.

Gold of Uphaz— The same as Ophir.

Verse 6. *His body also was like the beryl*— The description of this person is very similar to that of our Lord in Revelation 1:13-15.

Verse 7. *The men that were with me saw not the vision*— An exactly parallel case with what occurred at the conversion of Saul of Tarsus, Acts 9:7. There was a Divine influence which they all felt, but only Daniel saw the corporeal appearance.

Verse 9. *Was I in a deep sleep*— I fell into a swoon.

Verse 10. *A hand touched me*— Nothing was apparent or palpable but a hand. A hand had written Belshazzar's fate upon the wall; and the hand is frequently mentioned when the power or majesty of God is intended. Perhaps by hand God himself may be meant. It is remarkable that in a very ancient MS. of the Septuagint, more than a thousand years old, now in the imperial library of Vienna, adorned with paintings which have been engraved for the catalogue of Lambechius, and transferred to that of Nesselius, all the appearances of God are represented by a hand in the clouds.

Verse 12. *I am come for thy words*— On account of thy prayers I am sent to comfort and instruct thee.

Verse 13. *But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me*— I think it would go far to make a legend or a precarious tale of this important place to endeavor to maintain that either a good or evil ANGEL IS intended here. Cyrus alone was the prince of Persia, and God had destined him to be the deliverer of his people; but there were some matters, of which we are not informed, that caused him to hesitate for some time. Fearing, probably, the greatness of the work, and not being fully satisfied of his ability to execute

it, he therefore for a time resisted the secret inspirations which God had sent him. The opposition might be in reference to the building of the temple.

But lo, Michael— Gabriel, who speaks, did not leave Cyrus till Michael came to take his place. Michael, he who is like God, sometimes appears to signify the Messiah, at other times the highest or chief archangel. Indeed there is no archangel mentioned in the whole Scripture but this one. See Jude 9; Revelation 12:7.

Verse 14. *For yet the vision is for many days.*— There are many things which remain yet to be revealed, and the time of their accomplishment is very distant.

Verse 15. *I set my face toward the ground*— He was standing upright, ver. 11, and he now bent his body in reverence, and looked down upon the ground.

And became dumb.— Found himself unable to speak.

Verse 16. *Like the similitude of the sons of men.*— I think Gabriel is here meant, who appeared to Daniel in a human form; and so in ver. 18, and see also chap. 9:21.

Touched my lips— Before this he was unable to speak.

By the vision— The vision that I have already had, and of which I have not a proper knowledge has greatly afflicted me, because I see it intimates grievous calamities to my people. See chap. 9:26.

Verse 17. *Neither is there breath*— He could not breathe freely; he was almost suffocated with sorrow.

Verse 19. *O man, greatly beloved*— אִישׁ חַמּוּדוֹת ish chamudoth, man of delights; the most amiable of men.

Let my lord speak— I am now so strengthened and encouraged, that I shall

be able to bear any revelation that thou mayest make.

Verse 20. *Knowest thou wherefore I come*— So high art thou in the favor of God, that he hath sent me unto thee to give thee farther satisfaction; though I was elsewhere employed upon a most important mission, and I must speedily return to accomplish it, viz.:—

To fight with the king of Persia— To remove all the scruples of Cyrus, and to excite him to do all that God designs him to do for the restoration of my people, and the rebuilding of the city and temple of Jerusalem. Nothing less than a supernatural agency in the mind of Cyrus can account for his decree in favor of the Jews. He had no natural, no political inclination to it; and his reluctance to obey the heavenly motions is here represented as a fight between him and the angel.

The prince of Grecia shall come.— I believe this refers to Alexander the Great, who was to destroy the Persian empire. See the second and third verses of the following chapter.

Verse 21. *Noted in the scripture of truth*— Perhaps this refers to what he had already written down. See the preceding visions, which Daniel did not fully understand, though a general impression from them had filled his heart with sorrow.

Michael your prince.— The archangel mentioned before, ver. 13, and who has been always supposed to be appointed by God as the guardian of the Jewish nation. It appears that God chose to make use of the ministry of angels in this work; that angels, as they could be only in one place at one time, could not produce influence where they were not; and that, to carry on the operation on the mind of the Persian king, it was necessary that either Gabriel or Michael should be present with him, and when one went on another commission another took his place; see ver. 13. But we know so little of the invisible world that we cannot safely affirm any thing positively.

CHAPTER 11

This chapter gives a more particular explanation of those events which were predicted in the eighth chapter. The prophet had foretold the partition of Alexander's kingdom into four parts. Two of these, in which were included Egypt and Syria, the one to the north, the other to the south, in respect of Judea, appear to take up the chief attention of the prophet, as his people were particularly concerned in their fate; these being the countries in which by far the greatest number of the Jews were, and still are, dispersed. Of these countries he treats (according to the views of the most enlightened expositors) down to the conquest of Macedon, A.M. 3836, B.C. 168, when he begins to speak of the Romans, 1-30; and then of the Church under that power, 31-35. This leads him to speak of Antichrist, who was to spring up in that quarter, 36-39; and of those powers which at the TIME of the end, or the latter days of the Roman monarchy, (as this term is generally understood,) were to push at it, and overthrow many countries, 40-43. By the king of the SOUTH, in the fortieth verse, the dominion of the Saracens, or Arabs, is supposed to be intended, which was an exceeding great plague to the Roman empire in the east, and also to several papistical countries, for the space of one hundred and fifty years, i.e. from A.D. 612, when Mohammed and his followers first began their depredations, to A.D. 762, when Bagdad was built, and made the capital of the caliphs of the house of Abbas, from which epoch the Saracens became a more settled people. By the king of the NORTH in the same verse the prophet is supposed by some to design that great scourge of eastern Christendom, the Ottoman or Othman empire, by which, after about a hundred and fifty years of almost uninterrupted hostilities, the Roman empire in the east was completely overturned, A.D. 1453. The chapter concludes with a prediction of the final overthrow of this northern power, and of the manner in which this great event shall be accomplished, 44, 45. But it should be observed that, notwithstanding the very learned observations of Bishop Newton and others upon this chapter, their scheme of interpretation presents very great and insurmountable difficulties; among which the very lengthy detail of events in the Syrian and Egyptian histories, comprising a period of less

than two hundred years, and the rather uncouth transition to the incomparably greater transactions in Antichristian times, and of much longer duration, which are passed over unth unaccountable brevity, are not the least. On all these subjects, however, the reader must judge for himself. See the notes.

NOTES ON CHAP. 11

Verse 1. *In the first year of Darius the Mede*— This is a continuation of the preceding discourse. Bp. Newton, who is ever judicious and instructing, remarks: It is the usual method of the Holy Spirit to make the latter prophecies explanatory of the former; and thus revelation “is a shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.” The four great empires shown to Nebuchadnezzar, under the symbol of a great image, were again more particularly represented to Daniel under the forms of four great wild beasts. In like manner, the memorable events that were revealed to Daniel in the vision of the ram and he-goat, are here more clearly revealed in this last vision by an angel; so that this latter prophecy may not improperly be said to be a comment on the former. It comprehends many signal events. The types, figures, and symbols of the things are not exhibited in this, as in most other visions, and then expounded by the angel; but the angel relates the whole: and, not by way of vision, but by narration, informs Daniel of that which is noted in the Scripture of truth, chap. 10:21.

Verse 2. *There shall stand up yet three kings*— Gabriel had already spoken of Cyrus, who was now reigning; and after him three others should arise. These were, 1. Cambyses, the son of Cyrus. 2. Smerdis, the Magian, who was an impostor, who pretended to be another son of Cyrus. And, 3. Darius, the son of Hystaspes, who married Mandane, the daughter of Cyrus.

Cambyses reigned seven years and five months; Smerdis reigned only seven months; and Darius Hystaspes reigned thirty-six years.

The fourth shall be far richer than they all— This was Xerxes, the son of

Darius, of whom Justin says. “He had so great an abundance of riches in his kingdom, that although rivers were dried up by his numerous armies, yet his wealth remained unexhausted.”

He shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia.— His military strength was such, that Herodotus, who lived in that time, informs us that his army amounted to five millions, two hundred and eighty-three thousand, two hundred and twenty men. Besides these, the Carthaginians furnished him with an army of three hundred thousand men, and a fleet of two hundred ships. He led an army against the Greeks of eight hundred thousand men, and twelve hundred and seven ships, with three banks of rowers each. As he marched along, he obliged all the people of the countries through which he passed to join him.

Verse 3. *A mighty king shall stand up*— This was Alexander the great. It is not said that this mighty king shall stand up against Xerxes, for he was not born till one hundred years after that monarch; but simply that he should stand up, i.e., that he should reign in Greece.

Verse 4. *His kingdom shall be broken*— Shall, after his death, be divided among his four chief generals, as we have seen before. See chap. 8:22.

And not to his posterity— The family of Alexander had a most tragical end: 1. His wife Statira was murdered soon after his death by his other wife Roxana. 2. His brother Aridaeus who succeeded him, was killed, together with his wife Euridice, by command of Olympias, Alexander’s mother, after he had been king about six years and some months. 3. Olympias herself was killed by the soldiers in revenge. 4. Alexander Aëgus, his son, together with his mother Roxana, was slain by order of Cassander. 5. Two years after, his other son Hercules, with his mother Barsine, was privately murdered by Polysperchon; so that in fifteen years after his death not one of his family or posterity remained alive!

“Blood calls for blood.” He (Alexander) was the great butcher of men. He was either poisoned, or killed himself by immoderate drinking, when he was only thirty-two years and eight months old: and a retributive Providence destroyed all his posterity, so that neither root nor branch of

them was left on the face of the earth. Thus ended Alexander, the great butcher; and thus ended his family and posterity.

Verse 5. *The king of the south*— This was Ptolemy Lagus, one of his generals, who had the government of Egypt, Libya, etc., which are on the south of Judea. He was strong, for he had added Cyprus, Phoenicia, Caria, etc., to his kingdom of Egypt.

And one of his princes shall be strong above him— This was Seleucus Nicator, who possessed Syria, Babylon, Media, and the neighboring countries. This was the king of the north, for his dominions lay north of Judea.

Verse 6. *In the end of years*— Several historical circumstances are here passed by.

The king's daughter of the south— Berenice, daughter of Ptolemy Philadelphus, king of Egypt, was married to Antiochus Theos, king of Syria. These two sovereigns had a bloody war for some years; and they agreed to terminate it by the above marriage, on condition that Antiochus would put away his wife Laodice and her children, which he did; and Berenice having brought an immense fortune to her husband, all things appeared to go on well for a time.

But she shall not retain the power of the arm— זרע zaro, her posterity, shall not reign in that kingdom.

But she shall be given up— Antiochus recalled his former wife Laodice and her children, and she, fearing that he might recall Berenice, caused him to be poisoned and her to be murdered, and set her son Callinicus upon the throne.

And they that brought her— Her Egyptian women, striving to defend their mistress, were many of them killed.

And he to at begat her! Or, as the margin, “he whom she brought forth;” the son being murdered, as well as the mother, by order of Laodice.

And he that strengthened her— Probably her father Ptolemy, who was excessively fond of her, and who had died a few years before.

Verse 7. But out of a branch of her roots— A branch from the same root from which she sprang. This was Ptolemy Euergetes, her brother, who, to avenge his sister's death, marched with a great army against Seleucus Callinicus, took some of his best places, indeed all Asia, from Mount Taurus to India, and returned to Egypt with an immense booty, forty thousand talents of silver, precious vessels, and images of their gods two thousand five hundred, without Callinicus daring to offer him battle. I can but touch on these historic facts, for fear of extending these notes to an immoderate length.

Verse 8. He shall continue more years— Seleucus Callinicus died (an exile) by a fall from his horse; and Ptolemy Euergetes survived him four or five years. — Bp. Newton.

Verse 9. So the king of the south— Ptolemy Euergetes:—

Shall come into his kingdom— That of Seleucus Callinicus.

And shall return— Having heard that a sedition had taken place in Egypt, Ptolemy Euergetes was obliged to return speedily in order to repress it; else he had wholly destroyed the kingdom of Callinicus.

Verse 10. But his sons shall be stirred up— That is, the sons of Callinicus, who were Seleucus Ceraunus and Antiochus, afterwards called the Great.

Shall assemble a multitude— Seleucus Ceraunus did assemble a multitude of forces in order to recover his father's dominions; but, not having money to pay them, they became mutinous, and he was poisoned by two of his own generals. His brother Antiochus was then proclaimed king; so that one only of the sons did certainly come, and overflow, and pass through; he retook Seleucia, and regained Syria. He then returned, and overcame Nicolaus the Egyptian general; and seemed disposed to invade Egypt, as

he came even to his fortress, to the frontiers of Egypt.

Verse 11. *The king of the south*— Ptolemy Philopater, who succeeded his father Euerpetes.

Shall come forth and fight with him— He did come forth to Raphia, where he was met by Antiochus, when a terrible battle was fought between these two kings.

And he (Antiochus, the king of the north) shall set forth a great multitude— Amounting to sixty-two thousand foot, six thousand horse, and one hundred and two elephants; but yet the multitude was given into his hand, the hand of the king of the south; for Ptolemy gained a complete victory. Raphia, and other neighbouring towns, declared for the victor; and Antiochus was obliged to retreat with his scattered army to Antioch, from which he sent to solicit a peace. See 3 Macc. 1:1-6, and Polybius, lib. v.

Verse 12. *His heart shall be lifted up*— Had Ptolemy improved his victory, he might have dispossessed Antiochus of his whole empire; but giving way to pride, and a criminally sensual life, he made peace on dishonorable terms; and though he had gained a great victory, yet his kingdom was not strengthened by it, for his subjects were displeased, and rebelled against him, or at least became considerably disaffected.

Verse 13. *The king of the north shall return-after certain years*— In about fourteen years Antiochus did return, Philopater being dead, and his son Ptolemy Epiphanes being then a minor. He brought a much larger army and more riches; these he had collected in a late eastern expedition.

Verse 14. *Many stand up against the king of the south*— Antiochus, and Philip king of Macedon, united together to overrun Egypt.

Also the robbers of thy people— The Jews, who revolted from their religion, and joined Ptolemy, under Scopas:—

Shall exalt themselves to establish the vision— That is, to build a temple like that of Jerusalem, in Egypt, hoping thereby to fulfill a prediction of

Isaiah, #Isa 30:18-25, which seemed to intimate that the Jews and the Egyptians should be one people. They now revolted from Ptolemy, and joined Antiochus; and this was the means of contributing greatly to the accomplishment of prophecies that foretold the calamities that should fall upon the Jews.

But they shall fall.— For Scopas came with a great army from Ptolemy; and, while Antiochus was engaged in other parts, reduced Coelesyria and Palestine, subdued the Jews, placed guards on the coasts of Jerusalem, and returned with great spoils to Egypt.

Verse 15. *So the king of the north*— Antiochus came to recover Judea. Scopas was sent by Ptolemy to oppose him; but he was defeated near the fountains of Jordan, and was obliged to take refuge in Sidon with ten thousand men. Antiochus pursued and besieged him; and he was obliged by famine to surrender at discretion, and their lives only were spared. Antiochus afterwards besieged several of the fenced cities, and took them; in short, carried all before him; so that the king of the south, Ptolemy, and his chosen people, his ablest generals, were not able to oppose him.

Verse 16. *He shall stand in the glorious land*— Judea. For he reduced Palestine; and the Jews supplied him with provisions, and assisted him to reduce the garrison that Scopas had left in the citadel of Jerusalem.

Which by his hand shall be consumed— Or, which shall be perfected in his hand. For Antiochus showed the Jews great favor: he brought back those that were dispersed, and reestablished them in the land; freed the priests and Levites from all tribute, etc.

Verse 17. *He shall also set his face to enter*— Antiochus purposed to have marched his army into Egypt; but he thought it best to proceed by fraudulence, and therefore proposed a treaty of marriage between him and his daughter Cleopatra, called here the daughter of women, because of her great beauty and accomplishments. And this he appeared to do, having “upright ones with him.” Or, as the Septuagint have it *kai euyeia panta met’ autou poihsai*, “and he will make all things straight with him;” that is, he acted as if he were influenced by nothing but the most upright views.

But he intended his daughter to be a snare to Ptolemy, and therefore purposed to corrupt her that she might betray her husband.

But she shall not stand on his side— On the contrary, her husband's interests became more dear to her than her father's; and by her means Ptolemy was put upon his guard against the intentions of Antiochus.

Verse 18. *Shall he turn his face unto the isles*— Antiochus had fitted out a great fleet of one hundred large ships and two hundred smaller, and with this fleet subdued most of the maritime places on the coast of the Mediterranean, and took many of the isles, Rhodes, Samos, Euboea, Colophon, and others.

But a prince for his own behalf— Or, a captain. The consul Acilius Glabrio caused the reproach to cease; beat and routed his army at the straits of Thermopylae, and expelled him from Greece. So he obliged him to pay the tribute which he hoped to impose on others; for he would grant him peace only on condition of paying the expense of the war, fifteen thousand talents; five hundred on the spot, — two thousand five hundred when the peace should be ratified by the senate, — and the remaining twelve thousand in twelve years, each year one thousand. See Polybius in his Legations, and Appian in the Wars of Syria. And thus:—

Without his own reproach— Without losing a battle, or taking a false step, Acilius caused the reproach which he was bringing upon the Romans to turn upon himself.

Verse 19. *Be shall turn his face toward the fort of his own land*— After this shameful defeat, Antiochus fled to Sardis, thence to Apamea, and the next day got into Syria, and to Antioch, his own fort, whence he sent ambassadors to treat for peace; and was obliged to engage to pay the immense sum of money mentioned above.

But he shall stumble and fall— Being under the greatest difficulties how to raise the stipulated sums, he marched into his eastern provinces to exact the arrears of taxes; and, attempting to plunder the temple of Jupiter Belus at Elymais, he was opposed by the populace, and he and his attendants

slain. This is the account that Diodorus Sicules, Strabo, and Justin give of his death. But it is variously related by others; some saying that he was assassinated by some of his own people whom he had punished for being drunk at a feast. — So Aurelius Victor. St. Jerome says he lost his life in a battle against the inhabitants of Elymais. In short, the manner of his death is uncertain; and perhaps even this circumstance is referred to by the prophet, when he says, “He shall stumble and fall, and NOT BE FOUND.”

Verse 20. *Then shall stand up in his estate a raiser of taxes*— Seleucus Philopater succeeded his father Antiochus. He sent his treasurer Heliodorus to seize the money deposited in the temple of Jerusalem, which is here called the glory of the kingdom, see 2 Macc. 9:23. He was so cramped to pay the annual tax to the Romans, that he was obliged to burden his subjects with continual taxes.

He shall be destroyed, neither in anger-fighting against an enemy, nor in battle-at the head of his troops; but basely and treacherously, by the hand of Heliodorus his treasurer, who hoped to reign in his stead.

Verse 21. *In his estate shall stand up a vile person*— This was Antiochus, surnamed Epiphanes-the Illustrious. They did not give him the honor of the kingdom: he was at Athens, on his way from Rome, when his father died; and Heliodorus had declared himself king, as had several others. But Antiochus came in peaceably, for he obtained the kingdom by flatteries. He flattered Eumenes, king of Pergamus, and Attalus his brother, and got their assistance. He flattered the Romans, and sent ambassadors to court their favor, and pay them the arrears of the tribute. He flattered the Syrians, and gained their concurrence; and as he flattered the Syrians, so they flattered him, giving him the epithet of Epiphanes-the Illustrious. But that he was what the prophet here calls him, a vile person, is fully evident from what Polybius says of him, from Athenians, lib. v.: “He was every man’s companion: he resorted to the common shops, and prattled with the workmen: he frequented the common taverns, and ate and drank with the meanest fellows, singing debauched songs,” etc., etc. On this account a contemporary writer, and others after him, instead of Epiphanes, called him Epimanes-the Madman.

Verse 22. *And with the arms of a flood*— The arms which were overflowed before him were his competitors for the crown. They were vanquished by the forces of Eumenes and Attalus; and were dissipated by the arrival of Antiochus from Athens, whose presence disconcerted all their measures.

The prince of the covenant— This was Onias, the high priest, whom he removed, and put Jason in his place, who had given him a great sum of money; and then put wicked Menelaus in his room, who had offered him a larger sum. Thus he acted deceitfully in the league made with Jason.

Verse 23. *He shall come up*— From Rome, where he had been a hostage for the payment of the tax laid on his father.

Shall become strong with a small people.— At first he had but few to espouse his cause when he arrived at Antioch, the people having been greatly divided by the many claimants of the crown; but being supported by Eumenes and Attalus, his few people increased, and he became strong.

Verse 24. *He shall enter peaceably even upon the fattest places*— The very richest provinces—Coelesyria and Palestine.

He shall do that which his fathers have not done, nor his fathers' fathers— He became profuse in his liberalities, and scattered among them the prey of his enemies, the spoil of temples, and the riches of his friends, as well as his own revenues. He spent much in public shows, and bestowed largesses among the people. We are told in 1 Macc. 3:30, that “in the liberal giving of gifts he abounded above all the kings that went before him.” These are nearly the words of the prophet; and perhaps without any design to copy them on the part of the apocryphal writer. He would sometimes go into the streets, and throw about a handful of money, crying out, “Let him take it, to whom Fortune sends it.”

He shall forecast his devices— As Eulaeus and Lenaeus, who were the guardians of the young Egyptian king Ptolemy Philometer, demanded from Antiochus the restitution of Coelesyria and Palestine, which he refused, he foresaw that he might have a war with that kingdom; and therefore he

forecast devices—fixed a variety of plans to prevent this; visited the strong holds and frontier places to see that they were in a state of defense. And this he did for a time—he employed some years in hostile preparations against Egypt.

Verse 25. *He shall stir up his power*— Antiochus marched against Ptolemy, the king of the south, (Egypt,) with a great army; and the Egyptian generals had raised a mighty force.

Stirred up to battle— The two armies met between Pelusium and Mount Casius; but he (the king of the south) could not stand—the Egyptian army was defeated. The next campaign he had greater success; he routed the Egyptian army, took Memphis, and made himself master of all Egypt, except Alexandria, see 1 Macc. 1:16-19. And all these advantages he gained by forecasting devices; probably by corrupting his ministers and captains. Ptolemy Macron gave up Cyprus to Antiochus; and the Alexandrians were led to renounce their allegiance to Ptolemy Philometer, and took Euergetes, or Physcon his younger brother, and made him king in his stead. All this was doubtless by the corruptions of Antiochus. See below.

Verse 26. *Yea, they that feed of the portion of his meat*— This is the proof of what has been last noted, that the intrigues of Antiochus, corrupting the ministers and officers of Ptolemy, were the cause of all the disasters that fell on the Egyptian king. They that fed of the portion of his meat—who were in his confidence and pay, and possessed the secrets of the state, betrayed him; and these were the means of destroying him and his army, so that he was defeated, as was before observed.

Verse 27. *And both these kings' hearts shall be to do mischief*— That is, Antiochus, and Ptolemy Philometer, who was nephew to the former, and whose interest he now pretended to have much at heart, since the Alexandrians had renounced their allegiance to him, and set his younger brother Euergetes upon the throne. When Antiochus came to Memphis, he and Philometer had frequent conferences at the same table; and at these times they spoke lies to each other, Antiochus professing great friendship to his nephew and concern for his interests, yet in his heart designing to ruin the kingdom by fomenting the discords which already subsisted

between the two brothers. On the other hand, Philometer professed much gratitude to his uncle for the interest he took in his affairs, and laid the blame of the war upon his minister Eulaeus; while at the same time he spoke lies, determining as soon as possible to accommodate matters with his brother, and join all their strength against their deceitful uncle.

But it shall not prosper— Neither succeeded in his object; for the end of the appointed time was not yet come.

Verse 28. Then shall he return onto his land with great riches— Antiochus did return, laden with riches, from the spoils that he took in Egypt; see 1 Macc. 1:19, 20. And hearing that there had been a report of his death, at which the citizens of Jerusalem had made great rejoicings:—

His heart shall be against the holy covenant— He was determined to take a severe revenge, and he had an ostensible pretext for it, for Jason, who had been deprived of the high priesthood, hearing the report of the death of Antiochus, raised forces, marched against Jerusalem, took it, and obliged Menelaus, the high priest, to shut himself up in the castle. Antiochus brought a great army against Jerusalem; took it by storm; slew forty thousand of the inhabitants; sold as many more for slaves; boiled swine's flesh, and sprinkled the temple and the altar with the broth; broke into the holy of holies; took away the golden vessels and other sacred treasures, to the value of one thousand eight hundred talents; restored Menelaus to his office; and made one Philip, a Phrygian, governor of Judea. 1 Macc. 1:24; 2 Macc. 5:21. Prideaux and Newton. These are what we term exploits; which having finished, he returned to his own land.

Verse 29. At the time appointed he shall return— Finding that his treachery was detected, and that the two brothers had united their counsel and strength for their mutual support, he threw off the mask; and having collected a great army early in the spring, he passed through Coelesyria; entered Egypt; and the inhabitants of Memphis having submitted to him, he came by easy marches to Alexandria. But, says the prophet, "it shall not be as the former or as the latter:" he had not the same success as the former, when he overthrew the Egyptian army at Pelusium; nor as the latter, when he took Memphis, and subdued all Egypt, except Alexandria.

See the reason.

Verse 30. *For the ships of Chittim shall come against him*— Chittim is well known to mean the Roman empire. Antiochus, being now in full march to besiege Alexandria, and within seven miles of that city, heard that ships were arrived there from Rome, with legates from the senate. He went to salute them. They delivered to him the letters of the senate, in which he was commanded, on pain of the displeasure of the Roman people, to put an end to the war against his nephews. Antiochus said he would go and consult his friends; on which Popilius, one of the legates, took his staff, and instantly drew a circle round Antiochus on the sand where he stood, and commanded him not to pass that circle till he had given a definitive answer. Antiochus, intimidated, said, he would do whatever the senate enjoined; and in a few days after began his march, and returned to Syria. This is confirmed by Polybius, Livy, Velleius, Paterculus, Valerius Maximus, and Justin.

Therefore he shall be grieved— “Grieving and groaning,” says Polybius; both mortified, humbled, and disappointed.

Have indignation against the holy covenant— For he vented his rage against the Jews; and he sent his general, Apollonius, with twenty-two thousand men against Jerusalem, plundered and set fire to the city, pulled down the houses round about it, slew much of the people, and built a castle on an eminence that commanded the temple, and slew multitudes of the poor people who had come up to worship, polluted every place, so that the temple service was totally abandoned, and all the people fled from the city. And when he returned to Antioch he published a decree that all should conform to the Grecian worship; and the Jewish worship was totally abrogated, and the temple itself consecrated to Jupiter Olympius. How great must the wickedness of the people have been when God could

the people. See 1 Macc. i, 41, 62; 2 Macc. 6:1-9; confirmed by Josephus, War, book 1:chap. 1, s. 1. The concluding reflection of Bp. Newton here is excellent:—

“It may be proper to stand a little here, and reflect how particular and circumstantial this prophecy is, concerning Egypt and Syria, from the death of Alexander to the time of Antiochus Epiphanes. There is not so concise, comprehensive, and regular an account of their kings and affairs to be found in any authors of those times. The prophecy is really more perfect than any history, and is so wonderfully exact, not only to the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, but likewise equally so beyond that time, that we may conclude in the words of the inspired writer, ‘No one could thus declare the times and seasons, but he who hath them in his own power.’”

Verse 31. *And arms shall stand on his part*— After Antiochus, arms, that is, the Romans, shall stand up: for arms in this prophecy every where denote military power, and standing up, the power in activity and conquering. Both Sir Isaac Newton and Bp. Newton agree, that what follows is spoken of the Romans. Hitherto Daniel has described the actions of the kings of the north and of the south, that of the kings of Syria and Egypt; but, upon the conquest of Macedon by the Romans, he has left off describing the actions of the Greeks, and begun to describe those of the Romans in Greece, who conquered Macedon, Illyricum, and Epirus, in the year of the era of Nabonassar, 580. Thirty-five years after, by the will of Attalus, they inherited all Asia westward of Mount Taurus; sixty-five years after they conquered the kingdom of Syria, and reduced it into a province; and thirty-four years after they did the same to Egypt. By all these steps the Roman arms stood up over the Greeks; and after ninety-five years more, by making war upon the Jews, they polluted the sanctuary of strength, — the temple, (so called by reason of its fortifications,) and took away the daily sacrifice and placed the abomination that maketh desolate, or of the desolator; for that this abomination was thus placed after the time of Christ, appears from Matthew 24:15.

In the sixteenth year of the Emperor Adrian, A.D. 132, they placed this abomination by building a temple to Jupiter Capitolinus, where the temple

of God in Jerusalem stood; upon which the Jews, under Barchocab, rose up against the Romans. But in this war they had fifty cities demolished, nine hundred and fifty of their best towns destroyed, and eighty thousand men were slain by the sword; and in the end of the war, A.D. 136, were banished Judea on pain of death; and thenceforth the land became desolate. See Observations on Daniel, and Bp. Newton on the Prophecies.

Verse 32. *Such as do wickedly against the covenant*— This if understood of the Christian Jews, for the NEW had now succeeded to the OLD, the whole of the Jewish ritual having been abolished, and Jerusalem filled with heathen temples. And he—the Roman power, did all he could by flatteries, as well as threats, to corrupt the Christians, and cause them to sacrifice to the statues of the emperors.

But the people that do know their God— The genuine Christians.

Shall be strong— Shall be strengthened by his grace and Spirit.

And do exploits.— Continue steadfast in all temptations, hold fast their faith, and enjoy a good conscience.

Verse 33. *And they that understand*— The apostles and primitive Christians in general, who understood from the prophets, and his own actions, that JESUS was the true MESSIAH.

Instruct many— Preach the Gospel every where, and convert multitudes to the faith.

Yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days.— They were exposed to the malice and fury of their enemies, during TEN STATE PERSECUTIONS, and suffered all kinds of tortures, with but little intermission, for three hundred years. — Newton.

Verse 34. *Now when they shall fall*— When the storm of the tenth persecution under Diocletian, which lasted ten years, fell upon them, they were sorely oppressed.

They shall be holpen with a little help— By Constantine; who, while he removed all persecution, and promoted the temporal prosperity of the Christian Church, yet added little to its spiritual perfection and strength. For many, now seeing the Christians in prosperity:—

Cleave to them with flatteries.— Became Christians BECAUSE the EMPEROR was such.

Verse 35. *And some of them of understanding*— Disputes on certain points of religion soon agitated the Christian Church; and now, having no outward persecution, they began to persecute each other. And many excellent men, men of understanding, fell victims because they would not embrace erroneous doctrines, when professed by the state. But this was permitted:—

To try them, and to purge, and to make them white— To bring all to the pure profession, possession, and practice of Christianity.

To the time of the end— To the time that God shall cause pure and undefiled religion every where to prevail. But when is the time appointed for this?

Verse 36. *And the king shall do according to his will*— This may apply to Antiochus, who exalted himself above every god, called himself a god, sported with all religion, profaned the temple, etc., etc. But others think an antichristian power in the Church is intended; for in the language of this prophecy king is taken for power, a kingdom, etc. That such a power did spring up in the Church that acted in an arbitrary manner against all laws, human and Divine, is well known. This power showed itself in the Greek emperors in the east, and in the bishops of Rome in the west. And this is to continue.

Till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done.— This is the same as what was called in chap. 8:19, the last end of the indignation; and chap. 9:27, the consummation; and means the end or consummation of God's indignation against the Jews. And this seems more clearly expressed, chap. 12:7: "When he shall have accomplished to

scatter the power of the holy people.” We see this still subsisting in the Church of Rome; and it was a saying of Rabbi David Kimchi, “When Rome shall be laid waste, then shall be redemption for Israel.” For the destruction of Rome and the restoration of the Jews shall fall out about the same time. — Bp. Newton.

Verse 37. *Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers*— That God who sent the evangelists and apostles to preach the pure doctrine. These true fathers of the Christian Church, and their God, this Church has not regarded, but put councils, and traditions, and apocryphal writings in their place.

Nor the desire of women— Both the Greek and Latin Church, in their antichristian enactments, have discouraged, and in several cases proscribed, marriage, under the pretense of greater chastity, to the discredit of God’s ordinance, and Christianity itself.

Nor regard any god— For the mandates and decrees of that Church have been often in defiance of God and his word, for it has magnified itself above all power and authority in heaven and on earth. It professes to hold the keys, and to open and shut heaven at pleasure, both to states and individuals.

Verse 38. *Shall he honor the god of forces*— Myzem mauzzim, or gods protectors, as in the margin; worshipping saints and angels as guardians, and protectors, and mediators; leaving out, in general, the true God, and the only Mediator, JESUS CHRIST.

And a god whom his fathers knew not— For these gods guardians, the Virgin Mary, saints and angels, were utterly unknown as mediators and invocable guardians in the primitive apostolic Church.

Shall he honor with gold, and silver, and with precious stones— How literally does this apply to the Church of Rome! See the house of our lady at Loretto; the shrines of saints; the decorated images, costly apparel, gold, jewels, etc., profusely used about images of saints angels, and the blessed virgin, in different popish churches. This superstition began to prevail in

the fourth century, and was established in 787, by the seventh general council; for in that the worship of images was enacted.

Verse 39. *In the most strong holds with a strange god*— Bishop Newton proposed the following translation, after justly finding fault with our common Version: “Thus shall he do to the defenders of Mauzzim, together with the strange god whom he shall acknowledge: he shall multiply honor, and he shall cause him to rule over many; and the earth he shall divide for a reward.” The defenders of Mauzzim, these saint and angel gods protectors, were the monks, priests, and bishops; of whom it may be truly said, “They were increased with honor, ruled over many, and divided the land for gain.” They have been honored and revered almost to adoration; their jurisdiction was extended over the purses and consciences of men; they have been enriched with the noblest buildings and largest endowments, and the choicest lands have been appropriated for Church lands. These are points of such public notoriety, that they require no proof. — Newton.

Verse 40. *At the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him*— These kings are to be understood in reference to the times of which the prophet speaks. While the kingdoms of Egypt and Syria were subsisting, the king of the south and the north applied to them exclusively: but they did not exist at the time of which the prophet speaks; therefore other southern and northern powers must be sought. These we may find in the Saracens, who were of the Arabians, who came from the south, headed by the false prophet Mohammed, who pushed at him-made war on the Greek emperor Heraclius, and with amazing rapidity deprived him of Egypt, Syria, and many of his finest provinces.

And the king of the north— The Turks, who were originally Scythians, seized on the remains of the Greek empire; and in process of time rendered themselves masters of the whole. They are represented as coming like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen; their armies being chiefly composed of cavalry.

And with many ships— With these they got possession of many islands and maritime countries; and were so powerful in their fleets, that they

entirely defeated the Venetians; and at last their fleets became of the utmost consequence to them in besieging, and afterwards taking, Constantinople, A.D. 1453, which they hold to the present day. So they entered into the countries, and overflowed, rendering themselves masters of all Asia Minor and Greece.

Verse 41. *He shall enter also into the glorious land*— Entirely subdued Judea.

And many countries shall be overthrown— Aleppo, Damascus, Gaza, and many other cities were forced to submit to them; and they hold them still.

But these shalt escape—Edom and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon.— These and other Arabians they have never been able to subdue. They still occupy the deserts; and receive a yearly pension of forty thousand crowns of gold from the Ottoman emperors, to permit the caravans, with the pilgrims for Mecca, to have a free passage.

Verse 42. *He shall stretch forth his hand*— He—the Ottoman emperors, have stretched forth the hand, not only on European, but also upon Asiatic and African countries. Egypt has not escaped; it is a province of the Turkish government, as are also Fez, Morocco, Algiers, and many other African countries. And as the prophecy says they “got power over the silver and gold, and the precious things of Egypt,” so it was; for when Selim conquered Egypt, A.D. 1517, he took all its spoils; and the immense sums drawn from it to the present day, and the wretchedness of the land in consequence, are almost incredible.

The Libyans and the Ethiopians— The Cushim-unconquered Arabs, all sought their friendship; and many of them are tributary to the present time.

Verse 44. *But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him*— This part of the prophecy is allowed to be yet unfulfilled; and what is portended, the course of prophetic events will show. Were we to understand it as applying to Antiochus, then the news might be of the

preparations which he heard, that the provinces of the east, and Artaxerxes, king of Armenia, on the north were intending to rise up against him. But if the Turkish power be understood, as in the preceding verses, it may mean that the Persians on the east, and the Russians on the north, will at some time greatly embarrass the Ottoman government. And how completely has this been fulfilled; first, by the total destruction of the Egyptian fleet, by the combined fleets of England, France, and Russia, in the Bay of Navarino; and, secondly, by the total overthrow of the Turkish army by the Russians, in the years 1828 and 1829, when the sultan was obliged to accept any conditions that the emperor of Russia was pleased to give! [N.B. — The former part of this note was written for the first edition of this work, printed in 1825.]

Verse 46. *He shalt plant the tabernacles*— He shall make a last stand in Judea, and there shall his power be smitten.

He shall come to his end, and none shall help him— All his confederate and tributary kingdoms, states, and provinces shall desert him and leave that government to come to a shameful end.

IN the interpretation of this chapter I have generally followed Bp. Newton, in his most excellent Dissertations on the Prophecies, consulting other eminent authors occasionally.

From the beginning of the chapter to the end of ver. 30 all is very clear and plain, relative to the Grecian, Syrian, and Egyptian histories; from the thirty-first verse to the end, the mode of interpretation is not so satisfactory, in its application to the times since Christ. Yet possibly these alone may be intended; though the whole might be, with considerable ease, applied to the remaining part of the Syrian and Egyptian history. It is a wonderful piece of prophecy, and of great utility to the cause of Divine revelation.

CHAPTER 12

The proper conclusion to the great revolutions predicted in this and the following chapters is the general resurrection, of which the beginning of this chapter (to be literally understood) gives some intimation, 1-3. Daniel is then commanded to shut up the words and to seal the book to the time of the end, 4; and is informed of the three grand symbolical periods of a time, times, and a half, twelve hundred and ninety days and thirteen hundred and thirty-five days, 4-12; at the end of the last of which Daniel shall rest and stand in his lot, 13. It is generally thought by commentators that the termination of the last period is the epoch of the FIRST resurrection. See Revelation 20:4, 5.

NOTES ON CHAP. 12

Verse 1. *And at that time Michael shall stand up*— Michael the archangel, as has already been observed, was ever reputed the guardian of the Jewish people.

Every one that shall be found written in the book— All that truly fear, love, and obey the Lord, On the phrase, “written in the book, the book of life,” etc., see the passages in the margin, and the notes on those passages.

Verse 2. *Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth*— This prophecy has been referred to the future restoration of the Jews. It will be also true of the state of mankind at the general judgment.

Verse 3. *And they that be wise*— Those who are thoroughly instructed in Christ’s word and doctrine, shall shine—shall be eminently distinguished in the Christian Church by the holiness of their lives, and the purity of their creed.

And they that turn many to righteousness— They who, by preaching Christ crucified among their brethren, shall be the means of converting

them to the Christian faith; shall be as the stars-bright luminaries in the Gospel kingdom of Jesus Christ. This also may be applied to the case of holy and useful men, particularly the faithful ministers of the Gospel, in the day of judgment. See the parallel texts in the margin, and the notes on them.

Verse 4. *Shut up the words, and seal the book*— When a prophet received a prediction concerning what was at a considerable distance of time, he shut his book, did not communicate his revelation for some time after. This Daniel was commanded to do, chap. 8:26. See also Isaiah 29:10, 11; Revelation 22:10. Among the ancients, those were said to seal, who in the course of their reading stamped the places of which they were yet doubtful, in order to keep them in memory, that they might refer to them; again, as not yet fully understood. This custom Salmasius, in his book *De modo Usurarum*, p. 446, proves from Hesychius.

Many shall run to and fro— Many shall endeavour to search out the sense; and knowledge shall be increased by these means; though the meaning shall not be fully known till the events take place: THEN the seal shall be broken, and the sense become plain. This seems to be the meaning of this verse, though another has been put on it, viz., “Many shall run to and fro preaching the Gospel of Christ, and therefore religious knowledge and true wisdom shall be increased.” This is true in itself; but it is not the meaning of the prophet’s words.

Verse 5. *Behold there stood other two*— Probably two angels. We know no more of them, unless they be the same as those called saints, chap. 8:13, which see. The river was most likely the Tigris.

Verse 6. *The man clothed in linen*— Gabriel in a human form. Thus he is represented, chap. 10:5.

Verse 7. *Which was upon the waters*— By this description, he was standing on the water. This is very similar to the description of the angel, Revelation 10:5, 6, and in the seventh verse there seems to be a reference to this prophecy “a time, times, and a half.” See the note on chap. 7:25.

Verse 8. *I heard, but I understand not*— Could not comprehend what the time, times, and half time should refer to. These make three years and a half of prophetic times answering to one thousand two hundred and sixty years.

Verse 9. *The words are closed up*— The prophecy shall not be understood, but in its accomplishment; and then the depth of the wisdom and providence of God will be clearly seen in these matters. See on ver. 4. We must wait “till the time of the end;” and this, it appears from the following calculations, will not arrive before the TWENTIETH CENTURY. We here see the reason why these prophecies are at present so imperfectly understood. God has sealed them.

Verse 10. *Many shall be purified*— During the interim, the great work of God’s providence and grace shall be carried on in the salvation of men; who, in the midst of trials, temptations, and difficulties, shall be purified and made white—be fully saved from their sins.

None of the wicked shall understand— Because they are wicked, and will continue in their sins, the eyes of their understanding shall be closed, and their hearts hardened; so that they shall not see the light of the glorious Gospel.

But the wise— Those who open their hearts to God, that he may pour in his light, shall understand the things that make for their peace.

Verse 11. *From the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away*— See the notes on chap. 11:25-27.

The abomination that maketh desolate set up— I believe, with Bp. Newton, that this is a proverbial phrase; and may be applied to any thing substituted in the place of, or set up in opposition to, the ordinances of God, his worship, his truth, etc. Adrian’s temple, built in the place of God’s temple at Jerusalem, the church of St. Sophia turned into a Mohammedan mosque, etc., etc., may be termed abominations that make desolate. Perhaps Mohammedanism may be the abomination; which sprang up A.D. 612. If we reckon one thousand two hundred and ninety

years, ver. 11, from that time, it will bring us down to A.D. 1902, when we might presume from this calculation, that the religion of the FALSE PROPHET will cease to prevail in the world; which from the present year, 1825, is distant only seventy-seven years.

Verse 12. *Blessed is he that waiteth*— He who implicitly depends on God, expecting, as his truth cannot fail, that these predictions shall be accomplished in due time.

And cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days.— This is seventy-five days more than what is included in the three years and a half, or the time, times, and a half in the seventh verse; and as we have met with so many instances of prophets days and years, this undoubtedly is another instance; and as a day stands for a year, this must mean a period of one thousand three hundred and thirty-five years, which period is to bring all these wonders to an end, ver. 6. But we are left totally in the dark relative to the time from which these one thousand three hundred and thirty-five years are to be reckoned. If, however, we reckon them from the above epoch, A.D. 612, when Mohammedanism arose, they lead us to A.D. 1947, when the fullness of the Gentiles shall be brought in; and thus a final closure of vision and prophecy be made, as then all the great events relative to the salvation of men shall have taken place. Wars and contentions will probably then cease over the whole world; Jews and Gentiles become one fold, under one Shepherd and Bishop of souls; and the triune God be properly worshipped and glorified, from generation to generation, over the face of the whole earth. But all these conjectures may be founded in darkness. We have not chronological data; and “the times and seasons God has reserved in his own power.”

Verse 13. *But go thou thy way till the end be*— Here is proper advice for every man. 1. Thou hast a way-a walk in life, which God has assigned thee; walk in that way, it is thy way. 2. There will be an end to thee of all earthly things. Death is at the door, and eternity is at hand; go on to the end-be faithful unto death. 3. There is a rest provided for the people of God. Thou shalt rest; thy body, in the grave; thy soul, in the Divine favor here, and finally in paradise. 4. As in the promised land there was a lot for each of God’s people, so in heaven there is a lot for thee. Do not lose it,

do not sell it, do not let thy enemy rob thee of it. Be determined to stand in thy own lot at the end of the days. See that thou keep the faith; die in the Lord Jesus, that thou mayest rise and reign with him to all eternity. Amen.

MASORETIC NOTES

Number of verses in this book, 357 Middle verse, chap. 5:30 Masoretic sections, 7

Finished correcting for the press, March 1st, 1831. — A. C.

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK

OF THE

PROPHET HOSEA

HOSEA, the son of Beeri, is the first of the minor prophets. Epiphanius says that he was of the town of Belemoth, in the tribe of Issachar; which is no other, in all probability, than Beelmeon, towards Esdraelon, in this tribe. The rabbins say that Bura was his father, who is mentioned in the Chronicles, and was prince of the tribe of Reuben at the time when Tiglath-pileser carried some of the tribes of Israel into captivity. But if it be so, Hosea must be said to be of the tribe of Reuben; and a native of Beelmeon, beyond Jordan. This prophet lived in the kingdom of Samaria; and his prophecies for the most part have a view to this state, though there are likewise some particular things which concern the kingdom of Judah.

We read, in the introduction to his prophecy, that he prophesied under the kings of Judah, Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, and under Jeroboam II., king of Israel. If he prophesied in the reign of all these princes, he must have lived a very long time; for there are a hundred and twelve years from the beginning of Uzziah's reign to the end of Hezekiah's reign. Uzziah began to reign A.M. 3194, and Hezekiah's reign ended in 3306. Add, if you please, twenty or five and twenty years, which might be the age of Hosea when he began to prophesy; and this will make one hundred and thirty-two, or one hundred and thirty-seven years. And if we were to take ten years from Uzziah, and as many from Hezekiah, during which Hosea might not have prophesied, there will still remain one hundred and twelve, or one hundred and fifteen years.

In the whole collection of Hosea's prophecies, we find nothing which

proves that he prophesied so long. And, besides, why should his prophecies be dated in the title by the reigns of the kings of Judah, when he did not live under their dominion? It is therefore very probable that this title is not Hosea's, but some ancient transcriber's; and that the true beginning of this prophet's work is at these words: "The beginning of the word of the Lord by Hosea." It is our opinion that he began about the end of Jeroboam's reign, who was the second king of Israel of this name. See Calmet.

St. Jerome and many others believe Hosea to be the oldest prophet, whose writings are in our possession; and that he was witness to the first captivity of the four tribes carried away by Tiglath-pileser, and the extinction of the kingdom of Samaria by Shalmaneser. St. Jerome will have it that he prophesied even afterwards. The first verses of chap. 1: have a view to the death of Zechariah, king of Israel, and son of Jeroboam 2:

In the beginning of Hosea's prophecy, we read that the Lord directed him "to take unto him a wife of whoredoms, and children of whoredoms;" that is, to marry a woman who, before her marriages had lived a debauched life, but who, after her marriage, should retire from all bad conversation, and whose children should be legitimate, notwithstanding that, by reason of the blemish which their mother had contracted by her former life, they were called the children of whoredoms. This prostitute woman, and the children who were to be born of her, were a figure and a kind of real prophecy which described the idolatry and infidelity of Samaria and the ten tribes, formerly the Lord's spouse, but who afterwards became idolatrous and corrupt.

The children of this faithless woman are children of prostitution, since they imitate the idolatry of their mother. God gives these children the names of Jezreel, God will disperse; Lo-rechamah, or Without mercy; and Lo-ammi, Thou art no longer my people; to show, — 1. That God was going to revenge upon the house of Jehu, king of Israel, the sins which he had committed at Jezreel, when he usurped the kingdom of the ten tribes. 2. That the Lord would treat his idolatrous and sinful people without mercy. 3. That he would reject them, and no more look upon them as his people.

Hosea is concise, sententious, and abrupt. It is his manner to omit the connexive and adversative particles; an observation which we should recollect when we observe them occasionally supplied by versions or manuscripts. These are among the causes of that obscurity for which he is remarkable: but the greatest difficulties arise from the corrupt readings which deform the printed text. He chiefly addresses Israel; but introduces frequent mention of Judah. He not only inveighs against the vices of the people, but sharply arraigns the conduct of their kings, princes, and priests.

Like many of the Hebrew prophets, he tempers denunciations of God's vengeance against an idolatrous and vicious people, with promises of abundant mercies in store for them; and his transitions from one of these subjects to the other are rapid and unexpected. He abounds with short and

lively comparisons; and, like the best Greek and Roman writers, often omits the particle of similitude. These comparisons he sometimes accumulates in the spirit of that poetry which is most admired. See chap. 6:3, 4; 9:10; 11:11; 13:3; 14:5-7. He has often a GREAT FORCE OF EXPRESSION. See chap. 1:7; 2:3, 18, 21, 22; 4:2; 6:5; 11:4; 1. 1; 12:1; 1. 1. He is sometimes HIGHLY ANIMATED. See chap. 4:14; 5:8; 8:1; 9:5, 14; 13:10, 14. Many BEAUTIFUL PASSAGES occur in this prophet, as in the SIMILES throughout; in the ALLEGORIES, chap. 2:2, 20; 7:11, 12, 8:7; 1. 2-4; 10:11, 12, 13; 13:15; in the PATHOS, chap. 11:3; 1. 1, 2, and ver. 8, 9; in the FIGURES, chap. 13:12; 14:2; 1. 5. There are also some parts which are truly SUBLIME, as chap. 5:14, 15; 8:7; 1. 1; 10:8; 1. 2, 3; 13:7, 8.

I have already, at the beginning of Isaiah, given a table of the chronological succession of all the prophets: that of Archbishop Newcome on the twelve minor prophets I subjoin here, because it contains some differences from the preceding.

ORDER AND TIME IN WHICH THE TWELVE MINOR PROPHETS FLOURISHED

1. JONAH Prophesied between 823 B.C. and 783 B.C. in the reign of Jeroboam II., king of Israel. See 2 Kings 14:25.
2. AMOS prophesied from about 823 B.C. to about 785 B.C. in the reign of Uzziah, king of Judah, and in that of Jeroboam II., king of Israel. See Amos 1:1.
3. HOSEA flourished from about 809 B.C. to about 698 B.C., in the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in that of Jeroboam II., king of Israel. See Hosea 1:1. [But see the observations in the preceding page.]
4. MICAH flourished between 757 B.C. and 698 B.C., in the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. See Micah 1:1.
5. NAHUM is supposed to have prophesied between 720 B.C. and 698 B.C., in the reign of Hezekiah.

6. JOEL is supposed to have prophesied between 697 B.C. and 660 B.C., in the reign of Manasseh.
7. ZEPHANIAH prophesied between 640 B.C. and 609 B.C., in the reign of Josiah. See Zephaniah 1:1.
8. HABAKKUK is thought to have prophesied between 606 B.C. and 598 B.C., in the reign of Jehoiakim.
9. OBADIAH prophesied soon after 587 B.C., between the taking of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, and the destruction of the Edomites by the same prince.
10. HAGGAI prophesied about 520 B.C. after the return from Babylon. See Haggai 1:1.
11. ZECHARIAH prophesied from 520 B.C. to about 518 B.C.; and was contemporary with Haggai. See Zechariah 1:1.
12. MALACHI is generally believed to have prophesied about 436 B.C.

THE BOOK

OF THE

PROPHET HOSEA

Chronological Notes relative to the commencement of Hosea's prophesying, upon the supposition that this event took place in the last year of the reign of Jeroboam II., king of Israel

- Year of the world, according to the Usherian account, 3219.
- Year of the Julian period, 3929.
- Year since the Flood, 1563.
- Year from the vocation of Abram, 1136.
- Year from the foundation of Solomon's temple, 227.
- Year before the First Olympiad, 9.
- Year before the building of Rome, 32.
- Year before the vulgar era of Christ's nativity, 785.
- Cycle of the Sun, 9.
- Cycle of the Moon, 15.
- Second year of Coenus, the second king of Macedon; which was the thirtieth from the foundation of the monarchy.
- Thirteenth year of Agamestor, perpetual archon of the Athenians.
- Thirteenth year of Ardysus, king of Lydia.
- Twelfth year of Amulius Sylvius, king of the Albans.
- Twenty-fifth year of Charilaus, king of the Lacedaemonians.
- Forty-first year of Jeroboam II., king of Israel.
- Twenty-sixth year of Uzziah, king of Judah.

CHAPTER 1

Under the figure of a wife proving false to her marriage vows, and bearing children that would follow her example, the prophet represents the shameful idolatry of the ten tribes, which provoked God to cast them off. The whole passage is information by action instead of words. This names of the children are all emblematical. The first is intended to put Israel in mind of their unrepealed guilt, and the acts of cruelty committed in their palace of Jezreel, (1 Kings 21:1.) The second and third, signifying not finding mercy, and not my people, denote that, in consequence of their guilt, they were to be rejected of God, 1-9. God promises, however, to repair the loss to his Church by calling in the Gentiles, 10; and by uniting all the children of God under one head, the Messiah, in the latter days, 11.

NOTES ON CHAP. 1

Verse 1. *Hosea, the son of Beeri*— See the preceding account of this prophet.

In the days of Uzziah, etc.— If we suppose, says Bp. Newcome, that Hosea prophesied during the course of sixty-six years, and place him from the year 790 before Christ to the year 724, he will have exercised his office eight years in the reign of Jeroboam the second, thirty-three years in the reign of Uzziah, the whole reigns of Jotham and Ahaz, and three years in the reign of Hezekiah; but will not have survived the taking of Samaria. But see the preceding account of this prophet.

I think the first verse to be a title to this book added by the compiler of his prophecies, and that it relates more to facts which took place in those reigns, and had been predicted by Hosea, who would only be said to have prophesied under an those kings. by his predictions, which were consecutively fulfilled under them. By those, though dead, he continued to speak. The prophet's work properly begins at ver. 2; hence called, "The

beginning of the word of the Lord by Hosea.”

Verse 2. *A wife of whoredoms*— That is, says Newcome, a wife from among the Israelites, who were remarkable for spiritual fornication, or idolatry. God calls himself the husband of Israel; and this chosen nation owed him the fidelity of a wife. See Exodus 34:15; Deuteronomy 31:16; Judge. 2:17; Isaiah 54:5; Jeremiah 3:14; 31:32, Ezekiel 16:17; 23:5, 27; Hosea 2, 5; Revelation 17:1, 2. He therefore says, with indignation, Go join thyself in marriage to one of those who have committed fornication against me, and raise up children who, by the power of example, will themselves swerve to idolatry. See chap. 5:7. And thus show them that they are radically depraved.

Verse 3. *He went and took Gomer*— All this appears to be a real transaction, though having a typical meaning. If he took an Israelite, he must necessarily have taken an idolatress, one who had worshipped the calves of Jeroboam at Dan or at Bethel.

Verse 4. *Call his name Jezreel*— **יִזְרְעֵאל** that is, God will disperse. This seems to intimate that a dispersion or sowing of Israel shall take place; which happened under Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, 2 Kings 17:5, 6. But the word refers also to the name of a city, where Jehu slew Jezebel and all the children of Ahab. 2 Kings 9:10, 36; 10:6.

This was one of those prophetic names which we so often meet with in the Scriptures; e.g. Japheth Abraham, Israel, Judah, Joshua, Zerubbabel, Solomon, Sheer-jashub, etc.

The blood of Jezreel— Not Jehu’s vengeance on Ahab’s family, but his acts of cruelty while he resided at Jezreel, a city in the tribe of Issachar, Joshua 19:18, where the kings of Israel had a palace, 1 Kings 21:1.

Will cause to cease the kingdom— Either relating to the cutting off of the kingdom of Israel by the Assyrians, see ver. 6, or to the ceasing of the kingdom of Israel from the house of Jehu, 2 Kings 10:30, and which was fulfilled, 2 Kings 15:10. — Newcome.

Verse 5. *In the valley of Jezreel*— This also is supposed to relate either to some signal defeat of the Israelites by the Assyrians, which took place in the valley of Jezreel; or to the death of Zechariah, the fourth lineal descendant of Jehu, which may have happened here. See 2 Kings 15:10. — Newcome.

Verse 6. *Call her Lo-ruhamah*— לֹא רַחֲמָה, “Not having obtained mercy.” This also was a prophetic or typical name; and the reason of its imposition is immediately given:

For I will no more have mercy— כִּי לֹא אוֹשִׁיף עִיד אֲרַחֵם ki lo osiph od arachem, “For I will no more add to have mercy upon the house of Israel.” This refers to the total destruction of that kingdom.

Verse 7. *But I will have mercy upon the house of Judah*— I will spare them as a kingdom after Israel has been carried away into captivity by the Assyrians.

And will save them by the Lord their God— Remarkably fulfilled in the supernatural defeat of the army of the Assyrians, see 2 Kings 19:35; and so they were saved not by bow, nor by sword, nor by battle, nor by horses, nor by horsemen. The former expression may mean, not in war by horses, i.e., yoked to war chariots, nor by horsemen-nor by cavalry, however efficient such troops might have then been deemed.

Verse 9. *Call his name Lo-ammi*— לֹא עַמִּי Lo-ammi, “Not my people;” for which the reason is immediately given:

Ye are not my people, and I will not be your God.— The word GOD is not added here by any of the ancient versions or MSS.; and yet the construction absolutely requires it, as Houbigant properly observes, who thinks the present reading לֹא אֱהִיָּה לָכֶם lo eheyeh lachem, “I will not be to you,” a corruption of the word אֱלֹהֵיכֶם eloheychem, “your God.” It is strange that no various reading occurs on this verse in any MS. yet discovered. In two of the oldest of mine there is a blank of half a line left after the last word; and so it is in the Masoretic Bibles, though the sense is

not complete; for it is evidently continued in the following verse. Probably God refers to the words, Exodus 3:14: אֲנִי אֲנִי אֲנִי אֲנִי I am that I am. I am, אֲנִי אֲנִי eheyeh, — I shall be, hath sent me unto you. I will not be your eheyeh, i.e., I will not be your God.

Verse 10. *Yet the number of the children of Israel*— God had promised that the children of Israel should be as the sand of the sea. See Genesis 32:12; Romans 9:25, 26. And though for their iniquities he had thinned and scattered them, yet the spirit and design of his promise and covenant shall be fulfilled. An Israel there shall be. In the place of the reprobated people, who were now no longer his people, there shall be found an Israel that shall be the children of the living God. See the above scriptures, and 1 Peter 2:10. This must mean either the Israelites after their conversion to Christianity, or even the Gentiles themselves converted to God, and now become the true Israel.

Verse 11. *The children of Judah and the Children of Israel*— After the return from Babylon, the distinction between Israel and Judah was entirely destroyed; and those of them that did return were all included under one denomination, Jews; and the one head may refer to Zerubbabel their leader, and afterwards under Ezra and Nehemiah. In the more extensive view of the prophet the one Head may mean Jesus Christ, under whom the true Israel, Jews and Gentiles, shall be finally gathered together; so that there shall be one flock, and one Shepherd over that flock.

They shall come up out of the land— Assyria and Chaldea in particular; but also from the various places of their dispersions in general.

Great shall be the day of Jezreel.— He alludes to the meaning of the word, the seed of God. God who has dispersed-sown, them in different lands, shall gather them together; and that day of God's power shall be great and glorious. It was a wonderful seed time in the Divine justice; it shall then be a wonderful harvest in the Divine mercy. He sowed them among the nations in his wrath; he shall reap them and gather them in his bounty.

CHAPTER 2

The prophet exhorts his people to speak and to act as became those who obtained mercy of God; and to remonstrate strongly against the conduct of their mother, (Samaria,) whose captivity is threatened on account of her forsaking God, and ascribing her prosperity to idols, 1-5. As an amplification of this threatening, the prophet ennumerates a series of afflictions which were to befall her to bring her to a sense of her duty to God; and of her folly in seeking after idols, and falsely ascribing to them the blessings of Providence, 6-13. After these corrections, however, God promises to conduct Israel safely to their own land; perhaps alluding to their restoration from the Babylonish captivity, for this prophecy is supposed to have been delivered about two hundred and fifty years prior to this event, 14, 15. He farther engages to deal with them as a tender husband, and not as a severe master, as were the idols which they served, 16, 17. The rest of the chapter promises the people of God, the true Israel, security from every evil, with the possession of every blessing, under a new covenant; and that in terms full of beauty, energy, and consolation. Heaven and earth, and whatever they contain; all nature, and the God of nature, are represented as uniting to make the people of God happy; so that if they only breathe a wish, one part of nature, animate or inanimate, echoes it to another, and all join in sweet harmony to transmit it to the ear of the Almighty. "I will hear, saith the LORD, I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth; and the earth shall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oil; and they shall hear Jezreel."

NOTES ON CHAP. 2

Verse 1. *Say ye unto your brethren, Ammi*— I prefer the interpretation of these proper names. Say ye unto your brethren, MY PEOPLE; and, to your sisters, who have OBTAINED MERCY.

Verse 2. *Plead with your mother*— People of Judah, accuse your mother, (Jerusalem,) who has abandoned my worship, and is become idolatrous,

convince her of her folly and wickedness, and let her return to him from whom she has so deeply revolted.

Verse 3. *Lest I strip her naked*— Lest I expose her to infamy, want, and punishment. The punishment of an adulteress among the ancient Germans was this: “They shaved off her hair, stripped her naked in the presence of her relatives, and in this state drove her from the house of her husband.” See on Isaiah 3:17; and see also Ezekiel 16:39; 23:26. However reproachful this might be to such delinquents, it had no tendency to promote their moral reformation.

And set her like a dry land— The Israelites, if obedient, were promised a land flowing with milk and honey; but, should they be disobedient, the reverse. And this is what God here threatens against disobedient Israel.

Verse 4. *They be the children of whoredoms*.— They are all idolaters; and have been consecrated to idols, whose marks they bear.

Verse 5. *That give me my bread*— See the note on Jeremiah 44:17, 18, where nearly the same words are found and illustrated.

Verse 6. *I will hedge up thy way with thorns*— I will put it out of your power to escape the judgments I have threatened; and, in spite of all your attachment to your idols, you shall find that they can give you neither bread, nor water, nor wool, nor flax, nor oil, nor drink. And ye shall be brought into such circumstances, that the pursuit of your expensive idolatry shall be impossible. And she shall be led so deep into captivity, as never to find the road back to her own land. And this is the fact; for those who were carried away into Assyria have been lost among the nations, few of them having ever returned to Judea. And, if in being, where they are now is utterly unknown.

Verse 8. *For she did not know that I gave her corn*— How often are the gifts of God’s immediate bounty attributed to fortuitous causes—to any cause but the right one!

Which they prepared for Baal.— And how often are the gifts of God’s

bounty perverted into means of dishonoring him! God gives us wisdom, strength, and property; and we use them to sin against him with the greater skill, power, and effect! Were the goods those of the enemy, in whose service they are employed, the crime would be the less. But the crime is deeply engrained, when God's property is made the instrument to dishonor himself.

Verse 9. *Therefore will I return, and take away*— In the course of my providence, I will withhold those benefits which she has prostituted to her idolatrous services. And I will neither give the land rain, nor fruitful seasons.

Verse 10. *In the sight of her lovers*— Her idols, and her faithful or faithless allies.

Verse 11. *Her feast days*— Jerusalem shall be pillaged and destroyed; and therefore all her joyous assemblies, and religious feasts, etc., shall cease.

Verse 12. *These are my rewards*— They attributed all the blessings of Providence as rewards received from the idols which they worshipped.

Verse 13. *Days of Baalim*— To visit signifies to inflict punishment; the days are taken for the acts of idolatrous worship committed on them; and Baalim means the multitude of false gods worshipped by them. Baal was a general name for a male idol, as Astarte was for a female. Baalim includes all the male idols, as Ashtaroath all those that were female. But the species of idol was often designated by some adjunct; as Baal-Zebub, Baal-Peor, Baal-Zephon, Baal-Berith, etc.

Her earrings— נִזְמָה nizmah, signifies rather a nose jewel. These are worn by females in the East to the present day, in great abundance.

And her jewels— וְחֲלִיטָהּ vechelyatah, rings, armlets, bracelets, ankle-rings, and ornaments of this kind.

Verse 14. *I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her.*— After inflicting many judgments upon her, I will

restore her again. I will deal with her as a very affectionate husband would do to an unfaithful wife. Instead of making her a public example, he takes her in private, talks to and reasons with her; puts her on her good behavior; promises to pass by all, and forgive all, if she will now amend her ways. In the meantime he provides what is necessary for her wants and comfortable support, and thus opening a door of hope for her, she may be fully reconciled; rejoice as at the beginning, when he first took her by the hand, and she became his bride. This is most probably the simple meaning of the above metaphorical expressions. The valley on Achor was very fruitful; it lay to the north of Jericho, not far from GilGalatians See Isaiah 65:10.

Verse 15. *She shall sing there*— There she shall sing the responsive song as on high festival occasions, and in marriage ceremonies. The Book of Canticles is of this sort.

Verse 16. *Thou shalt call me Ishi*— That is, my man, or my husband; a title of love and affection; and not BAALI, my master, a title exciting fear and apprehension; which, howsoever good in itself, was now rendered improper to be applied to Jehovah, having been prostituted to false gods. This intimated that they should scrupulously avoid idolatry; and they had such a full proof of the inefficacy of their idolatrous worship that, after their captivity, they never more served idols.

Verse 18. *Will I make a covenant for them*— I will make an agreement between them and the birds, beasts, and reptiles, so that they shall not be injured by those; their flocks shall not be destroyed, nor their crops spoiled. I will also prevent every species of war, that they may no more have the calamities that arise from that source. They shall also be safe from robbers and nightly alarms; for I will make them to lie down in safety.

Verse 19. *I will betroth thee unto me*— The people are always considered under the emblem of a wife unfaithful to her husband.

In righteousness— According to law, reason, and equity.

In judgment— According to what is fit and becoming.

In lovingkindness— Having the utmost affection and love for thee.

In mercies.— Forgiving and blotting out all past miscarriages. Or there may be an allusion here to the dowry given by the husband to his wife: “I will give righteousness,” etc., as a dowry.

Verse 20. *In faithfulness*— Thou shalt no more prostitute thyself to idols, but be faithful to him who calls himself thy husband.

Thou shalt know the Lord.— There shall be no more infidelity on thy part nor divorce on mine; and thou shalt experience me to be the sole, present, and eternal good of thy immortal spirit: and when this conviction is fully rooted then there can be no more idolatry, for it shall be seen that an idol is nothing in the world.

Verse 21. *I will hear, saith the Lord*— The sentence is repeated, to show how fully the thing was determined by the Almighty, and how implicitly they might depend on the Divine promise.

I will hear the heavens— The visible heavens, the atmosphere, where vapours are collected. The clouds, when they wish to deposit their fertilizing showers upon the earth.

They shall hear the earth— When it seems to supplicate for rain.

Verse 22. *Shall hear the corn, and the wine*— When they seem to express a desire to supply the wants of man.

And they shall hear Jezreel.— The destitute people who are in want of the necessaries of life.

This most elegant gradation in the exertion of the influences of nature, for the supply of the wants of man, may be considered thus:—

1. There is a concord, harmony, and mutual influence, which God has

established in the parts of created nature, in reference to the support and preservation of the human race.

2. God alone is the author of all this; and unless he give his command, communicate his energetic influence to the different parts of nature, these effects will not, cannot be produced.

3. Jezreel, the people who have been dispersed for their iniquities, and now about to be sown or planted in their own land, will require the most fostering care. See on ver. 23.

4. They are heard in desiring oil, wine, and corn. These are necessary to the support and comfort of life; and to those the desire of animal life naturally aspires.

5. These products are looked for from the EARTH. On it, and by it, grass grows for the cattle, and corn for the service of man.

6. The seeds or germs, whence proceed corn, wine, and oil, live and grow in the earth; but cannot come to perfection, unless the earth be impregnated with the dews and rains from the clouds. They are therefore represented as imploring the heavens to collect their clouds, to pour down their fructifying moisture upon it.

7. The clouds, or materials of which they are composed, not being able to arrange themselves, nor aggregate themselves so as to meet those demands, prevent drought, and maintain an effective vegetation, are represented as calling upon the heavens to form, arrange, and supply them with the requisite quantity of moisture.

8. God, who is the author of all being and all bounty, dependent on nothing, comes forward and says, I will hear the heavens, the clouds which are gathered in the atmosphere; he will arrange the particles, saturate those that are light, till they become sufficiently impregnated with the necessary fluid; and then direct them In his providence where to deposit their contents. And,

9. When brought to the proper place, he will shake them with his winds, or strike them with his thunder, so as to cause them to fall down in drops to fertilize the earth with their showers.

Thus then:—

1. God works upon the heavens.
2. In them the clouds are collected.
3. The clouds drop their moisture upon the earth.
4. The earth exerts its vegetative influence upon the germs which it contains.
5. They expand, increase, and become matured, under the genial influences of the heavens, sun, air, water, from the clouds, etc.
6. Man receives and applies those bounties of Providence, and variously prepares them for the support and comfort of life.

Take all this in still fewer words:—

As Jezeel or the Israelites are here considered as perishing for want of food, all inanimate nature is represented as invoking God in their behalf.

1. The heavens have prayed that they be stored with clouds, that they may drop down fatness upon the earth.
2. The Lord answers the heavens, and clouds are formed.
3. The earth invokes the clouds, that they may drop down their fatness into its bosom.
4. The bottles of heaven are, consequently, unstopped for this purpose.
5. Then the corn, wine, and olive, implore the earth to put forth its

vegetative energy.

6. The earth answers; and corn, wine, and oil are produced.

7. Jezreel cries for the necessaries of life, and the abundance of the above supplies all his wants.

All these are dependent on each other, as the links are which constitute a chain; and God has the government of the whole; and he manages all for the benefit of man. How wondrous is this providence! How gracious is this GOD!

Here is a series of prosopopoeias together. Corn, wine, oil, the earth, the clouds and their contents, the heavens, sun, moon, etc., are all represented as intelligent beings, speaking to and influencing each other. GOD is at one end of the chain, and MAN at the other; and by means of the intermediate links the latter is kept in a state of continued dependence upon the former for life, breath, and all things.

Verse 23. *I wili sow her*— Alluding to the import of the name Jezreel, the seed of God. Then shall it appear that God has shown mercy to them that had not obtained mercy. Then the covenant of God will be renewed; for he will call them his people who were not his people; and they shall call Jehovah their God, who before had him not for the object of their worship. It does not appear that these promises have had their fulfillment among the Jews. They must either be understood of the blessings experienced by the Gentiles on their conversion to God by the preaching of the Gospel, or are yet to be fulfilled to the Jews on their embracing the Gospel, and being brought back to their own land.

The sentences in the latter part of this verse are very abrupt, but exceedingly expressive; leaving out those words supplied by the translators, and which unnerve the passage, it stands thus: I will say to NOT MY PEOPLE, THOU MY PEOPLE; and they shall say, MY GOD.

CHAPTER 3

By the prophet's taking back his wife, for whom he (her friend or husband) still retained has affection, though she had proved unfaithful; by his entering into a new contract with her; and by his giving her hopes of reconciliation, after she should for some time prove, as in a state of widowhood, the sincerity of her repentance; is represented the gracious manner in which God will restore the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, 1-4. It is also very strongly intimated that the whole house of Israel will be added to the Church of Christ in the latter days, 5.

NOTES ON CHAP. 3

Verse 1. *Go yet, love a woman*— This is a different command from that mentioned in the first chapter. That denoted the infidelity of the kingdom of Israel, and God's divorce of them. He gave them up to their enemies, and caused them to be carried into captivity. The woman mentioned here represents one who was a lawful wife joining herself to a paramour; then divorced by her husband; afterwards repenting, and desirous to be joined to her spouse; ceasing from her adulterous commerce, but not yet reconciled to him. This was the state and disposition of the Jews under the Babylonish captivity. Though separated from their own idols, they continued separated from their God. He is still represented as having affectionate feelings towards them; awaiting their full repentance and contrition, in order to renew the marriage covenant. These things are pointed out by the symbolical actions of the prophet.

Beloved of her friend— Or, a lover of evil; or, loving another: for the Hebrew words אהבת רע mean one who loves evil or a friend: because רע signifies a friend, or evil, according as it is pointed. The former seems to be its best sense here; רע rea is a friend; רע ra is evil.

According to the love of the Lord— This woman, who had proved false to

her husband, was still beloved by him, though he could not acknowledge her; as the Israelites were beloved by the Lord, while they were looking after other gods. The flagons of wine were probably such as were used for libations, or drunk in idol feasts. Others think that the words should be translated cakes of dried grapes, sweet cakes, consecrated wafers.

Verse 2. *Fifteen pieces of silver*— If they were shekels, the price of this woman was about two pounds five shillings.

A *homer of barley*— As the homer was about eight bushels, or something more, the homer and half was about twelve or thirteen bushels.

Verse 3. *Thou shalt abide for me many days*— He did not take her home, but made a contract with her that, if she would abstain from her evil ways, he would take her to himself after a sufficient trial. In the meantime he gave her the money and the barley to subsist upon, that she might not be under the temptation of becoming again unfaithful.

So will I also be for thee.— That is, if thou, Israel, wilt keep thyself separate from thy idolatry, and give me proof, by thy total abstinence from idols, that thou wilt be my faithful worshipper, I will receive thee again, and in the meantime support thee with the necessaries of life while thou art in the land of thy captivity. This is farther illustrated in the following verses.

Verse 4. *Many days without a king*— Hitherto this prophecy has been literally fulfilled. Since the destruction of the temple by the Romans they have neither had king nor prince, nor any civil government of their own, but have lived in different nations of the earth as mere exiles. They have neither priests nor sacrifices nor urim nor thummim; no prophet, no oracle, no communication of any kind from God.

Without an image ephod-teraphim— The Septuagint read, ουδε ουσης θυσιας, ουδε οντος θυσιαστηριου, ουδε ιερατειας, ουδε δηλων: “Without a sacrifice, without an altar, without a priesthood, and without oracles;” that is, the urim and thummim. The Vulgate, Arabic, and Syriac read nearly the same. Instead of מצבה matstsebah, an image, they have

evidently read **מזבח** *mizbeach*, an altar; the letters of these words being very similar, and easily mistaken for each other. But instead of either, one, if not two, of Kennicott's MSS. has **מנחה** *minchah*, an oblation.

What is called image may signify any kind of pillar, such as God forbade them to erect Leviticus 26:1, lest it should be an incitement to idolatry.

The ephod was the high priest's garment of ceremony; the teraphim were some kind of amulets, telesms, or idolatrous images; the urim and thummim belonged to the breastplate, which was attached to the ephod.

Instead of teraphim some would read seraphim, changing the **ט** tau into **ש** sin; these are an order of the celestial hierarchy. In short, all the time that the Israelites were in captivity in Babylon, they seem to have been as wholly without forms of idolatrous worship as they were without the worship of God; and this may be what the prophet designs: they were totally without any kind of public worship, whether true or false. As well without images and teraphim, as they were without sacrifice and ephod, though still idolaters in their hearts. They were in a state of the most miserable darkness, which was to continue many days; and it has continued now nearly eighteen hundred years, and must continue yet longer, till they acknowledge him as their Savior whom they crucified as a blasphemer.

Verse 5. *Afterward shall the children of Israel return*— Shall repent of their iniquities, and seek the Lord; lay aside their mock worship, and serve the true God in spirit and in truth.

And David their king— Or as the Targum, “They shall obey the Messiah, the Son of David their King;” and thus look believingly upon him whom they have pierced, and mourn. And then shall their long spiritual darkness and dismal captivity have an end; but not before. The Messiah, as David, is promised in Jeremiah 30:9; Ezekiel 24:23; 37:22, 24, 25, (where see the notes,) and in this place of Hosea. Some think that the family of David is intended; but if we go to the rigour of the letter, the house of Israel was scarcely ever perfectly submissive to David. And we

know that after the death of Solomon they never acknowledged the house of David till they were all carried away captive; and certainly never since. And to say that Zerubbabel is here meant, is not supportable, as the very short and imperfect obedience of the Jews to Zerubbabel can never comport with the high terms of this and similar prophecies. We are obliged, therefore, from the evidence of these prophecies, from the evidence of the above facts, from the evidence of the rabbins themselves, and from the evidence of the New Testament, to consider these texts as applying solely to JESUS CHRST, the promised MESSIAH, who has been a light to lighten the Gentiles, and will yet be the glory of his people Israel. There is a strange propensity in some men to deny these evidences of Christianity, while they profess to believe its doctrines.

CHAPTER 4

The prophet charges his people with their enormous sins, 1, 2; in consequence of which they are threatened with heavy judgments, 3-5. God himself is then introduced complaining of the ignorance and obstinacy of Israel; and as their priests had a large share in the common guilt, it is declared that they shall be visited with a proportionable share of the common ruin, 6-11. The sins of idolatry and divination are then particularly reproved, 12-14; and Judah admonished to beware of these sins, which would leave her rebellious sister Israel helpless and desolate as a lamb in a desert, 15, 16. In the remaining verses the style is varied, but the subject is the same. Ephraim is given up to idolatry, and the necessary consequence declared to be a bitter draught! Immediately we see him bound in the wings of a mighty tempest, and driven as chaff before the wind, either to destruction or captivity, 17-19.

NOTES ON CHAP. 4

Verse 1. *The Lord hath a controversy*— רִיב רִיב rib, what we should call a lawsuit, in which God is plaintiff, and the Israelites defendants. It is Jehovah versus Israel and Judah.

But when has God a controversy with any land?—Answer. When there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land. These refer to the minds of the people. But wherever these righteous principles are wanting, there will soon be a vicious practice; hence it is added,

Verse 2. *By swearing, and lying*— Where there is no truth there will be lies and perjury; for false swearing is brought in to confirm lying statements. And when there is no mercy, killing, slaying, and murders, will be frequent. And where there is no knowledge of God, no conviction of his omnipresence and omniscience, private offenses, such as stealing, adulteries, etc., will prevail. These, sooner or later, break out, become a flood, and carry all before them. Private stealing will assume the form of a

public robbery, and adulteries become fashionable, especially among the higher orders; and suits of crim. con. render them more public, scandalous, and corrupting. By the examination of witnesses, and reading of infamous letters in a court of justice, people are taught the wiles and stratagems to be used to accomplish these ends, and prevent detection; and also how to avoid those circumstances which have led to the detection of others. Every report of such matters is an experimental lecture on successful debauchery.

Blood toucheth blood.— Murders are not only frequent, but assassinations are mutual. Men go out to kill each other; as in our duels, the frenzy of cowards; and as there is no law regarded, and no justice in the land, the nearest akin slays the murderer. Even in our land, where duels are so frequent, if a man kill his antagonist, it is murder; and so generally brought in by an honest coroner and his jury. It is then brought into court; but who is hanged for it? The very murder is considered as an affair of honor, though it began in a dispute about a prostitute; and it is directed to be brought in manslaughter; and the murderer is slightly fined for having hurried his neighbor, perhaps once his friend, into the eternal world, with all his imperfections on his head! No wonder that a land mourns where these prevail; and that God should have a controversy with it. Such crimes as these are sufficient to bring God's curse upon any land. And how does God show his displeasure? See the following verse.

Verse 3. *Therefore shall the land mourn*— Fruitful seasons shall be denied.

That dwelleth therein shall lanyuish— Endemic and epidemic disorders shall prevail, and multitudes shall die; so that mourning shall be found in all quarters.

The beasts of the field, and with the fowls— There is a death of cattle and domestic animals, in consequence of the badness of the season.

The fishes of the sea also shall be taken away.— Those immense shoals which at certain seasons frequent the coasts, which are caught in millions, and become a very useful home supply, and a branch of most profitable traffic, they shall be directed by the unseen influence of God to avoid our

coasts, as has frequently been the case with herrings, mackerel, pilchards, etc.; and so this source of supply and wealth has been shut up, because of the iniquities of the land.

Verse 4. *Yet let no man strive*— Or, no man contendeth. All these evils stalk abroad unreprieved, for all are guilty. None can say, “Let me pluck the mote out of thy eye,” because he knows that “there is a beam in his own.”

For thy people are— The people and the priest are alike rebels against the Lord; the priests having become idolaters, as well as the people. Bp. Newcome renders this clause, “And as is the provocation of the priest, so is that of my people.” The whole clause in the original is כַּמְרִיבֵי כֹהֵן וְעַמֶּךָ veammecha kimeribey cohen, “and thy people as the rebellions of the priest.” But one of my oldest MSS. omits כֹהֵן cohen, “priest;” and then the text may be read, And thy people are as rebels. In this MS. כֹהֵן cohen is added in the margin by a much later hand.

Verse 5. *Therefore shalt thou fall in the day*— In the most open and public manner, without snare or ambush.

And the prophet also shall fall-in the night— The false prophet, when employed in taking prognostications from stars, meteors, etc.

And I will destroy thy mother.— The metropolis or mother city. Jerusalem or Samaria is meant.

Verse 6. *My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge*— They have not the knowledge of God, nor of sacred things, nor of their own interest, nor of the danger to which they are exposed. They walk on blindly, and perish.

Because thou hast rejected knowledge— So they might have become wise, had they not rejected the means of improvement.

Thou shalt be no priest to me— If this be the true reading, there must be

reference to some particular priest, well known, to whom these words are personally addressed; unless by priest the whole priesthood is meant, and then it may apply to the priests of Jeroboam's calves.

Verse 7. *Will I change their glory into shame.*— As the idolaters at Dan and Bethel have changed my glory into the similitude of an ox that eateth grass, (Romans 1:23,) so will I change their glory into shame or ignominy. In the day of my wrath, their calf-gods shall not deliver them.

Verse 8. *They eat up the sin of my people*— חטאת *chattath*, the sin-offerings, though it be offered contrary to the law; for their hearts are set on iniquity, they wish to do whatever is contrary to God.

Verse 9. *Like people, like priest*—

“The priest a wanderer from the narrow way; The silly sheep, no wonder that they stray.”

I will punish them— Both priest and people; both equally bad.

Verse 10. *They shall eat, and not have enough*— Whatever means they may use to satisfy or gratify themselves shall be ineffectual.

Verse 11. *Whoredom and wine*— These debaucheries go generally together.

Take away the heart.— Darken the understanding, deprave the judgment, pervert the will, debase all the passions, etc.

Verse 12. *At their stocks*— They consult their wooden gods.

And their staff declareth— They use divination by rods; see the note on Ezekiel xxi., where this sort of divination (râdomancy) is explained.

Verse 13. *Under oaks*— אלו *allon*, from אלל *alal*, he was strong. Hence, the oak, in Latin, is called *robur*; which word means also, strength, the oak being the strongest of all the trees of the forest.

The shadow thereof is good— Their “daughters committed whoredom, and their spouses committed adultery.” 1. Their deities were worshipped by prostitution. 2. They drank much in their idol worship, ver. 11, and thus their passions became inflamed. 3. The thick groves were favorable to the whoredoms and adulteries mentioned here. In imitation of these, some nations have their public gardens.

Verse 14. *I will not punish*— Why should you be stricken any more; ye will revolt more and more. When God, in judgment, removes his judgments, the case of that people is desperate. While there is hope, there is correction.

Themselves are separated— There is a reference here to certain debaucheries which should not be described. The state of the people at this time must have been abominable beyond all precedent; animal, sensual, bestial, diabolical: women consecrating themselves to serve their idols by public prostitution; boys dismembered like the Galli or priests of Cybele, men and women acting unnaturally; and all conjoining to act diabolically.

Verse 15. *Let not Judah offend*— Israel was totally dissolute; Judah was not so. Here she is exhorted to maintain her integrity. If the former will go to what was once Beth-el, the house of God, now Beth-aven, the house of iniquity, because Jeroboam has set up his calves there, let not Judah imitate them. Gilgal was the place where the covenant of circumcision was renewed when the people passed over Jordan; but was rendered infamous by the worship of idols, after Jeroboam had set up his idolatry.

Verse 16. *Israel slideth back*— They are untractable, like an unbroken heifer or steer, that pulls back, rather than draw in the yoke.

Will feed them as a lamb in a large place.— A species of irony. Ye shall go to Assyria, and be scattered among the nations; ye may sport yourselves in the extensive empire, wither ye shall be carried captives.

Verse 17. *Ephraim*— The ten tribes.

Is joined to idols— Is become incorporated with false gods.

Let him alone.— They are irreclaimable, leave them to the consequences of their vicious conduct.

Verse 18. *Their drink is sour*— Or rather, he is gone after their wine. The enticements of idolatry have carried them away.

Her rulers with shame do love— Rather, have loved shame; they glory in their abominations.

Give ye.— Perhaps it would be better to read, Her rulers have committed, etc. They have loved gifts. What a shame! These were their rulers, literally, their shields. Justice and judgment were perverted.

Verse 19. *The wind hath bound her*— A parching wind has blasted them in their wings-coasts, borders; or they are carried away into captivity, as with the most rapid blight. These two last verses are very obscure.

CHAPTER 5

This chapter begins with threatening the Israelites for ensnaring the people to idolatry by their sacrifices and other rites on Mizpah and Tabor, 1-5. Their sacrifices, however costly, are declared to be unacceptable, 6; and their substance is devoted to the locust, 7. Nor is judgment to stop here. The cities of Judah are called upon, in a very animated manner, to prepare for the approach of enemies. Benjamin is to be pursued; Ephraim is to be desolate; and all this is intimated to Israel, that they may by repentance avert the judgment, 8, 9. The following verses contain farther denunciations, 10-13, expressed in terms equally terrible and sublime, 14. The Lord afflicts not willingly the children of men; he visits them with temporal calamities that he may heal their spiritual malady, 15.

NOTES ON CHAP. 5

Verse 1. *Hear ye this, O priests*— A process is instituted against the priests, the Israelites, and the house of the king; and they are called on to appear and defend themselves. The accusation is, that they have ensnared the people, caused them to practice idolatry, both at Mizpah and Tabor. Mizpah was situated beyond Jordan; in the mountains of Gilead; see Judges 11:29. And Tabor was a beautiful mountain in the tribe of Zebulum. Both these places are said to be eminent for hunting etc., and hence the natural occurrence of the words snare and net, in speaking of them.

Verse 2. *The revolvers are profound to make slaughter*— Here may be a reference to the practice of hunters, making deep pits in the ground, and lightly covering them over, that the beasts, not discovering them, might fall in, and become a prey.

Though I have been a Rebuker— “I will bring chastisement on them all.” As they have made victims of others to their idolatry, I will make victims

of them to my justice. Some have thought that as many as wished to depart from the idolatrous worship set up by Jeroboam, were slaughtered; and thus Jeroboam the son of Nebat MADE Israel to sin.

Verse 3. *I know Ephraim*— I know the whole to be idolaters.

Verse 4. *They will not frame their doings*— They never purpose to turn to God, they have fully imbibed the spirit of idolatry.

Verse 5. *The pride of Israel doth testify to his face*— The effrontery with which they practise idolatry manifests, not only their insolence, but the deep depravity of their heart; but their pride and arrogance shall be humbled.

Verse 6. *They shall go with their flocks*— They shall offer many sacrifices, professing to seek and be reconciled to the Lord; but they shall not find him. As they still retain the spirit of their idolatry, he has withdrawn himself from them.

Verse 7. *Now shall a month devour them*— In a month's time the king of Assyria shall be upon them, and oblige them to purchase their lives and liberties by a grievous tax of fifty shekels per head. This Menahem, king of Israel, gave to Pul, king of Assyria, 2 Kings 15:16-20. Instead of month, some translate the original locust. "The locusts shall devour them."

Verse 8. *Blow ye the cornet in Gibeah*— Gibeah and Ramah were cities of Judah, in the tribe of Benjamin.

After thee, O Benjamin— An abrupt call of warning. "Benjamin, fly for thy life! The enemy is just behind thee!" This is a prediction of the invasion of the Assyrians, and the captivity of the ten tribes.

Verse 9. *Among the tribes of Israel have I made known*— They have got sufficient warning; it is their own fault that they have not taken it.

Verse 10. *Like them that remove the bound*— As execrable as they who remove the land-mark. They have leaped over law's enclosure, and scaled

all the walls of right; they have despised and broken all laws, human and Divine.

Verse 11. *Walked after the commandment.*— Jeroboam's commandment to worship his calves at Dan and Beth-el. Many of them were not forced to do this, they did it willingly.

Verse 12. *Unto Ephraim as a moth*— I will consume them by little and little, as a moth frets a garment.

Verse 13. *When Ephraim saw his sickness*— When both Israel and Judah felt their own weakness to resist their enemies, instead of calling upon and trusting in me, they sought sinful alliances, and trusted in their idols.

King Jareb— This name occurs nowhere in Scripture but here and in chap. 10:6. The Vulgate and Targum render כַּרְבַּי yareb, an avenger, a person whom they thought able to save them from their enemies. It is well known that Menahem, king of Israel, sought alliance with Pul and Tiglath-pileser, kings of Assyria, and Ahaz, king of Judah. These were the protectors that Ephraim sought after. See 2 Kings 15:and 16:But far from healing them by making them tributary, the Assyrians made their wound more dangerous.

Verse 14. *I will be-as a lion*— כַּשְׁחַל cashshachel, as a panther or lioness.

Verse 15. *I will go and return to my place*— I will abandon them till they acknowledge their offenses. This had the wished-for effect, as we shall see in the following chapter; for they repented and turned to God, and he had mercy upon them. These two verses are considered as instances of the true sublime.

CHAPTER 6

The prophet earnestly exhorts to repentance, 1-3. God is then introduced as very tenderly and pathetically remonstrating against the backslidings of Ephraim and Judah, 4-11.

NOTES ON CHAP. 6

Verse 1. *Come, and let us return unto the Lord*— When God had purposed to abandon them, and they found that he had returned to his place—to his temple, where alone he could be successfully sought; they, feeling their weakness, and the fickleness, weariness, and unfaithfulness of their idols and allies, now resolve to “return to the Lord;” and, referring to what he said, chap. 5:14: “I will tear and go away;” they say, he “hath torn, but he will heal us;” their allies had torn, but they gave them no healing. While, therefore, they acknowledge the justice of God in their punishment, they depend on his well-known mercy and compassion for restoration to life and health.

Verse 2. *After two days will he revive*— Such is his power that in two or three days he can restore us. He can realize all our hopes, and give us the strongest token for good.

In the third day he will raise us up

And we shall live in his sight.— His resurrection being a proof of theirs.

Verse 3. *Then shall we know*— We shall have the fullest evidence that we have not believed in vain.

If we follow on to know the Lord— If we continue to be as much in earnest as we now are.

His going forth— The manifestation of his mercy to our souls is as certain as the rising of the sun at the appointed time.

And he shall come unto us as the rain— As surely as the early and the latter rain come. The first, to prepare the earth for the seed; this fell in autumn: the second, to prepare the full ear for the harvest; this fell in spring. Here is strong confidence; but not misplaced, however worthless the persons were. As surely as the sun, who is now set, is running his course to arise on us in the morning, and make a glorious day after a dreary night, so surely shall the Lord come again from his place, and the Sun of righteousness shall arise on our souls with healing in his wings. He is already on his way to save us.

Verse 4. *O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee?*— This is the answer of the Lord to the above pious resolutions; sincere while they lasted, but frequently forgotten, because the people were fickle. Their goodness (for goodness it was while it endured) was like the morning cloud that fadeth away before the rising sun, or like the early dew which is speedily evaporated by heat. Ephraim and Judah had too much goodness in them to admit of their total rejection, and too much evil to admit of their being placed among the children. Speaking after the manner of men, the justice and mercy of Good seem puzzled how to act toward them. When justice was about to destroy them for their iniquity, it was prevented by their repentance and contrition: when mercy was about to pour upon them as penitents its choicest blessings, it was prevented by their fickleness and relapse! These things induce the just and merciful God to exclaim, “O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? O Judah, what shall I do unto thee?” The only thing that could be done in such a case was that which God did.

Verse 5. *Therefore have I hewed them by the prophets*— I have sent my prophets to testify against their fickleness. They have smitten them with the most solemn and awful threatenings; they have, as it were, slain them by the words of my mouth. But to what purpose?

Thy judgments are as the light that goeth forth— Instead of אור יצא **אור ומשפטיך** umispateycha or yetse, “and thy judgments a light that goeth forth,” the versions in general have read אור ומשפטי כאור umishpati keor, “and my judgment is as the light.” The final ך caph in the common reading has by mistake been taken from אור aur, and joined to משפטי mishpati; and thus turned it from the singular to the plural number, with the postfix ך cha. The proper reading is, most probably, “And my judgment is as the light going forth.” It shall be both evident and swift; alluding both to the velocity and splendour of light.

Verse 6. *I desired mercy, and not sacrifice*— I taught them righteousness by my prophets; for I desired mercy. I was more willing to save than to destroy; and would rather see them full of penitent and holy resolutions, than behold them offering the best and most numerous victims upon my altar. See Matthew 9:13.

Verse 7. *But they like men (כאדם keadam, “like Adam”) have transgressed the covenant*— They have sinned against light and knowledge as he did. This is sense, the other is scarcely so. There was a striking similarity in the two cases. Adam, in Paradise, transgressed the commandment, and I cast him out: Israel, in possession of the promised land, transgressed my covenant, and I cast them out, and sent them into captivity.

Verse 8. *Gilead is a city of them that work iniquity*— In this place Jacob and Laban made their covenant, and set up a heap of stones, which was called Galeed, the heap of testimony; and most probably idolatry was set up here. Perhaps the very heap became the object of superstitious adoration.

Verse 9. *As troops of robbers*— What a sad picture is this of the state of

the priesthood! The country of Gilead was infamous for its robberies and murders. The idolatrous priests there formed themselves into companies, and kept possession of the roads and passes; and if they found any person going to Jerusalem to worship the true God, they put him to death. The reason is given:—

For they commit lewdness.— They are gross idolaters.

Verse 10. *I have seen a horrible thing*— That is, the idolatry that prevailed in Israel to such a degree that the whole land was defiled.

Verse 11. *O Judah, he hath set a harvest for thee*— Thou also hast transgressed; thy harvest will come; thou shalt be reaped down and sent into captivity. The sickle is already thrust in. That which thou hast sowed shalt thou reap. They who sow unto the flesh shall reap corruption.

When I returned the captivity of my people.— Bp. Newcome translates, “Among those who lead away the captivity of my people.” There is thy harvest; they who have led Israel into captivity shall lead thee also into the same. The Assyrians and Babylonians were the same kind of people; equally idolatrous, equally oppressive, equally cruel. From the common reading some suppose this to be a promise of return from captivity. It is true that Judah was gathered together again and brought back to their own land, but the majority of the Israelites did not return, and are not now to be found.

CHAPTER 7

Here God complains that though he had employed every means for reforming Israel, they still persisted in their iniquity, without fearing the consequences, 1, 2; that those who ought to check their crimes were pleased with them, 3; and that they all burned with adultery, as an oven when fully heated, and ready to receive the kneaded dough, 4. The fifth verse alludes to some recent enormities; the sixth charges them with dividing their time between inactivity and iniquity; the seventh alludes to their civil broils and conspiracies; (see 2 Kings 15:10, 14, 25;) the eighth to their joining themselves with idolatrous nations; and the ninth describes the sad consequence. The tenth verse reproves their pride and open contempt of God's worship; the eleventh reproves their foolish conduct in applying for aid to their enemies; (see 2 Kings 15:19; 17:4;) the twelfth and thirteenth threaten them with punishments; the fourteenth charges them with hypocrisy in their acts of humiliation; the fifteenth with ingratitude; and the image of the deceitful bow, in the sixteenth verse, is highly expressive of their frequent apostasies; and their hard speeches against God shall be visited upon them by their becoming a reproach in the land of their enemies.

NOTES ON CHAP. 7

Verse 1. *When I would have healed Israel*— As soon as one wound was healed, another was discovered. Scarcely was one sin blotted out till another was committed.

The thief cometh in— Their own princes spoil them.

The troop of robbers spoileth without.— The Assyrians, under different leaders, waste and plunder the country.

Verse 2. *They consider not in their hearts*— They do not consider that my eye is upon all their ways; they do not think that I record all their

wickedness; and they know not their own evil doings are as a host of enemies encompassing them about.

Verse 3. *They make the king glad*— They pleased Jeroboam by coming readily into his measures, and heartily joining with him in his idolatry. And they professed to be perfectly happy in their change, and to be greatly advantaged by their new gods; and that the religion of the state now was better than that of Jehovah. Thus, they made all their rulers, “glad with their lies.”

Verse 4. *As an oven heated by the baker*— Calmet’s paraphrase on this and the following verses expresses pretty nearly the sense: Hosea makes a twofold comparison of the Israelites; to an oven, and to dough. Jeroboam set fire to his own oven-his kingdom-and put the leaven in his dough; and afterwards went to rest, that the fire might have time to heat his oven, and the leaven to raise his dough, that the false principles which he introduced might infect the whole population. This prince, purposing to make his subjects relinquish their ancient religion, put, in a certain sense, the fire to his own oven, and mixed his dough with leaven. At first he used no violence, but was satisfied with exhorting them, and proclaiming a feast. This fire spread very rapidly, and the dough was very soon impregnated by the leaven. All Israel was seen running to this feast, and partaking in these innovations. But what shall become of the over-the kingdom; and the bread-the people? The oven shall be consumed by these flames; the king, the princes, and the people shall be enveloped in the burning, ver. 7. Israel was put under the ashes, as a loaf well kneaded and leavened; but not being carefully turned, it was burnt on one side before those who prepared it could eat of it; and enemies and strangers came and carried off the loaf. See ver. 8, 9. Their lasting captivity was the consequence of their wickedness and their apostasy from the religion of their fathers. On this explication ver. 4-9, may be easily understood.

Verse 7. *All their kings are fallen*— There was a pitiful slaughter among the idolatrous kings of Israel; four of them had fallen in the time of this prophet. Zechariah was slain by Shallum; Shallum, by Menahem; Pekahiah, by Pekah; and Pekah, by Hoshea, 2 Kings 15: All were idolaters, and all came to an untimely death.

Verse 8. *A cake not turned.*— In the East having heated the hearth, they sweep one corner, put the cake upon it, and cover it with embers; in a short time they turn it, cover it again, and continue this several times, till they find it sufficiently baked. All travelers into Asiatic countries have noted this.

Verse 9. *Gray hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth not.*— The kingdom is grown old in iniquity; the time of their captivity is at hand, and they are apprehensive of no danger. They are in the state of a silly old man, who through age and infirmities is become nearly bald, and the few remaining hairs on his head are quite gray. But he does not consider his latter end; is making no provision for that eternity on the brink of which he is constantly standing; does not apply to the sovereign Physician to heal his spiritual diseases; but calls in the doctors to cure him of old age and death! This miserable state and preposterous conduct we witness every day. O how fast does the human being cling to his native earth! Reader, hear the voice of an old man:—

O my coevals! remnants of yourselves, Shall our pale withered hands be still stretched out? Trembling at once with eagerness and age; With avarice and ambition grasping-fast Grasping at air! For what hath earth beside? We want but little; nor THAT LITTLE long.

Verse 10. *The pride of Israel*— The same words as at chap. 5:6, where see the note.

Verse 11. *Ephraim also is like a silly dove without heart*— A bird that has little understanding; that is easily snared and taken; that is careless about its own young, and seems to live without any kind of thought. It has been made, by those who, like itself, are without heart, the symbol of conjugal affection. Nothtng worse could have been chosen, for the dove and its mate are continually quarrelling.

They call to Egypt, they go to Assyria.— They strive to make these their allies and friends; but in this they showed that they were without heart, had not a sound understanding; for these were rival nations, and Israel

could not attach itself to the one without incurring the jealousy and displeasure of the other. Thus, like the silly dove, they were constantly falling into snares; sometimes of the Egyptians, at others of the Assyrians. By the former they were betrayed; by the latter, ruined.

Verse 12. *When they shall go*— To those nations for help:—

I will spread my net upon them— I will cause them to be taken by those in whom they trusted.

I will bring them down— They shall no sooner set oS to seek this foreign help, than my net shall bring them down to the earth. The allusion to the dove, and to the mode of taking the fowls of heaven, is still carried on.

As their congregation hath heard.— As in their solemn assemblies they before have heard; in the reading of my law, and the denunciation of my wrath against idolaters.

Bishop Newcome translates: “I will chastise them when they hearken to their assembly.” That is, when they take the counsel of their elders to go down to Egypt for help, and trust in the arm of the Assyrians for succor.

Verse 13. *Wo unto them!*— They shall have wo, because they have fled from me. They shall have destruction, because they have transgressed against me.

Though I have redeemed them— Out of Egypt; and given them the fullest proof of my love and power.

Yet they have spoken lies against me.— They have represented me as rigorous and cruel; and my service as painful and unprofitable.

Verse 14. *They have not cried unto me with their heart*— They say they have sought me, but could not find me; that they have cried unto me, but I did not answer. I know they have cried, yea, howled; but could I hear them when all was forced and hypocritical, not one sigh coming from their heart?

They assemble themselves for corn and wine— In dearth and famine they call and howl: but they assemble themselves, not to seek ME, but to invoke their false gods for corn and wine.

Verse 15. *Though I have bound and strengthened their arms*— Whether I dealt with them in judgment or mercy, it was all one; in all circumstances they rebelled against me.

Verse 16. *They return, but not to the Most High*— They go to their idols.

They are like a deceitful bow— Which, when it is reflexed, in order to be strung, suddenly springs back into its quiescent curve; for the eastern bows stand in their quiescent state in a curve, something like [curved figure] ; and in order to be strung must be beaded back in the opposite direction. This bending of the bow requires both strength and skill; and if not properly done, it will fly back, and regain its former position; and in this recoil endanger the archer—may even break an arm. I have been in this danger myself in bending the Asiatic bow. For want of this knowledge not one commentator has hit the meaning of the passage.

Shall fall by the sword— Their tongue has been enraged against ME; the sword shall be enraged against them. They have mocked me, (ver. 5,) and their fall is now a subject of derision in the land of Egypt. What they have sown, that do they now reap.

CHAPTER 8

This chapter begins with threatening some hostile invasion in short and broken sentences, full of rapidity, and expressive of sudden danger and alarm: “The trumpet to thy mouth; he cometh as an eagle,” 1. And why? For their hypocrisy, 2; iniquity, 3; treason (see 2 Kings 15:13, 17) and idolatry, 4; particularly the worshipping of the calves of Dan and Bethel, 5, 6. The folly and unprofitableness of pursuing evil courses is then set forth in brief but very emphatic terms. The labor of the wicked is vain, like sowing of the wind; and the fruit of it destructive as the whirlwind. Like corn blighted in the bud, their toil shall have no recompense; or if it should have a little, their enemies shall devour it, 7. They themselves, too, shall suffer the same fate, and shall be treated by the nations of Assyria and Egypt as the vile sherds of a broken vessel, 8, 9. Their incorrigible idolatry is again declared to be the cause of their approaching captivity under the king of Assyria. And as they delighted in idolatrous altars, there they shall have these in abundance, 10-14. The last words contain a prediction of the destruction of the fenced cities of Judah, because the people trusted in these for deliverance, and not in the Lord their God.

NOTES ON CHAP. 8

Verse 1. *Set the trumpet to thy mouth*— Sound another alarm. Let them know that an enemy is fast approaching.

As an eagle against the house of the Lord— of this be a prophecy against Judah, as some have supposed, then by the eagle Nebuchadnezzar is

represented here as hovering over the house of God, as the eagle does over the prey which he has just espied, and on which he is immediately to pounce.

Verse 2. *Israel shalt cry*— The rapidity of the eagle's flight is well imitated in the rapidity of the sentences in this place.

My God, we know thee.— The same sentiment, from the same sort of persons, under the same feelings, as that in the Gospel of St. Matthew, 7:29: "Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? Then will I profess unto them, I never KNEW YOU."

Verse 4. *They have set up kings, but not by me*— Properly speaking, not one of the kings of Israel, from the defection of the ten tribes from the house of David, was the anointed or the Lord.

I knew it not— It had not my approbation. In this sense the word know is frequently understood.

That they may be cut off.— That is, They shall be cut off in consequence of their idolatry.

Verse 5. *Thy calf, O Samaria, hath cast thee off*— Bishop Newcome translates: "Remove far from thee thy calf, O Samaria!" Abandon thy idolatry; for my anger is kindled against thee.

How long will it be ere they attain to innocency?— How long will ye continue your guilty practices? When shall it be said that ye are from these vices? The calf or ox, which was the object of the idolatrous worship of the Israelites, was a supreme deity in Egypt; and it was there they learned this idolatry. A white ox was worshipped under the name of Apis, at Memphis; and another ox under the name of Mnevis, was worshipped at On, or Heliopolis. To Osiris the males of this genus were consecrated, and the females to Isis. It is a most ancient superstition, and still prevails in the East. The cow is a most sacred animal among the Hindoos.

Verse 6. *The workman made it; therefore it is not God*— As God

signifies the supreme eternal Good, the Creator and Upholder of all things, therefore the workman cannot make Him who made all things. This is an overwhelming argument against all idols. Nothing need be added. The workman has made them; therefore they are not God.

Verse 7. *They have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind*—

As the husbandman reaps the same kind of grain which he has sown, but in far greater abundance, thirty, sixty, or one hundred fold; so he who sows the wind shall have a whirlwind to reap. The ventral seed shall be multiplied into a tempest so they who sow the seed of unrighteousness shall reap a harvest of judgment. This is a fine, bold, and energetic metaphor.

It hath no stalk— Nothing that can yield a blossom. If it have a blossom that blossom shall not yield fruit; if there be fruit, the sower shall not enjoy it, for strangers shall eat it. The meaning is, the labors of this people shall be utterly unprofitable and vain.

Verse 8. *Now shall they be among the Gentiles*— They shall be carried into captivity, and there be as a vessel wherein there is no pleasure; one soiled, unclean, infectious, to be despised, abhorred, not used. The allusion is to a rotten, corrupted skin-bottle; a bottle made of goat, deer, or calf hide, still commonly used in Asia and Africa. Some of them are splendidly ornamented. This is the case with one now before me made of a goat's skin well dressed, variously painted, and ornamented with leather fringes, tassels, etc. In such a bottle there might be pleasure; but the Israelites are compared to such a bottle, rough, ill-dressed, not ornamented, old, musty, and putrid. This shows the force of the comparison.

Verse 9. *They are gone up to Assyria*— For succor.

A wild ass alone by himself— Like that animal, jealous of its liberty, and suffering no rival. If we may credit Pliny and others, one male wild ass will keep a whole flock of females to himself, suffer no other to approach them, and even bite off the genitals of the colts, lest in process of time they should become his rivals. “Mares singuli faeminarum gregibus imperitant; timent libidinis aemulos, et ideo gravidas custodiunt, morsuque

natos mares castrant.”-Hist. Nat., lib. viii., c. 30. The Israelites, with all this selfishness and love of liberty, took no step that did not necessarily lead to their thralldom and destruction.

Ephraim hath hired lovers.— Hath subsidized the neighboring heathen states.

Verse 10. *For the burden of the king of princes.*— The exactions of the Assyrian king, and the princes of the provinces.

Verse 11. *Many altars to sin*— Though it does not appear that the Jews in Babylon were obliged to worship the idols of the country, except in the case mentioned by Daniel, yet it was far otherwise with the Israelites in Assyria, and the other countries of their dispersion. Because they had made many altars to sin while they were in their own land, they were obliged to continue in the land of their captivity a similar system of idolatry against their will. Thus they felt and saw the evil of their idolatry, without power to help themselves.

Verse 12. *I have written to him the great things of my law*— I have as it were inscribed my laws to them, and they have treated them as matters in which they had no interest.

Verse 13. *They sacrifice flesh*— Bp. Newcome translates thus: “They sacrifice gifts appointed unto me, and eat flesh.” They offer to their idols the things which belong to Jehovah; or, while pretending to offer unto the Lord, they eat and drink idolatrously; and therefore the Lord will not accept them.

They shall return to Egypt.— Many of them did return to Egypt after the conquest of Palestine by Shalmaneser, and many after the ruin of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar; but they had in effect returned to Egypt by setting up the worship of the golden calves, which were in imitation of the Egyptian Apis.

Verse 14. *Israel hath forgotten his Maker*— And therefore built temples to other gods. Judah had lost all confidence in the Divine protection, and

therefore built many fenced cities. But the fire of God's anger burnt up both the temples and the fortified cities.

CHAPTER 9

The prophet reproves the Israelites for their sacrifices and rejoicings on their corn-floors, by which they ascribed to idols, as the heathen did, the praise of all their plenty, 1. For which reason they are threatened with famine and exile, 2, 3, in a land where they should be polluted, and want the means of worshipping the God of their fathers, or observing the solemnities of his appointment, 4, 5. Nay more; they shall speedily fall before the destroyer, be buried in Egypt, and leave their own pleasant places desolate, 6-9. God is then introduced declaring his early favor for his people, and the delight he took in their obedience; but now they had so deeply revolted, all their glory will take wing, God will forsake them, and their offspring be devoted to destruction, 10-16.

NOTES ON CHAP. 9

Verse 1. *Rejoice not*— Do not imitate the heathens, nor serve their idols. Do not prostitute thy soul and body in practicing their impurities. Hitherto thou hast acted as a common harlot, who goes even to the common threshing places; connects herself with the meanest, in order to get a hire even of the grain there threshed out.

Verse 3. *But Ephraim shall return to Egypt*— See on chap. 8:12.

Verse 4. *As the bread of mourners*— By the law, a dead body, and every thing that related to it, the house where it lay, and the persons who touched it, were all polluted and unclean, and whatever they touched was considered as defiled. See Deuteronomy 26:14; Numbers 19:11, 13, 14.

For their bread for their soul— The bread for the common support of life shall not be sanctified to them by having the first-fruits presented at the temple.

Verse 5. *What will ye do in the solemn day*— When ye shall be despoiled of every thing by the Assyrians; for the Israelites who remained in the land after its subjection to the Assyrians did worship the true God, and offer unto him the sacrifices appointed by the law, though in an imperfect and schismatic manner; and it was a great mortification to them to be deprived of their religious festivals in a land of strangers. See Calmet.

Verse 6. *For, lo, they are gone*— Many of them fled to Egypt to avoid the destruction; but they went there only to die.

Memphis— Now Cairo, or Kahira, found them graves.

The pleasant places for their silver— The fine estates or villas which they had purchased by their money, being now neglected and uninhabited, are covered with nettles; and even in their tabernacles, thorns and brambles of different kinds grow. These are the fullest marks of utter desolation.

Verse 7. *The days of visitation*— Of punishment are come.

The prophet is a fool— Who has pretended to foretell, on Divine authority, peace and plenty; for behold all is desolation.

The spiritual man— **אִישׁ הָרוּחַ** ish haruach, the man of spirit, who was ever pretending to be under a Divine afflatus.

Is mad— He is now enraged to see every thing falling out contrary to his prediction.

Verse 8. *The watchman of Ephraim*— The true prophet, was with-faithful to, God.

The prophet— The false prophet is the snare of a fowler; is continually deceiving the people, and leading them into snares, and infusing into their hearts deep hatred against God and his worship.

Verse 9. *They have deeply corrupted themselves, as in the days of Gibeah*— This relates to that shocking rape and murder of the Levite's

wife, mentioned Judges 19:16, etc.

Verse 10. *I found Israel like grapes in the wilderness*— While they were faithful, they were as acceptable to me as ripe grapes would be to a thirsty traveler in the desert.

I saw your fathers— Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Joshua, Caleb, Samuel, etc.

As the first ripe— Those grapes, whose bud having come first, and being exposed most to the sun, have been the first ripe upon the tree; which tree was now in the vigor of youth, and bore fruit for the first time. A metaphor of the rising prosperity of the Jewish state.

But they went to Baal-Peor— The same as the Roman Priapus, and worshipped with the most impure rites.

And their abominations were according as they loved.— Or, “they became as abominable as the object of their love.” So Bp. Newcome. And this was superlatively abominable.

Verse 11. *Their glory shall fly away*— It shall suddenly spring away from them, and return no more.

From the birth— “So that there shall be no birth, no carrying in the womb, no conception.”-Newcome. They shall cease to glory in their numbers; for no children shall be born, no woman shall be pregnant, for none shall conceive. Here judgment blasts the very germs of population.

Verse 12. *Though they bring up their children*— And were they even to have children, I would bereave them of them; for, when I depart from them, they shall have all manner of wretchedness and wo.

Verse 13. *Ephraim, as I saw Tyrus*— Tyre was strongly situated on a rock in the sea; Samaria was on a mountain, both strong and pleasant. But the strength and beauty of those cities shall not save them from destruction.

Ephraim shall bring forth his children to the murderer.— The people shall be destroyed, or led into captivity by the Assyrians. Of the grandeur, wealth, power, etc., of Tyre, see the notes on Ezekiel, chap. 27:and 28.

Verse 14. *Give them, O Lord: what wilt thou give?*— There is an uncommon beauty in these words. The prophet, seeing the evils that were likely to fall upon his countrymen, begins to make intercession for them; but when he had formed the first part of his petition, “Give them, O Lord!” the prophetic light discovered to him that the petition would not be answered and that God was about to give them something widely different. Then changing his petition, which the Divine Spirit had interrupted, by signifying that he must not proceed in his request, he asks the question, then, “What wilt thou give them?” and the answer is, “Give them a miscarrying womb, and dry breasts.” And this he is commanded to announce. It is probable that the Israelites had prided themselves in the fruitfulness of their families, and the numerous population of their country. God now tells them that this shall be no more; their wives shall be barren, and their land cursed.

Verse 15. *All their wickedness is in Gilgal*— though we are not directly informed of the fact, yet we have reason to believe they had been guilty of some scandalous practices of idolatry in Gilgal See chap. 4:15.

For there I hated them— And therefore he determined, “for the wickedness of their doings, to drive them out of his house,” so that they should cease to be a part of the heavenly family, either as sons or servants; for he would “love them no more,” and bear with them no longer.

Verse 16. *Ephraim is smitten*— The thing being determined, it is considered as already done.

Their root is dried up— They shall never more be a kingdom. And they never had any political form from their captivity by the Assyrians to the present day.

Yea, though they bring forth— See the note on ver. 11, 12.

Verse 17. *My God will cast them away*— Here the prophet seems to apologize for the severity of these denunciations; and to vindicate the Divine justice, from which they proceeded. It is:—

Because they did not hearken unto him— That “my God,” the fountain of mercy and kindness, “will cast them away.”

And they shall be wanderers among the nations.— And where they have wandered to, who can tell? and in what nations to be found, no man knows. Wanderers they are; and perhaps even now unknown to themselves. Some have thought they have found them in one country; some, in another; and a very pious writer, in a book entitled, *The Star in the West*, thinks he has found their descendants in the American Indians; among whom he has discovered many customs, apparently the same with those of the ancient Jews, and commanded in the Law. He even thinks that the word Je-ho-vah is found in their solemn festal cry, Ye-ho-wa-he. If they be this long lost people, they are utterly unknown to themselves; their origin being lost in a very remote antiquity.

CHAPTER 10

This chapter treats of the same subject, but elegantly varied. It begins with comparing Israel to a fruitful vine but corrupted by too much prosperity, 1. It next reproveth and threatens them for their idolatry, 2; anarchy, 3; and breach of covenant, 4. Their idolatry is then enlarged on; and its fatal consequences declared in terms full of sublimity and pathos, 5-8. God is now introduced complaining of their excessive guilt; and threatening them with captivity in terms that bear a manifest allusion to their favourite idolatry, the worshiping the similitude of a calf or heifer, 9-11. Upon which the prophet, in a beautiful allegory suggested by the preceding metaphors, exhorts them to repentance; and warns them of the dreadful consequences of their evil courses, if obstinately persisted in, 12-15.

NOTES ON CHAP. 10

Verse 1. *Israel is an empty vine*— Or, a vine that casteth its grapes.

He bringeth forth fruit— Or, he laid up fruit for himself. He abused the blessings of God to the purposes of idolatry. He was prosperous; but his prosperity corrupted his heart.

According to the multitude of his fruit— He became idolatrous in proportion to his prosperity; and in proportion to their wealth was the costliness of their images, and the expensiveness of their idol worship. True is the homely saying of old Quarles:—

*“So God’s best gifts, usurp’d by wicked ones,
To poison turn, by their con-ta-gi-ons.”*

Another poet, of a higher order, but worse school, says:—

Effodiuntur opes, irritamenta malorum. — OVID.

Of which the words of St. Paul are nearly a literal rendering:—

ῥιζα γαρ πανθων των κακων εστιν η θιλαργυρια.

“For the love of money is the root of all these evils” 1 Timothy 6:10. Pity that this beautiful metal, on which God has bestowed such a large portion of mineral perfection, and then hid in the earth, should, on its being dug up by man, become the incentive to so many vices, and draw away his heart from the Creator of all things, and the fountain of ineffable perfection and goodness.

Verse 2. *Their heart is divided*— They wish to serve God and Mammon, Jehovah and Baal: but this is impossible. Now GOD will do in judgment what they should have done in contrition, “break down their altars, and spoil their images.”

Verse 3. *We have no king*— We have rejected the King of kings; and had we any king, he would be of no service to us in this state, as he would be a captive like ourselves; nor could we have the approbation of God, as we now justly lie under his displeasure.

Verse 4. *They have spoken words*— Vain, empty, deceitful words.

Swearing falsely— This refers to the alliances made with strange powers, to whom they promised fidelity without intending to be faithful; and from whom they promised themselves protection and support, notwithstanding God was against them, and they knew it. All their words were vain, and in the end as bitter as gall.

Judgment springeth up as hemlock— As our land lies without cultivation, so that we have nothing but noxious weeds instead of crops; so we have no administration of justice. What is done in this way is a perversion of law, and is as hurtful to society as hemlock would be to animal life. All this may refer to the anarchy that was in the kingdom of Israel before Hoshea’s reign, and which lasted, according to Archbishop Usher, nine years. They then, literally, “had no king.”

Verse 5. *The inhabitants of Samaria shall fear*— According to Calmet, shall worship the calves of Beth-aven; those set up by Jeroboam, at Beth-el. Fear is often taken for religious reverence.

The people thereof shall mourn— On seeing the object of their worship carried into captivity, as well as themselves.

And the priests thereof— כַּמְרִים *kemarim*. The priests of Samaria, says Calmet, are here called *kemarim*, that is, black coats, or shouters, because they made loud cries in their sacrifices. Instead of יַגִּילוּ *yagilu*, “they shall rejoice;” learned men propose יִלְלוּ *yalilu*, “shall howl,” which is likely to be the true reading, but it is not supported by any of the MSS. yet discovered. But the exigentia loci, the necessity of the place, requires some such word.

Verse 6. *A present to King Jareb*— See on chap. 5:13. If this be a proper name, the person intended is not known in history: but it is most likely that Pul, king of Assyria, is intended, to whom Menahem, king of Israel, appears to have given one of the golden calves, to insure his assistance.

Verse 7. *Her king is cut off as the foam*— As lightly as a puff of wind blows off the foam that is formed below by a fall of water, so shall the kings of Israel be cut off. We have already seen that not less than four of them died by assassination in a very short time. See on chap. 7:7.

Verse 8. *The high-places*— Idol temples.

Of Aven— Beth-aven.

The thorn and the thistle shall come up on their altars— Owing to the uncultivated and unfrequented state of the land, and of their places of idol worship, the people being all carried away into captivity.

“And they shall say to the mountains, Cover us, And to the hills, Fall on us.”

“This sublime description of fear and distress our Lord had in sfiew, Luke 23:30, which may be a reference, and not a quotation. However, the Septuagint, in the Codex Alexandrinus, has the same order of words as occurs in the evangelist. The parallelism makes the passages more beautiful than Revelation 6:16; and Isaiah 2:19 wants the animated dramatic form. That there is a reference to the caverns that abounded in the mountainous countries of Palestine, see the note on Isaiah 2:19.”-Newcome.

Verse 9. *Thou hast sinned from the days of Gibeah*— This is another reference to the horrible rape and murder of the Levite’s wife, Judges 19:13, 14.

There they stood— Only one tribe was nearly destroyed, viz., that of Benjamin. They were the criminals, the children of iniquity; the others were faultless, and stood only for the rights of justice and mercy.

Verse 10. *When they shall bind themselves in their two furrows.*— “When they are chastised for their two iniquities,” i.e., the calves in Dan and Beth-el. — Newcome. But this double iniquity may refer to what Jeremiah says, chap. 11:13: “My people have committed two evils.”-1. They have forsaken me. 2. They have joined themselves to idols.

Verse 11. *Ephraim is as a heifer that is taught*— One thoroughly broken in to the yoke.

And loveth to tread out— Goes peaceably in the yoke; and is pleased because, not being nuzzled, she eats of the corn.

I passed over upon her fair neck— I brought the yoke upon it, that she should not tread out the corn merely, but draw the plough and drag the harrow. These operations of husbandry are all referred to here, with some others. Ephraim shall tread out the corn, that there may be seed for the fields.

Judah shall plough— That the furrows may receive it.

Jacob shall break his clods.— Harrow—that the seed may be covered with the mould.

Israel very frequently made great depredations on Judah; and as this heifer loved to tread out the corn, and not plough, it is therefore added that he should be made to plough, be put under the yoke, namely, that of the Assyrians. What is added, “Judah and Jacob shall plough for themselves,” means, that Judah should not now plough for Israel, but for himself; as Israel shall no more make depredations upon him. — Dodd.

Verse 12. *Sow to yourselves in righteousness*— Let the seed you sow be of the best kind, and in just measure.

Reap in mercy— By the blessing of God on this ploughing, sowing, and harrowing, you may expect a good crop in harvest.

Break up your fallow ground— Do not be satisfied with a slight furrow; let the land that was fallowed (slightly ploughed) be broken up again with a deep furrow.

For it is time to seek the Lord— This should be immediately done: the season is passing; and if you do not get the seed in the ground, the early rain will be past, and your fields will be unfruitful.

Rain righteousness upon you.— God will give you the early rain in due time, and in proper measure. Here are the metaphors, and the application cannot be difficult.. Here are ploughing, fallowing, sowing, harrowing, watering, reaping, threshing, and feeding on the produce of well-directed labor. All may be applied to the human heart, and the work of God upon it. Correction, contrition, conversion, receiving the grace of Christ, bringing forth fruit, etc.

Verse 13. *Ye have ploughed wickedness*— Ye have labored sinfully.

Ye have reaped iniquity— The punishment due to your iniquity.

Ye have eaten the fruit of lies— Your false worship and your false gods

have brought you into captivity and misery.

Because thou didst trust in thy way— Didst confide in thy own counsels, and in thy mighty men, and not in the God who made you.

Verse 14. *Shall a tumult arise*— The enemy shall soon fall upon thy people, and take all thy fortified places.

As Shalman spoiled Beth-arbel— Some think that this refers to Jerubbaal, or Gideon's victory over Zalmunna, general of the Midianites; see Judges vii., 8: Others think that an allusion is made here to the destruction of Arbela, a city of Armenia, by Shalmaneser, here called Shalman; and this while he was only general of the Assyrian forces, and not yet king. I think the history to which this refers is unknown. It seems that it was distinguished by some remarkable ferocities.

The mother was dashed in pieces upon her children.— But when, where, how, and by whom, still remain unknown. Conjecture in such a case must be useless.

Verse 15. *So shall Beth-el do unto you*— This shall be the consequence of your idolatry.

In a morning shall the king of Israel utterly be cut off.— Suddenly, unexpectedly. Hoshea, the king of Israel, shall be cut off by the Assyrians. There are some allusions to facts in this chapter, which cannot be easily verified, as we have not sufficient acquaintance with the history of those times.

CHAPTER 11

This chapter gives a very pathetic representation of God's tender and affectionate regard for Israel, by metaphors chiefly borrowed from the conduct of mothers toward their tender offspring. From this, occasion is taken to reflect on their ungrateful return to the Divine goodness, and to denounce against them the judgments of the Almighty, 1-7. But suddenly and unexpectedly the prospect changes. Beams of mercy break frown the clouds just now fraught with vengeance. God, to speak in the language of men, feels the relentings of a tender parent; his bowels yearn; his mercy triumphs; his rebellious child shall yet be pardoned. As the lion of the tribe of Judah, he will employ his power to save his people, he will call his children from the land of their captivity; and, as doves, they will fly to him, a faithful and a holy people, 8-12.

NOTES ON CHAP. 11

Verse 1. *When Israel was a child*— In the infancy of his political existence.

I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.— Where he was greatly oppressed; and in this I gave the proof of my love. I preserved my people in their affliction there, and brought them safely out of it.

Verse 3. *I taught Ephraim also to go*— An allusion to a mother or nurse teaching a child to walk, directing it how to lift and lay its feet, and supporting it in the meantime by the arms, that it may use its feet with the greater ease. This is a passage truly pathetic.

Verse 4. *I drew them with cords of a man*— This is a reference to leading strings, one end of which is held by the child, the other by the nurse, by which the little one, feeling some support, and gaining confidence, endeavors to walk. God, their heavenly Father, made use of every means and method to teach them to walk in the right and only safe path; for, as

the Targum says, “As beloved children are drawn I drew them by the strength of love.”

That take of the yoke on their jaws— I did every thing that mercy could suggest, and justice permit, to make their duty their delight and profit. There appears to be here an illusion to the moving and pulling forward the collar or yoke of beasts which have been hard at work, to let in the cool air between it and their neck, so as to refresh them, and prevent that heat, which with the sweat would scald their necks, and take off not only the hair, but the skin. I have often done this at the land ends, in ploughing, when at the turnings the cattle were permitted a few moments to draw their breath after the hard pull that terminated the furrow at either end of the field:—

And I laid meat unto them.— Giving them at the same time a bite of grass or hay, to encourage them to go on afresh. The metaphor is strong and expressive; and he who ever had or saw the management of cattle in the plough or cart must admire it. Thus God acted with the people on whose necks was the yoke of his law. How many privileges, advantages, and comforts did he mingle with his precepts, to make them at once a righteous and happy people!

Verse 5. *He shall not return into-Egypt*— I have brought them thence already, with the design that the nation should never return thither again; but as they have sinned, and forfeited my favor and protection, they shall go to Assyria; and this because they refused to return to me. This view of the verse removes every difficulty.

Verse 6. *The sword shall abide on his cities*— Israel was agitated with external and intestine wars from the time of Jeroboam the Second. Although Zechariah his son reigned twelve years, yet it was in continual troubles; and he was at last slain by the rebel Shallum, who, having reigned one month, was slain by Menahetn. Pekahiah succeeded his father Menahem, and reigned two years, and was killed by Pekah, son of Remaliah. He joined Rezin, king of Syria, and made an irruption into the land of Judah; but Ahaz having obtained succor from Tiglath-Pileser, king of Assyria, Pekah was defeated, and the tribes of Reuben, Gad, Naphtali,

and the half-tribe of Manasseh, were carried away captives by the Assyrian king; and in a short time after, Hosea, son of Elah, slew Pekah and usurped the kingdom, which he could not possess without the assistance of Shalmaneser, who for his services imposed a tribute on the Israelitish king. Wishing to rid himself of this yoke, he applied to the king of Egypt; but this being known to Shalmaneser, he came against Samaria, and after a three years' siege took and destroyed it. Thus the sword rested on their cities; it continued in the land till all was ruined. See Calmet.

Verse 7. *Though they called them to the Most High*— Newcome is better: “And though they call on him together because of the yoke, he will not raise it. He shall receive no refreshment.” See the metaphor, ver. 4.

Verse 8. *How shall I give thee up*— See the notes on chap. 6:4, where we have similar words from similar feeling.

Mine heart is turned within me— Justice demands thy punishment; Mercy pleads for thy life. As thou changest, Justice resolves to destroy, or Mercy to save. My heart is oppressed, and I am weary with repenting—with so frequently changing my purpose. All this, though spoken after the manner of men, shows how merciful, compassionate, and loath to punish the God of heaven is. What sinner or saint upon earth has not been a subject of these gracious operations?

Verse 9. *I will not execute*— Here is the issue of this conflict in the Divine mind. Mercy triumphs over Judgment; Ephraim shall be spared. He is God, and not man. He cannot be affected by human caprices. They are now penitent, and implore mercy; he will not, as man would do, punish them for former offenses, when they have fallen into his hand. The holy place is in Ephraim, and God is in this holy place; and he will not go into the cities, as he did into Sodom and Gomorrah, to destroy them. Judgment is his strange work. How exceedingly affecting are these two verses!

Verse 10. *They shall walk after the Lord*— They shall discern the operations of his providence, when,

He shall roar like a lion— When he shall utter his majestic voice, Cyrus

shall make his decree. The people shall tremble-be in a state of commotion; every one hurrying to avail himself of the opportunity to return to his own land.

Verse 11. *They shall tremble as a bird*— Those of them that are in Egypt shall also be called thence, and shall speed hither as a bird. Those in Assyria shall also be called to return, and they shall flee as doves to their windows. All shall, in the fullness of time, return to their own land. And,

I will place them in their houses, saith the Lord.— They shall have their temple once more, and all their holy ordinances.

Verse 12. *Ephraim compasseth me about with lies*— I think this verse does not well unite with the above; it belongs to another subject, and should begin the following chapter, as in the Hebrew.

Judah yet ruleth with God— There is an allusion here to Genesis 32:24, where Jacob having “wrestled with the Angel,” had his name changed to Israel, one that rules with God. That glory the Israelites had lost by their idolatry; but Judah still retained the true worship, and alone deserved the name of Israel.

Bp. Newcome translates this clause thus:—

“But hereafter they shall come down a people of God, even a faithful people of saints.”

Even allowing this to be the most correct view of the original, I do not see what we gain by this change.

CHAPTER 12

The prophet, in very pointed terms, describes the unprofitableness and destruction attending vicious courses; particularly such as Ephraim pursued, who forsook God, and courted the alliance of idolatrous princes, 1. Judah is also reproved, 2. He is reminded of the extraordinary favor of God to his father Jacob, in giving him the birthright; and exhorted, after his example, to wrestle with God (the Angel of the covenant, the same unchangeable Jehovah) for a blessing; and to love mercy and execute justice, 34. Ephraim is accused of pursuing practices that are deceitful, although pretending to integrity, 7, 8. God then threatens to deprive this people of their possessions, 9, as they had rejected every means of reformation, 10, and given themselves up to gross impieties, 11. And, as an aggravation of their guilt, they are reminded from what humble beginnings they had been raised, 12, 13. The Divine judgments about to fall upon Israel are declared to be the result of great provocation 14.

NOTES ON CHAP. 12

Verse 1. *Ephraim feedeth on wind*— He forms and follows empty and unstable counsels.

Followeth after the east wind— They are not only empty, but dangerous and destructive. The east wind was, and still is, in all countries, a parching, wasting, injurious wind.

He daily increaseth lies— He promises himself safety from foreign alliances. He “made a covenant with the Assyrians,” and sent a subsidy of “oil to Egypt.” The latter abandoned him; the former oppressed him.

Verse 2. *The Lord hath also a controversy with Judah*— The rest of the prophecy belongs both to Judah and Israel. He reproaches both with their ingratitude, and threatens them with God’s anger. In order to make their infidelity the more hateful, and their malice the more sensible, he opposes

to them the righteousness, obedience, and piety of their father Jacob. He recalls to their minds the benefits they had received since they returned from Egypt. He speaks afterwards of their kings; and how, in their ingratitude, they refused to have him for their monarch. Having mentioned this fact, he subjoins reflections, exhortations, invectives, and threatenings, and continues this subject in this and the two following chapters. — Calmet.

Verse 3. *He took his brother by the heel*— See on Genesis 25:26; 32:24, etc.

Verse 4. *He had power over the Angel*— Who represented the invisible Jehovah.

He wept, and made supplication— He entreated with tears that God would bless him; and he prevailed. The circumstance of his weeping is not mentioned in Genesis.

He found him in Beth-el— It was there that God made those glorious promises to Jacob relative to his posterity. See Genesis 28:13-15.

Verse 5. *The Lord is his memorial*.— He is the same God as when Jacob so successfully wrestled with him.

Verse 6. *Therefore turn thou to thy God*— Because he is the same, and cannot change. Seek him as faithfully and as fervently as Jacob did, and you will find him the same merciful and compassionate Being.

Verse 7. *He is a merchant*— Or a Canaanite; referring to the Phoenicians, famous for their traffic. Ephraim is as corrupt as those heathenish traffickers were. He kept, as many in all ages have done, a weight and a weight; a heavy one to buy with and a light one to sell by.

Verse 8. *I am become rich*— They boasted in their riches, notwithstanding the unjust manner in which they were acquired.

In all my labors they shall find none iniquity in me— This is frequently

the language of merchants, tradesmen, etc. None are so full of professions of equity and justice, while all the time they are endeavoring to overreach, both in buying and selling. “Sir, I cannot afford it at that price.” “It is not mine for that money.” “I assure you that it cost me more than you offer.” “I am sorry I cannot take your money; but if I did, I should lose by the article,” etc., etc., etc. I have heard such language over and over, when I knew every word was false. Truth is a sacred thing in the sight of God; but who regards it as he should? There are, however, many noble exceptions among merchants and tradesmen. Bp. Newcome gives another turn to the subject, by translating:—

“All his labors shall not be found profitable unto him, For the iniquity wherewith he hath sinned.”

Verse 9. *And I-the Lord thy God*— I who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, will again make thee to dwell in tabernacles. This appears to be a threatening. I will reduce you to as miserable a state in the land of your captivity, as you often were through your transgressions in the wilderness. This was the opinion of some of the ancients on this verse; and the context requires it to be understood in this way. I do not think that the feast of tabernacles is referred to.

Verse 10. *I have also spoken*— I have used every means, and employed every method, to instruct and save you. I have sent prophets, who spake plainly, exhorting, warning, and beseeching you to return to me. They have had Divine visions, which they have declared and interpreted. They have used similitudes, symbols, metaphors, allegories, etc., in order to fix your attention, and bring you back to your duty and interest. And, alas! all is in vain; you have not profited by my condescension. This text St. Paul seems to have had full in view, when he wrote, Hebrews 1:1: “God who, at **SUNDRY TIMES** and in **DIVERS MANNERS**, spake in time past unto the **FATHERS** by the **PHOPHETS**.” See the note on the above.

Dr. Dodd supposes that there are three distinct kinds of prophecy mentioned here: 1. Immediate inspiration, when God declares the very words. 2. Vision; a representation of external objects to the mind, in as lively a manner as if there were conveyed by the senses. 3. Parables and

apt resemblances.

Verse 11. *Iniquity in Gilead*— Gilgal and Gilead are equally iniquitous, and equally idolatrous. Gilead, which was beyond Jordan, had already been brought under subjection by Tiglath-Pileser. Gilgal, which was on this side Jordan, shall share the same fate; because it is now as idolatrous as the other.

Their altars are as heaps— They occur everywhere. The whole land is given to idolatry.

Verse 12. *Served for a wife*— Seven years for Rachel.

For a wife he kept sheep.— Seven years for Leah; having been cheated by Laban, who gave him first Leah, instead of Rachel; and afterwards made him serve seven years more before he would confirm his first engagement. Critics complain of want of connection here. Why is this isolated fact predicted? Thus, in a detached sentence, the prophet speaks of the low estate of their ancestors, and how amply the providence of God had preserved and provided for them. This is all the connection the place requires.

Verse 13. *By a prophet (Moses) the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt, and by a prophet (Joshua) was he preserved*.— Joshua succeeded Moses, and brought the Israelites into the promised land; and when they passed the Jordan at Gilgal, he received the covenant of circumcision; and yet this same place was now made by them the seat of idolatry! How blind and how ungrateful!

Verse 14. *Therefore shall he leave his blood upon him*— He will not remove his guilt. These are similar to our Lord's words, John 3:36; 9:41: "He that believeth not on the Son of God, shall not see life, for the wrath of God ABIDETH ON HIM"—shall not be removed by any remission, as he rejects the only way in which he can be saved. Because ye say, We see; therefore, YOUR SIN REMAINETH, i.e., it still stands charged against you. Your miseries and destruction are of your own procuring; your perdition is of yourselves. God is as merciful as he is just.

CHAPTER 13

Thus chapter begins with observing that the fear of God leads to prosperity, but sin to ruin; a truth most visibly exemplified in the sin and punishment of Ephraim, 1-3. As an aggravation of their guilt, God reminds them of his former favors, 4, 5; which they had shamefully abused, 6; and which now expose them to dreadful punishments, 7, 8. He, however, tempers these awful threatenings with gracious promises; and, on their repentance, engages to save them, when no other could protect them, 9-11. But, alas! instead of repenting, Ephraim is filling up the measure of his iniquity, 12, 13. Notwithstanding this, God promises to put forth his almighty power in behalf of his people, and, as it were, raise them from the dead, 14; although, in the meantime, they must be visited with great national calamities, compared first to the noxious and parching east wind, 15, and described immediately after in the plainest terms, 16.

NOTES ON CHAP. 13

Verse 1. When Ephraim spake trembling— When he was meek and humble, of a broken heart and contrite spirit.

He exalted himself in Israel— He became great in God's sight; he rose in the Divine esteem in proportion as he sank in his own. But this did not continue.

He offended in Baal— He became an idolater.

He died.— The sentence of death from the Divine justice went out against him.

This has been differently understood: "As soon as Ephraim spake (To your tents, O Israel!) There was a trembling or commotion: then the kingdom was exalted in Israel." Thus taken, it refers to the division of the

ten tribes from Rehoboam, son of Solomon, 1 Kings 12:16, etc., and the establishment of the kingdom of Israel under Jeroboam in opposition to that of Judah; which breach was never healed.

Verse 2. *And now they sin more and more*— They increase in every kind of vice, having abandoned the great Inspirer of virtue.

Let the men that sacrifice kiss the calves.— This was the test. If there be a Jew that pretends to sacrifice, and whose conversion is dubious, let him come openly and kiss the calves. This will show what he is; no real Jew will do this. If he be an idolater, he will not scruple. This was the ancient method of adoration. 1. They kissed the idol. 2. When the statue was too high or too far off, they presented the hand, in token of alliance. 3. They brought that hand respectfully to their mouths, and kissed it. This was the genuine act of adoration; from ad, to, and os, oris, the mouth. So PLINY, Hist. Nat., lib. xxviii., c. 1. Adorando, dexteram ad oscula referimus.

And APULEIUS, Asin., lib. iv.: Admoventes oribus suis dexteram, ut ipsam prorsus deam religiosis adorationibus venerabantur. See Calmet, and see the note on Job 31:17.

Verse 3. *Therefore they shall be as the morning CLOUD-as the early DEW-as the CHAFF-as the SMOKE*— Four things, most easy to be driven about and dissipated, are employed here to show how they should be scattered among the nations, and dissipated by captivity.

Verse 4. *I am the Lord thy God*— This was the first discovery I made of myself to you, and the first commandment I gave; and I showed you that besides me there was no Savior. There is a remarkable addition in the Septuagint here: “But I am Jehovah thy God, who stretched out the heavens and created the earth. And I showed them not to thee, that thou shouldst walk after them. And I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt,” etc. This might have been once in the Hebrew text.

Verse 5. *I did know thee*— I approved of thee; I loved thee; and by miraculously providing for thee in that land of drought, I demonstrated my love.

Verse 6. According to their pasture— They had a rich pasture, and were amply supplied with every good. They became exalted in their heart, forgot their God, and became a prey to their enemies. “He that exalteth himself shall be abased.”

Verse 7. I will be unto them as a lion— שַׁחַל שָׁחַל shachal is supposed to mean here the black lion, frequent in Ethiopia.

As a leopard— נֶמֶר נָמַר namar, so termed from its spotted skin, for to be spotted is the signification of the root.

Will I observe them— The leopard, tiger, and panther will hide themselves in thick bushwood, near where they expect any prey to pass; and as soon as it comes near, spring suddenly upon it. To this is the allusion in the text: “By the way will I observe them;” watch for them as the leopard does. They shall be greatly harassed even on their way to Assyria, when going into captivity.

Verse 8. As a bear-bereaved— This is a figure to denote excessive ferocity. See the note on 2 Samuel 17:8, where a remarkable instance is given.

And will rend the caul of their heart— Every savage beast goes first to the seat of the blood when it has seized its prey; as in this fluid they delight more than in the most delicate parts of the flesh.

There will I devour them like a lion— לָבִיא לָבִיא labi, the old strong lion; drinking the blood, tearing the flesh, and breaking the bones to extract the marrow.

The wild beast shall tear them— Probably this refers to the chakal or jackal, who frequently hunts down the prey, which the lion takes the liberty to devour, while the jackal stands by, and afterwards picks the bones. Hence he has been called the lion’s PROVIDER, and the lion’s waiting-man.

Verse 9. *O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself*— These evils come not by my immediate infliction; they are the consequences of thy own crimes. In the above terrifying figures of the ferocious beasts, the prophet only shows what they would meet with from the hand of the Assyrians in the war, the famine, and the captivity; God being represented as doing what he only permits to be done.

But in me is thine help.— “Though thou hast destroyed thyself, yet in me alone can thy help be found”-Newcome. And others read, And who will help thee? reading מִי mi, who, for בִּי bi, in me. Though this is countenanced by the Syriac, yet there is no evidence of it in any of the MSS. yet collated, nor do I think it to be the true reading.

Verse 10. *Give me a king and princes?*— Referring to the time in which they cast off the Divine theocracy and chose Saul in the place of Jehovah.

Verse 11. *I gave thee a king in mine anger*— Such was Saul; for they highly offended God when they clamoured to have a king like the heathen nations that were around them.

Took him away in my wrath.— Permitted him and the Israelites to fall before the Philistines. Others think that Shalmaneser was the king thus given, and Hoshea the king thus taken away.

Verse 12. *The iniquity of Ephraim is bound up*— It is registered in my court of justice; the death warrant is in store, and will be produced in due time. Though there be not at present the judgment inflicted which such glaring transgressions demand, yet it will surely come. Such crimes cannot go unpunished.

Verse 13. *The sorrows of a travailing woman*— These judgments shall come suddenly and unavoidably.

The place of the breaking forth of children.— As there is a critical time in parturition in which the mother in hard labor may by skillful assistants be eased of her burden, which, if neglected, may endanger the life both of

parent and child, so there was a time in which Ephraim might have returned to God, but they would not; therefore they are now in danger of being finally destroyed. And, speaking after the manner of men, he must be deemed an unwise son, who if he had power and consideration, would prolong his stay in the porch of life, where he must necessarily be suffocated; so is Ephraim, who, though warned of his danger, having yet power to escape, continued in his sin, and is now come to destruction. I could illustrate the allusion in the text farther, and show the accurate propriety of the original; but the subject forbids it.

Verse 14. *I will ransom them from the power of the grave*— In their captivity they are represented as dead and buried, which is a similar view to that taken of the Jews in the Babylonish captivity by Ezekiel in his vision of the valley of dry bones. They are now lost as to the purpose for which they were made, for which God had wrought so many miracles for them and for their ancestors; but the gracious purpose of God shall not be utterly defeated. He will bring them out of that grave, and ransom them from that death; for as they have deserved that death and disgraceful burial, they must be redeemed and ransomed from it, or still lie under it. And who can do this but God himself? And he will do it. In the prospect of this the prophet exclaims, in the person of the universal Redeemer, “O death, I will be thy plagues;” I will bring into thy reign the principle of its destruction. The Prince of life shall lie for a time under thy power, that he may destroy that power.

O grave, I will be thy destruction— I will put an end to thy dreary domination by rising from the dead, and bringing life and immortality to life by my Gospel, and by finally raising from the death the whole human race in the day of the general resurrection.

שאוּל sheol, which we translate grave, is the state of the dead. **מות** maveth, which we translate death, is the principle of corruption that renders the body unfit to be longer the tenement of the soul, and finally decomposes it. Sheol shall be destroyed, for it must deliver up all its dead. Maveth shall be annihilated, for the body shall be raised incorruptible. See the use which the apostle makes of this passage, 1 Corinthians 15:54, 55; but he does not quote from the Hebrew, nor from any of the ancient

versions. He had to apply the subject anew; and the Spirit, which had originally given the words, chose to adapt them to the subject then in hand, which was the resurrection of the dead in the last day. Instead of דְּבָרֶיךָ debareycha, thy plagues, one of my oldest MSS., ninety-six of Kennicott's and thirty-two of De Rossi's, have דְּבַרְךָ debarcha, thy plague, that which shall carry thee off, as the plague does them who are affected by it. To carry off, carry away, is one of the regular meanings of the verb דָּבַר dabar.

Repentance shall be hid from mine eyes.— On these points I will not change my purpose; this is the signification of repentance when attributed to God.

Verse 15. *Though he be fruitful*— יַפְרִיא 'yaphri; a paronomasia on the word אֶפְרַיִם ephrayim, which comes from the same root פָּרָה parah, to be fruitful, to sprout, to bud.

An east wind shall come— As the east wind parches and blasts all vegetation, so shall Shalmaneser blast and destroy the Israelitish state.

Verse 16. *Samaria shall become desolate*— This was the capital of the Israelitish kingdom. What follows is a simple prophetic declaration of the cruelties which should be exercised upon this hapless people by the Assyrians in the sackage of the city.

CHAPTER 14

By the terrible denunciation of vengeance which concludes the preceding chapter, the prophet is led to exhort Israel to repentance, furnishing them with a beautiful form of prayer, very suitable to the occasion, 1-3. Upon which God, ever ready to pardon the penitent, is introduced making large promises of blessings, in allusion to those copious dews which refresh the green herbs, and which frequently denote, not only temporal salvation, but also the rich and refreshing comforts of the Gospel, 4-7. Their reformation from idolatry is foretold, and their consequent prosperity, under the emblem of a green flourishing fir tree, 8; but these promises are confined to those who may bring forth the fruits of righteousness, and the wicked are declared to have no share in them, 9.

NOTES ON CHAP. 14

Verse 1. *O Israel, return unto the Lord*— These words may be considered as addressed to the people now in captivity; suffering much, but having still much more to suffer if they did not repent. But it seems all these evils might yet be prevented, though so positively predicted, if the people would repent and return; and the very exhortation to this repentance shows that they still had power to repent, and that God was ready to save them and avert all these evils. All this is easily accounted for on the doctrine of the contingency of events, i.e., the poising a multitude of events on the possibility of being and not being, and leaving the will of man to turn the scale; and that God will not foreknow a thing as absolutely certain, which his will has determined to make contingent. A doctrine against which some solemn men have blasphemed, and philosophic infidels declaimed; but without which fate and dire necessity must be the universal governors, prayer be a useless meddling, and Providence nothing but the ineluctable adamantine chain of unchangeable events; all virtue is vice, and

and unvarying necessity, from the operation of which no soul of man can escape, and no occurrence in the universe be otherwise than it is. From such blasphemy, and from the monthly publications which avouch it, good Lord, deliver us!

Verse 2. *Take with you words*— And you may be assured that you pray aright, when you use the words which God himself has put in your

alone for all that can make you wise, useful, holy, and happy. The resolutions are:—

1. Asshur shall not save us-We will neither trust in, nor fear, this rich and powerful king. We will not look either to riches or power for true rest and peace of mind.

2. We will not ride upon horses-We shall no more fix our hopes on the proud Egyptian cavalry, to deliver us out of the hands of enemies to whom thy Divine justice has delivered us. We will expect no rest nor happiness in the elegances of life, and gratification of our senses.

3. Neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, Ye are our gods-We will not trust in any thing without us; nor even in any good thing we are able to do through thy grace; knowing we have nothing but what we have received. We will trust in thy infinite mercy for our final salvation.

4. And we will do all this from the conviction, that in thee the fatherless findeth mercy; for we are all alike helpless, desolate, perishing orphans, till translated into thy family.

Verse 4. *I will heal their backsliding*— Here is the answer of God to these prayers and resolutions. See its parts:—

1. Ye have backslidden and fallen, and are grievously and mortally wounded by that fall; but I, who am the Author of life, and who redeem from death, will heal all these wounds and spiritual diseases.

2. I will love them freely-**נְדַבָּה**-nedabah, after a liberal, princely manner. I will love them so as to do them incessant good. It shall not be a love of affection merely, but shall be a beneficial love. A love that not only feels delight in itself, but fills them with delight who are its objects, by making them unutterably and supremely happy.

3. For mine anger is turned away from him-Because he has turned back to me. Thus God and man become friends.

Verse 5. *I will be as the dew unto Israel*— On these metaphors I gladly avail myself of the elegant and just observations of Bp. Lowth. “These verses (ver. 5-7) contain gracious promises of God’s favor and blessings upon Israel’s conversion. In the fifth verse, it is described by that refreshment which copious dews give to the grass in summer. If we consider the nature of the climate, and the necessity of dews in so hot a country, not only to refresh, but likewise to preserve life; if we consider also the beauty of the oriental lilies, the fragrance of the cedars which grow upon Lebanon, the beauteous appearance which the spreading olive trees afforded, the exhilarating coolness caused by the shade of such trees, and the aromatic smell exhaled by the cedars; we shall then partly understand the force of the metaphors here employed by the prophet; but their full energy no one can conceive, till he feels both the want, and enjoys the advantage, of the particulars referred to in that climate where the prophet wrote.”-Lowth’s twelfth and nineteenth prelection; and Dodd on the place.

What a glorious prophecy! What a wonderful prophet! How sublime, how energetic, how just! The great master prophet, Isaiah, alone could have done this better. And these promises are not for Israel merely after the flesh; they are for all the people of God. We have a lot and portion in the matter; God also places his love upon us. Here the reader must feel some such sentiment as the shepherd in Virgil, when enraptured with the elegy which his associate had composed on their departed friend. The phraseology and metaphors are strikingly similar; and therefore I shall produce it.

Tale tuum carmen nobis, divine poeta, Quale sopor fesses in gramine,
 quale per aestum Dulcis aquae saliente sitim restinguere rivo. Nec calamis
 solum aequiparas, sed voce magistrum. Fortunate puer! tu nunc eris alter
 ab illo. Nos tamen haec quocunque modo tibi nostra vicissim Dicemus,
 Daphninque tuum tollemus ad astra: Daphnin ad astra feremus: amavit nos
 quoque Daphnis. VIRGIL. Ecl. v., ver. 45.

“O heavenly poet, such thy verse appears, So sweet, so charming to my
 ravish’d ears, As to the weary swain with cares oppress’d, Beneath the
 sylvan shade, refreshing rest; As to the feverish traveler, when first He

finds a crystal stream to quench his thirst. In singing, as in piping, you excel; And scarce your master could perform so well. O fortunate young man! at least your lays Are next to his, and claim the second praise. Such as they are, my rural songs I join To raise your Daphnis to the powers divine; For Daphnis was my friend, as well as thine.”

Verse 7. *They that dwell under his shadow shall return*— The Targum is curious: “They shall be gathered together from the midst of their captivity; they shall dwell under the shadow of his CHRIST, and the dead shall revive.”

They shall revive as the corn— The justness and beauty of this metaphor is not generally perceived. After the corn has been a short time above the earth, in a single spike, the blades begin to separate, and the stalk to spring out of the center. The side leaves turn back to make way for the protruding stalk; and fall bending down to the earth, assuming a withered appearance, though still attached to the plant. To look at the corn in this state, no one, unacquainted with the circumstance, could entertain any sanguine hope of a copious harvest. In a short time other leaves spring out; the former freshen, and begin to stand erect; and the whole seems to revive from a vegetative death. This is the circumstance to which the prophet refers “they shall revive as the corn.” Of this a prudent and profitable use may be made.

1. When a soul is first “drawn by the cords of love,” chap. 11:4, every thing seems to it promising, comfortable, and delightful, like the corn in its first state.
2. But when the Spirit of judgment brings to the light of conscience the hidden things of iniquity, and repentance is deepened into contrition, the broken and the contrite heart groans, and thinks that all is lost; deep distress takes place, and discouragement succeeds discouragement. This answers to the corn in its second state.
3. By and by the pardon comes, and God’s love is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost; every hope is revived and realized, the full corn in the ear becomes manifest; and this answers to the corn in its third state.

“They shall revive as the corn.” Glory be to God for his unspeakable gift!

Verse 8. *What have I to do any more with idols?*— The conversion of Ephraim is now as complete as if was sincere. God hears and observes this.

I am like a green fir tree.— Perhaps these words should be joined to the preceding, as Newcome has done, and be a part of God’s speech to Ephraim. “I have heard him; and I have seen him as a flourishing fir tree.” He is become strong and vigorous; and from his present appearance of healthiness, his future increase and prosperity may be safely anticipated.

From me is thy fruit found.— All thy goodness springs from the principle of grace which I have planted in thy soul; for as the earth cannot bring forth fruit without the blessing of God, sending the dews and rains, with the genial rays of the sun, so neither can the soul of man, even of the most pious, bear fruit, without a continual influence from the Most High. Without the former, neither grass could grow for cattle, nor corn for the service of man; without the latter, no seeds of righteousness could take root, no stalk of promise could grow, no fruit of grace could be produced. And the unclean spirit, which was cast out, would soon return; and, finding his former house empty, swept, and garnished, would re-enter with seven demons of greater power and worse influence; and the latter end of that man would be worse than the first. Reader, ever consider that all thy good must be derived from God; and all that good must be preserved in thee by his continued influence of light, love, and power upon thy soul.

Verse 9. *Who is wise, and he shall understand these things?*— What things? Those which relate to the backslidings, iniquity, and punishment of Israel; and to the mercy and kindness of God in their promised restoration. The things which belong to the work of sin in the heart; the things which belong to the work of grace in the soul; and particularly the things mentioned in this wonderful chapter.

Prudent, and he shall know them?— He who endeavors to understand them, who lays his heart to them, such a person shall understand them.

For the ways of the Lord are right— This is the conclusion which the prophet makes from the whole. All God's conduct, both in the dispensation of justice and mercy, is right: all as it should be, all as it must be; because he is too wise to err, too good to be unkind.

The just shall walk, in them— This is a truth which he will always acknowledge; and illustrate it by a righteous and godly life.

But the transgressors shall fall therein.— Howsoever good they might have been before, if they do not consider the necessity of depending upon God; of receiving all their light, life, power, and love from him; ever evidencing that faith which worketh by love; maintaining an obedient conduct, and having respect to all God's precepts; they shall fall, even in

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK

OF THE

PROPHET JOEL

JOEL, the son of Pethuel, the second of the twelve minor prophets, was, as is said, of the tribe of Reuben, and city of Bethoran; or rather Betharan, for Bethoran was on this side Jordan, in the tribe of Ephraim, and Betharan was on the other side of the river, in the tribe of Reuben. Joel prophesied in the kingdom of Judah; and it is the opinion of some critics that he did not appear there till after the removal of the ten tribes and the destruction of the kingdom of Israel. We do not know distinctly the year wherein he began to prophesy, nor that in which he died. He speaks of a great famine, and an inundation of locusts, which ravaged Judea; but as these are evils not uncommon in that country, and all sorts of events have not been registered in history, we can infer nothing from thence towards fixing the particular period of Joel's prophecy.

St. Jerome, followed by many others, both ancients and moderns, believed Joel to have been contemporary with Hosea, according to this rule laid down by him, that when there is no certain proof of the time wherein any prophet lived, we are to be directed in our conjectures by the time of the preceding prophet, whose epoch is better known. But this rule is not always certain, and should not hinder us from following another system, if we have good reason for doing so. The Hebrews maintain that Joel prophesied under Manasseh; and as collateral circumstances seem to preponderate in favor of this hypothesis, it has been accordingly followed in the margin. Under the idea of an enemy's army, the prophet represents a cloud of locusts, which in his time fell upon Judea, and caused great desolation. This, together with the caterpillars, and the drought, brought a

terrible famine upon the land. God, being moved with the calamities and prayers of his people, scattered the locusts, and the wind blew them into the sea. These misfortunes were succeeded by plenty and fertility. After this, the prophet foretold the day of the Lord, and the vengeance he was to exercise in the valley of Jezreel. He speaks of the teacher of righteousness, whom God was to send; and of the Holy Spirit, which was to descend upon all flesh. He says that Jerusalem will be inhabited for ever; that salvation will come out from thence; and that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. All this relates to the new covenant, and the time of the Messiah. See Calmet.

Bishop Lowth observes that “the style of Joel differs much from that of Hosea; but, though of a different kind, is equally poetical. It is elegant, perspicuous, clear, diffusive, and flowing; and, at the same time, very sublime, nervous, and animated. He displays the whole power of poetic description in the first and second chapters; and, at the same time, his fondness for metaphors, comparisons, and allegories; nor is the connection of his subjects less remarkable than the graces of his diction. It is not to be denied that in some places he is very obscure; which every attentive reader will perceive, especially in the end of this prophecy.” Prael. xxi.; and see Dodd. The two first chapters are inimitably beautiful; and the language, in force, and often in sound, well adapted to the subject. See the note on ver. 1.

THE BOOK

OF THE

PROPHET JOEL

Chronological Notes relative to the commencement of Joel's prophesying, upon the supposition that this event took place about six hundred and ninety years before the commencement of the Christian era.

- Year from the Creation, according to Archbishop Usher, 3314.
- Year of the Julian Period, 4024.
- Year since the Flood, 1658.
- Year from the foundation of Solomon's temple, 322.
- Year since the division of Solomon's monarchy into the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, 285.
- Year since the extinction of the kingdom of Israel by Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, 31.
- Third year of the twenty-second Olympiad.
- Year from the building of Rome, according to the Varronian computation, 64.
- Year before the vulgar era of Christ's nativity, 690.
- Cycle of the Sun, 20.
- Cycle of the Moon, 15.
- Third year of Eryxias, the last decennial archon of the Athenians.
- First year of Anaxidamus, king of Lacedaemon, of the family of the Proclidae.
- Thirty-fifth year of Eurycrates I., king of Lacedaemon, of the family of the Eurythenidae.
- Eleventh year of Deioces, the first king of the Medes.
- Fortieth year of Perdiccas I., king of Macedon.
- Twenty-ninth year of Gyges, king of Lydia.

— Ninth year of Manasseh, king of Judah.

CHAPTER 1

This and the beginning of the next chapter contain a double prophecy, applicable in its primary sense to a plague of locusts which was to devour the land, and to be accompanied with a severe drought and famine; and in its secondary sense it denotes the Chaldean invasion. Both senses must be admitted: for some of the expressions will apply only to the dearth by insects; others to the desolation by war. The contexture of both is beautiful and well conducted. In this chapter the distress of every order of people is strongly painted; and not only does the face of nature languish when the God of nature is displeased, 1-19; but the very beasts of the field, by a bold figure, are represented as supplicating God in their distress, and reproaching the stupidity of man, 20.

NOTES ON CHAP. 1

Verse 1. *The word of the Lord that came to Joel*— See the introduction for some account of this prophet, whose history is very obscure. Bishop Newcome thinks that he prophesied while the kingdom of Judah subsisted, and refers to chap. 2:1, 15, (see also chap. 1:14, and the note there,) but not long before its subversion as his words, chap. 3:1, seem to imply that its captivity was approaching. See 2 Kings 21:10-15. He therefore favors the conjecture of Drusius, that this prophet lived under Manasseh, and before his conversion, 2 Chronicles 33:13; that is, some time from before Christ 697 to (suppose) 660.

Verse 2. *Ye old men*— Instead of **הַזִּקְנִים** hazzekenim old men, a few MSS. have **הַכֹּהֲנִים** haccohanim, ye priests, but improperly.

Hath this been in your days— He begins very abruptly; and before he proposes his subject, excites attention and alarm by intimating that he is

about to announce disastrous events, such as the oldest man among them has never seen, nor any of them learnt from the histories of ancient times.

Verse 3. *Tell ye your children of it*— To heighten the effect, he still conceals the subject, and informs them that it is such as should be handed down from father to son through all generations.

Verse 4. *That which the palmerworm hath left*— Here he begins to open his message, and the words he chooses show that he is going to announce a devastation of the land by locusts, and a famine consequent on their depredations. What the different insects may be which he specifies is not easy to determine. I shall give the words of the original, with their etymology.

The palmerworm, גזם gazam, from the same root, to cut short; probably the caterpillar, or some such blight, from its cutting the leaves of the trees into pieces for its nourishment.

The locust, ארבה arbeh, from רבה rabah, to multiply, from the immense increase and multitude of this insect.

Cankerworm, ילק yelek, from לק lak, to lick or lap with the tongue; the reference is uncertain.

Caterpillar, חסיל chasil, from חסל chasal, to consume, to eat up, the consumer. Bishop Newcome translates the first grasshopper; the second, locust; the third, devouring locust; and the fourth, consuming locust. After all that has been said by interpreters concerning these four animals, I am fully of opinion that the arbeh, or locust himself, is the gazam, the yelek, and the chasing and that these different names are used here by the prophet to point out the locust in its different states, or progress from embryo to full growth. See the note on chap. 2:2.

Verse 5. *Awake, ye drunkards*— The general destruction of vegetation by these devouring creatures has totally prevented both harvest and vintage; so that there shall not be wine even for necessary uses, much less for the

purposes of debauchery. It is well known that the ruin among the vines by locusts prevents the vintage for several years after.

Verse 6. *A nation is come up upon my land*— That real locusts are intended there can be little doubt; but it is thought that this may be a double prophecy, and that the destruction by the Chaldeans may also be intended, and that the four kinds of locusts mentioned above may mean the four several attacks made on Judea by them. The first in the last year of Nabonassar, (father of Nebuchadnezzar,) which was the third of Jehoiakim; the second when Jehoiakim was taken prisoner in the eleventh year of his reign; the third in the ninth year of Zedekiah and the fourth three years after, when Jerusalem was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar. Others say that they mean four powers which have been enemies of the Jews: 1. The palmerworm, the Assyrians and Chaldeans. 2. The locust, the Persians and Medes. 3. The cankerworm, the Greeks, and particularly Antiochus Epiphanes. 4. The caterpillar, the Romans. Others make them four kings; Tiglath-pileser, Shalmaneser, Sennacherib, and Nebuchadnezzar. But of such similitudes there is no end; and the best of them is arbitrary and precarious.

Verse 7. *He hath laid my vine waste*— The locusts have eaten off both leaves and bark. **חשפ חשפה**

Verse 12. *The vine is dried up*— Dr. Shaw observes that in Barbary, in the month of June, the locusts collect themselves into compact bodies a furlong or more square, and march on, eating up every thing that is green or juicy, and letting nothing escape them, whether vegetables or trees.

They destroy the pomegranate, the palm, the apple, (תפוח תפוח tappuach, the citron tree,) the vine, the fig, and every tree of the field. See the note on chap. 2:2.

Verse 14. *Call a solemn assembly*— עצרה atsarah signifies a time of restraint, as the margin has it. The clause should be translated—consecrate a fast, proclaim a time of restraint; that is, of total abstinence from food, and from all secular employment. All the elders of the land and the representatives of the people were to be collected at the temple to cry unto the Lord, to confess their sins, and pray for mercy. The temple was not yet destroyed. This prophecy was delivered before the captivity of Judah.

Verse 15. *Alas for the day!*— The Syriac repeats this, the Vulgate, Septuagint, and Arabic, thrice: “Alas, alas, alas, for the day!”

As a destruction from the Almighty— The destruction that is now coming is no ordinary calamity; it is as a signal judgment immediately inflicted by the Almighty.

Verse 17. *The seed is rotten under their clods*— When the sprout was cut off as low as possible by the locusts, there was no farther germination. The seed rotted away.

Verse 18. *How do the beasts groan!*— I really think that the neighing of horses, or braying of asses, is wonderfully expressed by the sound of the original: מה נאנחה בהמה mah NEENCHAH behemah, how do the horses neigh! how do the asses bray! בהמה behemah is a collective name for all domestic cattle, and those used in husbandry.

Cattle are perplexed— They are looking everywhere, and wandering about

to find some grass, and know not which way to run.

Verse 19. *O Lord, to thee will I cry*— Let this calamity come as it may, we have sinned, and should humble ourselves before God; and it is such a calamity as God alone can remove, therefore unto him must we cry.

The fire hath devoured the pastures— This may either refer to a drought, or to the effects of the locusts; as the ground, after they have passed over it, everywhere appears as if a sheet of flame had not only scorched, but consumed every thing.

Verse 20. *The beasts of the field cry also unto thee*— Even the cattle, wild and tame, are represented as supplicating God to have mercy upon them, and send them provender! There is a similar affecting description of the effects of a drought in Jeremiah, 14:6.

The rivers of waters are dried up— There must have been a drought as well as a host of locusts; as some of these expressions seem to apply to the effects of intense heat.

For **המדבר** hammidbar, “the wilderness,” one of my oldest MSS. reads **מדבר** midbar, “wilderness” simply, as in ver. 19. Eight or ten of Dr. Kennicott’s have the same reading.

CHAPTER 2

The prophet sounds the alarm of a dreadful calamity, the descripturn of which is most terribly worked up, 1-11. Exhortation to repentance, fasting, and prayer, that the Divine judgments may be averted, 12-17. God will in due time take vengeance on all the enemies of pure and undefiled religion, 18-20. Great prosperity of the Jews subsequent to their return from the Babylonish captivity, 21-27. Joel then makes an elegant transition to the outpouring of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, 28-30; for so these verses are explained by one of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. See Acts 2:16-21. Prophecy concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, which was shortly to follow the opening of the Gospel dispensation, 31. Promises of safety to the faithful and penitent; promises afterwards remarkably fulfilled to the Christians in their escape to Pella from the desolating sword of the Roman army, 32.

NOTES ON CHAP. 2

Verse 1. *Blow ye the trumpet in Zion*— This verse also shows that the temple was still standing. All assemblies of the people were collected by the sound of the trumpet.

The day of the Lord cometh— This phrase generally means a day of judgment or punishment.

Verse 2. *A day of darkness, etc.*— The depredations of the locusts are described from the second to the eleventh verse, and their destruction in the twentieth. Dr. Shaw, who saw locusts in Barbary in 1724 and 1725, thus describes them:—

“I never observed the mantes, bald locusts, to be gregarious. But the locusts, properly so called, which are so frequently mentioned by sacred as well as profane writers, are sometimes so beyond expression. Those which I saw in 1724 and 1725 were much bigger than our common

grasshopper; and had brown spotted wings, with legs and bodies of a bright yellow. Their first appearance was toward the latter end of March, the wind having been for some time south. In the middle of April their numbers were so vastly increased that, in the heat of the day, they formed themselves into large and numerous swarms; flew in the air like a succession of clouds; and, as the prophet Joel expresses it, (2:10) they darkened the sun. When the wind blew briskly, so that these swarms were crowded by others, or thrown one upon another, we had a lively idea of that comparison of the psalmist, (Psalm 109:23,) of being ‘tossed up and down as the locust.’ In the month of May, when the ovaries of those insects were ripe and turgid, each of these swarms began gradually to disappear; and retired into the Mettijiah, and other adjacent plains, where they deposited their eggs. These were no sooner hatched in June, than each of these broods collected itself into a compact body of a furlong or more in square; and, marching immediately forward in the direction of the sea, they let nothing escape them; eating up every thing that was green and juicy, not only the lesser kinds of vegetables, but the vine likewise; the fig tree, the pomegranate, the palm, and the apple tree, even all the trees of the field, Joel 1:12; in doing which they kept their ranks like men of war; climbing over, as they advanced, every tree or wall that was in their way. Nay, they entered into our very houses and bedchambers, like so many thieves. The inhabitants, to stop their progress, made a variety of pits and trenches all over their fields and gardens, which they lined with water; or else they heaped up in them heath, stubble, and such like combustible matter, which were severally set on fire upon the approach of the locusts. But this was all to no purpose, for the trenches were quickly filled up, and the fires extinguished, by infinite swarms succeeding one another; while the front was regardless of danger, and the rear pressed on so close, that a retreat was altogether impossible. A day or two after one of these broods was in motion, others were already hatched to march and glean after them; gnawing off the very bark, and the young branches, of such trees as had before escaped with the loss only of their fruit and foliage. So justly have they been compared by the prophet Joel (chap. 2:3) to a great army; who further observes, that ‘the land is as the garden of Eden before them and behind them a desolate wilderness.’

“Having lived near a month in this manner (like a **μυριοστομον ξιφος**, or

sword with ten thousand edges, to which they have been compared,) upon the ruin and destruction of every vegetable substance which came in their way, they arrived at their full growth, and threw off their nymph state by casting their outward skin. To prepare themselves for this change, they clung by their hinder feet to some bush, twig, or corner of a stone; and immediately, by using an undulating motion, their heads would first break out, and then the rest of their bodies. The whole transformation was performed in seven or eight minutes, after which they lay for a short time in a torpid and seemingly languishing condition; but as soon as the sun and air had hardened their wings, by drying up the moisture which remained upon them, after casting their sloughs, they reassumed their former voracity, with an addition both of strength and agility. Yet they did not continue long in this state before they were entirely dispersed, as their parents were before, after they had laid their eggs; and as the direction of the marches and flights of them both was always to the northward, and not having strength, as they have sometimes had, to reach the opposite shores of Italy France, or Spain, it is probable they perished in the sea, a grave which, according to these people, they have in common with other winged creatures.”-Travels, 4to. edition pp. 187, 188.

A day of darkness— They sometimes obscure the sun. And Thuanus observes of an immense crowd, that “they darkened the sun at mid-day.”

As the morning spread upon the mountains— They appeared suddenly: as the sun, in rising behind the mountains, shoots his rays over them. Adanson, in his voyage to Senegal, says: “Suddenly there came over our heads a thick cloud which darkened the air, and deprived us of the rays of the sun. We soon found that it was owing to a cloud of locusts.” Some clouds of them are said to have darkened the sun for a mile, and others for the space of twelve miles! See on ver. 10.

Verse 3. *A fire devoureth before them*— They consume like a general conflagration. “They destroy the ground, not only for the time, but burn trees for two years after.” Sir Hans Sloane, Nat. Hist. of Jamaica, vol. i., p. 29.

Behind them a flame burneth— “Wherever they feed,” says Ludolf, in

his History of Ethiopia, “their leavings seem as if parched with fire.”

Nothing shall escape them.— “After devouring the herbage,” says Adanson, “with the fruits and leaves of trees, they attacked even the buds and the very bark; they did not so much as spare the reeds with which the huts were thatched.”

Verse 4. *The appearance of horses*— The head of the locust is remarkably like that of the horse; and so Ray on Insects describes them: Caput oblongum, equi instar, prona spectans- “They have an oblong head, like to that of a horse, bending downward.” On this account the Italians call them cavaletta, cavalry. Bochart remarks, from an Arabic writer, that the locusts resemble ten different kinds of animals: 1. The HORSE in its head. 2. The ELEPHANT in its eyes. 3. The BULL in its neck. 4. The STAG in its horns. 5. The LION in its breast. 6. The SCORPION in its belly. 7. The EAGLE in its wings. 8. The CAMEL in its thighs. 9. The OSTRICH in its feet. And 10. The SERPENT in its tail. Vid. Hieroz., vol. ii., p. 475, edit. 1692. But its most prominent resemblance is to the horse, which the prophet mentions; and which the Arabic writer puts in the first place, as being the chief.

Verse 5. *Like the noise of chariots*— Bochart also remarks: — “The locusts fly with a great noise, so as to be heard six miles off, and while they are eating the fruits of the earth, the sound of them is like that of a flame driven by the wind.”-Ibid., p. 478.

Verse 6. *All faces shall gather blackness.*— Universal mourning shall take place, because they know that such a plague is irresistible.

Verse 7. *Like mighty men-like men of war (and as horsemen, ver. 4)*— The prophet does not say they are such, but they resemble. They are locusts; but in their operations they are LIKE the above.

They shall not break their ranks— See the account on ver. 2, from Dr. Shaw.

Verse 8. *They shall not be wounded.*— They have hard scales like a coat of mail; but the expression refers to the utter uselessness of all means to

prevent their depredations. See Shaw's account above.

Verse 10. *The earth shall quake-the heavens shall tremble*— Poetical expressions, to point out universal consternation and distress. The earth quaked to see itself deprived of its verdure; the heavens trembled to find themselves deprived of their light.

The sun and the moon shall be dark— Bochart relates that “their multitude is sometimes so immense as to obscure the heavens for the space of twelve miles!” -Ibid. p. 479.

Verse 11. *The Lord shall utter his voice*— Such a mighty force seems as if summoned by the Almighty, and the noise they make in coming announces their approach, while yet afar off.

Verse 12. *Turn ye even to me*— Three means of turning are recommended: Fasting, weeping, mourning, i.e., continued sorrow.

Verse 13. *Rend your heart*— Let it not be merely a rending of your garments, but let your hearts be truly contrite. Merely external worship and hypocritical pretensions will only increase the evil, and cause God to meet you with heavier judgments.

For he is gracious— Good and benevolent in his own nature.

Merciful— Pitying and forgiving, as the effect of goodness and benevolence.

Slow to anger— He is not easily provoked to punish, because he is gracious and merciful.

Of great kindness— Exuberant goodness to all them that return to him.

And repenteth him of the evil.— Is ever ready to change his purpose to destroy, when he finds the culprit willing to be saved. See the notes on Exodus 34:6, 7.

Verse 14. *Who knoweth if he will return*— He may yet interpose and turn aside the calamity threatened, and so far preserve the land from these ravagers, that there will be food for men and cattle, and a sufficiency of offerings for the temple service. Therefore:—

Verse 15. *Blow the trumpet*— Let no time be lost, let the alarm be sounded.

Verse 16. *Gather the children*— Let all share in the humiliation, for all must feel the judgment, should it come. Let no state nor condition among the people be exempted. The elders, the young persons, the infants, the bridegroom, and the bride; let all leave their houses, and go to the temple of God.

Verse 17. *Let the priests-weep between the porch and the altar*— The altar of burnt-offerings stood before the porch of the temple, 2 Chronicles 8:12, and between them there was an open space of fifteen or twenty cubits. It was there that the priests prostrated themselves on such occasions. It was into this place that the priests brought the sacrifice or victim of atonement; and where the high priest laid his hands on the head of the victim confessing his sins.

Let them say— The following was the form to be used on this occasion, “Spare thy people,” etc. And if this be done with a rent heart, etc., “then will the Lord be jealous for his land, and pity his people,” ver. 18. He will surely save, if ye seriously return to and penitently seek him.

Verse 19. *Yea, the Lord will answer*— It is not a peradventure; it will surely be done; if ye seek God as commanded, ye will find him as promised.

I will send you corn and wine— He will either prevent the total ravaging of the land, or so bless it with extraordinary vegetable strength, that ye shall have plentiful crops.

Verse 20. *I will remove far off from you the northern army*— “That is, the locusts; which might enter Judea by the north, as Circassia and

Mingrelia abound with them. Or the locusts may be thus called, because they spread terror like the Assyrian armies, which entered Judea by the north. See Zephaniah 2:13.”-Newcome. Syria, which was northward of Judea, was infested with them; and it must have been a northern wind that brought them into Judea, in the time of Joel; as God promises to change this wind, and carry them into a barren and desolate land, Arabia Deserta. “And his face toward the east sea,” i.e., the Dead Sea, which lay eastward of Jerusalem. “His hinder part toward the utmost sea,” the western sea, i.e., the Mediterranean.

And his stink shalt come up— After having been drowned by millions in the Mediterranean, the reflux of the tide has often brought them back, and thrown there in heaps upon the shore, where they putrefied in such a manner as to infect the air and produce pestilence, by which both men and cattle have died in great multitudes. See Bochart, Hieroz., vol. ii., p. 481.

Livy, and St. Augustine after him, relate that there was such an immense crowd of locusts in Africa that, having eaten up every green thing, a wind arose that carried them into the sea, where they perished; but being cast upon the shore, they putrefied, and bred such a pestilence, that eighty thousand men died of it in the kingdom of Massinissa, and thirty thousand in the garrison of Utica, in which only ten remained alive. See Calmet and Livy, lib. xc., and August. De Civitate Dei, lib. iv., c. 31. We have many testimonies of a similar kind.

Because he hath done great things— Or, כִּי ki, although he have done great things, or, after he has done them, i.e., in almost destroying the whole country.

Verse 21. *Fear not-for the Lord will do great things.*— The words are repeated from the preceding verse; Jehovah will do great things in driving them away, and supernaturally restoring the land to fertility.

Verse 23. *The former rain moderately*— הַמּוֹרֵה לְצַדִּיקָה hammoreh litsedakah, “the former rain in righteousness,” that is, in due time and in just proportion. This rain fell after autumn, the other in spring. See Hosea 6:3.

In the first month.— בראשון barishon, “as aforetime.” So Bp. Newcome. In the month Nisan. — Syriac.

Verse 25. I will restore-the years— It has already been remarked that the locusts not only destroyed the produce of that year, but so completely ate up all buds, and barked the trees, that they did not recover for some years. Here God promises that he would either prevent or remedy that evil; for he would restore the years that the locusts, cankerworm, caterpillar, and palmerworm had eaten.

Verse 26. Praise the name of the Lord your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you— In so destroying this formidable enemy; and so miraculously restoring the land to fertility, after so great a devastation.

Verse 28. Shall come to pass afterward— אחרֵי כֵן acharey ken, “after this;” the same, says Kimchi, as in the latter days, which always refers to the days of the Messiah; and thus this prophecy is to be interpreted: and we have the testimony of St. Peter, Acts 2:17, that this prophecy relates to that mighty effusion of the Holy Spirit which took place after the day of pentecost. Nor is there any evidence that such an effusion took place, nor such effects were produced, from the days of this prophet till the day of pentecost. And the Spirit was poured out then upon all flesh, that is, on people of different countries, speaking the languages of almost all the people of the earth; which intimated that these were the first-fruits of the conversion of all the nations of the world. For there was scarcely a tongue in the universe that was not to be found among the Parthians, Medes, Elamites, Mesopotamians, Jews, Cappadocians, people of Pontus, of Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, Libya, Cyrene, Rome, Crete, and Arabia, who were residents at Jerusalem at that time; and on whom this mighty gift was poured out, each hearing and apprehending the truths of the Gospel, in his own language wherein he was born. Thus we have Divine authority for saying, that was the fulfillment of this prophecy by Joel. And the mighty and rapid spread of the Gospel of Christ in the present day, by means of the translation of the Scriptures into almost all the regular languages of the world, and the sending missionaries to all nations, who preach the Gospel in those tongues, are farther proofs that

the great promise is in the fullest progress to be speedily fulfilled, even in the utmost sense of the words.

Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy— Shall preach-exhort, pray, and instruct, so as to benefit the Church.

Your old men shall dream dreams— Have my will represented to them in this way, as the others by direct inspiration.

Your young men shall see visions— Have true representations of Divine things made upon their imaginations by the power of God; that they shall have as full an evidence of them as they could have of any thing that came to the mind through the medium of the senses.

Verse 29. *And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids*— The gifts of teaching and instructing men shall not be restricted to any one class or order of people. He shall call and qualify the men of his own choice; and shall take such out of all ranks, orders, degrees, and offices in society. And he will pour out his Spirit upon them; and they shall be endowed with all the gifts and graces necessary to convert sinners, and build up the Church of Christ on its most holy faith.

And this God has done, and is still doing. He left the line of Aaron, and took his apostles indiscriminately from any tribe. He passed by the regular order of the priesthood, and the public schools of the most celebrated doctors, and took his evangelists from among fishermen, tent-makers, and even the Roman tax-gatherers. And he, lastly, passed by the Jewish tribes, and took the Gentile converts, and made them preachers of righteousness to the inhabitants of the whole earth. The same practice he continues to the present day; yet he did not then pass by a man brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, no more than he would now a man brought up in a celebrated seminary of learning. He is ever free to use his own gifts, in his own way; and when learning is sanctified, by being devoted to the service of God, and the possessor is humble and pious, and has those natural gifts necessary for a public teacher, perhaps we might safely say, God would in many cases prefer such: but he will have others, as intimated in the prophecy, that we may see the conversion of men is not by human might,

nor power, but by the Spirit of the Lord of hosts. The learned man can do nothing without his Spirit; the unlearned must have his gifts and graces, without which both their labors would be unprofitable; and thus the excellency of the power is of God, and no flesh can glory in his presence. See my sermon on this passage.

Verse 30. *Wonders in the heavens and in the earth*— This refers to those dreadful sights, dreadful portents, and destructive commotion, by which the Jewish polity was finally overthrown, and the Christian religion established in the Roman empire. See how our Lord applies this prophecy, Matthew 24:29, and the parallel texts.

Verse 31. *The sun shall be turned into darkness*— The Jewish polity, civil and ecclesiastical, shall be entirely destroyed.

Before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come.— In the taking and sacking of Jerusalem, and burning of the temple, by the Romans, under Titus, the son of Vespasian. This was, perhaps, the greatest and most terrible day of God's vengeance ever shown to the world, or that ever will be shown, till the great day of the general judgment. For a full view of this subject, I wish to refer the reader to the notes on Matthew xxiv.

Verse 32. *Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord*— בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה כל אשר יקרא col asher yikra beshem Yehovah, “All who shall invoke in the name of Jehovah.” That CHRIST is the Jehovah here mentioned appears plain from Romans 10:15, where the reader had better consult the notes. “This refers,” says Bp. Newcome, “to the safety of the Christians during the Jewish and the Roman war.” It may: but it has a much more extensive meaning, as the use of it by St. Paul, as above, evidently shows. Every man who invokes Jehovah for mercy and salvation by or in the name, JESUS—that very name given under heaven among men for this purpose—shall be saved. Nor is there salvation in any other; and those who reject him had better lay these things to heart before it be too late.

For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem— Our blessed Lord first began to preach the Gospel in Mount Zion, in the temple, and throughout Jerusalem. There he formed his Church, and thence he sent his apostles

and evangelists to every part of the globe: “Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature.” Of the Jews there was but a remnant, a very small number, that received the doctrine of the Gospel, here termed the remnant that the Lord should call; קרא kore, whom he calleth. Many were called who would not obey: but those who obeyed the call were saved; and still he delivers those who call upon him; and he is still calling on men to come to him that they may be saved.

CHAPTER 3

The prophecy in this chapter is thought by some to relate to the latter times of the world, when God shall finally deliver his people from all their adversaries; and it must be confessed that the figures employed are so lofty as to render it impossible to restrain the whole of their import to any events prior to the commencement of the Christian era. The whole prophecy is delivered in a very beautiful strain of poetry; by what particular events are referred to is at present very uncertain, 1-21.

NOTES ON CHAP. 3

Verse 1. *For, behold, in those days*— According to the preceding prophecy, these days should refer to Gospel times, or to such as should immediately precede them. But this is a part of the prophecy which is difficult to be understood. All interpreters are at variance upon it; some applying its principal parts to Cambyses; his unfortunate expedition to Egypt; the destruction of fifty thousand of his troops (by the moving pillars of sand) whom he had sent across the desert to plunder the rich temple of Jupiter Ammon; his return to Judea, and dying of a wound which he received from his own sword, in mounting his horse, which happened at Ecbatane, at the foot of Mount Carmel. On which his army, composed of different nations, seeing themselves without a head, fell out, and fought against each other, till the whole were destroyed. And this is supposed to be what Ezekiel means by Gog and Magog, and the destruction of the former. See Ezekiel 38: and 39.

Others apply this to the victories gained by the Maccabees, and to the destruction brought upon the enemies of their country; while several consider the whole as a figurative prediction of the success of the Gospel among the nations of the earth. It may refer to those times in which the Jews shall be brought in with the fullness of the Gentiles, and be re-established in their own land. Or there may be portions in this prophecy that refer to all the events; and to others that have not fallen yet

within the range of human conjecture, and will be only known when the time of fulfillment shall take place. In this painful uncertainty, rendered still more so by the discordant opinions of many wise and learned men, it appears to be my province, as I have nothing in the form of a new conjecture to offer, to confine myself to an explanation of the phraseology of the chapter; and then leave the reader to apply it as may seem best to his own judgment.

I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem.— This may refer to the return from the Babylonish captivity; extending also to the restoration of Israel, or the ten tribes.

Verse 2. *The valley of Jehoshaphat*— There is no such valley in the land of Judea; and hence the word must be symbolical. It signifies the judgment of God, or Jehovah's judgment; and may mean some place (as Bp. Neave imagines) where Nebuchadnezzar should gain a great battle, which would utterly discomfit the ancient enemies of the Jews, and resemble the victory which Jehoshaphat gained over the Ammonites, Moabites, and Edomites, 2 Chronicles 20:22-26.

And parted my land.— The above nations had frequently entered into the territories of Israel; and divided among themselves the lands they had thus overrun.

While the Jews were in captivity, much of the land of Israel was seized on, and occupied by the Philistines, and other nations that bordered on Judea.

Verse 3. *Have given a boy for a harlot*— To such wretched circumstances were the poor Jews reduced in their captivity, that their children were sold by their oppressors; and both males and females used for the basest purposes. And they were often bartered for the necessaries or luxuries of life. Or this may refer to the issue of the Chaldean war in Judea, where the captives were divided among the victors. And being set in companies, they cast lots for them: and those to whom they fell sold them for various purposes; the boys to be slaves and catamites, the girls to be prostitutes; and in return for them they got wine and such things. I think this is the meaning of the text.

Verse 4. *What have ye to do with me*— Why have the Syrians and Sidonians joined their other enemies to oppress my people? for they who touch my people touch me.

Will ye render me a recompense?— Do you think by this to avenge yourselves upon the Almighty? to retaliate upon God! Proceed, and speedily will I return your recompense; I will retaliate.

Verse 5. *Ye have taken my silver and my gold*— The Chaldeans had spoiled the temple, and carried away the sacred vessels, and put them in the temple of their own god in Babylon.

Verse 6. *Sold unto the Grecians*— These were the descendants of Javan, Genesis 10:2-5. And with them the Tyrians trafficked, Ezekiel 27:19.

That ye might remove them far from their border.— Intending to send them as far off as possible, that it might be impossible for them to get back to reclaim the land of which you had dispossessed them.

Verse 7. *I will raise them*— I shall find means to bring them back from the place whither ye have sold them, and they shall retaliate upon you the injuries they have sustained. It is said that Alexander and his successors set at liberty many Jews that had been sold into Greece. And it is likely that many returned from different lands, on the publication of the edict of Cyrus. — Newcome.

Verse 8. *I will sell your sons*— When Alexander took Tyre, he reduced into slavery all the lower people, and the women. Arrian, lib. ii., says that thirty thousand of them were sold. Artaxerxes Ochus destroyed Sidon, and subdued the other cities of Phoenicia. In all these wars, says Calmet, the Jews, who obeyed the Persians, did not neglect to purchase Phoenician slaves, whom they sold again to the Sabeans, or Arabs.

Verse 9. *Prepare war*— Let all the enemies of God and of his people join together; let them even call all the tillers of the ground to their assistance, instead of laboring in the field; let every peasant become a soldier. Let

them turn their agricultural implements into offensive weapons, so that the weak, being well armed, may confidently say, I am strong: yet, when thus collected and armed, Jehovah will bring down thy mighty ones; for so the clause in ver. 11 should be rendered.

Verse 12. *Let the heathen be wakened*— The heathen shall be wakened.

The valley of Jehoshaphat— Any place where God may choose to display his judgments against his enemies.

Verse 13. *Put ye in the sickle*— The destruction of his enemies is represented here under the metaphor of reaping down the harvest; and of gathering the grapes, and treading them in the wine-presses.

Verse 14. *Multitudes, multitudes*— **הַמְּנוֹיִם הַמְּנוֹיִם** hamonim, hamonim, crowds upon crowds, in the valley of decision, or excision: the same as the valley of Jehoshaphat, the place where God is to execute judgment on his enemies.

Verse 15. *The sun and the moon shall be darkened*— High and mighty states shall be eclipsed, and brought to ruin, and the stars-petty states, princes, and governors—shall withdraw their shining; withhold their influence and tribute from the kingdoms to which they have belonged, and set up themselves as independent governors.

Verse 16. *The Lord also shall roar out of Zion*— His temple and worship shall be reestablished there, and he will thence denounce his judgments against the nations. “The heavens and the earth shall shake.” There shall be great commotions in powerful empires and their dependencies; but in all these things his own people shall be unmoved, for God shall be their hope and strength.

Verse 17. *So shall ye know* — By the judgments I execute on your enemies, and the support I give to yourselves, that I am the all-conquering Jehovah; and that I have again taken up my residence in Jerusalem. All this may refer, ultimately, to the restoration of the Jews to their own land; when holiness to the Lord shall be their motto; and no strange god, or

impure people, shall be permitted to enter the city, or even pass through it; they shall have neither civil nor religious connections with any who do not worship the true God in spirit and in truth. This, I think, must refer to Gospel times. It is a promise not yet fulfilled.

Verse 18. *In that day*— After their return from their captivities.

The mountains shall drop down new wine— A poetic expression for great fertility. Happy times: peace and plenty. The vines shall grow luxuriantly on the sides of the mountains; and the hills shall produce such rich pastures that the flocks shall yield abundance of milk.

And all the rivers of Judah— Far from being generally dry in the summer, shall have their channels always full of water.

And a fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord— See the account of the typical waters in Ezekiel 47., to which this seems to have a reference; at least the subject is the same, and seems to point out the grace of the Gospel, the waters of salvation, that shall flow from Jerusalem, and water the valley of Shittim. Shittim was in the plains of Moab beyond Jordan; Numbers 33:49; Joshua 3:1; but as no stream of water could flow from the temple, pass across Jordan, or reach this plain, the valley of Shittim must be considered symbolical, as the valley of Jehoshaphat. But as Shittim may signify thorns, it may figuratively represent the most uncultivated and ferocious inhabitants of the earth receiving the Gospel of Christ, and being civilized and saved by it. We know that briars and thorns are emblems of bad men; see Ezekiel 2:6. Thus all the figures in this verse will point out the happy times of the Gospel: the mountains shall drop down new wine; the hills flow with milk; the thorny valleys become fertile, etc. Similar to those almost parallel words of the prince of poets:—

*Mistaque ridenti colocasia fundet acantho.
 Ipsae lacte domum referent destenta capellae
 Ubera: nec magnos metuent armenta leones.
 Molli paullatim flavescet campus arista,
 Incultisque rubens pendebit sentibus uva:
 Et durae quercus sudabunt roscida mella.*

VIRG. ED. 4:20.

*Unbidden earth shall wreathing ivy bring, And fragrant
 herbs the promises of spring. The goats with streaming
 dugs shall homeward speed; And lowing herds, secure from
 lions, feed. Unlabour'd harvests shall the fields adorn, And
 cluster'd grapes shall grow on every thorn: The knotted
 oaks shall showers of honey weep.*

DRYDEN.

Verse 19. *Egypt shall be a desolation*— While peace, plenty, and prosperity of every kind, shall crown my people, all their enemies shall be as a wilderness; and those who have used violence against the saints of God, and shed the blood of innocents (of the holy MARTYRS) in their land, when they had political power; these and all such shall fall under the just judgments of God.

Verse 20. *But Judah shall dwell for ever*— The true Church of Christ shall be supported, while all false and persecuting Churches shall be annihilated. The promise may also belong to the full and final restoration of the Jews, when they shall dwell at Jerusalem as a distinct people professing the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Verse 21. *For I will cleanse their blood*— נִקֵּיתִי nikkeythi, I will avenge the slaughter and martyrdom of my people, which I have not yet avenged. Persecuting nations and persecuting Churches shall all come, sooner or later, under the stroke of vindictive justice.

For the Lord dwelleth in Zion.— He shall be the life, soul, spirit, and defense of his Church for ever. THIS prophet, who has many things similar to Ezekiel, ends his prophecy nearly in the same way:

Ezekiel says of the glory of the Church, **יהוה שמה** Yehovah shammah,
THE LORD IS THERE.

Joel says, **יהוה שכ בציו** Yehovah shochan betsiyon, THE LORD
DWELLETH IN ZION.

Both point out the continued indwelling of Christ among his people.

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK

OF THE

PROPHET AMOS

AMOS, the third of the minor prophets, was, it is said, of the little town of Tekoa, in the tribe of Judah, about four leagues southward of Jerusalem. There is no good proof, however, that he was a native of this place; but only that he retired thither when he was driven from Beth-el, which was in the kingdom of the ten tribes. It is very probable that he was born within the territories of Israel, and that his mission was directed principally to this kingdom.

As he was prophesying in Beth-el, where the golden calves were, in the reign of Jeroboam the second, about the year of the world 3217; before the birth of Jesus Christ, 783; before the vulgar era, 787; Amaziah, the high priest of Beth-el, accused him before King Jeroboam, saying, "Amos hath conspired against thee in the midst of the house of Israel: the land is not able to bear all his words. For thus Amos saith, Jeroboam shall die by the sword, and Israel shall surely be led away captive out of their own land." Amaziah said therefore unto Amos, "O thou seer, go, flee thee away into the land of Judah, and there eat bread, and prophesy there: but prophesy not again any more at Beth-el; for it is the king's chapel, and it is the king's court."

Amos answered Amaziah, "I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son; but I was a herdman, and a gatherer of sycamore fruit. And the Lord took me as I followed the flock; and the Lord said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel. Now, therefore, hear thou the word of the Lord; Thou sayest, Prophesy not against Israel, and drop not thy word against the house of Isaac. Therefore thus saith the Lord, Thy wife shall be a

harlot in the city, and thy sons and thy daughters shall fall by the sword, and thy land shall be divided by line; and thou shalt die in a polluted land, and Israel shall surely go into captivity forth of his land.”

After this the prophet retired into the kingdom of Judah, and dwelt in the town of Tekoa, where he continued to prophesy. He complains in many places of the violence offered him by endeavoring to oblige him to silence, and bitterly exclaims against the disorders of Israel.

He began to prophesy the second year before the earthquake, which happened in the reign of King Uzziah; and which Josephus, with most of the ancient and modern commentators, refers to this prince's usurpation of the priest's office, when he attempted to offer incense to the Lord.

The first of his prophecies, in order of time, are those of the seventh chapter. The others he pronounced in the town of Tekoa, whither he retired. His two first chapters are against Damascus, the Philistines, Tyrians, Edomites, Ammonites, Moabites, the kingdom of Judah, and that of the ten tribes. The evils with which he threatens them refer to the times of Shalmaneser, Tiglath-pileser, Sennacherib, and Nebuchadnezzar, who did so much mischief to these provinces, and at last led the Israelites into captivity.

He foretold the misfortunes into which the kingdom of Israel should fall after the death of Jeroboam the Second, who was then living. He foretold the death of King Zechariah; the invasion of the lands belonging to Israel by Pul and Tiglath-pileser, kings of Assyria; and speaks of the captivity of the ten tribes, and of their return into their own country. He makes sharp invectives against the sins of Israel; against their effeminacy and avarice, their harshness to the poor, the splendor of their buildings, and the delicacy of their tables. He reproves the people of Israel for going to Beth-el, Dan, Gilgal, and Beer-sheba, which were the most famous pilgrimages of the country; and for swearing by the gods of these places.

The time and manner of his death are not known. Some old authors relate that Amaziah, priest of Beth-el, whom we have spoken of, provoked by the discourses of the prophet, had his teeth broken in order to silence him.

Others say that Hosea, or Uzziah, the son of Amaziah, struck him with a stake upon the temples, and knocked him down, and almost killed him; that in this condition he was carried to Tekoa, where he died, and was buried with his fathers. This is the account these authors give us. On the

many images from the scenes in which he was engaged; but he introduces them with skill, and gives them tone and dignity by the eloquence and grandeur of his manner. We shall find in him many affecting and pathetic, many elegant and sublime, passages. No prophet has more magnificently described the Deity; or more gravely rebuked the luxurious: or reproved injustice and oppression with greater warmth, and a more generous indignation. He is a prophet on whose model a preacher may safely form his style and manner in luxurious and profligate times.”

THE BOOK

OF THE

PROPHET AMOS

Chronological Notes relative to this Book

- Year from the Creation, according to Archbishop Usher, 3217.
- Year of the Julian Period, 3927.
- Year since the Flood, 1561.
- Year from the foundation of Solomon's temple, 225.
- Year since the division of Solomon's monarchy into the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, 188.
- Year since the first Olympic games were celebrated in Elis by the Idaei Dactyli, 667.
- Year since the restoration of the Olympic games at Elis by Lyourgus, Iphitus, and Cleosthenes, 97.
- Year before the conquest of Corcebus at Olympia, vulgarly called the first Olympiad, 11.
- Year before the building of Rome, according to the Varronian computation, 34.
- Year before the birth of Christ, 783.
- Year before the vulgar era of Christ's nativity, 787.
- Cycle of the Sun, 7.
- Cycle of the Moon, 13.
- Twenty-eighth and last year of Caranus, the founder of the kingdom of Macedon.
- Twenty-third year of Nicander, king of Lacedaemon, of the family of the Proclidae.
- Twenty-seventh year of Alcamenes, king of Lacedaemon, of the family of the Eurysthenidae.

- Eleventh year of Ardysus, king of Lydia.
- Eleventh year of Agamestor, perpetual archon of the Athenians.
- Tenth year of Amulius Sylvius, king of the Albans.
- Fifth year of Telestus, monarch of Corinth.
- Sixth year of Sosarmus, king of the Medes, according to some chronologers.
- Thirty-ninth year of Jeroboam II., king of Israel.
- Twenty-fourth year of Uzziah, king of Judah.

CHAPTER 1

This chapter denounces judgments against the nations bordering on Palestine, enemies to the Jews, viz., the Syrians, 1-5; Philistines, 6-8; Tyrians, 9, 10; Edomites, 11, 12; and Ammonites, 13-15. The same judgments were predicted by other prophets, and fulfilled, partly by the kings of Assyria, and partly by those of Babylon; though, like many other prophecies, they had their accomplishment by degrees, and at different periods. The prophecy against the Syrians, whose capital was Damascus, was fulfilled by Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria; see 2 Kings 16:9. The prophecy against Gaza of the Philistines was accomplished by Hezekiah, 2 Kings 18:8; by Pharaoh, Jeremiah 47:1; and by Alexander the Great; see Quintius Curtius, lib. 4:c. 6. The prophecy against Ashdod was fulfilled by Uzziah, 2 Chronicles 26:6; and that against Ashkelon by Pharaoh, Jeremiah 47:5. All Syria was also subdued by Pharaoh-necho; and again by Nebuchadnezzar, who also took Tyre, as did afterwards Alexander. Nebuchadnezzar also subdued the Edomites, Jeremiah 25:9, 21; 27:3, 6. Judas Maccabeus routed the remains of them, 1 Macc. 5:3; and Hyrcanus brought them under entire subjection. The Ammonites were likewise conquered by Nebuchadnezzar. The earthquake, which the prophet takes for his era, is perhaps referred to in Zechariah 14:5, and also in Isaiah 5:25. Josephus ascribes it to Uzziah's invasion of the priestly office; see 2 Chronicles 26:16.

NOTES ON CHAP. 1

Verse 1. *The words of Amos*— This person and the father of Isaiah, though named alike in our translation, were as different in their names as in their persons. The father of Isaiah, אִמּוֹץ Amots; the prophet before us, עֲמוֹס Amos. The first, aleph, mem, vau, tsaddi; the second, ain, mem, vau, samech. For some account of this prophet see the introduction.

Among the herdmen— He seems to have been among the very lowest

orders of life, a herdsman, one who tended the flocks of others in the open fields, and a gatherer of sycamore fruit. Of whatever species this was, whether a kind of fig, it is evident that it was wild fruit; and he probably collected it for his own subsistence, or to dispose of either for the service of his employer, or to increase his scanty wages.

Before the earthquake.— Probably the same as that referred to Zechariah 14:5, if **הרעש** *haraash* do not mean some popular tumult.

Verse 2. *The Lord will roar from Zion*— It is a pity that our translators had not followed the hemistich form of the Hebrew:—

Jehovah from Zion shall roar, And from Jerusalem shall give forth his voice; And the pleasant dwellings of the shepherds shall mourn, And the top of mount Carmel shall wither.

Carmel was a very fruitful mountain in the tribe of Judah, Joshua 15:56; Isaiah 35:2.

This introduction was natural in the mouth of a herdsman who was familiar with the roaring of lions, the bellowing of bulls, and the lowing of kine. The roaring of the lion in the forest is one of the most terrific sounds in nature; when near, it strikes terror into the heart of both man and beast.

Verse 3. *For three transgressions of Damascus, and for four*— These expressions of three and four, so often repeated in this chapter, mean repetition, abundance, and any thing that goes towards excess. Very, very exceedingly; and so it was used among the ancient Greek and Latin poets. See the passionate exclamation of Ulysses, in the storm, *Odyss.*, lib. v., ver. 306:—

**τρις μακαρες δαζαοι και τετρακις, οι τοτ' ολοντο
τροιη εν ευρειη, χαριν ατρειδησι φεροντες.**

“Thrice happy Greeks! and four times who were slain
In Atreus’ cause,
upon the Trojan plain.”

Which words Virgil translates, and puts in the mouth of his hero in similar circumstances, AEn. 1:93.

Extemplo AEneae solvuntur frigore membra: Ingemit; et, duplicis tendens ad sidera palmas, Talia voce refert: O terque quaterque beati! Queis ante ora patrum Trojae sub moenibus altis Contigit oppetere.

“Struck with unusual fright, the Trojan chief With lifted hands and eyes invokes relief. And thrice, and four times happy those, he cried, That under Ilion’s walls before their parents died.” DRYDEN.

On the words, O terque quaterque, SERVIUS makes this remark, “Hoc est saepias; finitus numerus pro infinito.” “O thrice and four times, that is, very often, a finite number for an infinite.” Other poets use the same form of expression. So SENECA in Hippolyt., Act. 2:694.

*O ter quaterque prospero fato dati,
Quos hausit, et peremit, et leto dedit
Odium dolusque!*

*“O thrice and four times happy were the men
Whom hate devoured, and fraud, hard pressing on,
Gave as a prey to death.”*

And so the ancient oracle quoted by Pausanias Achaic., lib. vii., c. 6: **τρις μακαρες κεινοι και τετρακις ανδρες εσνται**; “Those men shall be thrice and four times happy.”

These quotations are sufficient to show that this form of speech is neither unfrequent nor inelegant, being employed by the most correct writers of antiquity.

Damascus was the capital of Syria.

Verse 4. Ben-hadad.— He was son and successor of Hazael. See the cruelties which they exercised upon the Israelites, 2 Kings 10:32; 13:7, etc., and see especially 2 Kings 8:12, where these cruelties are predicted.

The fire threatened here is the war so successfully carried on against the Syrians by Jeroboam II., in which he took Damascus and Hamath, and reconquered all the ancient possessions of Israel. See 2 Kings 14:25, 26, 28.

Verse 5. *The bar of Damascus*— The gates, whose long traverse bars, running from wall to wall, were their strength. I will throw it open; and the gates were forced, and the city taken, as above.

The plain of Aven—the house of Eden— These are names, says Bochart, of the valley of Damascus. The plain of Aven, or Birkath-Aven, Calmet says, is a city of Syria, at present called Baal-Bek, and by the Greeks Heliopolis; and is situated at the end of that long valley which extends from south to north, between Libanus and Anti-Libanus.

The people of Syria shall go into captivity unto Air— KIR is supposed to be the country of Cyrene in Albania, on the river Cyrus, which empties itself into the Caspian Sea. The fulfilment of this prophecy may be seen in 2 Kings 16:1-9.

Verse 6. *They carried away captive*— Gaza is well known to have been one of the five lordships of the Philistines; it lay on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, near to Egypt. Erkon, Ashdod, and Askelon, were other signories of the same people, which are here equally threatened with Gaza. The captivity mentioned here may refer to inroads and incursions made by the Philistines in times of peace. See 2 Chronicles 21:16. The margin reads, an entire captivity. They took all away; none of them afterwards returned.

Verse 9. *Tyrus*— See an ample description of this place, and of its desolation and final ruin, in the notes on Ezekiel 26., 27., and 28.

The brotherly covenant— This possibly refers to the very friendly league made between Solomon and Hiram, king of Tyre, 1 Kings 5:12; but some contend that the brotherly covenant refers to the consanguinity between the Jews and Edomites. The Tyrians, in exercising cruelties upon these,

did it, in effect, on the Jews, with whom they were connected by the most intimate ties of kindred; the two people having descended from the two brothers, Jacob and Esau. See Calmet.

Verse 10. *I will send a fire on the wall of Tyrus*— The destructive fire or siege by Nebuchadnezzar, which lasted thirteen years, and ended in the destruction of this ancient city; see on Ezekiel, 26:7-14, as above. It was finally ruined by Alexander, and is now only a place for a few poor fishermen to spread their nets upon.

Verse 11. *For three transgressions of Edom*— That the Edomites (notwithstanding what Calmet observes above of the brotherly covenant) were always implacable enemies of the Jews, is well known; but most probably that which the prophet has in view was the part they took in distressing the Jews when Jerusalem was besieged, and finally taken, by the Chaldeans. See Obadiah 11-14; Ezekiel 25:12; 35:5; Psalm 137:7.

Verse 12. *Teman-Bozrah*.— Principal cities of Idumea.

Verse 13. *The children of Ammon*— The country of the Ammonites lay to the east of Jordan, in the neighborhood of Gilead. Rabbah was its capital.

Because they have ripped up— This refers to some barbarous transaction well known in the time of this prophet, but of which we have no distinct mention in the sacred historians.

Verse 14. *With shouting in the day of battle*— They shall be totally subdued. This was done by Nebuchadnezzar. See Jeremiah 27:3, 6.

Verse 15. *Their king shall go into captivity*— Probably מלכּם malcham should be Milcom, who was a chief god of the Ammonites; and the following words, he and his princes, may refer to the body of his priesthood. See 1 Kings 11:33, and the notes there. All these countries were subdued by Nebuchadnezzar.

CHAPTER 2

The prophet goes on to declare the judgments of God against Moab, 1-3; against Judah, 4, 5; and then against Israel, the particular object of his mission. He enumerates some of their sins, 6-8, aggravated by God's distinguishing regard to Israel, 9-12; and they are in consequence threatened with dreadful punishments, 13-16. See 2 Kings 15:19; 17:6.

NOTES ON CHAP. 2

Verse 1. *For three transgressions of Moab and for four*— See an explanation of this form chap. 1:2. The land of the Moabites lay to the east of the Dead Sea. For the origin of this people, see Genesis 19:37.

He burned the bones on the king of Edom into lime— Possibly referring to some brutality; such as opening the grave of one of the Idumean kings, and calcining his bones. It is supposed by some to refer to the fact mentioned 2 Kings 3:26, when the kings of Judah, Israel, and Idumea, joined together to destroy Moab. The king of it, despairing to save his city, took seven hundred men, and made a desperate sortie on the quarter where the king of Edom was; and, though not successful, took prisoner the son of the king of Edom; and, on their return into the city, offered him as a burnt-offering upon the wall, so as to terrify the besieging armies, and cause them to raise the siege. Others understand the son that was sacrificed to be the king of Moab's own son.

Verse 2. *The palaces of Kirioth*— This was one of the principal cities of the Moabites.

Moab shall die with tumult— All these expressions seem to refer to this city's being taken by storm, which was followed by a total slaughter of its inhabitants.

Verse 3. *I will cut off the judge*— It shall be so destroyed, that it shall

never more have any form of government. The judge here, שופט shophet, may signify the chief magistrate. The chief magistrates of the Carthaginians were called suffetes; probably taken from the Hebrew JUDGES, שופטים shophetim.

Verse 4. *For three transgressions of Judah*— We may take the three and four here to any latitude; for this people lived in continual hostility to their God, from the days of David to the time of Uzziah, under whom Amos prophesied. Their iniquities are summed up under three general heads: 1. They despised, or rejected the law of the Lord. 2. They kept not his statutes. 3. They followed lies, were idolaters, and followed false prophets rather than those sent by Jehovah.

Verse 5. *I will send a fire upon Judah*— This fire was the war made upon the Jews by Nebuchadnezzar, which terminated with the sackage and burning of Jerusalem and its palace the temple.

Verse 6. 8. *For three transgressions of Israel, etc.*— To be satisfied of the exceeding delinquency of this people, we have only to open the historical and prophetic books in any part; for the whole history of the Israelites is one tissue of transgression against God. Their crimes are enumerated under the following heads:—

1. Their judges were mercenary and corrupt. They took bribes to condemn the righteous; and even for articles of clothing, such as a pair of shoes, they condemned the poor man, and delivered him into the hands of his adversary.

2. They were unmerciful to the poor generally. They pant after the dust of the earth on the head of the poor; or, to put it on the head of the poor; or, they bruise the head of the poor against the dust of the earth. Howsoever the clause is understood, it shows them to have been general oppressors of the poor, showing them neither justice nor mercy.

3. They turn aside the way of the meek. They are peculiarly oppressive to the weak and afflicted.

4. They were licentious to the uttermost abomination; for in their idol feasts, where young women prostituted themselves publicly in honor of Astarte, the father and son entered into impure connections with the same female.

5. They were cruel in their oppressions of the poor; for the garments or beds which the poor had pledged they retained contrary to the law, Exodus 22:7-26, which required that such things should be restored before the setting of the sun.

6. They punished the people by unjust and oppressive fines, and served their tables with wine bought by such fines. Or it may be understood of their appropriating to themselves that wine which was allowed to criminals to mitigate their sufferings in the article of death; which was the excess of inhumanity and cruelty.

Verse 7. See Clarke on “Amos 2:6”.

Verse 8. See Clarke on “Amos 2:6”.

Verse 9. *Yet destroyed I the Amorite*— Here follow general heads of God’s mercies to them, and the great things he had done for them. 1. Bringing them out of Egypt. 2. Miraculously sustaining them in the wilderness forty years. 3. Driving out the Canaanites before them, and giving them possession of the promised land. 4. Raising up prophets among them to declare the Divine will. 5. And forming the holy institution of the Nazarites among them, to show the spiritual nature of his holy religion, ver. 9-11.

Verse 12. *But ye gave the Nazarites wine*— This was expressly forbidden in the laws of their institution. See Numbers 6:1-3.

Prophecy not.— They would not worship God, and they would not hear the voice of his prophets.

Verse 13. *Behold, I am pressed under you*— The marginal reading is better: “Behold, I will press your place, as a cart full of sheaves presseth.”

I will bring over you the wheel of destruction; and it shall grind your place-your city and temple, as the wheel of a cart laden with sheaves presses down the ground, gravel, and stones over which it rolls.

Verse 14. *The flight shall perish from the swift*— The swiftest shall not be able to save himself from a swifter destruction. None, by might, by counsel, or by fleetness, shall be able to escape from the impending ruin. In a word, God has so fully determined to avenge the quarrel of his broken covenant, that all attempts to escape from his judgments shall be useless.

Verse 15. *Neither shall he that rideth the horse deliver himself*.— I believe all these sayings, ver. 13-16, are proverbs, to show the inutility of all attempts, even in the best circumstances, to escape the doom now decreed, because the cup of their iniquity was full.

Verse 16. *Shall flee away naked*— In some cases the alarm shall be in the night; and even the most heroic shall start from his bed, and through terror not wait to put on his clothes.

CHAPTER 3

This chapter begins with reproving the twelve tribes in general, 1, 2; and then particularly the kingdom of Israel, whose capital was Samuria. The prophet assures them that, while they were at variance with God, it would be unreasonable in them to expect his presence or favor, 3-8. Other neighboring nations are then called upon to take warning from the judgments about to be inflicted upon the house of Israel, which would be so general that only a small remnant should escape them, 9-15. The image used by the prophet on this occasion, (see ver. 12,) and borrowed from his former calling, is very natural and significant, and not a little dignified by the inspired writer's lofty air and manner.

NOTES ON CHAP. 3

Verse 1. *Against the whole family*— That is, all, both the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. In this all the twelve tribes are included.

Verse 2. *You only have I known*— I have taken no other people to be my own people. I have approved of you, loved you, fed, sustained, and defended you; but because you have forsaken me, have become idolatrous and polluted, therefore will I punish you. And the punishment shall be in proportion to the privileges you have enjoyed, and the grace you have abused.

Verse 3. *Can two walk together*— While ye loved and served me, I dwelt in you and walked among you. Now ye are become alienated from me, your nature and mine are totally opposite. I am holy, ye are unholy. We are no longer agreed, and can no longer walk together. I can no longer hold communion with you. I must cast you out. The similes in this and the three following verses are all chosen to express the same thing, viz., that no calamities or judgments can fall upon any people but by the express will of God, on account of their iniquities; and that whatever his prophets have foretold, they have done it by direct revelation from their Maker; and

that God has the highest and most cogent reason for inflicting the threatened calamities. This correctness of the prophets' predictions shows that they and I are in communion.

Verse 4. *Will a lion roar*— Should I threaten such a judgment without cause?

Verse 5. *Can a bird fall in a snare*— Can ye, as a sinful people, fall into calamities which I have not appointed?

Shall one take up a snare-and have taken nothing— Will the snare be removed before it has caught the expected prey?-shall I remove my judgments till they are fully accomplished? This is a curious passage, and deserves farther consideration. The original, literally translated, is nearly as follows: "Shall the trap arise from the ground; and catching, shall it not catch?" Here is a plain allusion to such traps as we employ to catch rats, foxes, etc. The jaws of the trap opening backward, press strongly upon a spring so as to keep it down; and a key passing over one jaw, and hooking on a table in the center, the trap continues with expanded jaws, till any thing touch the table, when the key, by the motion of the table, being loosened, the spring recovers all its elastic power, and throws up the jaws of the trap, and their serrated edges either close in each other, or on the prey that has moved the table of the trap. Will then the jaws of such a trap suddenly spring up from the ground, on which before they were lying flat, and catch nothing? Shall they let the prey that was within them escape? Certainly not. So my trap is laid for these offenders; and when it springs up, (and they themselves will soon by their transgressions free the key,) shall not the whole family of Israel be inclosed in it? Most certainly they shall. This is a singular and very remarkable passage, and, when properly understood, is beautifully expressive.

Verse 6. *Shall a trumpet be blown*— The sign of alarm and invasion.

And the people not be afraid?— Not take the alarm, and provide for their defense and safety?

Shall there be evil in a city— Shall there be any public calamity on the

wicked, that is not an effect of my displeasure? The word does not mean moral evil, but punishment for sin; calamities falling on the workers of iniquity. Natural evil is the punishment of moral evil: God sends the former when the latter is persisted in.

Verse 7. *Surely the Lord God will do nothing*— In reference to the punishment, correction, or blessing of his people:—

But he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.— They are in strict correspondence with him, and he shows them things to come. Such secrets of God are revealed to them, that they may inform the people; that, by repentance and conversion, they may avoid the evil, and, by walking closely with God, secure the continuance of his favor.

Verse 8. *The lion hath roared,*— God hath sent forth a terrible alarm, Who will not fear? Can any hear such denunciations of Divine wrath and not tremble?

The Lord God hath spoken— And those only who are in communion with him have heard the speech. Who can but prophesy? Who can help proclaiming at large the judgment threatened against the nation?

But I think נָבִיא naba, here, is to be taken in its natural and ideal signification, to pray, supplicate, or deprecate vengeance. The Lord hath spoken of punishment—who can help supplicating his mercy, that his judgments may be averted?

Verse 9. *Publish in the palaces*— The housetops or flat roofs were the places from which public declarations were made. See on Isaiah 21:1, and on Matthew 10:27. See whether in those places there be not tumults, oppressions, and rapine sufficient to excite my wrath against them.

Verse 10. *For they know not to do right*— So we may naturally say that they who are doing wrong, and to their own prejudice and ruin, must certainly be ignorant of what is right, and what is their own interest. But we say again “There are none so blind as those who will not see.” Their eyes, saith the Lord, they have closed.

Verse 11. *An adversary, round about the land*— Ye shall not be able to escape, wherever ye turn, ye shall meet a foe.

Verse 12. *As the shepherd taketh out of the mouth of the lion*— Scarcely any of you shall escape; and those that do shall do so with extreme difficulty, just as a shepherd, of a whole sheep carried away by a lion, can recover no more than two of its legs, or a piece of its ear, just enough to prove by the marks on those parts, that they belonged to a sheep which was his own.

So shall the children of Israel be taken out— Those of them that escape these judgments shall escape with as great difficulty, and be of as little worth, as the two legs and piece of an ear that shall be snatched out of the lion's mouth. We know that when the Babylonians carried away the people into Chaldea they left behind only a few, and those the refuse of the land.

In the corner of a bed— As the corner is the most honorable place in the East, and a couch in the corner of a room is the place of the greatest distinction; so the words in the text may mean, that even the metropolitan cities, which are in the corner-in the most honorable place-of the land, whether Samaria in Israel, or Damascus in Syria, shall not escape these judgments; and if any of the distinguished persons who dwell in them escape, it must be with as great difficulty as the fragments above-mentioned have been recovered from a lion. The passage is obscure. Mr. Harmer has taken great pains to illustrate it; but I fear with but little success. A general sense is all we can arrive at.

Verse 13. *Hear ye*— This is an address to the prophet.

Verse 14. *In the day that I shall visit*— When Josiah made a reformation in the land he destroyed idolatry, pulled down the temples and altars that had been consecrated to idol worship, and even burnt the bones of the priests of Baal and the golden calves upon their own altars. See 2 Kings 23:15, 16, etc.

Verse 15. *I will smite the winter house with the summer house*— I will not only destroy the poor habitations and villages in the country, but I will destroy those of the nobility and gentry as well as the lofty palaces in the fortified cities in which they dwell in the winter season, as those light and elegant seats in which they spend the summer season. Dr. Shaw observes that “the hills and valleys round about Algiers are all over beautified with gardens and country seats, whither the inhabitants of better fashion retire during the heats of the summer season. They are little white houses, shaded with a variety of fruit trees and evergreens, which beside shade and retirement, afford a gay and delightful prospect toward the sea. The gardens are all well stocked with melons, fruits, and pot herbs of all kinds; and (which is chiefly regarded in these hot countries) each of them enjoys a great command of water.”

And the houses of ivory— Those remarkable for their magnificence and their ornaments, not built of ivory, but in which ivory vessels, ornaments, and inlaying abounded. Thus, then, the winter houses and the summer houses, the great houses and the houses of uncommon splendor, shall all perish. There should be a total desolation in the land. No kind of house should be a refuge, and no kind of habitation should be spared. Ahab had at Samaria a house that was called the ivory house, 1 Kings 22:39. This may be particularly referred to in this place. We cannot suppose that a house constructed entirely of ivory can be intended.

CHAPTER 4

Israel reprov'd for their oppression, 1-3; idolatry, 4, 5; and for their impenitence under the chastising hand of God, 6-11. The omniscience and uncontrollable power of God, 12, 13.

NOTES ON CHAP. 4

Verse 1. *Hear this word, ye kine of Bashan*— Such an address was quite natural from the herdsman of Tekoa. Bashan was famous for the fertility of its soil, and its flocks and herds; and the prophet here represents the iniquitous, opulent, idle, lazy drones, whether men or women, under the idea of fatted bullocks, which were shortly to be led out to the slaughter.

Verse 2. *He will take you away with hooks*— Two modes of fishing are here alluded to: 1. Angling with rod, line, and baited hook. 2. That with the gaff, eel-spear, harpoon, or such like; the first used in catching small fish, by which the common people may be here represented; the second, for catching large fish, such as leave the sea, and come up the rivers to deposit their spawn; or such as are caught in the sea, as sharks, whales, dolphins, and even the hippopotamus, to which the more powerful and opulent inhabitants may be likened. But as the words in the text are generally feminine, it has been supposed that the prophecy is against the proud, powerful, voluptuous women. I rather think that the prophet speaks catachrestically; and means men of effeminate manners and idle lives. They are not the bulls of Bashan, but the cows; having little of the manly character remaining. Some understand the latter word as meaning a sort of basket or wicker fish-nets.

Verse 3. *And ye shall go out at the breaches*— Probably the metaphor is here kept up. They shall be caught by the hooks, or by the nets; and though they may make breaches in the latter by their flouncing when caught, they shall be taken out at these very breaches; and cast, not in the palace, but into a reservoir, to be kept awhile, and afterwards be taken out

to be destroyed. Samaria itself is the net; your adversaries shall besiege it, and make breaches in its walls. At those breaches ye shall endeavor to make your escape, but ye shall be caught and led into captivity, where most of you shall be destroyed. See Houbigant on this passage.

Verse 4. *Come to Beth-el and transgress*— Spoken ironically. Go on to worship your calves at Beth-el; and multiply your transgressions at Gilgal; the very place where I rolled away the reproach of your fathers, by admitting them there into my covenant by circumcision. A place that should have ever been sacred to me; but you have now desecrated it by enormous idolatries. Let your morning and evening sacrifices be offered still to your senseless gods; and continue to support your present vicious priesthood by the regular triennial tithes which should have been employed in my service; and:—

Verse 5. *Over a sacrifice of thanksgiving*— To the senseless metal, and the unfeeling stock and stone images, from which ye never did, and never could receive any help. Proceed yet farther, and bring free-will offerings; testify superabundant gratitude to your wooden and metallic gods, to whom ye are under such immense imaginary obligations! Proclaim and publish these offerings, and set forth the perfections of the objects of your worship; and see what they can do for you, when I, Jehovah, shall send drought, and blasting, and famine, and pestilence, and the sword among you.

Verse 6. *Cleanness of teeth*— Scarcity of bread, as immediately explained. Ye shall have no trouble in cleaning your teeth, for ye shall have nothing to eat.

Yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord.— This reprehension is repeated live times in this chapter; and in it are strongly implied God's longsuffering, his various modes of fatherly chastisement, the ingratitude of the people, and their obstinate wickedness. The famine mentioned here is supposed to be that which is spoken of 2 Kings 8:1; but it is most likely to have been that mentioned by Joel, chaps. 1:and 2.

Verse 7. *When there were yet three months to the harvest*— St. Jerome

says, from the end of April, when the latter rain falls, until harvest, there are three months, May, June, and July, in which no rain falls in Judea. The rain, therefore, that God had withheld from them, was that which was usual in the spring months, particularly in April.

I caused it to rain upon one city— To prove to them that this rain did not come fortuitously or of necessity, God was pleased to make these most evident distinctions. One city had rain and could fill all its tanks or cisterns, while a neighboring city had none. One farm or field was well watered, and abundant in its crops, while one contiguous to it had not a shower. In these instances a particular providence was most evident. “And yet, they did not return to the Lord.”

Verse 9. *I have smitten you with blasting and mildew*— He sent blasting and mildew on the crops, and the locust on the gardens, vineyards, and fields; and this in such a way as to show it was a Divine judgment. They saw this; “yet they did not return to the Lord!”

Verse 10. *I have sent-the pestilence*— After the blasting and the mildew, the pestilence came; and it acted among them as one of the plagues of Egypt. Besides this, he had suffered their enemies to attack and prevail against them; alluding to the time in which the Syrians besieged Samaria, and reduced it to the most extreme necessity, when the head of an ass was sold for eighty pieces of silver, and the fourth part of a cab of dove’s dung for five; and mothers ate the flesh of their children that had died through hunger, 2 Kings 6:25. And the people were miraculously relieved by the total slaughter of the Syrians by the unseen hand of God, 2 Kings 7:1, etc. And yet, after all those signal judgments, and singular mercies, “they did not return unto the Lord!”

Verse 11. *I have overthrown some of you*— In the destruction of your cities I have shown my judgments as signally as I did in the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah; and those of you that did escape were as “brands plucked out of the fire;” if not consumed, yet much scorched. And as the judgment was evidently from my hand, so was the deliverance; “and yet ye have not returned unto me, saith the Lord.”

Verse 12. *Therefore thus will I do unto thee*— I will continue my judgments, I will fight against you; and, because I am thus determined:—

Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel.— This is a military phrase, and is to be understood as a challenge to come out to battle. As if the Lord had said, I will attack you immediately. Throw yourselves into a posture of defense, summon your idols to your help: and try how far your strength, and that of your gods, will avail you against the unconquerable arm of the Lord of hosts! This verse has been often painfully misapplied by public teachers; it has no particular relation to the day of judgment, nor to the hour of death. These constructions are impositions on the text.

Verse 13. *He that formeth the mountains*— Here is a powerful description of the majesty of God. He formed the earth; he created the wind; he knows the inmost thoughts of the heart; he is the Creator of darkness and light; he steps from mountain to mountain, and has all things under his feet! Who is he who hath done and can do all these things? JEHOVAH ELOHIM TSEBAOTH, that is his name. 1. The self-existing, eternal, and independent Being. 2. The God who is in covenant with mankind. 3. The universal Commander of all the hosts of earth and heaven. This name is farther illustrated in the following chapter. These words are full of instruction, and may be a subject of profitable meditation to every serious mind.

CHAPTER 5

This chapter opens with a tender and pathetic lamentation, in the style of a funeral song, over the house of Israel, 1, 2. The prophet then glances at the awful threatening denounced against them, 3; earnestly exhorting them to renounce their idols, and seek Jehovah, of whom he gives a very magnificent description, 4-9. He then reproves their injustice and oppression with great warmth and indignation; exhorts them again to repentance; and enforces his exhortation with the most awful threatenings, delivered with great majesty and authority, and in images full of beauty and grandeur, 10-24. The chapter concludes with observing that their idolatry was of long standing, that they increased the national guilt, by adding to the sins of their fathers; and that their punishment, therefore, should be great in proportion, 25-27. Formerly numbers of them were brought captive to Damascus, 2 Kings 10:32, 33; but now they must go beyond it to Assyria, 2 Kings 15:29; 17:6.

NOTES ON CHAP. 5

Verse 1. *Hear ye this word*— Attend to this doleful song which I make for the house of Israel.

Verse 2. *The virgin of Israel*— The kingdom of Israel, or the ten tribes, which were carried into captivity; and are now totally lost in the nations of the earth.

Verse 3. *The city that went out by a thousand*— The city that could easily have furnished, on any emergency, a thousand fighting men, can now produce scarcely one hundred-one in ten of the former number; and now of the hundred scarcely ten remain: so reduced was Israel when Shalmaneser besieged and took Samaria, and carried the residue into captivity.

Verse 4. *Seek ye me, and ye shall live*— Cease your rebellion against me;

return to me with all your heart; and though consigned to death, ye shall be rescued and live. Deplorable as your case is, it is not utterly desperate.

Verse 5. *But seek not Beth-el*— There was one of Jeroboam's golden calves, and at Gilgal were carved images; both were places in which idolatry was triumphant. The prophet shows them that all hope from those quarters is utterly vain; for Gilgal shall go into captivity, and Beth-el be brought to naught. There is a play or paronomasia on the letters and words in this clause: **הגלגל גלה יגלה ובית אל יהיה לאו** haggilgal galoh yigleh, ubeith el yiheyeh leaven. "This Gilgal shall go captive into captivity; and Beth-el (the house of God) shall be for Beth-aven," (the house of iniquity.)

Verse 6. *Seek the Lord, and ye shall live*— Repeated from ver. 4.

In the house of Joseph— The Israelites of the ten tribes, of whom Ephraim and Manasseh, sons of Joseph, were the chief.

Verse 7. *Ye who turn judgment to wormwood*— Who pervert judgment; causing him who obtains his suit to mourn sorely over the expenses he has incurred in gaining his right.

Verse 8. *That maketh the seven stars and Orion*— Or, Hyades and Arcturus, Kimah and Kesil. See my notes on Job 9:9; 38:32, where the subject of this verse is largely considered.

Turneth the shadow of death into the morning— Who makes day and night, light and darkness.

Calleth for the waters of the sea— Raising them up by evaporation, and collecting them into clouds.

And poureth them out— Causing them to drop down in showers upon the face of the earth. Who has done this? JEHOVAH is his name.

Verse 9. *That strengtheneth the spoiled*— Who takes the part of the poor and oppressed against the oppressor; and, in the course of his providence,

sets up the former, and depresses the latter.

Verse 10. *They hate him that rebuketh in the gate*— They cannot bear an upright magistrate, and will not have righteous laws executed.

Verse 11. *Your treading is upon the poor*— You tread them under your feet; they form the road on which ye walk; and yet it was by oppressing and improverishing them that ye gained your riches.

Ye take from him burdens of wheat— Ye will have his bread for doing him justice.

Verse 12. *I know your manifold transgressions*— I have marked the multitude of your smaller crimes, as well as your mighty offenses. Among their greater offenses were, 1. Their afflicting the righteous. 2. Taking bribes to blind their eyes in judgment. And, 3. Refusing to hear the poor, who had no money to give them.

Verse 13. *The prudent shall keep silence*— A wise man will consider that it is useless to complain. He can have no justice without bribes; and he has no money to give: consequently, in such an evil time, it is best to keep silence.

Verse 14. *Seek good, and not evil*— Is there a greater mystery in the world, than that a man, instead of seeking good, will seek evil, knowing that it is evil?

And so the Lord— As God is the Fountain of good, so they who seek the supreme good seek him: and they who seek shall find him; For the Lord, the God of hosts, shall be with him.

Verse 15. *Hate the evil, and love the good*— What ruins you, avoid; what helps you, cleave to. And as a proof that you take this advice, purify the seats of justice, and then expect God to be gracious to the remnant of Joseph—to the posterity of the ten tribes.

Verse 16. *They shall call the husbandman to mourning*— Because the

crops have failed, and the ground has been tilled in vain.

Sucks as are skillful of lamentation— See the note on Jeremiah 9:17.

Verse 17. *And in all vineyards shall be wailing*— The places where festivity especially used to prevail.

I will pass through thee— As I passed, by the ministry of the destroying angel, through Egypt, not to spare, but to destroy.

Verse 18. *Wo unto you that desire the day of the Lord*— The prophet had often denounced the coming of God's day, that is, of a time of judgment; and the unbelievers had said, "Let his day come, that we may see it." Now the prophet tells them that that day would be to them darkness-calamity, and not light-not prosperity.

Verse 19. *As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him*— They shall go from one evil to another. He who escapes from the lion's mouth shall fall into the bear's paws:—

Incidit in Scyllam, cupiens vitare Charybdim.

The Israelites, under their king Menahem, wishing to avoid a civil war, called in Pul, king of Assyria, to help them. This led to a series of evils inflicted by the Syrian and Assyrian kings, till at last Israel was ravaged by Shalmaneser, and carried into captivity. Thus, in avoiding one evil they fell into another still more grievous.

Leaned his hands on a wall, and a serpent bit him.— Snakes and venomous animals are fond of taking up their lodging in walls of houses, where they can either find or make holes; and it is dangerous to sit near them or lean against them. In the East Indies they keep the faithful mongose, a species of ichneumon, in their houses, for the purpose of destroying the snakes that infest them.

Verse 21. *I hate, I despise your feast days*— I abominate those sacrificial festivals where there is no piety, and I despise them because they pretend

to be what they are not. This may refer to the three annual festivals which were still observed in a certain way among the Israelites.

Verse 22. *The peace-offerinys of your fat beasts.*— מְרִיחֵם

merieychem probably means buffaloes; and so Bochart.

Verse 23. *The noise of thy songs—the melody of thy viols.*— They had both vocal and instrumental music in those sacrificial festivals; and God hated the noise of the one and shut his ears against the melody of the other. In the first there was nothing but noise, because their hearts were not right with God; and in the latter there could be nothing but (זִמְרָה zimrath) cutting and scraping, because there was no heart-no religious sense in the thing, and nearly as little in them that used it. See on chap. 6:5.

Verse 24. *Let judgment run down*— Let the execution of justice be everywhere like the showers that fall upon the land to render it fertile; and let righteousness in heart and life be like a mighty river, or the Jordan, that shall wind its course through the whole nation, and carry every abomination into the Dead Sea. Let justice and righteousness prevail everywhere, and sweep their contraries out of the land.

Verse 25. *Have ye offered unto me sacrifices*— Some have been led to think that “during the forty years which the Israelites spent in the wilderness, between Egypt and the promised land, they did not offer any sacrifices, as in their circumstances it was impossible; they offered none because they had none.” But such people must have forgotten that when the covenant was made at Sinai, there were burnt-offerinys and peace-offerings of oxen sacrificed to the Lord, Exodus 24:5; and at the setting up of the tabernacle the twelve princes of the twelve tribes offered each a young bullock, a ram, and a lamb, for a burnt-offering; a kid for a sin-offering; two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, and five lambs, for a peace-offering, Numbers 7:12, etc.; which amounted to an immense number of victims offered in the course of the twelve days during which this feast of the dedication lasted. At the consecration of priests, bullocks and rams to a considerable number were offered, see Leviticus 8:1, etc.; but they were not offered so regularly, nor in such abundance, as they were

after the settlement in the promised land. Learned men, therefore, have considered this verse as speaking thus: Did ye offer to me, during forty years in the wilderness, sacrifices in such a way as was pleasing to me? Ye did not; for your hearts were divided, and ye were generally in a spirit of insurrection or murmuring.

Verse 26. *But ye have borne*— The preceding verse spoke of their fathers; the present verse speaks of the Israelites then existing, who were so grievously addicted to idolatry, that they not only worshipped at stated public places the idols set up by public authority, but they carried their gods about with them everywhere.

The tabernacle of your Moloch— Probably a small portable shrine, with an image of their god in it, such as Moloch; and the star or representative of their god Chiun. For an ample exposition of this verse, see the note on Acts 7:42; to which let me add, that from Picart's Religious Ceremonies, vol. 3:p. 199, we find that there was an idol named Choun worshipped among the Peruvians from the remotest antiquity.

Verse 27. *Will I cause you to go into captivity beyond Damascus*— That is, into Assyria, the way to which, from Judea, was by Damascus.

But St. Stephen says, Acts 7:43, beyond Babylon; because the Holy Spirit that was in him chose to extend the meaning of the original text to that great and final captivity of the Jews in general, when Zedekiah, their last king, and the people of Judea, were carried into Mesopotamia, Armenia, and Media; see 2 Kings 17:7, 24. This captivity happened after the time of Amos.

CHAPTER 6

The prophet reproves his people for indulging themselves in luxurious ease, and forming alliances with their powerful idolatrous neighbors, 1. He asks if their lands or their lot be better than their own, 2, that they should choose to worship the gods of the heathen, and forsake Jehovah. Then follows an amplification of the sin which the prophet reproves, 3-6; to which he annexes very awful threatenings, confirmed by the oath of Jehovah, 7, 8. He next particularly specifies the punishment of their sins by pestilence, 9-11; by famine, or a drought that should harden the earth so that it could not be tilled, 12; and by the sword of the Assyrians, 14.

NOTES ON CHAP. 6

Verse 1. *Wo to them that are at ease in Zion*— For **השֵׁאֲנָנִים** hashshaananim, “who dwell at ease,” it has been proposed to read **השֵׁעֲנָנִים** hashshaananim, “who confidently lean,” the two words differing only in one letter, an **ע** ain for an **ש** alEphesians They leaned confidently on Zion; supposing that, notwithstanding their iniquities they should be saved for Zion’s sake. Thus the former clause will agree better with the latter, “leaning upon Zion,” and “trusting in the mountain of Samaria.” Those that are at ease may mean those who have no concern about the threatened judgments, and who have no deep concern for the salvation of their own souls. Houbigant would read, “Go to them who despise Zion, and trust in Samaria.” So the Septuagint, reading **שֹׂנְאִים** soneim, hating, instead of **שֵׁאֲנָנִים** shaananim, being at rest, tranquil Calmet first proposed this conjecture; Houbigant follows him.

Are named chief— Newcome renders, “That are named after the chief of the nations;” and observes, that the Hebrew word **נְקֻבֵי** nekubey is an allusion to marking a name or character by punctures. See on Isaiah 44:5. They call themselves not after their ancestors, but after the chief of the idolatrous nations with whom they intermarry contrary to the law.

Perhaps the words here rather refer to the mountains and their temples, than to the people. The mountain of Zion, and the mountain of Samaria, were considered the chief or most celebrated among the nations, as the two kingdoms to which they belonged were the most distinguished on the earth.

Verse 2. *Pass ye unto Calneh*— This is, says Calmet, the Ctesiphon on the river Tigris.

Hamath— The same as Emesa. Hamath was a city on the Orontes, in Syria.

Gath— A well-known town, and head of one of the five seignories of the Philistines.

Be they better— You have no more reason to expect exemption from the consequences of your sins than they had. They have been punished; so shall you. Why then will ye trust in their gods, that could not save their own cities?

Verse 3. *Ye that put far away the evil day*— Wo to you who will not consider the day of approaching vengeance; but continue in your iniquity, and harden your hearts. Ye bring your iniquities nearer, and still suppose your punishment to be at a greater distance.

Verse 4. *That lie upon beds of ivory*— The word **הוי** hoi, wo, is understood at the beginning of each of the first, third, fourth, fifth, and sixth verses. The beds mentioned here may be either sofas to recline on at table, or beds to sleep on; and these among the ancients were ornamented with ivory inlaid. They were called lectos eburatos by Plautus, lectos eburnos by Horace, “ivory beds.” Probably those ornamented with shells, or mother-of-pearl, may be intended. Several works of this kind may be still seen in Palestine and other places. I have before me a cross brought from Jerusalem, incrustated all over with mother-of-pearl, and various figures chased on it.

There must have been a great deal of luxury and effeminacy among the Israelites at this time; and, consequently, abundance of riches. This was in the time of Jeroboam the second, when the kingdom had enjoyed a long peace. The description in the fourth, fifth, and sixth verses, is that of an Asiatic court even in the present day.

Verse 5. *And invent to themselves instruments of music, like David*—

See the note on 1 Chronicles 23:5; and see especially the note on 2 Chronicles 29:25. I believe that David was not authorized by the Lord to introduce that multitude of musical instruments into the Divine worship of which we read, and I am satisfied that his conduct in this respect is most solemnly reprehended by this prophet; and I farther believe that the use of such instruments of music, in the Christian Church, is without the sanction and against the will of God; that they are subversive of the spirit of true devotion, and that they are sinful. If there was a wo to them who invented instruments of music, as did David under the law, is there no wo, no curse to them who invent them, and introduce them into the worship of God in the Christian Church? I am an old man, and an old minister; and I here declare that I never knew them productive of any good in the worship of God; and have had reason to believe that they were productive of much evil. Music, as a science, I esteem and admire: but instruments of music in the house of God I abominate and abhor. This is the abuse of music; and here I register my protest against all such corruptions in the worship of the Author of Christianity. The late venerable and most eminent divine, the Revelation John Wesley, who was a lover of music, and an elegant poet, when asked his opinion of instruments of music being introduced into the chapels of the Methodists said, in his terse and powerful manner, “I have no objection to instruments of music in our chapels, provided they are neither HEARD nor SEEN.” I say the same, though I think the expense of purchase had better be spared.

The word **הַפְּרִמִּים** happoretim, which we render chant, and the margin quaver, signifies to dance, to skip, etc. In the sight of such a text, fiddlers, drummers, waltzers, etc., may well tremble, who perform to excite detestable passions.

Verse 6. *That drink wine in bowls*— Perhaps the costliness of the

drinking vessels, more than the quantity drank, is that which is here reprehended by the prophet. Drinking vessels of the most costly materials, and of the most exquisite workmanship, are still in use; and as to precious ointments and perfumes among the Jews, we have a proof that the contents of one small box was worth three hundred denarii, at least seven pounds ten shillings sterling. See the case in the Gospel, John 12:5, and the note there.

Verse 7. *With the first that go captive*— The house of Israel shall be carried into captivity before the house of Judah.

Verse 8. *The Lord God hath sworn by himself*— בנפשו *benaphsho*, by his soul, his being, existence.

Verse 9. *Ten men-they shall die*.— ALL shall be cut off by the sword, or by captivity, or by famine.

Verse 10. *A man's uncle shall take him up*— Bp. Newcome says, this obscure verse seems to describe the effects of famine and pestilence during the siege of Samaria. The carcass shall be burnt, and the bones removed with no ceremony of funeral rites, and without the assistance of the nearest kinsman. Solitude shall reign in the house; and if one is left, he must be silent, (see chap. 8:3,) and retired, lest he be plundered of his scanty provision! Burning the body, and then collecting the ashes, and putting them into an urn, was deemed the most honorable mode of burial.

Verse 11. *He will smote the great house with breaches*— The great and small shall equally suffer; no distinction shall be made; rich and poor shall fall together; death has received his commission, and he will spare none. Horace has a sentiment precisely like this, Carm. Lib. i., Od. iv., 5:13.

*Pallida mors aequo pulsat pede pauperum
TABERNAS, Regumque TURRES.*

*With equal pace impartial fate
Knocks at the palace as the cottage gate.*

But this may refer particularly to the houses of the poor in Eastern countries; their mud walls being frequently full of clefts; the earth of which they are built seldom adhering together because of its sandiness.

Verse 12. *Shall horses run upon the rock*— First, they could not do it, because they were unshod; for the shoeing of horses with iron was not then known. Secondly, If they did run on the rock, it would be useless to their owner, and hurtful to themselves. Thirdly, And it would be as useless to plough on the rock with oxen; for there it would be impossible to sow with any advantage. Fourthly, Just as useless and injurious would it be to put gall in the place of judgment, and hemlock in the place of righteousness. You have not only been laboring in vain for yourselves, but you have also been oppressive to others; and for both ye shall suffer.

Verse 13. *Ye which rejoice in a thing of naught*— In your idols: for an idol is nothing in the world.

Have we not taken to us horns— We have arrived to power and dignity by our strength. Horns were the symbols of power and authority. So Horace:—

*Vina parant animos:
tum pauper cornua sumet.*

*“Wine repairs our strength,
and furnishes the poor with horns.”*

At such times they think themselves as great as the greatest.

Verse 14. *I will raise up against you a nation*— The Assyrians under Pul, Tiglath-pileser, and Shalmaneser, who subdued the Israelites at various times, and at last carried them away captive in the days of Hosea, the last king of Israel in Samaria.

From the entering in of Hamath (on the north) unto the river of the wilderness.— Besor, which empties itself into the sea, not far from Gaza, and was in the southern part of the tribe of Simeon.

CHAPTER 7

In this chapter God represents to Amos, by three several visions, the judgments he is about to bring on Israel. The first is a plague of locusts, threatening to cut off the hopes of the harvest by attacking it in the time of the second growth; the first luxuriances of the crop being probably mowed for the king's horses, 1-3. The next vision threatens a judgment by fire, which would consume a great part, 4-6; and the third a total overthrow of Israel, levelling it as it were by a line, 7-9. The rest of the chapter is a denunciation of heavy judgments against Amaziah, priest of Beth-el, who had brought an accusation to the king against the prophet, 10-17.

NOTES ON CHAP. 7

Verse 1. *Behold, he formed grasshoppers*— גִּבַּי *gobai* is generally understood here to signify locusts. See the notes on Joel 1:and 2.

The shooting up of the latter growth— The early crop of grass had been already mowed and housed. The second crop or rowing, as it is called in some places, was not yet begun. By the king's mowings we may understand the first crop, a portion of which the king probably claimed as being the better hay; but the words may signify simply the prime crop, that which is the best of the whole. Houbigant thinks the shearing of the king's sheep is meant.

Verse 2. *By whom shall Jacob arise?*— The locusts, the symbols of the many enemies that had impoverished Jerusalem, having devoured much of the produce of the land, were proceeding, till, at the intercession of the prophet, they were removed. Then, seeing in the light of prophecy the nation in every sense brought low, he cries, "By whom shall Jacob arise? for he is small." Calmet justly remarks: "After the death of Jeroboam the second, the kingdom, so flourishing and powerful before, was reduced to such weakness that it was obliged to have recourse to strangers for

support. Menahem applied to Pul, king of Assyria, whence arose the final misery of the state.

Verse 3. *The Lord repented*— Changed his purpose of destroying them by the locusts. See ver. 6.

Verse 4. *The Lord God called to contend by fire*— Permitted war, both civil and foreign, to harass the land, after the death of Jeroboam the second. These wars would have totally destroyed it, had not the prophet interceded.

It devoured the great deep, and did eat up a part.— We are here to understand the partially destructive wars which afterwards took place; for the Lord causes all these things to pass before the eyes of Amos in the vision of prophecy; and intimates that, at the intercession of his prophets, total ruin should be prevented.

Verse 7. *With a plumbline in his hand.*— This appears to be intended as an emblem of strict justice, and intimated that God would now visit them according to their iniquities.

Verse 8. *I will set a plumbline*— I will visit them by justice without any mixture of mercy.

Verse 9. *And the high places of Isaac shall be desolate*— Their total destruction is at hand. The high place of Isaac was Beer-sheba, where Isaac had built an altar to the Lord, Genesis 26:25. This high place, which had been abused to idolatrous uses, was demolished by Josiah, king of Judah, as we read in 2 Kings 23:8, for he defiled all the high places from Geba to Beersheba.

I will rise against the house of Jeroboam— The Lord had promised to Jehu, the ancestor of Jeroboam, that his family should sit on the throne of Israel to the fourth generation. Zechariah, the son of Jeroboam, was the fourth in order after Jehu; and on him the threatening in this verse fell; for he was murdered by Shallum after he had reigned six months, and in him the family became extinct. See 2 Kings 10:30; 15:8-10.

Verse 10. *Amaziah the priest of Beth-el*— The idolatrous priest who had been established by the king to maintain the worship of the golden calves which Jeroboam the elder had set up at this place.

Amos hath conspired against thee— This was truly a lying prophet; there is not one word of truth in this message which he sent to Jeroboam. Amos had not conspired against the king—had not said that Jeroboam should die by the sword—and had not said that Israel should be carried away captive, though this last was implied in God's threatening and afterwards delivered by this prophet; see ver. 17.

Verse 12. *O thou seer*— He pretends kindness to the prophet, and counsels him to go into Judea, and prophesy there and be safe, even in the time that he had accused him of high treason against Jeroboam. Hireling priests of this kind have ever been the great enemies of the true prophets of God; and when they could bring no charge of false doctrine or immorality against them, have accused them of conspiring against the government; and because they have preached against sin, have held them up as exciting insurrection among the people.

Verse 13. *But prophesy not-at Beth-el*— He must not speak against idolatry, because that was the king's religion; and he who speaks against the king's religion must be an enemy to the state. This was the doctrine held in England by popish James 2:and his insidious Jesuit hireling priests, till God in his mercy put this pitiful tyrant down, and with him his false prophets, and the degrading superstition which they endeavored to establish in these lands.

Verse 14. *I was no prophet*— I am an extraordinary messenger of God. I am not called to the prophetic office but for this occasion. I have no message to Judah, and therefore need not go there. I have a message to Israel alone, and I must faithfully deliver it.

For the account which Amos gives here of himself, see the introduction.

Verse 16. *Now therefore hear thou the word of the Lord*— While he was

speaking in his own vindication, God seems to have inspired him with the awful prediction which he immediately delivers.

Verse 17. *Thy wife shall be a harlot*— As this was the word of the Lord, so it was fulfilled; but as we have no farther account of this idolatrous priest, so we cannot tell in what circumstances these threatenings were executed. 1. His wife was to be a public prostitute; she was probably such already privately in the temple, as the wife of an idolatrous priest. 2. His sons and daughters were to fall by the sword. 3. Their inheritance was to be taken by strangers. 4. And himself was to die a captive in a heathen land.

Israel shall surely go into captivity— He now declares fully what he had not declared before, though Amaziah had made it a subject of accusation. This particular was probably revealed at this instant, as well as those which concerned Amaziah and his family.

CHAPTER 8

This chapter begins with a fourth vision denoting the certainty and nearness of the destruction of Israel, 1-3. The prophet then proceeds to reprove their oppression and injustice, 4-7. Strong and beautiful figures, by which is represented the complete dissolution of the Israelitish polity, 8-10. The people threatened with a most awful judgment; a FAMINE of the word of God, 11-14.

NOTES ON CHAP. 8

Verse 1. A basket of summer fruit.— As summer fruit was not proper for preserving, but must be eaten as soon as gathered, so the Lord intimates by this symbol that the kingdom of Israel was now ripe for destruction, and that punishment must descend upon it without delay. Some think the prophet means the fruits at the end of autumn. And as after the autumn no fruit could be expected, so Israel's summer is gone by, her autumn is ended, and she shall yield no more fruit. Or, the autumn of her iniquity is come, the measure is filled up, and now she shall gather the fruit of her sin in the abundance of her punishment.

Verse 2. A basket of summer fruit— כְּלוּב קַיִץ kelub kayits, the end is come—בַּא הַקַּיץ ba hakkets: here is a paronomasia or play upon the words kayits, summer fruit, and kets, the end, both coming from similar roots. See the note on Ezekiel 7:2, where there is a similar play on the same word.

I will not again pass by them any more.— I will be no longer their Guardian.

Verse 3. The songs of the temple— Instead of שִׁירוֹת shiroth, songs, Houbigant reads שׁוֹרוֹת shoroth, the singing women; and Newcome follows him: “And the singing women of the palace shall howl in that

day.” Instead of joyous songs, they shall have nothing but lamentation.

They shall cast them forth with silence.— Every place shall be filled with the dead, and a dreadful silence shall reign universally; the few that remain being afraid either to speak or complain, or even to chant a funeral dirge for the most respectable of the dead.

Verse 4. *Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy*— Ye that bruise the poor; exact from them, and tread them under foot.

Verse 5. *When will the new moon be gone*— This was kept as a kind of holy day, not by Divine command, but by custom. The Sabbath was strictly holy; and yet so covetous were they that they grudged to give to God and their own souls this seventh portion of time! But bad and execrable as they were, they neither set forth their corn, nor their wheat, nor any other kind of merchandise, on the Sabbath. They were saints then, when compared to multitudes called Christians, who keep their shops either partially or entirely open on the Lord’s day, and buy and sell without any scruples of conscience. Conscience! alas! they have none; it is seared as with a hot iron. The strong man armed, in them, is quiet, for all his goods are in peace.

Making the ephah small, and the shekel great— Giving short measure, and taking full price; or, buying with a heavy weight, and selling with one that was light.

Falsifying the balances— Having one scale light, and the other weighty; one end of the beam long, and the other short. A few months ago I detected a knave with such balances; with a slip of his finger along the beam he altered the center, which made three ounces short weight in every pound. He did it so dexterously, that though I knew he was cheating, or, as the prophet expresses it, was falsifying the balances by deceit, it was some time before I could detect the fraud, and not till I had been several times cheated by this accomplished knave. So we find that though the knaves of ancient Israel are dead, they have left their successors behind them.

Verse 6. *That we may buy the poor for silver*— Buying their services for such a time, with just money enough to clear them from other creditors.

And the needy for a pair of shoes— See chap. 2:6.

And sell the refuse of the wheat!— Selling bad wheat and damaged flour to poor people as good, knowing that such cannot afford to prosecute them.

Verse 7. *By the excellency of Jacob*— By the state of eminence to which he had raised the descendants of Jacob; or, by the excellent ONE of Jacob, that is, HIMSELF. The meaning is: “As surely as I have raised you to such a state of eminence, so surely will I punish you in proportion to your advantages and your crimes.”

Verse 8. *Shall not the land tremble for this*— It is supposed that an earthquake is here intended, and that the rising up and subsiding as a flood refers to that heaving motion that takes place in an earthquake, and which the prophet here compares to the overflowing and subsiding of the waters of the Nile. But it may refer to commotions among the people.

Verse 9. *I will cause the sun to go down at noon*— This may either refer to that darkness which often precedes and accompanies earthquakes, or to an eclipse. Abp. Usher has shown that about eleven years after Amos prophesied there were two great eclipses of the sun; one at the feast of tabernacles, and the other some time before the passover. The prophet may refer to the darkness occasioned by those eclipses; yet I rather think the whole may refer to the earthquake.

Verse 10. *I will turn your feasts into mourning*— See on ver. 3.

A bitter day.— A time of grievous calamity.

Verse 11. *A famine in the land*— The most grievous of all famines, a famine of the words of Jehovah; a time in which no prophet should appear, no spiritual counsellor, no faithful reprove, none any longer who would point out the way of salvation, or would assure them of the mercy of God on their repentance and return to him. This is the severest of

God's judgments on this side the worm that never dieth, and the fire that is never quenched.

Verse 12. *They shall wander front sea to sea*— From the Mediterranean to the Dead Sea or from west to east, and from north to south, to seek the word of the Lord; to find a prophet, or any person authorized by God to show them the end of their calamities. In this state they shall continue, because they have rejected Him who is the bread of life.

Verse 14. *By the sin of Samaria*— Baal, who was worshipped here.

Thy god, O Dan— The golden calf, or ox, the representative of the Egyptian god Apis, or Osiris.

The manner of Beer-sheba— The worship, or object of worship. Another of the golden calves which Jeroboam had set up there. The word דרך *derech*, way, is here taken for the object and mode of worship; see Acts 19:9, where way is taken for the creed and form of Divine worship as practiced by the followers of Christ, and by which they were distinguished from the Jews. See also Acts 9:2.

CHAPTER 9

The first part of this chapter contains another vision, in which God is represented as declaring the final ruin of the kingdom of Israel, and the general dispersion of the people, 1-10. The prophet then passes to the great blessedness of the people of God under the Gospel dispensation, 11-15. See Acts 15:15, 16.

NOTES ON CHAP. 9

Verse 1. *I saw the Lord standing upon the altar*— As this is a continuation of the preceding prophecy, the altar here may be one of those either at Dan or Beer-sheba.

Smite the lintel— Either the piece of timber that binds the wall above the door, or the upper part of the door frame, in which the cheeks, or side posts, are inserted, and which corresponds to the threshold, or lower part of the door frame.

And cut them in the head— Let all the lintels of all the doors of all those temples be thus cut, as a sign that the whole shall be thrown down and totally demolished. Or this may refer to their heads—chief men, who were principals in these transgressions. Mark their temples, their priests, their prophets, and their princes, for destruction.

He that fleeth—shall not flee away— He shall be caught before he can get out of the reach of danger.

And he that escapeth (that makes good his flight) shall not be delivered.— Captivity, famine, or sword, shall reach him even there.

Verse 2. *Though they dig into hell*— Though they should get into the deepest caverns; though they climb up to heaven—get to the most inaccessible heights; I will drag them up from the one, and pull them down

from the other.

Verse 3. *Though they hide themselves*— All these are metaphorical expressions, to show the impossibility of escape.

Verse 4. *I will set mine eyes upon them for evil*— I will use that very providence against them which before worked for their good. Should they look upward, they shall see nothing but the terrible lightning-like eye of a sin-avenging God.

Verse 5. *The Lord God of hosts is he*— So powerful is he that a touch of his hand shall melt or dissolve the land, and cause all its inhabitants to mourn. Here is still a reference to the earthquake. See the note, chap. 8:8, where the same images are used.

Verse 6. *Buildeth his stories in the heaven*— There is here an allusion to large houses, where there are cellars, or places dug in the ground as repositories for corn; middle apartments, or stories, for the families to live in; and the house-top for persons to take the air upon. There may be here a reference to the various systems which God has formed in illimitable space, transcending each other, as the planets do in our solar system: and thus we find Solomon speaking when addressing the Most High: “The heavens and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee, **ושמי השמים** **השמים** hashshamayim ushemey hashshamayim, 1 Kings 8:27. Six heavens are necessarily implied in these three words. According to the points, the first and third are in the dual number, and the second is the contracted form of the plural. But how many more spheres may be intended who can tell? There may be millions of millions of stellar systems in unlimited space; and then what are all these to the VAST IMMENSITY of God!

Hath founded his troop in the earth— **אגדתי** aguddatho, from **אגד** agad, to bind or gather together, possibly meaning the seas and other collections of waters which he has gathered together and bound by his perpetual decree, that they cannot pass; yet when he calleth for these very waters, as in the general deluge, he “poureth them out upon the face of the earth.”

The Lord is his name.— This points out his infinite essence. But what is that essence? and what is his nature? and what his immensity and eternity? What archangel can tell?

Verse 7. *Children of the Ethiopians*— Or Cushites. Cush was the son of Ham, Genesis 10:6; and his descendants inhabited a part of Arabia Petraea and Arabia Felix. All this stock was universally despised. See Bochart.

The Philistines from Caphtor— The island of Crete, the people of which were the Cherethim. See, 1 Samuel 30:14; Ezekiel 25:16; Zephaniah 2:5.

The Syrians from Kir?— Perhaps a city of the Medes, Isaiah 22:6. Aram, from whom Syria had its name, was the son of Shem, Genesis 10:22. Part of his descendants settled in this city, and part in Aram Naharaim, “Syria of the two rivers,” viz., Mesopotamia, included between the Tigris and the Euphrates.

The meaning of the verse is this: Do not presume on my having brought you out of the land of Egypt and house of bondage, into a land flowing with milk and honey. I have brought other nations, and some of your neighbors, who are your enemies, from comparatively barren countries, into fruitful territories; such, for instance, as the Philistines from Caphtor, and the Syrians from Kir.

Verse 8. *The eyes of the Lord God are upon the sinful kingdom*— The kingdom of Israel, peculiarly sinful; and therefore to be signally destroyed by the Assyrians.

I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob— The race shall not become extinct: I will reserve them as monuments of my justice, and finally of my mercy.

Verse 9. *I will sift the house of Israel among all nations*— I will disperse them over the face of the earth; and yet I will so order it that the good shall not be lost; for though they shall be mixed among distant nations, yet there shall be a general restoration of them to their own land.

The least grain— צֶרֶר tseror, little stone, pebble, or gravel. Not one of them, howsoever little or contemptible, when the time comes, shall be left behind. All shall be collected in Christ, and brought into their own land.

Verse 10. All the sinners of my people— Those who are the boldest and most incredulous; especially they who despise my warnings, and say the evil day shall not overtake nor prevent us; they shall die by the sword. It is no evidence of a man's safety that he is presumptuously fearless. There is a blessing to him who trembles at God's word.

Verse 11. Will I raise up the tabernacle of David— It is well known that the kingdom of Israel, the most profane and idolatrous, fell first, and that the kingdom of Judah continued long after, and enjoyed considerable prosperity under Hezekiah and Josiah. The remnant of the Israelites that were left by the Assyrians became united to the kingdom of Judah; and of the others, many afterwards joined them: but this comparatively short prosperity and respite, previously to the Babylonish captivity, could not be that, as Calmet justly observes, which is mentioned here. This could not be called closing up the breaches, raising up the ruins, and building it as in the days of old; nor has any state of this kind taken place since; and, consequently, the prophecy remains to be fulfilled. It must therefore refer to their restoration under the Gospel, when they shall receive the Lord Jesus as their Messiah, and be by him restored to their own land. See these words quoted by James, Acts 15:17. Then indeed it is likely that they shall possess the remnant of Edom, and have the whole length and breadth of Immanuel's land, ver. 12. Nor can it be supposed that the victories gained by the Asmoneans could be that intended by the prophet and which he describes in such lofty terms. These victories procured only a short respite, and a very imperfect re-establishment of the tabernacle of David; and could not warrant the terms of the prediction in these verses.

Verse 12. That they may possess the remnant of Edom— Bp. Newcome translates this clause as follows: "That the residue of men may seek Jehovah, and all the heathen who are called by my name." Here, instead of אֶדוֹם Edom, he reads אָדָם Adam, men or mankind, which is the reading of the Arabic, and some MSS. of the Syriac, and of Acts 15:17.

The Pachomian MS. of the Septuagint adds here, *ὡς ἐκζητήσωσι με*, that they may seek me. And the Arabic has [A] the Lord; and in stead of *יִרְשׁוּ* yireshu, “they shall possess,” the learned bishop seems to have read *יִדְרְשׁוּ* yidreshu, “they may seek;” and thus the text resembles the quotation by St. James, Acts 15:17, “That the residue of men might seek after the Lord.” It is strange that not one of the MSS. collated by Kennicott and De Rossi, nor any of my own, favors or countenances any of these alterations. I am of opinion, therefore, that we must dismiss all these conjectural emendations, and take the Hebrew text as we find it. That it speaks of the conversion of the Jews in Gospel times, we have the authority of the New Testament as above to prove; and it we cannot make the words, as they stand there. entirely to agree with the words here, the subject is not affected by it. The Jews shall be converted and restored, and this text in both covenants is a proof of it.

Verse 13. *The ploughman shall overtake the reaper*— All the seasons shall succeed in due and natural order: but the crops shall be so copious in the fields and in the vineyards, that a long time shall be employed in gathering and disposing of them; so that the seasons of ploughing, sowing, gathering the grapes, treading the wine-press, etc., shall press on the heels of each other; so vast will be the abundance, and so long the time necessary to gather and cure the grain and fruits. We are informed by travelers in the Holy Land, Barbary, etc., that the vintage at Aleppo lasts from the fifteenth of September to the middle of November; and that the sowing season begins at the close of October, and lasts through all November. Here, then, the ploughman, sower, grape-gatherer, and operator at the wine-press, not only succeed each other, but have parts of these operations going on at the same time. But great fertility in the land, abundance in the crops, and regularity of the seasons, seem to be the things which the prophet especially predicts. These are all poetical and prophetic images, by which happy times are pointed out.

Verse 14. *They shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine*— When threatened with great evils, chap. 5:11, it is said, “They shall plant pleasant vineyards but shall not drink the wine of them.” Previously to their restoration, they shall labor for others; after their restoration, they

shall labor for themselves.

Verse 15. *I will plant them upon their land*— They shall receive a permanent establishment there.

And they shall no more be pulled up— Most certainly this prophecy has never yet been fulfilled. They were pulled out by the Assyrian captivity, and by that of Babylon. Many were planted in again, and again pulled out by the Roman conquest and captivity, and were never since planted in, but are now scattered among all the nations of the earth. I conclude, as the word of God cannot fail, and this has not yet been fulfilled, it therefore follows that it will and must be fulfilled to the fullness of its spirit and intention. And this is established by the conclusion: “Saith the Lord thy God.” He is JEHOVAH, and cannot fail; he is THY GOD, and will do it. He can do it, because he is JEHOVAH; and he will do it, because he is THY GOD. Amen.

THE BOOK

OF THE

PROPHET OBADIAH

Chronological Notes relative to this book, upon the supposition that it was written about five hundred and eighty-seven years before the commencement of the Christian era

- Year from the Creation, according to Archbishop Usher, 3417.
- Year of the Jewish era of the world, 3174.
- Year since the Flood, 1761.
- Year from the vocation of Abram, 1335.
- Year from the foundation of Solomon's temple, 425.
- Year since the division of Solomon's monarchy into the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, 389.
- Year of the era of Iphitus, 298.
- Second year of the forty-eighth Olympiad.
- Year from the building of Rome, according to the Varronian or generally received computation, 167.
- Year from the building of Rome, according to the Fasti Consulares, 166.
- Year from the building of Rome, according to Polybius the historian, 165.
- Year from the building of Rome, according to Fabius Pictor, 161.
- Year since the overthrow of the kingdom of Israel by Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, 135.
- Year since the destruction of the kingdom of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, 2.
- Year of the Julian Period, 4127.

- Year of the era of Nabonassar, 161.
- Year before the birth of Christ, 583.
- Year before the vulgar era of Christ's nativity, 587.
- Cycle of the Sun, 11.
- Cycle of the Moon, 4.
- Thirtieth year of Tarquinius Priscus, the fifth king of the Romans.
- Thirty-ninth year of Cyaraxes or Cyaxares, the fourth king of Media.
- Nineteenth year of Agasicles, king of Lacedaemon of the family of the Proclidae.
- Twenty-first year of Leon, king of Lacedaemon, of the family of the Eurysthenidae.
- Thirty-third year of Alyattes II., king of Lydia.
- Sixteenth year of AEROPAS, the seventh king of Macedon.
- Eighth year of Apries, king of Egypt; the same with the celebrated Pharaoh-hophrah.
- Ninth year of Baal, king of the Tyrians.
- Twentieth year of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon.

OBADIAH

God is here represented as summoning the nations against Edom, and declaring that his strongholds should not save him, 14; that not a remnant, not a gleaning, should be left of him, 5; that the enemy would search out his people, and totally subdue them; and that none of their allies should stand by them, 6-9. He then enlarges on their particular offense, and threatens them with a speedy recompense, 10-16. The Babylonians accordingly subdued the Edomites, and expelled them from Arabia Petraea, of which they never afterwards recovered possession. The remaining verses contain a prophecy of the restoration of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, and of their victory over all their enemies, 17-21. Some commentators think that these last verses were fulfilled by the conquests of the Maccabees over the Edomites. See 1 Macc. 5:3-5, 65, etc.

Who was this prophet? where born? of what country? at what time did he prophesy? who were his parents? when and where did he die? are

questions which have been asked from the remotest antiquity; and which, to this day, have received no answer worthy of recording. There is a multitude of opinions concerning these points; and their multitude and discrepancy are the strongest proofs of their uncertainty. All that seems probable is, that, as he prophesied concerning the destruction of Edom, he flourished a little before, or a little after, the taking of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, which happened about five hundred and eighty-eight years before Christ; and the destruction of Idumea by the same monarch, which took place a short time after; probably between 588 B.C. and 575 B.C., in the interval of the thirteen years which Nebuchadnezzar employed in the siege of Tyre, which he undertook immediately after the capture of Jerusalem.

Obadiah foretells the subduction of the Idumeans by the Chaldeans, and finally by the Jews, whom they had used most cruelly when brought low by other enemies. These prophecies have been literally fulfilled for the Idumeans, as a nation, are totally extinct.

Whoever will be at the trouble to collate this short prophecy with the forty-ninth chapter of Jeremiah, will find a remarkable similarity, not only in the sentiments and words, but also in whole verses. In the above chapter Jeremiah predicts the destruction of the Idumeans. Whether he copied Obadiah, or Obadiah copied him, cannot be determined; but it would be very strange if two prophets, unacquainted with each other, should speak of the same event precisely in the same terms. See the parallel texts in the margin, and the notes on Jeremiah 49:1, etc.

NOTES ON THE BOOK OF OBADIAH

Verse 1. *We have heard a rumor*— See Jeremiah 49:14, where the same expressions are found. The prophet shows that the enemies of Idumea had confederated against it, and that Jehovah is now summoning them to march directly against it.

Verse 2. *I have made thee small among the heathen*— God ever attributes to himself the rise and fall of nations. If they be great and

prosperous, it is by God's providence; if they be low and depressed, it is by his justice. Compared with the Assyrians, Chaldeans, Egyptians, Syrians, Arabs, and other neighboring nations, the Idumeans were a small people.

Verse 3. *The pride of thine heart*— St. Jerome observes that all the southern part of Palestine, from Eleutheropolis to Petra and Aialath, was full of caverns hewn out of the rocks, and that the people had subterranean dwellings similar to ovens. Here they are said to dwell in the clefts of the rock, in reference to the caverns above mentioned. In these they conceived themselves to be safe, and thought that no power brought against them could dislodge them from those fastnesses. Some think that by סלע sela, rock, Petra, the capital of Idumea, is intended.

Verse 4. *Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle*— Though like this bird thou get into the highest cliff of the highest rock, it will not avail thee. To defend thee, when Jehovah has determined thy destruction, thy deepest caves and highest rocks will be equally useless. See Jeremiah 49:16.

Verse 5. *If thieves came to thee*— That is, if thieves entered thy dwellings, they would not have taken every thing; they would have laid hold on thy wealth; and carried off as much as they could escape with conveniently; if grape-gatherers entered thy vineyards, they would not have taken every bunch; some gleanings would have been left. But the Chaldeans have stripped thee bare; they have searched out all thy hidden things, ver. 6, they have left thee nothing. How art thou cut off! Thou art totally and irretrievably ruined! The prophet speaks of this desolation as if it had already taken place.

Verse 7. *All the men of thy confederacy*— The Chaldeans are here intended, to whom the Idumeans were attached, and whose agents they became in exercising cruelties upon the Jews.

Have brought thee even to the border— Have hemmed thee in on every side, and reduced thee to distress. Or, they have driven thee to thy border; cast thee out of thy own land into the hands of thine enemies.

The men that were at peace with thee— The men of thy covenant, with whom thou hadst made a league.

That eat thy bread— That professed to be thy firmest friends, have all joined together to destroy thee.

Have laid a wound— Placed a snare or trap under thee. See Newcome.

There is none understanding in him.— Private counsels and public plans are all in operation against thee; and yet thou art so foolish and infatuated as not to discern thy own danger.

Verse 8. *Shall I not-destroy the wise men*— It appears, from Jeremiah 49:7, that the Edomites were remarkable for wisdom, counsel, and prudence. See on the above place.

Verse 9. *Thy mighty men, O Teman*— This was one of the strongest places in Idumea; and is put here, as in Amos 1:2, and elsewhere, for Idumea itself.

Mount of Esau— Mount Seir.

Verse 10. *For thy violence against thy brother Jacob*— By this term the Israelites in general are understood; for the two brothers, — Jacob, from whom sprang the Jews, and Esau, from whom sprang the Idumeans or Edomites, — are here put for the whole people or descendants of both. We need not look for particular cases of the violence of the Edomites against the Jews. Esau, their founder, was not more inimical to his brother Jacob, who deprived him of his birthright, than the Edomites uniformly were to the Jews. See 2 Chronicles 28:17, 18. They had even stimulated the Chaldeans, when they took Jerusalem, to destroy the temple, and level it with the ground. See Psalm 137:7.

Verse 11. *Thou stoodest on the other side*— Thou not only didst not help thy brother when thou mightest, but thou didst assist his foes against him.

And cast lots— When the Chaldeans cast lots on the spoils of Jerusalem,

thou didst come in for a share of the booty; “thou wast as one of them.”

Verse 12. *Thou shouldest not have looked*— It shows a malevolent heart to rejoice in the miseries of those who have acted unkindly or wickedly towards us. The Edomites triumphed when they saw the judgments of God fall upon the Jews. This the Lord severely reprehends in verses 12-15. If a man have acted cruelly towards us, and God punish him for this cruelty, and we rejoice in it, we make his crime our own; and then, as we have done, so shall it be done unto us; see ver. 15. All these verses point out the part the Edomites took against the Jews when the Chaldeans besieged and took Jerusalem, destroyed the temple, and divided the spoils.

Verse 14. *Neither shouldest thou have stood in the crossway*— They are represented here as having stood in the passes and defiles to prevent the poor Jews from escaping from the Chaldeans. By stopping these passes,

when God permitted them to be carried into captivity.

The house of Jacob shall possess— They were restored to their former possessions. But this may refer also to their future restoration under the Gospel, when they shall be truly converted, and become holiness to the Lord; for salvation and holiness shall be the characteristics of Zion-the Christian Church, for ever.

Verse 18. *The house of Jacob shall be a fire*— After their return from captivity, the Jews, called here the house of Jacob and the house of Joseph, did break out as a flame upon the Idumeans; they reduced them into slavery; and obliged them to receive circumcision, and practise the rites of the Jewish religion. See 1 Macc. 5:3, etc.; 2 Macc. 10:15-23; and JosEphesians Antiq., lib. 13:c. 17.

There shall not be any remaining— As a people and a nation they shall be totally destroyed. This is the meaning; it does not signify that every individual shall be destroyed.

Verse 19. *They of the south*— The Jews who possessed the southern part of Palestine, should render themselves masters of the mountains of Idumea which were contiguous to them.

They of the plain— From Eleutheropolis to the Mediterranean Sea. In this and the following verse the prophet shows the different districts which should be occupied by the Israelites after their return from Babylon.

The fields of Samaria— Alexander the Great gave Samaria to the Jews; and John Hyrcanus subdued the same country after his wars with the Syrians. See Josephus, contra. App. lib, ii., and Antiq. lib. xiii., c. 18.

Benjamin shall possess Gilead.— Edom lay to the south; the Philistines to the west, Ephraim to the north; and Gilead to the east. Those who returned from Babylon were to extend themselves everywhere. See Newcome; and see, for the fulfillment, 1 Macc. 5:9, 35, 45; 9:35, 36.

Verse 20. *Zarephath*— Sarepta, a city of the Sidonians, 1 Kings 17:9.

That is, they should possess the whole city of Phoenicia, called here that of the Canaanites.

Which is in Sepharad— This is a difficult word. Some think the Bosphorus is meant; others, Spain; others, France; others, the Euphrates; others, some district in Chaldea; for there was a city called Siphora, in Mesopotamia, above the division of the Euphrates. Dr. Lightfoot says it was a part of Edom. Those who were captives among the Canaanites should possess the country of the Canaanites; and those whom the Edomites had enslaved should possess the cities of their masters. See Newcome and Lowth.

Verse 21. And saviours shall come up— Certain persons whom God may choose to be deliverers of his people; such as Zerubbabel, Ezra, Nehemiah, and the Maccabees.

Some think these saviours, מושיעים moshiim, mean the apostles of our Lord. Several MSS. have מושעים mushaim, the preserved; those that are saved, i.e., they who were delivered from the captivity; and those of Mount Zion shall judge, that is, shall execute judgment on the Edomites. And as the Asmonean princes joined the priesthood to the state, it might be what the prophet means when he says, “the kingdom shall be the Lord’s,” the high priest having both the civil and ecclesiastical power in his own hands. And these actually were masters of Edom, and judged and governed the mountain of Esau. And thus this prophecy appears to have had a very literal fulfillment.

But if we take the whole as referring to the times of the Gospel, which I believe is not its primary sense, it may signify the conversion and restoration of the Jews, and that under JESUS CHRIST the original theocracy shall be restored; and thus, once more, in the promised land, it may be said:—

והיתה ליהוה המלוכה hammeluchah laihovah vehayethah.

“And the kingdom shall belong to Jehovah”

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK

OF THE

PROPHET JONAH

JONAH, the son of Amittai, the fifth of the minor prophets, was a Galilean, a native of Gath-hepher, which is believed to be the same as Jotapata, celebrated for the siege which Josephus the historian there maintained against the Roman army, a little before the destruction of Jerusalem. Gath-hepher was situated in the land of Zebulun, where was the canton of Ophir or Hopher. St. Jerome places it two miles from Sepphoris, in the way towards Tiberias. Some rabbins are of opinion that Jonah was the widow of Sarepta's son, restored to life by Elijah.

What we know with certainty of Jonah is, that God having commanded him to go to Nineveh, and there proclaim that the cry of the inhabitants' sins was come up to heaven, and they were threatened with approaching ruin; instead of obeying these orders, he resolved to flee away, and go to Tarsus in Cilicia. For this purpose he embarked at Joppa; but the Lord having sent a violent tempest while he was upon the sea, the mariners, with great fear, cried each of them to his god. In the meantime Jonah slept in the hold; whereupon the pilot wakened him; and they who were in the

God prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. This fish, according to some, was a whale; or, as others say, the lamia, canis carcharias, or the sea-dog. The prophet continued in the fish three days and three nights. He cried unto the Lord, and the Lord heard him, and commanded the fish to cast him upon the shore, as it is believed, at the foot of a mountain which projects a great way into the sea, between Berytus and Tripoli. Others think it was upon the coast of Cilicia, two leagues north from Alexandretta.

After this the word of the Lord came a second time to Jonah, and directed him to go to Nineveh. When he came into the city, which was three days journey in extent, about twenty-five leagues in circumference, Jonah walked up and down a whole day, crying out, "In forty days Nineveh shall be destroyed." The Ninevites believed his word; they appointed a public fast to be observed; and, from the meanest of the people to the greatest, covered themselves with sackcloth. The king of Nineveh, supposed to have been Sardanapalus, known in profane authors by the name of Anacyndaraxa or Anabaxarus, descended from his throne, and covered himself with sackcloth, and sat down upon ashes. God suffered himself to be moved with their repentance, and did not execute the sentence which he had pronounced against them.

Jonah was afflicted at this; and complained to God, saying, that he had always questioned whether, as being a God of clemency and mercy, he would not be flexible to their prayers.

After this, in all probability, Jonah returned from Nineveh into Judea.

The Greeks have for a long time expressed their veneration for Jonah. There was a church dedicated to this prophet in the sixth age.

We do not know when it was that Jonah foretold how Jeroboam II., king of Israel, should restore the kingdom of Samaria to its former extent, from the entrance of Hamath to the Dead Sea. Whether this was before or after his going to Nineveh, we cannot tell.

Our Savior makes frequent mention of Jonah in the Gospels. He says that

the Ninevites shall one day rise in judgment against the Jews, and condemn them, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and the Jews would not hearken to Him who was greater than Jonah. And when the Pharisees required a sign of him to prove his mission, he said he would give them no other than that of the prophet Jonah, that is to say, of his resurrection, which would complete all his miracles, and render the Jews inexcusable in their hardness of heart. For a discussion of the question concerning the three days and three nights which Jonah lay in the belly of the fish, see Matthew 12:40, and the notes there. And for Oriental and Jewish legends and fabulous relations relative to the history of this prophet, see Calmet in his preface to this book.

That there are difficulties in this book every man must allow; and that learned men have differed greatly in their mode of interpreting the book, and explaining these difficulties, is well known. Some have considered it an allegory; referring entirely to Manasseh, and what was done before, during, and after the war with Esar-haddon, king of Assyria. Manasseh being taken prisoner by the Assyrians, and thrust into a dungeon; where, having lain three days and three nights, on his earnest prayer to God in the dungeon, he was delivered, etc. Others have thought, that instead of a fish, a ship is meant, which had the image of a whale on the stern, and might be called κητος, or the whale. Others have thought that the whole of the account of Jonah's being swallowed by a great fish, his praying in its belly, and being cast on dry land, was a dream which he had while fast asleep in the ship. See chap. 1:5. And others state that the whole book is a parable, intending to point out God's justice and mercy, and how prevalent repentance is to turn aside the threatened stroke of Divine wrath.

There is a fable, most probably of Phoenician origin, which, bearing some similitude to the history of Jonah, may have been taken from this book. Laomedon, king of Troy, having displeased Neptune, to appease him, was required to expose his daughter Hesione to be devoured by a sea-monster. She was chained to a rock, and was awaiting her fate at the next flux of the tide. In the interim Hercules slew the sea-monster, and delivered the princess. To this Lycophron, in his *Cassandra*, ver. 33, etc., is supposed to allude:—

τριεσπερου λεοντος, ον ποτε γναθοις
 τριτωνος ημαλαψε καρχαρος κυων.

“Of the lion the offspring of three nights, which the fierce dog of Triton swallowed down greedily.”

The scholiasts explain this in the following manner: While the princess was standing chained to the rock, expecting the greedy dog (καρχαρος κυων, the shark) to come and devour her, Hercules stood by ready armed; and when the monster came forward with open mouth, he jumped directly down his throat, and spent three days in cutting and hacking his entrails; and afterwards came out of the monster, with the loss of all the hair on his head. Cyril, in his comment, says this was occasioned by the incredible heat of the monster’s stomach.

This fable might have been easily taken from the true history; though some have been ready enough to intimate that the history of the prophet was taken from the fable.

The appeal made to the main facts of this history by our Lord, proves that we are to admit of no allegorical exposition of these facts. 1. There was such a person as Jonah. 2. He was swallowed by a sea-monster, in whose belly he was miraculously preserved three days and three nights. 3. This same prophet preached to the Ninevites; and they repented, and turned from their sins, under his ministry. This testimony puts an end to all mythological, allegorical, and hypothetical interpretations of those great facts. And in its literal sense alone, I undertake the interpretation of this book.

THE BOOK

OF THE

PROPHET JONAH

Chronological Notes relative to this Book, upon the supposition that the repentance of the Ninevites happened in the twenty-third year of the reign of Jehu, king of Israel.

- Year from the Creation, according to Archbishop Usher, 3142.
- Year of the Julian Period, 3852.
- Year since the Flood, 1486.
- Year from the foundation of Solomon's temple, 150.
- Year since the division of Solomon's monarchy into the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, 114.
- Year before the first Olympiad, 86.
- Year before the building of Rome, according to the Varronian computation, 109.
- Year before the birth of Jesus Christ, 858.
- Year before the vulgar era of Christ's nativity, 862.
- Twelfth year of Charilaus, king of Lacedaemon, of the family of the Proclidae.
- Fifty-second year of Archelaus, king of Lacedaemon, of the family of the Eurysthenidae.
- Second year of Phereclus, perpetual archon of the Athenians.
- Fourteenth year of Alladius Sylvius, king of the Albans.
- Twenty-third year of Jehu, king of Israel.
- Seventeenth year of Joash, king of Judah.

CHAPTER 1

Jonah, sent to Nineveh, flees to Tarshish, 1-3. He is overtaken by a great tempest, 4-14; thrown into the sea, 15, 16; and swallowed by a fish, in the belly of which he is miraculously preserved alive three days and three nights, 17.

NOTES ON CHAP. 1

Verse 1. *Now the word of the Lord came unto Jonah*— All that is certainly known about this prophet has already been laid before the reader. He was of Gath-hepher, in the tribe of Zebulun, in lower Galilee, Joshua 19:13; and he prophesied in the reigns of Jeroboam the Second, and Joash, kings of Israel. Jeroboam came to the throne eight hundred and twenty-three years before the Christian era, and reigned in Samaria forty-one years, 2 Kings 14:23-25. As a prophet, it is likely that he had but this one mission.

Verse 2. *Go to Nineveh*— This was the capital of the Assyrian empire, and one of the most ancient cities of the world, Genesis 10:10; and one of the largest, as it was three days' journey in circumference. Ancient writers represent it as oblong; being in length one hundred and fifty stadia, and ninety in breadth, the compass being four hundred and eighty stadia. Now as the stadium is allowed to have been equal to our furlong, eight of which make a mile, this amounts to fifty-four English miles: see on chap. 3:3. But we must not suppose that all this space was covered with compact streets and buildings; it took in a considerable space of country, probably all the cultivated ground necessary to support all the inhabitants of that district. Calmet computes the measurement of the circumference to be equal to twenty-five French leagues. It is reported to have had walls one hundred feet high, and so broad that three chariots might run abreast upon them. It was situated on the Tigris, or a little to the west, or on the west side of that river. It was well peopled, and had at this time one hundred and twenty thousand persons in it reputed to be in a state of infancy, which

on a moderate computation would make the whole number six hundred thousand persons. But some, supposing that persons not being able to distinguish their right hand from their left must mean children under two years of age, and reckoning one such child for every twenty persons from that age upwards, make the population amount to two millions five hundred thousand. Nor can this be considered an exaggerated estimate, when we know that London, not one-tenth of the size of ancient Nineveh, contains a population of upwards of one million. But calculations of this kind, relative to matters of such remote antiquity, are generally precarious, and not very useful: and ancient authors, though the only guides, are not always safe conductors. Mosul is generally supposed to be the same as the ancient Nineveh. It is in the province of Dearhekir, on the west bank of the Tigris.

Their wickedness is come up before me.— This is a personification of evil. It ascends from earth to heaven; and stands before the Supreme Judge, to bear witness against its own delinquency, and that of the persons whom it has seduced.

Verse 3. *To flee unto Tarshish*— Some say Tartessus, in Spain, near the straits of Gibraltar, others, Tarsus, in Cilicia; and others, Taprobana, or the island of Ceylon, formerly called Taprobah; and Tabrobavagh in Sanscrit, to the present day.

And went down to Joppa— This place is celebrated as that where Andromeda, daughter of Cepheus, was chained to a rock, and exposed to be devoured by a sea-monster, from which she was delivered by the valor of Perseus. It is the nearest port to Jerusalem on that side of the Mediterranean.

And he found a ship— The Phoenicians carried on a considerable trade with Tartessus, Ezekiel 27:12; and it was probably in one of their ships that Jonah embarked.

He paid the fare thereof— He paid for his passage. This shows that there was traffic between the two places, and that each passenger paid a stated fare.

From the presence of the Lord.— He considered that God was peculiarly resident in Judea; and if he got out of that land, the Lord would most probably appoint another prophet to carry the message; for Jonah appears to have considered the enterprise as difficult and dangerous, and therefore wished to avoid it.

Verse 4. *A great wind*— They were overtaken with a storm, which appears from the sequel to have come by the immediate direction of God.

Like to be broken— They had nearly suffered shipwreck.

Verse 5. *Cried every man unto his god*— The ship's crew were all heathens; and, it is probable, heathens who had each a different object of religious worship.

Cast forth the wares— Threw the lading overboard to lighten the ship, hoping the better to ride out the storm.

Jonah was gone down— Most probably into the hold or cabin under the deck; or where they had berths for passengers in the sides of the ship, something in the manner of our packets.

Was fast asleep.— Probably quite exhausted and overcome with distress, which in many cases terminates in a deep sleep. So the disciples in the garden of Gethsemane.

Verse 6. *The shipmaster*— Either the captain or the pilot.

Arise, call upon thy God— He supposed that Jonah had his god, as well as they had theirs; and that, as the danger was imminent, every man should use the influence he had, as they were all equally involved in it.

Verse 7. *Come, and let us cast lots*— This was a very ancient mode of endeavoring to find out the mind of Divine Providence; and in this case it proves that they supposed the storm to have arisen on account of some hidden crime of some person aboard.

A philosopher being at sea in a violent storm. when the crew began to call earnestly to the gods for safety, he said, "Be silent, and cease your prayers; for should the gods know that you are here, we shall all be lost."

The lot fell upon Jonah.— In this case God directed the lot.

Verse 8. *Tell us-for whose cause*— A very gentle method of bringing the charge home to himself, and the several questions here asked gave the utmost latitude to make the best of his own case.

Verse 9. *I fear the Lord*— In this Jonah was faithful. He gave an honest testimony concerning the God he served, which placed him before the eyes of the sailors as infinitely higher than the objects of their adoration; for the God of Jonah was the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land, and governed both. He also honestly told them that he was fleeing from the presence of this God, whose honorable call he had refused to obey. See ver. 10.

Verse 11. *What shall we do unto thee*— In these poor men there was an uncommon degree of humanity and tender feeling.

Verse 12. *I know that for my sake*— I am not worthy to live; throw me overboard. God will not quiet the storm till I am cast out of the ship. Here was deep compunction; and honest avowal of sin; and a justification of the displeasure which God had now manifested.

Verse 13. *The men rowed hard*— Were very unwilling to proceed to this extremity, and thought they would risk every thing rather than cast this disobedient prophet into the great deep.

Verse 14. *They cried unto the Lord*— Under a conviction that he was the self-existing Being, the Maker of the heavens and the earth, and the author of the present storm, they put up their prayers to him.

Let us not perish for this man's life— They were now about to cast him overboard; but seemed to call God to witness that it was with the utmost

reluctance, and only in obedience to his command. There is a parallel passage in the Argonautics, which has been quoted to illustrate this:—

πολλα δε μερμηριζον ενι φρεσι πευκαλιμησι,
η μεν αποφθισωσι, και ιχθυσι κυρμα βαλωσιν
αινολεχη μηδειαν, αποτρεψωσι δ' εριννυν.

Ver. 1171.

“And much they doubted, in their prudent minds, Whether to kill and cast a prey to fishes Wretched Medea, and avert their fate.”

See Newcome.

Verse 16. Offered a sacrifice— The first perhaps ever offered on board a vessel since the ark floated on the waters of the great deluge; and it is most probable that these heathens, witnessing what was done, became sincere converts to the true God.

Verse 17. Now the Lord had prepared a great fish— דג גדול dag gadol. This could not have been a whale, for the throat of that animal can scarcely admit a man’s leg; but it might have been a shark, which abounds in the Mediterranean, and whose mouth and stomach are exceedingly capacious. In several cases they have been known to swallow a man when thrown overboard. See the note on Matthew 12:40, where the whole subject of this verse is considered at large. That days and nights do not, among the Hebrews, signify complete days and nights of twenty-four hours, see Esther 4:16, compared with chap. 5:1; Judges 14:17, 18. Our Lord lay in the grave one natural day, and part of two others; and it is most likely that this was the precise time that Jonah was in the fish’s belly.

CHAPTER 2

This chapter (except the first verse and the last, which make a part of the narrative) contains a beautiful prayer or hymn, formed of those devout thoughts which Jonah had in the belly of the great fish, with a thanksgiving for his miraculous deliverance.

NOTES ON CHAP. 2

Verse 1. *Then Jonah prayed-out of the fish's belly*— This verse makes the first of the second chapter in the Hebrew text.

It may be asked, "How could Jonah either pray or breathe in the stomach of the fish?" Very easily, if God so willed it. And let the reader keep this constantly in view; the whole is a miracle, from Jonah's being swallowed by the fish till he was cast ashore by the same animal. It was God that had prepared the great fish. It was the Lord that spake to the fish, and caused it to vomit Jonah upon the dry land. ALL is miracle.

Verse 2. *Out of the belly of hell*— Among the Hebrews שְׁאוֹל sheol means the grave, any deep pit, the place of separate spirits, etc. Here the prophet represents himself as in the bottom of the sea; for so sheol must be understood in this place.

Verse 3. *All thy billows and thy waves passed over me.*— This may be understood literally; while the fish, in whose belly he was, sought its pleasure or sustenance in the paths of the deep, the waves and billows of the sea were rolling above. This line seems borrowed from Psalm 42:7.

Verse 4. *I am cast out of thy sight*— See Psalm 31:22.

Thy holy temple.— Then Jerusalem was not yet destroyed, for the temple was standing.

Verse 5. *The waters compassed me about even to the soul*— So as to seem to deprive me of life. I had no hope left.

The weeds were wrapped about my head.— This may be understood literally also. He found himself in the fish's stomach, together with sea weeds, and such like marine substances, which the fish had taken for its aliment.

Verse 6. *I went down to the bottoms of the mountains*— This also may be literally understood. The fish followed the slanting base of the mountains, till they terminated in a plain at the bottom of the great deep.

The earth with her bars— He represents himself as a prisoner in a dungeon, closed in with bars which he could not remove, and which at first appeared to be for ever, i.e., the place where his life must terminate.

Yet hast thou brought up my life— The substance of this poetic prayer was composed while in the fish's belly; but afterwards the prophet appears to have thrown it into its present poetic form, and to have added some circumstances, such as that before us; for he now speaks of his deliverance from this imminent danger of death. "Thou hast brought up my life from corruption."

Verse 7. *When my soul fainted*— When I had given up all hope of life.

My prayer came in unto thee— Here prayer is personified, and is represented as a messenger going from the distressed, and entering into the temple of God, and standing before him. This is a very fine and delicate image. This clause is one of those which I suppose the prophet to have added when he penned this prayer.

Verse 8. *They that observe lying vanities*— They that trust in idols, follow vain predictions, permit themselves to be influenced with foolish fears, so as to induce them to leave the path of obvious duty, forsake their own mercy. In leaving that God who is the Fountain of mercy, they abandon that measure of mercy which he had treasured up for them.

Verse 9. *But I will sacrifice unto thee*— I will make a sincere vow, which, as soon as my circumstances will permit, I will faithfully execute; and therefore he adds, “I will pay that which I have vowed.”

Salvation is of the Lord.— All deliverance from danger, preservation of life, recovery from sickness, and redemption of the soul from the power, guilt, and pollution of sin, is from Jehovah. He alone is the Savior, he alone is the Deliverer; for all salvation is from the Lord.

Verse 10. *And the Lord spake unto the fish*— That is, by his influence the fish swam to shore, and cast Jonah on the dry land. So the whole was a miracle from the beginning to the end; and we need not perplex ourselves to find out literal interpretations; such as, “When Jonah was thrown overboard he swam for his life, earnestly praying God to preserve him from drowning; and by his providence he was thrown into a place of fish-a fishing cove, where he was for a time entangled among the weeds, and hardly escaped with his life; and when safe, he composed this poetic prayer, in metaphorical language, which some have wrongly interpreted, by supposing that he was swallowed by a fish; when דג dag should have been understood, as a place of fish, or fishing creek,” etc. Now I say the original has no such meaning in the Bible: and this gloss is plainly contrary to the letter of the text; to all sober and rational modes of interpretation; and to the express purpose for which God appears to have wrought this miracle, and to which Jesus Christ himself applies it. For as Jonah was intended for a sign to the Jews of the resurrection of Christ, they were to have the proof of this semiosis, in his lying as long in the heart of the earth as the prophet was in the belly of the fish, and all interpretations of this kind go to deny both the sign and the thing signified. Some men, because they cannot work a miracle themselves, can hardly be persuaded that GOD can do it.

The text, and the use made of it by Christ, most plainly teach us that the prophet was literally swallowed by a fish, by the order of God; and that by the Divine power he was preserved alive, for what is called three days and three nights, in the stomach of the fish; and at the conclusion of the above time that same fish was led by the unseen power of God to the shore, and there compelled to eject the prey that he could neither kill nor

digest. And how easy is all this to the almighty power of the Author and Sustainer of life, who has a sovereign, omnipresent, and energetic sway in the heavens and in the earth. But foolish man will affect to be wise; though, in such cases, he appears as the recently born, stupid offspring of the wild ass. It is bad to follow fancy, where there is so much at stake. Both ancients and moderns have grievously trifled with this prophet's narrative; merely because they could not rationally account for the thing, and were unwilling (and why?) to allow any miraculous interference.

CHAPTER 3

Jonah is sent again to Nineveh, a city of three days' journey, (being sixty miles in circumference, according to Diodorus Siculus,) 1-4. The inhabitants, in consequence of the prophet's preaching, repent in dust and ashes, 5-9. God, seeing that they were deeply humbled on account of their sins, and that they turned away from all their iniquities, repents of the evil with which he had threatened them, 10.

NOTES ON CHAP. 3

Verse 1. *And the word of the Lord*— The same oracle as that before given; and which, from what he had felt and seen of the justice and mercy of the Lord, he was now prepared to obey.

Verse 2. *And preach unto it the preaching*— וְקָרָא אֶת הַקְּרִיָּאָה vekera eth hakkeriah, “And cry the cry that I bid thee.” Be my herald, and faithfully deliver my message. The word κηρυξ in Greek answers to the Hebrew קֹרֵא kore: both signifying a crier, a herald, a preacher; one that makes proclamation with a loud and earnest cry. Such was John Baptist, Isaiah 40:3; such was Jesus Christ, John 7:18-37; and such were all his apostles. And such earnestness becomes a ministry that has to do with immortal souls, asleep and dead in sin, hanging on the brink of perdition, and insensible of their state. The soft-speaking, gentle-toned, unmoved preacher, is never likely to awaken souls. As we preach, so the people hear; scarcely receiving any counsels that appear to have no importance by the manner in which they are delivered. But this earnestness is widely different from that noisy, blustering, screaming rant, that manifests more of the turbulence of disorderly passions, than of the real inspired influence of the Spirit of God.

Verse 3. *Nineveh was an exceeding great city, of three days' journey.*— See on chap. 1:2. Strabo says, lib. xvi., πολυ μειζων ην της βαβυλωνος,

“it was much larger than Babylon:” and Ninus, the builder, not only proposed to make it the largest city of the world, but the largest that could be built by man. See Diodor. Sic. Bib. 50:2: And as we find, from the lowest computation, that it was at least fifty-four or sixty English miles in circumference, it would take the prophet three days to walk round upon the walls, and announce from them the terrible message, “Yet forty days, and Nineveh will be destroyed!”

Verse 4. *Yet forty days*— Both the Septuagint and Arabic read three days. Probably some early copyist of the Septuagint, from whom our modern editions are derived, mistook the Greek numerals μ forty for γ three; or put the three days’ journey in preaching instead of the forty days mentioned in the denunciation. One of Kennicott’s MSS., instead of ארבעים arbaim, forty, has שלשים sheloshim, thirty: but the Hebrew text is undoubtedly the true reading; and it is followed by all the ancient versions, the Septuagint and Vulgate excepted. thus God gives them time to think, reflect, take counsel, and return to him. Had they only three days’ space, the denunciation would have so completely confounded them, as to excite nothing but terror, and prevent repentance and conversion.

Verse 5. *The people of Nineveh believed God*— They had no doubt that the threatening would be fulfilled, unless their speedy conversion prevented it; but, though not expressed, they knew that the threatening was conditional. “The promises and threatenings of God, which are merely personal, either to any particular man or number of men, are always conditional, because the wisdom of God hath thought fit to make these depend on the behavior of men.”-Dr. S. Clarke’s Sermons, vol. i.

Proclaimed a fast— And never was there one so general, so deep, and so effectual. Men and women, old and young, high and low, and even the cattle themselves, all kept such a fast as the total abstinence from food implies.

Verse 6. *Word came unto the king*— This, some think, was Pul; others, Sardanapalus his son, king of Assyria, who flourished in the reign of Jeroboam the Second: but it seems more probable that the monarch here

alluded to was a king of Assyria contemporary with Joash, king of Judah. It was by the decree of the king that the fast was instituted, and became general.

Verse 8. *Let man and beast be covered*— This was done that every object which they beheld might deepen the impression already made, and cause them to mourn after a godly sort. Virgil tells us that the mourning for the death of Julius Caesar was so general, that the cattle neither ate nor drank:—

*Non ulli pastos illis egere diebus Frigida, Daphni,
boves ad flumina: nulla neque amnem Libavit
quadrupes, nec graminis attigit herbam.*

Ecl. 5:24.

*“The swains forgot their sheep, nor near the brink
Of running waters brought their herds to drink.
The thirsty cattle of themselves abstain’d,
From water, and their grassy fare disdain’d.”*

DRYDEN.

And that they sometimes changed: or reversed the harness and ornaments of cattle, as indicative of mourning, we have a proof in Virgil’s description of the funeral procession in honor of Pallas, slain by Turnus, AEn. 11:ver. 89.

Post bellator equus, positus insignibus, AËthon It lacrymans, guttisque humectat grandibus ora.

“Stripp’d of his trappings, and his head declined, AËthon, his generous warrior-horse, behind, Moves with a solemn, slow, majestic pace; And the big tears come rolling down his face.”

Verse 9. *Who can tell if God will turn and repent*— There is at least a peradventure for our salvation. God may turn towards us, change his

purpose, and save us alive. While there is life there is hope; God has no pleasure in the death of sinners; he is gracious and compassionate. Himself has prescribed repentance; if we repent, and turn to him from our iniquities, who knows then whether God will not turn, etc.

Verse 10. *And Gods saw their works*— They repented, and brought forth fruits meet for repentance; works which showed that they did most earnestly repent. He therefore changed his purpose, and the city was saved. The purpose was: If the Ninevites do not return from their evil ways, and the violence that is in their hands, within forty days, I will destroy the city. The Ninevites did return, etc., and therefore escaped the threatened judgment. Thus we see that the threatening was conditional.

CHAPTER 4

Jonah, dreading to be thought a false prophet, repines at God's mercy in sparing the Ninevites, whose destruction he seems to have expected, from his retiring to a place without the city about the close of the forty days. But how does he glorify that mercy which he intends to blame! And what an amiable posture does he give of the compassion of God! 1-5. This attribute of the Deity is still farther illustrated by his tenderness and condescension to the prophet himself, who, with all his prophetic gifts, had much of human infirmity, 6-11.

NOTES ON CHAP. 4

Verse 1. *But it displeased Jonah exceedingly*— This hasty, and indeed inconsiderate prophet, was vexed because his prediction was not fulfilled. He had more respect to his high sense of his own honor than he had to the goodness and mercy of God. He appeared to care little whether six hundred and twenty thousand persons were destroyed or not, so he might not pass for a deceiver, or one that denounced a falsity.

And he was very angry.— Because the prediction was not literally fulfilled; for he totally lost sight of the condition.

Verse 2. *I know that thou art a gracious God*— See the note on Exodus 34:6.

Verse 3. *Take, I beseech thee, my life from me*— קח נא את נפשי kach na eth naphshi, “Take, I beseech thee, even my Soul.” Do not let me survive this disgrace. Thou hast spared this city. I thought thou wouldst do so, because thou art merciful and gracious, and it was on this account that I refused to go at first, as I knew that thou mightest change thy purpose, though thou hadst commanded me to make an absolute denunciation of judgment. God has left this example on record to show that an inconsiderate man is not fit to be employed in his work; and he

chose this one example that it might serve as an endless warning to his Church to employ no man in the work of the ministry that is not scripturally acquainted with God's justice and mercy.

Verse 4. *Doest thou well to be angry?*—ההיטב הרה לך haheitib harah lac, "Is anger good for thee?" No, anger is good for no man; but an angry preacher, minister, bishop, or prophet, is an abominable man. He who, in denouncing the word of God against sinners, joins his own passions with the Divine threatenings, is a cruel and bad man, and should not be an overseer in God's house. A surly bishop, a peevish, passionate preacher, will bring neither glory to God, nor good to man. Dr. Taylor renders the clause, "Art thou very much grieved?" A man may be very much grieved that a sinner is lost; but who but he who is of a fiendish nature will be grieved because God's mercy triumphs over judgment?

Verse 5. *So Jonah went out of the city*—I believe this refers to what had already passed; and I therefore agree with Bp. Newcome, who translates, "Now Jonah HAD gone out of the city, and HAD sat," etc.; for there are many instances where verbs in the preterite form have this force, the וָ vau here turning the future into the preterite. And the passage is here to be understood thus: When he had delivered his message he left the city, and went and made himself a tent, or got under some shelter on the east side of the city, and there he was determined to remain till he should see what would become of the city. But when the forty days had expired, and he saw no evidence of the Divine wrath, he became angry, and expostulated with God as above. The fifth verse should be read in a parenthesis, or be considered as beginning the chapter.

Verse 6. *And the Lord God prepared a gourd*—I believe this should be rendered in the preterpluperfect tense. The Lord HAD prepared-this plant, קיקיון kikayon. It had in the course of God's providence been planted and grown up in that place, though perhaps not yet in full leaf; and Jonah made that his tent. And its thick branches and large leaves made it an ample shelter for him, and because it was such, he rejoiced greatly on the account. But what was the kikayon? The best judges say the ricinus or palma Christi, from which we get what is vulgarly called castor oil, is

meant. It is a tree as large as the olive, has leaves which are like those of the vine, and is also quick of growth. This in all probability was the plant in question, which had been already planted, though it had not attained its proper growth, and was not then in full leaf. Celsus, in his Hierobot., says it grows to the height of an olive tree; the trunk and branches are hollow like a kex, and the leaves sometimes as broad as the rim of a hat. It must be of a soft or spongy substance, for it is said to grow surprisingly fast. See Taylor under the root קִיָּק, 1670. But it is evident there was something supernatural in the growth of this plant, for it is stated to have come up in a night; though the Chaldee understands the passage thus: "It was here last night, and it withered this night." In one night it might have blown and expanded its leaves considerably, though the plant had existed before, but not in full bloom till the time that Jonah required it for a shelter.

Verse 7. *But God prepared a worm*— By being eaten through the root, the plant, losing its nourishment, would soon wither; and this was the case in the present instance.

Verse 8. *A vehement east wind*— Which was of itself of a parching, withering nature; and the sun, in addition, made it intolerable. These winds are both scorching and suffocating in the East, for deserts of burning sand lay to the east or south-east; and the easterly winds often brought such a multitude of minute particles of sand on their wings, as to add greatly to the mischief. I believe these, and the sands they carry, are the cause of the ophthalmia which prevails so much both in Egypt and India.

Verse 9. *I do well to be angry, even unto death.*— Many persons suppose that the gifts of prophecy and working miracles are the highest that can be conferred on man; but they are widely mistaken, for the gifts change not the heart. Jonah had the gift of prophecy, but had not received that grace which destroys the old man and creates the soul anew in Christ Jesus. This is the love of which St. Paul speaks, which if a man have not, though he had the gift of prophecy, and could miraculously remove mountains, yet in the sight of God, and for any good himself might reap from it, it would be as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. Jonah was a prophet, and yet had all his old bad tempers about him, in a shameful predominancy. Balaam was of the same kind. So we find that God gave the

gift of prophecy even to graceless men. But many of the prophets were sanctified in their nature before their call to the prophetic office, and were the most excellent of men.

Verse 10. *which came up in a night*— St. Jerome, speaking of this plant, the kikayon, assigns to it an extraordinary rapidity of growth. It delights in a sandy soil, and in a few days what was a plant grows into a large shrub. But he does not appear to have meant the ricinus; this however is the most likely. The expressions coming up in a night and perishing in a night are only metaphorical to express speedy growth and speedy decay; and so, as we have seen, the Chaldee interprets it, **הוה ובליליא אוחרנא אבד** **די בליליא הדרי** “which existed this night but in the next night perished;” and this I am satisfied is the true import of the Hebrew phrase.

Verse 11. *And should not I spare Nineveh*— In ver. 10 it is said, thou hast had pity on the gourd, **אתה חסת** attah CHASTA; and here the Lord uses the same word, **ואני לא אחוס** veani lo ACHUS, “And shall not I have pity upon Nineveh?” How much is the city better than the shrub? But besides this there are in it one hundred and twenty thousand persons! And shall I destroy them, rather than thy shade should be withered or thy word apparently fail? And besides, these persons are young, and have not offended, (for they knew not the difference between their right hand and their left,) and should not I feel more pity for those innocents than thou dost for the fine flowering plant which is withered in a night, being itself exceedingly short-lived? Add to all this, they have now turned from those sins which induced me to denounce judgment against them. And should I destroy them who are now fasting and afflicting their souls; and, covered with sackcloth, are lying in the dust before me, bewailing their offenses and supplicating for mercy? Learn, then, from this, that it is the incorrigibly wicked on whom my judgments must fall and against whom they are threatened. And know, that to that man will I look who is of a broken and contrite spirit, and who trembles at my word. Even the dumb beasts are objects of my compassion; I will spare them for the sake of their penitent owners; and remember with the rest, That the Lord careth for oxen.

The great number of cattle to which reference is here made were for the support of the inhabitants; and probably at this time the Ninevites gathered in their cattle from the champaign pasture, expecting that some foe coming to besiege them might seize upon them for their forage, while they within might suffer the lack of all things.

No doubt that ancient Nineveh was like ancient Babylon, of which Quintus Curtius says the buildings were not close to the walls, there being the space of an acre left between them; and in several parts there were within the walls portions of cultivated land, that, if besieged, they might have provisions to sustain the inhabitants.

And I suppose this to be true of all large ancient cities. They were rather cantons or districts than cities such as now are, only all the different inhabitants had joined together to wall in the districts for the sake of mutual defense.

This last expostulation of God, it is to be hoped, produced its proper effect on the mind of this irritable prophet; and that he was fully convinced that in this, as in all other cases, God had done all things well.

FROM this short prophecy many useful lessons may be derived. The Ninevites were on the verge of destruction, but on their repentance were respited. They did not, however, continue under the influence of good resolutions. They relapsed, and about one hundred and fifty years afterwards, the Prophet Nahum was sent to predict the miraculous discomfiture of the Assyrian king under Sennacherib, an event which took place about 710 B.C., and also the total destruction of Nineveh by Cyaxares and his allies which happened about 606 B.C. Several of the ancients, by allegorizing this book, have made Jonah declare the divinity, humanity, death, and resurrection of Christ. These points may be found in the Gospel history, their true repository; but fancy can find them any where it pleases to seek them; but he who seeks not for them will never find them here. Jonah was a type of the resurrection of Christ; nothing farther seems revealed in this prophet relative to the mysteries of Christianity.

In conclusion: while I have done the best I could to illustrate the very difficult prophet through whose work the reader has just passed, I do not pretend to say I have removed every difficulty. I am satisfied only of one thing, that I have conscientiously endeavored to do it, and believe that I have generally succeeded; but am still fearful that several are left behind, which, though they may be accounted for from the briefness of the narrative of a great transaction, in which so many surprising particulars are included, yet, for general apprehension, might appear to have required a more distinct and circumstantial statement. I have only to add, that as several of the facts are evidently miraculous, and by the prophet stated as such, others may be probably of the same kind. On this ground all difficulty is removed; for God can do what he pleases. As his power is unlimited, it can meet with no impossibilities. He who gave the commission to Jonah to go and preach to the Ninevites, and prepared the great fish to swallow the disobedient prophet, could maintain his life for three days and three nights in the belly of this marine monster; and cause it to eject him at the termination of the appointed time, on any sea-coast he might choose; and afterwards the Divine power could carry the deeply contrite and now faithful prophet over the intervening distance between that and Nineveh, be that distance greater or less. Whatever, therefore, cannot be accounted for on mere natural principles in this book, may be referred to this supernatural agency; and this, on the ostensible principle of the prophecy itself, is at once a mode of interpretation as easy as it is rational. God gave the commission; he raised the storm, he prepared the fish which swallowed the prophet; he caused it to cast him forth on the dry land; he gave him a fresh commission, carried him to the place of his destination, and miraculously produced the sheltering gourd, that came to perfection in a night and withered in a night. This God therefore performed the other facts for which we cannot naturally account, as he did those already specified. This concession, for the admission of which both common sense and reason plead, at once solves all the real or seeming difficulties to be found in the Book of the Prophet Jonah.

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK

OF THE

PROPHET MICAH

MICAH, the Morasthite, or of Moresa, a village near the city Eleutheropolis, in the southern part of Judah, is the sixth in order of the twelve minor prophets. He prophesied under Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, for about fifty years. Some have confounded him with Micaiah, son of Imlah, who lived in the kingdom of the ten tribes, under the reign of Ahab.

The spurious Dorotheus says that Micah was buried in the burying-place of the Anakim, whose habitation had been at Hebron, and round about it. This prophet appeared almost at the same time with Isaiah, and has even borrowed some expressions from him. Compare Isaiah 2:2 with Micah 4:1, and Isaiah 41:15 with Micah 4:13.

The prophecy of Micah contains but seven chapters. He foretells the calsmities of Samaria, which was taken by Shalmaneser, and reduced to a heap of stones. Afterwards he prophesies against Judah, and declares the troubles that Sennacherib should bring upon it under the reign of Hezekiah. Then he declaims against the iniquities of Samaria. He foretells the captivity of the ten tribes, and their return into their own country. The third chapter contains a pathetic invective against the princes of the house of Jacob, and the judges of the house of Israel; which seems levelled against the chief of the kingdom of Judah, the judges, the magistrates, the priests, the false prophets, etc. He upbraids them with their avarice, their injustice, and falsehood; and tells them they will be the occasion that Jerusalem shall be reduced to a heap of rubbish, and the mountain of the

temple shall be as a forest. We are informed, Jeremiah 26:18, 19, that this prophecy was pronounced in the reign of Hezekiah; and that it saved Jeremiah from death.

After these terrible denunciations, Micah speaks of the reign of the Messiah, and of the establishment of the Christian Church. And as the peaceable times which succeeded the return from the Babylonish captivity, and which were a figure of the reign of the Messiah, were disturbed by a tempest of a short continuance, Micah foretold it in such a manner as agrees very well with what Ezekiel says of the war of Gog against the Jews. Micah speaks in particular of the birth of the Messiah; that he was to be born at Bethlehem; and that his dominion was to extend to the utmost parts of the earth. He says that God should raise seven shepherds, who should reign by the sword over Assyria, and in the land of Nimrod; which Calmet explains of Darius, son of Hystaspes; and of the seven confederates that killed the magian, and who possessed the empire of the Persians, after the extinction of the family of Cyrus. The fifth chapter, from ver. 7 to the end, describes the flourishing estate of the Jews in their own country, from the reign of Darius, and after the Maccabees; yet in such a manner, that he mingles several things in it that can apply only to the Church of Jesus Christ.

The two last chapters of Micah contain, first, a long invective against the iniquities of Samaria: then he foretells the fall of Babylon; the re-establishment of the cities of Israel; the greatness of the country possessed by the Israelites; their happiness; the graces wherewith God will favor them; and all this in such lofty terms, that they chiefly agree with the Christian Church. St. Jerome says that Micah was buried at Morasthi, ten furlongs from Eleutheropolis; and Sozomenes says that his tomb was revealed to Zebennus, bishop of Eleutheropolis, under the reign of Theodosius the Great. He calls the place of his burial Beretsate, which is probably the same as Morasthi, ten furlongs from Eleutheropolis.

Bishop Newcome observes that Micah was of the kingdom of Judah, as he only makes mention of kings who reigned over that country. It is supposed that he prophesied farther on in the reign of Hezekiah than Hosea did; although chap. 5:5 was written before the captivity of the ten

tribes, which happened in the sixth year of Hezekiah. It is plain from chap. 1:1, 5, 9, 12, 13, that he was sent both to Israel and Judah. Like Amos and Hosea, he reproveth and threatens, with great spirit and energy, a corrupt people. See chap. 2:1-3, 8, 9, 10; 3:2-4, 6, 10-16; 7:2-4. And, like Hosea, he inveighs against the princes and prophets with the highest indignation. See chap. 3:5-7, 9-12; 7:3. The reader will observe that these similar topics are treated of by each prophet with remarkable variety, and copiousness of expression.

Some of his prophecies are distinct and illustrious ones, as chap. 2:12, 13; 3:12; 4:1-4, 10; 5:2-4; 6:13; 7:8-10.

We may justly admire the elegance of his diction:—

Chap. 2:12. — “I will surely gather, O Jacob, all of thee:
I will surely assemble the residue of Israel.
I will put them together as sheep of Bozra,
As a flock in the midst of their fold:
They shall make a tumult from the multitude of men.

13. — He that forceth a passage is come up before them:
They have forced a passage, and have passed through
the gate; and are gone forth by it:
And their King passeth before them, even Jehovah at
the head of them.”

Chap. 4:1. — “But it shall come to pass, in the latter days,
That the mountain of the temple of Jehovah shall be
Established on the top of the mountains,
And it shall be exalted above the hills;
And the people shall flow into it:

2. — And many nations shall go, and shall say,
Come, and let us go up unto the mountain of Jehovah,
And unto the temple of the God of Jacob:
That he may teach us of his ways, and that we may
walk in his paths.

For from Sion shall go forth a law,
And the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem.

3. — And he shall judge between many people,
And he shall convince strong nations afar off:
And they shall beat their swords into ploughshares,
And their spears into pruninghooks:
Nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
Neither shall they any longer learn war.”

His animation, chap. 1:5, lines 3, 4:—

“What is the transgression of Jacob?-is it not that of Samaria? And what are the high places of Judah?-are they not those of Jerusalem?”

Chap. 4:59. — “And now why dost thou cry out loudly?
Is there no king in thee?
Hath thy counsellor perished?
For pangs have seized thee, as a woman in travail.”

There are few beauties of composition of which examples may not be found in this prophet. For sublimity and impressiveness in several places, he is unrivalled. The Lord’s controversy, chap. 6:1-8, is equal to any thing even in the prophet Isaiah. It has a powerful effect on every attentive reader.

His strength of expression:—

Chap. 1:6. — “Therefore will I make Samaria a heap of the field,
a place for the plantings of a vineyard:
And I will pour down her stones into the valley, and
I will discover her foundations.”

3:2. — “Ye who hate good and love evil:
Who pluck their skin from off them,
And their flesh from off their bones.”

3:3. — Who have also eaten the flesh of my people,
 And have flayed their skin from off them,
 And have broken their bones;
 And have divided them asunder, as flesh in the pot:
 And as meat within the caldron.”

7:1. — “Wo is me; for I am become
 As the gatherers of late figs, as the gleaners of the vintage.
 There is no cluster to eat:
 My soul desireth the first-ripe fig.

2. — The good man is perished from the land,
 And there is none upright among men.
 All of them lie in wait for blood;
 They hunt every man his brother for his destruction.”

His pathos:—

Chap. 1:16. — “Make thee bald, and cut off thine hair for thy delicate children;
 Enlarge thy baldness as the eagle;
 For they are gone into captivity from thee.”

2:4. — “In that day shall a proverb be taken up against you;
 And a grievous lamentation shall be made:
 Saying, ‘We are utterly laid waste:
 He hath changed the portion of my people:
 How hath he departed from me,
 To bring again him that divided our fields!’”

His sublimity:—

Chap. 1:2. — “Hear, O ye people, all of you:
 Hearken, O land, and all that are therein.
 And let the Lord Jehovah be witness against you;
 Even the Lord from his holy temple.

3. — For, behold, Jehovah will go forth from his place:
And he will come down, and will tread upon the high
places of the earth.

4. — And the mountains shall be molten under him;
And the valleys shall cleave asunder;
As wax before the fire,
As waters poured down a steep place.”

Chap. 6:1. — “Hear ye now what Jehovah saith:
Arise, contend thou before the mountains;
And let the hills hear thy voice.”

7:15. — “The nations shall see, and shall be confounded
because of their might:
They shall lay their hand upon their mouth; their
ears shall be deaf.

7. — They shall lick the dust as the serpent;
As the creeping things upon the earth, they shall
tremble from their close places:
Because of Jehovah our God, they shall stand in
awe; and they shall fear because of thee.”

THE BOOK

OF THE

PROPHET MICAH

Chronological Notes relative to this Book

- Year from the Creation, according to Archbishop Usher, 3254.
- Year of the Julian Period, 3964.
- Year since the Flood, 1598.
- Year from the vocation of Abram, 1171.
- Year since the first celebration of the Olympic games in Elis by the Iduci Dactyli, 704.
- Year from the destruction of Troy, according to the general computation of chronologers, 434.
- Year since the commencement of the kingdom of Israel, by the Divine appointment of Saul to the regal dignity, 346.
- Year from the foundation of Solomon's temple, 262.
- Year since the division of Solomon's monarchy into the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, 226.
- Year since the restoration of the Olympic games at Elis by Lycurgus, Iphitus, and Cleosthenes, 135.
- Year from the foundation of the kingdom of Macedon by Caranus, 65.
- Year from the foundation of the kingdom of Lydia by Ardysus, 49.
- All before this reign concerning Lydia is entirely fabulous.
- Year since the conquest of Coroebus at Olympia, usually called the first Olympiad, 27.
- Third year of the seventh Olympiad.
- Year before the building of Rome, according to the Varronian computation, 4.
- Year from the building of Rome, according to Cato and the Fasti

Consulares, 3.

- Year from the building of Rome, according to Polybius the historian, 2.
- Year before the building of Rome, according to Fabius Pictor, 2.
- Year before the commencement of the era of Nabonassar, 2.
- Year before the birth of Christ, 746.
- Year before the vulgar era of Christ's nativity, 750.
- Cycle of the Sun, 16.
- Cycle of the Moon, 12.
- Twenty-first year of Theopompus, king of Lacedaemon, of the family of the Proclidae.
- Twenty seventh year of Polydorus, king of Lacedaemon, of the family of the Eurysthenidae.
- Twelfth year of Alyattes, king of Lydia.
- Fifth year of Charops, the first decennial archon of the Athenians.
- Fourth year of Romulus, the first king of the Romans.
- Tenth year of Pekah, king of Israel.
- Ninth year of Jothan, king of Judah.

CHAPTER 1

The prophet begins with calling the attention of all people to the awful descent of Jehovah, coming to execute his judgments against the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, 1-5; first against Samaria, whose fate the prophet laments on the dress of mourners, and with the doleful cries of the fox or ostrich, 6-8; and then against Jerusalem, which is threatened with the invasion of Sennacherib. Other cities of Judah are likewise threatened; and their danger represented to be so great as to oblige them to have recourse for protection even to their enemies the Philistines, from whom they desired at first to conceal their situation. But all resources are declared to be vain; Israel and Judah must go into captivity, 9-16.

NOTES ON CHAP. 1

Verse 1. *The word of the Lord that came to Micah the Morasthite*— For all authentic particulars relative to this prophet, see the preface.

In the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah— These three kings reigned about threescore years; and Micah is supposed to have prophesied about forty or fifty years; but no more of his prophecies have reached posterity than what are contained in this book, nor is there any evidence that any more was written. His time appears to have been spent chiefly in preaching and exhorting; and he was directed to write those parts only that were calculated to profit succeeding generations.

Verse 2. *Hear, all ye people*— The very commencement of this prophecy supposes preceding exhortations and predictions.

Hearken, O earth— ארץ arets, here, should be translated land, the country of the Hebrews being only intended.

And let the Lord God be Witness— Let him who has sent me with this message be witness that I have delivered it faithfully; and be a witness

against you, if you take not the warning.

The Lord from his holy temple.— The place where he still remains as your King, and your Judge; and where you profess to pay your devotions. The temple was yet standing, for Jerusalem was not taken for many years after this; and these prophecies were delivered before the captivity of the ten tribes, as Micah appears to have been sent both to Israel and to Judah. See ver. 5-9, 12, 13.

Verse 3. *For, behold, the Lord cometh forth*— See this clause, Amos 4:13. He represents Jehovah as a mighty conqueror, issuing from his pavilion, stepping from mountain to mountain, which rush down and fill the valleys before him; a consuming fire accompanying him, that melts and confounds every hill and dale, and blends all in universal confusion. God is here represented as doing that himself which other conquerors do by the multitude of their hosts; levelling the mountains, filling some of the valleys, and digging for waters in others, and pouring them from hills and dales for the use of the conquering armies, by pipes and aqueducts.

And why is all this mighty movement? ver. 5. “For the transgression of Jacob is all this, and for the sins of the house of Israel.”

Verse 5. *What is the transgression of Jacob?*— Is it not something extremely grievous? Is it not that of Samaria? Samaria and Jerusalem, the chief cities, are infected with idolatry. Each has its high places, and its idol worship, in opposition to the worship of the true God. That there was idolatry practiced by the elders of Israel, even in the temple of Jehovah, see Ezekiel 8:1, etc. As the royal cities in both kingdoms gave the example of gross idolatry, no wonder that it spread through the whole land, both of Israel and Judah.

Verse 6. *I will make Samaria*— I will bring it to desolation: and, instead of being a royal city, it shall be a place for vineyards. Newcome observes, that Samaria was situated on a hill, the right soil for a vineyard.

I will discover the foundations thereof.— I will cause its walls and fortifications to be razed to the ground.

Verse 7. *All the hires thereof shall be burned*— Multitudes of women gave the money they gained by their public prostitution at the temples for the support of the priesthood, the ornamenting of the walls, altars, and images. So that these things, and perhaps several of the images themselves, were literally the hire of the harlots: and God threatens here to deliver all into the hands of enemies who should seize on this wealth, and literally spend it in the same way in which it was acquired; so that “to the hire of a harlot these things should return.”

Verse 8. *I will make a wailing like the dragons*— Newcome translates:—

I will make a wailing like the foxes, (or jackals,)

And mourning like the daughters of the ostrich. This beast, the jackal or shiagal, we have often met with in the prophets. Travellers inform us that its howlings by night are most lamentable; and as to the ostrich, it is remarkable for its fearful shrieking and agonizing groanings after night. Dr. Shaw says he has often heard them groan as if they were in the greatest agonies.

Verse 9. *Her wound is incurable*— Nothing shall prevent their utter ruin, for they have filled up the measure of their iniquity.

He is come-even to Jerusalem.— The desolation and captivity of Israel shall first take place; that of Judah shall come after.

Verse 10. *Declare ye it not at Gath*— Do not let this prediction be known among the Philistines, else they will glory over you.

House of Aphrah— Or, Beth-aphrah. This place is mentioned Joshua 18:23, as in the tribe of Benjamin. There is a paronomasia, or play on words, here: **בבית לעפרה עפר** bebeith leaphrah aphar, “Roll thyself in the dust in the house of dust.”

Verse 11. *Inhabitant of Saphir*— Sapher, Sepphoris, or Sephora, was the

strongest place in Galilee. — Calmet. It was a city in the tribe of Judah, between Eleutheropolis and Ascalon. — Houbigant.

Zaanan— Another city in the tribe of Judah, Joshua 15:13.

Beth-ezel— A place near Jerusalem, Zechariah 14:5. Some think that Jerusalem itself is intended by this word.

Verse 12. *The inhabitant of Maroth*— There was a city of a similar name in the tribe of Judah, Joshua 15:59.

Verse 13. *Inhabitant of Lachish*— This city was in the tribe of Judah, Joshua 15:39, and was taken by Sennacherib when he was coming against Jerusalem, 2 Kings 18:13, etc., and it is supposed that he wished to reduce this city first, that, possessing it, he might prevent Hezekiah's receiving any help from Egypt.

She is the beginning of the sin— This seems to intimate that Lachish was the first city in Judah which received the idolatrous worship of Israel.

Verse 14. *Give presents to Moresheth-gath*— Calmet says that Moresa or Morashti, and Achzib, were cities not far from Gath. It is possible that when Ahaz found himself pressed by Pekah, king of Israel, he might have sent to these places for succor, that by their assistance he might frustrate the hopes of the king of Israel; and this may be the meaning of "The houses of Achzib shall be a lie to the kings of Israel." In these verses there are several instances of the paronomasia. See ver. 10, עפר *aphar*, dust, and עפרה *aphrah*, the name of the city. ver. 11, צאן *tsaan*, the city, and יצאה *yatsah*, to go out. ver. 13, לכיש *lachish*, the city, and רכש *rechesh*, the swift beast. ver. 14, אכזיב *achzib*, the city, and אכזב *achzab*, a lie. Such paronomasias were reputed ornaments by the prophets. They occur in Isaiah with great effect. See Isaiah 5:7.

Verse 15. *Yet will I bring an heir unto thee, O-Mareshah*— Here is another instance, הירש *haigeresh*, to bring an heir, and מרשה *mareshah*, the city, the name of which signifies heirship. And so of the above proper

names.

Adullam the glory of Israel.— This was a fenced city in the south of Judah (see 2 Chronicles 11:7) towards the Dead Sea.

There is much obscurity in the concluding verses of this chapter. They undoubtedly refer to the captivity of Israel, and to circumstances of distress, etc., which are not mentioned in any of the historical books, and therefore their reference and meaning can only be conjectured.

Verse 16. *Make thee bald*— Cutting off the hair was a sign of great distress, and was practised on the death of near relatives; see Amos 8:10. The desolation should be so great that Israel should feel it to her utmost extent; and the mourning should be like that of a mother for the death of her most delicate children.

Enlarge thy baldness as the eagle— Referring to the moulting of this bird, when in casting its feathers and breeding new ones, it is very sickly, and its strength wholly exhausted.

They are gone into captivity— This is a prediction of the captivity by Shalmaneser. Samaria, the chief city, is called on to deplore it, as then fast approaching.

CHAPTER 2

Here the prophet denounces a wo against the plotters of wickedness, the covetous and the oppressor, 1, 2. God is represented as devising their ruin, 3. An Israelite is then introduced as a mourner, personating his people, and lamenting their fate, 4. Their total expulsion is now threatened on account of their very numerous offenses, 5-10. Great infatuation of the people in favor of those pretenders to Divine inspiration who prophesied to them peace and plenty, 11. The chapter concludes with a gracious promise of the restoration of the posterity of Jacob from captivity; possibly alluding to their deliverance from the Chaldean yoke, an event which was about two hundred years in futurity at the delivery of this prophecy, 12, 13.

NOTES ON CHAP. 2

Verse 1. *Wo to them that devise iniquity*— Who lay schemes and plans for transgressions; who make it their study to find out new modes of sinning; and make these things their nocturnal meditations, that, having fixed their plan, they may begin to execute it as soon as it is light in the morning.

Because it is in the power of their hand.— They think they may do whatever they have power and opportunity to do.

Verse 2. *They covet fields*— These are the rich and mighty in the land; and, like Ahab, they will take the vineyard or inheritance of any poor Naboth on which they may fix their covetous eye; so that they take away even the heritage of the poor.

Verse 3. *Against this family (the Israelites) do I devise an evil*— You have devised the evil of plundering the upright; I will devise the evil to you of punishment for your conduct; you shall have your necks brought under the yoke of servitude. Tiglath-pileser ruined this kingdom, and transported

the people to Assyria, under the reign of Hezekiah, king of Judah; and Micah lived to see this catastrophe. See on ver. 9.

Verse 4. *Take up a parable against you*— Your wickedness and your punishment shall be subjects of common conversation; and a funeral dirge shall be composed and sung for you as for the dead. The lamentation is that which immediately follows: We be utterly spoiled; and ends, Are these his doings? ver. 7.

Verse 5. *None that shall cast a cord*— You will no more have your inheritance divided to you by lot, as it was to your fathers; ye shall neither have fields nor possessions of any kind.

Verse 6. *Prophecy ye not*— Do not predict any more evils-we have as many as we can bear. We are utterly ruined-shame and confusion cover our faces. The original is singular, and expressive of sorrow and sobbing. Literally, “Do not cause it to rain; they will cause it to rain; they cannot make it rain sooner than this; confusion shall not depart from us.” To rain, often means to preach, to prophesy; Ezekiel 20:46, 21:2; Amos 7:16; Deuteronomy 32:2; Job 29:22; Proverbs 5:3, etc.

The last line Bp. Newcome translates, “For he shall not remove from himself reproaches;” and paraphrases, “The true prophet will subject himself to public disgrace by exercising his office.”

Verse 7. *Is the Spirit of the Lord straitened?*— This is the complaint of the Israelites, and a part of the lamentation. Doth it not speak by other persons as well as by Micah? Doth it communicate to us such influences as it did formerly? Is it true that these evils are threatened by that Spirit? Are these his doings? To which Jehovah answers, “Do not my words do

Verse 8. *My people is risen up as an enemy*— Ye are not only opposed to me, but ye are enemies to each other. Ye rob and spoil each other. Ye plunder the peaceable passenger; depriving him both of his upper and under garment; ye pull off the robe from those who, far from being spoilers themselves, are averse from war.

Verse 9. *The women of any people*— Ye are the cause of the women and their children being carried into captivity-separated from their pleasant habitations, and from my temple and ordinances-and from the blessings of the covenant, which it is my glory to give, and theirs to receive. These two verses may probably relate to the war made on Ahaz by Rezin, king of Syria, and Pekah, king of Israel. They fell suddenly upon the Jews; killed in one day one hundred and twenty thousand, and took two hundred thousand captive; and carried away much spoil. Thus, they rose up against them as enemies, when there was peace between the two kingdoms; spoiled them of their goods, carried away men, women, and children, till, at the remonstrances of the prophet Oded, they were released. See 2 Chronicles 28:6, etc. Micah lived in the days of Ahaz, and might have seen the barbarities which he here describes.

Verse 10. *Arise ye, and depart*— Prepare for your captivity; ye shall have no resting place here: the very land is polluted by your iniquities, and shall vomit you out, and it shall be destroyed; and the destruction of it shall be great and sore.

Some think this is an exhortation to the godly, to leave a land that was to be destroyed so speedily.

Verse 11. *If a man walking in the spirit and falsehood*— The meaning is: If a man who professes to be Divinely inspired do lie, by prophesying of plenty, etc., then such a person shall be received as a true prophet by this people. It not unfrequently happens that the Christless worldling, who has got into the priest's office for a maintenance, and who leaves the people undisturbed in their unregenerate state, is better received than the faithful pastor, who proclaims the justice of the Lord, and the necessity of repentance and forsaking sin, in order to their being made partakers of that holiness without which no man shall see God.

Verse 12. *I will surely assemble*— This is a promise of the restoration of Israel from captivity. He compares them to a flock of sheep rushing together to their fold, the hoofs of which make a wonderful noise or clatter. So when one hundred sheep run, eight hundred toes or divisions of these bifed animals make a clattering noise. This appears to be the image.

Verse 13. *The breaker is come up*— He who is to give them deliverance, and lead them out on the way of their return. He who takes down the hurdles, or makes a gap in the wall or hedge, to permit them to pass through. This may apply to those human agents that shall permit and order their return. And Jehovah being at their head, may refer to their final restoration, when the Lord Jesus shall become their leader, they having returned unto him as the shepherd and bishop of their souls; and they and the Gentiles forming one fold under one shepherd, to go no more out into captivity for ever. Lord, hasten the time!

CHAPTER 3

In this chapter the prophet inveighs with great boldness and spirit against the princes and prophets of Judah; and foretells the destruction of Jerusalem as the consequence of their iniquity, 1-12. The last verse was fulfilled to a certain extent by Nebuchadnezzar; but most fully and literally by the Romans under Titus. See Josephus.

NOTES ON CHAP. 3

Verse 1. *Hear-O heads of Jacob*— The metaphor of the flock is still carried on. The chiefs of Jacob, and the princes of Israel, instead of taking care of the flocks, defending them, and finding them pasture, oppressed them in various ways. They are like wolves, who tear the skin of the sheep, and the flesh off their bones. This applies to all unjust and oppressive rulers.

Suetonius tells us, in his Life of Tiberius, that when the governors of provinces wrote to the emperor, entreating him to increase the tributes, he wrote back: “It is the property of a good shepherd to shear his sheep, not to skin them.” Praesidibus onerandas tributo provincias suadentibus rescripsit: BONI PASTORIS ESSE TONDERE PECUS, NON DEGLUBEBE. This is a maxim which many rulers of the earth do not seem to understand.

Verse 4. *Then shall they cry*— When calamity comes upon these oppressors, they shall cry for deliverance: but they shall not be heard; because, in their unjust exactions upon the people, they went on ruthlessly, and would not hear the cry of the oppressed.

Verse 5. *That bite with their teeth*— That eat to the full; that are well provided for, and as long as they are so, prophesy smooth things, and cry, Peace! i.e., Ye shall have nothing but peace and prosperity. Whereas the true prophet, “who putteth not into their mouths,” who makes no provision for their evil propensities, “they prepare war against him.”

קדשו עליו מלחמה kiddeshu again milchamah, “They sanctify a war against him.” They call on all to help them to put down a man who is speaking evil of the Lord’s people; and predicting the destruction of his temple, and Israel his inheritance.

Verse 6. *Night shall be unto you*— Ye shall have no spiritual light, nor will God give you any revelation of his will.

The sun shall go down over the prophets— They prospered for a while, causing the people to err; but they shall also be carried into captivity, and then the sun of their prosperity shall go down for ever, and the very day that gives light and comfort to others, shall be darkness and calamity to them.

Verse 7. *Shall the seers be ashamed*— For the false visions of comfort and prosperity which they pretended to see.

And the diviners confounded— Who pretended to foretell future prosperity; for they themselves are now thrall’d in that very captivity which the true prophets foretold, and which the false prophets said should not happen.

Verse 8. *But-I am full of power*— Here is the character of the true prophet. He is filled, all his soul is occupied with power, **כח** coach, with heavenly energy; by the Spirit of the Lord, the fountain of all truth and might; and of judgment, which enables him to make a proper discernment between the precious and the vile; and of might, **גבורה** geburah, prevalent power, against which vice shall not be able to prevail, and before which iniquity shall not be able to stand: but all shall fall together, and be confounded.

Verse 9. *Hear this*— An appeal similar to that in ver. 1.

Verse 10. *They build up Zion with blood*— They might cry out loudly against that butchery practiced by Pekah, king of Israel, and Pul coadjutor of Rezie, against the Jews. See on chap. 2:9. But these were by no means

clear themselves; for if they strengthened the city, or decorated the temple, it was by the produce of their exactions and oppressions of the people.

I do not know a text more applicable than this to slave-dealers; or to any who have made their fortunes by such wrongs as affect the life of man; especially the former, who by the gains of this diabolic traffic have built houses etc.; for, following up the prophet's metaphor, the timbers, etc., are the bones of the hapless Africans; and the mortar, the blood of the defenceless progeny of Ham. What an account must all those who have any hand in or profit from this detestable, degrading, and inhuman traffic, give to Him who will shortly judge the quick and dead!

Verse 11. *The heads thereof judge for reward*— This does not apply to the regular law officers, who have their proper salaries for giving up their whole time and attention to the conscientious discharge of the duties of their office; but to those who take a reward, who take BRIBES, for the perversion of justice; who will decide in favor of those from whom they get the greatest reward.

The prophets-divine for money— These are evidently the false prophets; for none, professing to be sent by God, used any kind of divination.

Yet will they lean upon the Lord— They will prescribe fasts and public thanksgivings, while not one sin is repented of or forsaken, and not one public grievance is redressed.

Is not the Lord among us?— Here is his temple, here are his ordinances, and here are his people. Will he leave these? Yes, he will abandon the whole, because all are polluted.

Verse 12. *Therefore shall Zion-be ploughed as a field*— It shall undergo a variety of reverses and sackages, till at last there shall not be one stone left on the top of another, that shall not be pulled down; and then a plough shall be drawn along the site of the walls, to signify an irreparable and endless destruction. Of this ancient custom Horace speaks, Odar. lib. i., Od. 16, ver. 18.

Altis urbibus ultimae Stetere causae cur perirent Funditus, imprimeretque
 muris Hostile aratrum exercitus insolens

“From hence proud cities date their utter falls; When, insolent in ruin, o’er
 their walls The wrathful soldier drags the hostile plough, That haughty
 mark of total overthrow.” FRANCIS.

Thus did the Romans treat Jerusalem when it was taken by Titus. Turnus Rufus, or as he is called by St. Jerome, Titus Arinius Rufus, or Terentius Rufus, according to Josephus, caused a plough to be drawn over all the courts of the temple to signify that it should never be rebuilt, and the place only serve for agricultural purposes. See; the note on Matthew 24:2. Thus Jerusalem became heaps, an indiscriminate mass of ruins and rubbish; and the mountain of the house, Mount Moriah, on which the temple stood, became so much neglected after the total destruction of the temple, that it soon resembled the high places of the forest. What is said here may apply also, as before hinted, to the ruin of the temple by Nebuchadnezzar in the last year of the reign of Zedekiah, the last king of the Jews.

As the Masoretes, in their division of the Bible, reckon the twelve minor prophets but as one book, they mark this verse (chap. 3:12) the MIDDLE verse of these prophets.

CHAPTER 4

In the commencement of this chapter we have a glorious prophecy of the establishment and prosperity of the Messiah's kingdom; its peaceful character, increasing spiritual and political influence, ultimate universality, and everlasting duration, 1-4. Then breaks in a chorus of his people declaring their peculiar happiness in being members of his kingdom, 5. The prophet resumes the subject; predicts the restoration and future prosperity of Israel, 6-8; and exhorts them not to be discouraged at their approaching captivity, as they should in due time not only be delivered from it, but likewise be victorious over all their enemies, 9-13. These last verses, which evidently contain a prediction of the final triumph of Christianity over every adversary, have been applied to the conquests of the Maccabees; but the character and beneficial results of their military exploits, as far as we have any account of them, correspond but in a very faint degree to the beautiful and highly wrought terms of the prophecy. The first three verses of this chapter are very similar to the commencement of the second chapter of Isaiah; and the fourth, for beauty of imagery and elegance of expression, is not unworthy of that prophet.

NOTES ON CHAP. 4

Verse 1.-4. *But in the last days it shall come to pass*— These four verses contain, says Bp. Newcome, a prophecy that was to be fulfilled by the coming of the Messiah, when the Gentiles were to be admitted into covenant with God, and the apostles were to preach the Gospel, beginning at Jerusalem, Luke 24:47; Acts 2:14, etc., when Christ was to be the spiritual Judge and King of many people, was to convince many nations of their errors and vices, and was to found a religion which had the strongest tendency to promote peace. Bp. Lowth thinks that “Micah took this passage from Isaiah;” or the Spirit may have inspired both prophets with this prediction; or both may have copied some common original, the words of a prophet well known at that time. The variations (few and of little

importance) may be seen in the notes on the parallel passages, Isaiah 2:2, etc.; to which the reader is requested to refer.

Verse 2. See Clarke on “Micah 4:1”.

Verse 3. See Clarke on “Micah 4:1”.

Verse 4. *Under his vine and under his fig tree*— A proverbial expression, indicative of perfect peace, security, and rural comfort. See on Isaiah 2:1. This verse is an addition to the prophecy as it stands in Isaiah. See Clarke on “Micah 4:1”.

Verse 5. *Every one in the name of his god*— This shall be the state of the Gentile world; but after the captivity, the Jews walked in the name of Jehovah alone; and acknowledge no other object of religious worship to the present day.

Verse 6. *Will I assemble her that halteth-driven out-afflicted*— Under these epithets, the state of the Jews, who were to be gathered into the Christian Church, is pointed out. They halted between the true God and idols; they were driven out into captivity, because of this idolatry; and they were variously afflicted, because they would not return unto the Lord that bought them.

Verse 7. *Her that halted a remnant*— I will preserve them as a distinct people after their return from captivity, for the farther purposes of my grace and mercy.

And the Lord shall reign over them in Mount Zion— The Chaldee is remarkable here, and positively applies the words to the Messiah: “But thou, O Messiah, of Israel, who art hidden because of the sins of the congregation of Zion, the kingdom shall come unto thee.”

Verse 8. *O tower of the flock*— I think the temple is meant, or Jerusalem; the place where the flock, the whole congregation of the people assembled to worship God. Newcome retains the Hebrew word עֶדֶר *eder*, a tower in or near Beth-lehem, Genesis 35:21 or, as some think, a tower near the

sheep-gate in Jerusalem, I believe Jerusalem, or the temple, or both, are meant; for these were considered the stronghold of the daughter-of Zion, the fortress of the Jewish people.

Even the first dominion— What was this? The Divine theocracy under Jesus Christ; this former, this first dominion, was to be restored. Hence the angel called him Immanuel, God with us, ruling among us.

Verse 9. *Is there no King in thee?*— None. And why? Because thou hast rejected Jehovah thy king.

Is thy counsellor perished?— No: but thou hast rejected the words and advices of the prophets.

Pangs have taken thee— He is speaking of the desolations that should take place when the Chaldeans should come against the city; and hence he says, “Thou shalt go to Babylon;” ye shall be cast out of your own land, and sent slaves to a foreign country, He represents the people under the notion of a woman in travail.

Verse 10. *There shalt thou be delivered*— There God shall meet thee; and by redeeming thee from thy captivity, bringing thee back to thine own land, and finally converting thee unto himself, shall deliver thee from the burden of grief and wo which thou now bearest, and under which thou dost groan.

Verse 11. *Many nations are gathered against thee*— The Chaldeans, who were composed of many nations. And, we may add, all the surrounding nations were their enemies; and rejoiced when the Chaldean army had overthrown Jerusalem, destroyed the temple, and led the people away captive.

Let her be defiled— This was their cry and their wish: Let Jerusalem be laid as low as she can be, like a thing defiled and cast away with abhorrence; that their eyes might look upon Zion with scorn, contempt, and exultation.

Verse 12. *But they know not the thoughts of the Lord*— These think that God has utterly rejected his people, and they shall have a troublesome neighbor no more: but this is not his design; he will afflict them for a time; but these, the enemies of his people, he will gather as sheaves into the threshing-floor, there to be trodden, and the wheel to go over them. This is the counsel, the purpose of God, which these do not understand. The persons here referred to are not only the Chaldeans which were threshed by the Persians and Medes; but the Idumeans, Ammonites, Moabites, and Philistines, which the Jews afterwards subdued.

Verse 13. *Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion*— This refers to the subject of the preceding verse. When God shall have gathered together all thy enemies, as into the threshing-floor, he will give thee commission and power to get a complete victory over them, and reduce them to servitude. And that thou mayest be able to do this, he will be on thy side as a powerful helper; here signified by the metaphors, iron horns, and brazen hoofs. Thou shalt have power, authority, and unconquerable strength; for thine enemies shall be no more against thee than the corn against oxen shod with brass, or a puny animal against the horn of a fierce bull tipped with iron.

I will consecrate their gain unto the Lord— What they have taken from thee in the way of spoil shall be restored; and again consecrated unto the service of him who will show himself to be the Lord, the Supreme Governor of the whole earth. Was not this prediction fulfilled when Cyrus gave the Jews permission to return to their own land, and gave them back the sacred vessels of the temple which Nebuchadnezzar had carried away? The Maccabees and their successors recovered much of the booty of which the neighboring nations had deprived the Jews; and the treasure taken was devoted to Jehovah. The first verse of the next chapter should conclude this.

CHAPTER 5

This chapter begins, according to the opinion of some commentators, with a prophecy concerning the siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, and the great indignities which Zedekiah should suffer from the Babylonians, 1. We have next a most famous prediction concerning the birthplace of the Messiah, “whose goings forth have been from of old, from EVERLASTING, 2. See Matthew 2:6. The Jews obstinately persisting in their opposition to the Messiah, God will therefore give them up into the hands of their enemies till the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled: and then all the posterity of Jacob, both Israel and Judah, shall be converted to the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, and, along with the Gentiles, be brought into the large and peaceful pastures of this Great Shepherd of the sheep, 3, 4. After this illustrious prophecy, the prophet goes on to foretell the downfall of the Assyrians, by whom are meant the enemies of the Church in general, the type being probably put for the antitype; the miraculous discomfiture of the great Assyrian army in the reign of Sennacherib strongly shadowing forth the glorious and no less miraculous triumphs of Christianity in the latter times, 5, 6. See Isaiah 11:16. Some understand this prophecy of Antiohus and the seven famous Maccabees, with their eight royal successors, from Aristobulus to Antigonus; and it is not impossible that these people may be also intended, for we have often had occasion to remark that a prophecy of the Old Testament Scriptures has frequently more than one aspect. The seventh verse was fulfilled by the Jews spreading the knowledge of the true God during their captivity, and so paving the way for the gospel; but will be more signally fulfilled after their conversion and restoration. See Romans 11:12-15. The remaining verses contain a prophecy of the final overthrow of all the enemies of pure and undefiled religion, and of the thorough purification of the Church of God from the corruptions of Antichrist, 9-15.

NOTES ON CHAP. 5

Verse 1. *O daughter of troops*— The Chaldeans, whose armies were composed of troops from various nations.

He (Nebuchadnezzar) hath laid siege against us; (Jerusalem;) they shall smite the judge of Israel (Zedekiah) with a rod upon the cheek.— They shall offer him the greatest indignity. They slew his sons before his face; and then put out his eyes, loaded him with chains, and carried him captive to Babylon.

Verse 2. *But thou, Beth-lehem Ephratah*— I have considered this subject in great detail in the notes on Matthew 2:6, to which the reader will be pleased to refer. This verse should begin this chapter; the first verse belongs to the preceding chapter.

Bethlehem Ephratah, to distinguish it from another Beth-lehem, which was in the tribe of Zebulun, Joshua 19:15.

Thousands of Judah— The tribes were divided into small portions called thousands; as in our country certain divisions of counties are called hundreds.

Whose goings forth have been from of old— In every age, from the foundation of the world, there has been some manifestation of the Messiah. He was the hope, as he was the salvation, of the world, from the promise to Adam in paradise, to his manifestation in the flesh four thousand years after.

From everlasting— מִיְמֵי עוֹלָם miyemey olam, “From the days of all time;” from time as it came out of eternity. That is, there was no time in which he has not been going forth-coming in various ways to save men. And he that came forth the moment that time had its birth, was before that time in which he began to come forth to save the souls that he had created. He was before all things. As he is the Creator of all things, so he is the Eternal, and no part of what was created. All being but God has been

created. Whatever has not been created is God. But Jesus is the Creator of all things; therefore he is God; for he cannot be a part of his own work.

Verse 3. *Therefore wilt he give them up*— Jesus Christ shall give up the disobedient and rebellious Jews into the hands of all the nations of the earth, till she who travaileth hath brought forth; that is, till the Christian Church, represented Revelation 12:1, under the notion of a woman in travail, shall have had the fullness of the Gentiles brought in. Then the remnant of his brethren shall return; the Jews also shall be converted unto the Lord; and thus all Israel shall be saved according to Romans 11:26.

Unto the children of Israel.— Taking in both families, that of Judah and that of Israel. The remnant of the ten tribes, wherever they are, shall be brought in under Christ; and though now lost among the nations of the earth, they will then not only be brought in among the fullness of the Gentiles, but most probably be distinguished as Jews.

On this verse Abp. Newcome says, “The sense is, God will not fully vindicate and exalt his people, till the virgin mother shall have brought forth her Son; and till Judah and Israel, and all the true sons of Abraham among their brethren the Gentiles, be converted to Christianity.

Verse 4. *He shall stand and feed*— The Messiah shall remain with his followers, supporting and governing them in the strength and majesty of the Lord, with all the miraculous interferences of his power, and all the glories of his grace.

And they shall abide— After this the Jews shall no more go astray, but shall remain one people with the Gentiles, under the one Shepherd and Bishop of all souls.

Newcome translates, “They shall be converted” for instead of וישבו veyashebu, he reads וישובו veyashubu, which gives him the translation above. This is the reading of three MSS. of Kennicott’s and De Rossi’s, with the Syriac, Chaldee, and Vulgate.

For now shall he be great— The Messiah shall be great, as bringing

salvation to the ends of the earth. All nations shall receive his religion, and he shall be universal King.

Verse 5. *And this man shall be the peace*— This clause should be joined to the preceding verse, as it finishes the prophecy concerning our blessed Lord, who is the Author and Prince of Israel; and shall finally give peace to all nations, by bringing them under his yoke.

When the Assyrian shall come— This is a new prophecy, and relates to the subversion of the Assyrian empire.

Then shall we raise against him seven shepherds— Supposed to mean the seven Maccabees, Mattathias, and his five sons, and Hyrcanus, the son of Simon.

Eight principal men.— Eight princes, the Asmonean race; beginning with Aristobulus, and ending with Herod, who was married to Mariamne. — Sharpe. Perhaps seven and eight are a definite for an indefinite number, as Ecclesiastes 11:2; Job 5:19. The prophet means the chiefs of the Medes and Babylonians, the prefects of different provinces who took Nineveh, whose number may have been what is here specified. — Newcome.

Calmet considers this as referring to the invasion of Judea by Cambyses, when the Lord raised up against him the seven magi. He of them who passed for king of the Persians was the Smerdis of Herodotus, the Oropastes of Trogus, and the Artaxerxes of Ezra. These magi were put to death by seven Persian chiefs; who, having delivered the empire from them, set one of themselves, Darius, the son of Hystaspes, upon the throne.

Verse 6. *The land of Nimrod*— Assyria, and Nineveh its capital; and Babylon, which was also built by Nimrod, who was its first king, Genesis 10:11, 12, in the margin.

In the entrances thereof— At its posts or watergates; for it was by rendering themselves masters of the Euphrates that the Medes and Persians took the city, according to the prediction of Jeremiah, 51:32, 36.

Calmet thinks that this refers to the deliverance of the land from Cambyses by his death, and the insurrection of the eight princes mentioned above, who made themselves masters of the whole Babylonian empire, etc. Perhaps it is best to refer it to the invasion of Judea by Nebuchadnezzar; and the final destruction of the Babylonish empire by Cyrus, who took Babylon, slew Belshazzar, and possessed himself of the kingdom.

Verse 7. *The remnant of Jacob*— From the reign of Darius Hystaspes (Ahasuerus, husband of Esther) the Jews were greatly favored. Those who continued in Persia and Chaldea were greatly honored under the protection of Mordecai and Esther. — Calmet. But others consider this as applying

destroyed Israel; and the Babylonians, who had ruined Judah.

Verse 10. *I will cut off thy horses*— Thou shalt have no need of cavalry in thine armies; God will fight for you.

Verse 11. *I will throw down all thy strongholds*— Thou shalt have no need of fortified cities; I will be thy defense.

Verse 12. *I will cut off witchcrafts*— Thou shalt seek help only in Jehovah thy God. They have had neither soothsayers, images, groves, nor high places, from the captivity to the present day.

Verse 13. *Thy graven images also will I cut off*— Thou shalt be no more an idolatrous people.

Verse 15. *I will execute vengeance upon the heathen*— And he did so; for the empires of the Assyrians, Chaldeans, and others, the sworn enemies of the Jews, have long since been utterly destroyed.

CHAPTER 6

This chapter reproves and threatens. The manner of raising the attention by calling on man to urge his plea in the face of all nature, and on the inanimate creation to hear the expostulation of Jehovah with his people, is awakening and sublime. The words of Jehovah follow, 3-5. And God's mercies having been set forth to his people, one of them is introduced, in a beautiful dramatic form, asking what his duty is towards a God so gracious, 6, 7. The answer follows in the words of the prophet, 8; who goes on to upbraid the people of his charge with their injustice and idolatry, to which he ascribes want of success in their lawful undertakings, and those heave calamities which are now impending, 9-15.

NOTES ON CHAP. 6

Verse 1. *Arise, contend thou*— This chapter is a sort of dialogue between God and the people. GOD speaks the five first verses, and convicts the people of sin, righteousness, and judgment. The PEOPLE, convinced of their iniquity, deprecate God's judgments, in the sixth and seventh verses. In the eighth verse God prescribes the way in which they are to be saved; and then the prophet, by the command of God, goes on to remonstrate from the ninth verse to the end of the chapter.

Verse 2. *Hear ye, O mountains*— Micah, as God's advocate, summons this people into judgment, and makes an appeal to inanimate creation against them. He had spoken to the priests, to the princes, to the people. He had done every thing that was necessary to make them wise, and holy, and happy; they had uniformly disobeyed, and were ever ungrateful. It was not consistent with either the justice or mercy of God to permit them to go on without reprehension and punishment. He now calls them into judgment; and such was the nature of their crimes that, to heighten the effect, and show what reason he had to punish such a people, he appeals to inanimate creation. Their ingratitude and rebellion are sufficient to make

the mountains, the hills, and the strong foundations of the earth to hear, tremble, and give judgment against them. This, then, is the Lord's controversy with his people, and thus he will plead with Israel.

Verse 3. *O my people, what have I done unto thee?*— They are called to show why God should not pronounce sentence upon them. This condescension is truly astonishing! God appears to humble himself to his creatures. You have acted basely, treacherously, and ungratefully to me; this had already been proved by the prophets. What cause have I given you for such conduct? I have required a religious service from you; but have I wearied you by a fatiguing round of difficult duties? If I have, now testify against me; and you shall be first heard, and your plea received, if it be reasonable and good. They are silent; and God proceeds, and states what he has done for them.

Verse 4. *I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt*— Where you were slaves, and grievously oppressed; from all this I redeemed you. Was this a small benefit? I sent before thee MOSES, my chosen servant, and instructed him that he might be your leader and lawgiver. I sent with him AARON, that he might be your priest and transact all spiritual matters between myself and you, in offerings, sacrifices, and atonements. I sent MIRIAM, to whom I gave the spirit of prophecy, that she might tell you things to come, and be the director of your females. To this sense the Chaldee, "I have sent three prophets before you; Moses, that he might teach you the tradition of judgments, Aaron, that he might make atonement for the people; and Miriam, that she might instruct the females."

Verse 5. *Remember now what Balak king of Moab consulted*— He sent for Balaam to curse your fathers; but by my influence he was obliged to bless them. See Numbers 22:and xxiii., and the notes there, where this subject is largely considered.

From Shittim unto Gilgal— From the encampment at Shittim, Numbers 25:1, on the way to that of Gilgal, Joshua 4:19. Balaam gave different answers in the interval between these places. We may suppose that the encampments of Israel advanced slowly to that part of Jordan which was

opposite to Gilgal. The Chaldee has, “Were there not wonderful things done in your behalf from the valley of Shittim to the house of Gilgal?” See Joshua 3:1; 4:20. Thus there will be a reference to the miraculous passage over JorDaniel See Newcome.

That ye may know the righteousness— The just, equitable, and merciful dealing of the Most High. Recollect those things, that ye may have a proper impression of this. There are many interpretations given of this rather obscure clause; what I have proposed seems to ne the most simple.

This is the sum of the address; and here the case of the plaintiff terminates, the prisoners being called to show why the sentence of the law should not be pronounced. I make no apology for using any forensic terms, as the passages before us refer to a case brought into a court to be judged, and the terms in the original are all such as are proper for a court of justice; and the thing itself is called the Lord’s controversy, רִיב יְהוָה rib Yehovah, Jehovah’s suit at law. And hence it is said, He will plead, litigate, with Israel.

Verse 6. *Wherewith shall I come before the Lord*— Now the people, as defendants, appear; but instead of vindicating themselves, or attempting to dispute what has been alleged against them, they seem at once to plead guilty; and now anxiously inquire how they shall appease the wrath of the Judge, how they shall make atonement for the sins already committed.

Bow myself before the high God— They wish to pray, and to make supplication to their Judge; but how shall they come before him? They have no right to come into his presence. Some offering must be brought; but of what kind, or of what value? Their sin is unprecedented, and usual methods of access will not avail. They are distracted in their minds, and make a variety of proposals to themselves, some rational, some absurd and impossible, and some even sinful.

Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings— This is resonable, and according to the law; but this will be insufficient.

Verse 7. *Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams*— These might

be procured, though with difficulty; but conscience says neither will these do.

With ten thousands of rivers of oil— This is absurd and impossible; but could even these be procured, could they all make atonement for such guilt, and ingratitude, and rebellion?

Shall I give my first-born for my transgression— This was sinful and wicked; but such offerings had been made by the Phoenicians, and their successors the Carthaginians, and this very custom was copied by the corrupt Israelites. See some cases of such offerings, 2 Kings 3:27; Leviticus 20:27.

The fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?— This clause is an explanation of the former. Shall I make the first-born, the best and goodliest of my children, **חַטָּאת** chattath, a SIN-OFFERING for my soul? And thus the original is used in a multitude of places.

When they had put all these questions to their reason and conscience, they found no satisfaction; their distraction is increased, and despair is about to take place, when Jehovah, the plaintiff, in his mercy interposes:

Verse 8. *He hath showed thee, O Man, what is good*— All the modes of expiation which ye have proposed are, in the sight of God, unavailable; they cannot do away the evil, nor purify from the guilt of sin. He himself has shown thee what is good; that which is profitable to thee, and pleasing to himself. And what is that? Answer, Thou art:—

I. To do justly; to give to all their due.

1. To God his due; thy heart, thy body, soul, and spirit; thy Wisdom, understanding, judgment. “To love him with all thy heart, soul, mind, and strength, and thy neighbor as thyself.” This is God’s due and right from every man.

2. Thou art to give thy neighbor his due to do to him as thou wouldst that he should do to thee, never working ill to him.

3. Thou art to give to thyself thy due; not to deprive thy soul of what God has provided for it; to keep thy body in temperance, sobriety, and chastity; avoiding all excesses, both in action and passion.

II. Thou art to love mercy; not only to do what justice requires, but also what mercy, kindness, benevolence, and charity require.

III. But how art thou to do this? Thou art to walk humbly with thy God; **הצנע**, hatsnea, to humble thyself to walk. This implies to acknowledge thy iniquity, and submit to be saved by his free mercy, as thou hast already found that no kind of offering or sacrifice can avail. Without this humiliation of soul there never was, there never can be, any walking With God; for without his mercy no soul can be saved; and he must be **THY** God before thou canst walk with him. Many, when they hear the nature of sin pointed out, and the way of salvation made plain through the blood of the Lamb, have shut their eyes both against sin and the proper sacrifice for it, and parried all exhortation, threatening, etc., with this text: "God requires nothing of us but to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with him." Now I ask any man, Art thou willing to stand or fall by this text? And it would cost me neither much time nor much pains to show that on this ground no soul of man can be saved. Nor does God say that this doing justly, etc., shall merit eternal glory. No. He shows that in this way all men should walk; that this is the duty of **EVERY** rational being; but he well knows that no fallen soul can act thus without especial assistance from him, and that it is only the regenerate man, the man who has found redemption through the blood of the cross, and has God for **HIS** God, that can thus act and walk. Salvation is of the mere mercy of God alone; for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

The manner of raising attention, says Bp. Newcome, on ver. 1, 2, by calling on man to urge his plea in the face of all nature, and on the inanimate creation to hear the expostulation of Jehovah with his people, is truly awakening and magnificent. The words of Jehovah follow in ver. 3-5. And God's mercies having been set before the people, one of them is introduced in a beautiful dramatic form; asking what his duty is towards so gracious a God, ver. 6, 7. The answer follows in the words of the prophet,

ver. 8. Some think we have a sort of dialogue between Balak and Balaam, represented to us in the prophetic way. The king of Moab speaks, ver. 6. Balaam replies by another question in the two first hemistichs of ver. 7. The king of Moab rejoins in the remaining part of the verse; and Balaam replies, ver. 8. Bps. Butler and Lowth favor this. I cannot agree.

Verse 9. *The Lord's voice crieth unto the city*— No man is found to hear; but the man of wisdom will hear, תושיה תושִׁיָה tushiyah; a word frequent in the writings of Solomon and Job, signifying wisdom, wealth, substance, reason, essence, happiness; any thing that is complete; or that which is substantial, in opposition to vanity, emptiness, mere show, unsubstantiality. When God speaks, the man of common sense, who has any knowledge of God or his own soul, will see thy name; but instead of ירה יִרְאֶה yireh, will see, the Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate, and Arabic, with twelve of Kennicott's and De Rossi's MSS., have read יִרְאֵי yirey, they that FEAR. The Vulgate reads:—

Et salus erit timentibus nomen tuum.

“And thou shalt be salvation to them that fear thy name.”

The Septuagint-καὶ σωσει φαβουμενους το ονομα αυτου.

And he shall save those who fear his name. — This the Arabic copies.

The Targum has, “And the teachers shall fear the name.” That is, יהוה Yehovah.

The French Bible is very strange:—

Car ton nom volt comme il va de tout.

“For thy name sees how every thing goes.”

The word תושיה tushiyah, mentioned above, which occasions all the difficulty, has been read with an א ain by the Vulgate and Septuagint, as

coming from the root **יָשַׁע** yasha, to be saved; and it is very likely that this was the original reading. The two last letters in the word, **יה**, might have been easily mistaken in the MS. for the letter **ע** where I may suppose the word stood thus, **תּוֹשַׁע**, shall be saved; and as several MSS. read **יִרְאִי** yirey, they who fear, instead of **יִרְאֶה** yireh, he shall see, the whole clause might have been just what it appears in the Vulgate and Septuagint. It is also necessary to remark that the word in dispute has various forms in some MSS., which is a strong presumption against its authenticity. See Kennicott and De Rossi.

Verse 10. *Are there yet the treasures of wickedness*— Such as false balances and deceitful weights. See on Hosea 12:7. This shows that they were not DOING JUSTLY. They did not give to each his due.

Verse 12. *For the rich men thereof are full of violence*— This shows that they did not love mercy.

The inhabitants thereof have spoken lies— This shows that they did not humble themselves to walk with God.

Verse 13. *Will I make thee sick in smiting thee*— Perhaps better, “I also am weary with smiting thee, in making thee desolate for thy sins.” They were corrected, but to no purpose; they had stroke upon stroke, but were not amended.

Verse 14. *Thou shalt eat, but not be satisfied*— All thy possessions are cursed, because of thy sins; and thou hast no real good in all thy enjoyments.

And thy casting down— For **וַיִּשְׁחַד** veyeshchacha, “thy casting down,” Newcome, by transposing the **ח** and **ש**, reads **וַיַּחֲשַׁךְ** veyechshach, “and it shall be dark;” and this is probably the true reading. The Arabic and Septuagint have read the same. “There shall be calamity in the midst of thee.” It shall have its seat and throne among you.

Verse 15. *Thou shalt sow, but thou shalt not reap*— Thou shalt labor to

amass property, but thou shalt not have God's blessing; and whatever thou collectest, thy enemies shall carry away. And at last carry thyself into captivity.

Verse 16. *The statutes of Omri are kept*— Omri, king of Israel, the father of Ahab, was one of the worst kings the Israelites ever had; and Ahab followed in his wicked father's steps. The statutes of those kings were the very grossest idolatry. Jezebel, wife of the latter, and daughter of Ithobaal, king of Tyre, had no fellow on earth. From her Shakespeare seems to have drawn the character of Lady Macbeth; a woman, like her prototype, mixed up of tigress and fiend, without addition. Omri Ahab, and Jezebel, were the models followed by the Israelites in the days of this prophet.

The inhabitants thereof a hissing— לִשְׂרָקָה lishrekah, “for a shriek;” because those who should see them should be both astonished and affrighted at them.

There are few chapters in the prophets, or in the Bible, superior to this for genuine worth and importance. The structure is as elegant as it is impressive; and it is every way worthy of the Spirit of God.

CHAPTER 7

The prophet begins this chapter with lamenting the decay of piety and the growth of ungodliness, using a beautiful allegory to imply (as explained in ver. 2) that the good man is as seldom to be met with as the early fig of best quality in the advanced season, or the cluster after the vintage, 1, 2. He then reproves and threatens in terms so expressive of great calamities as to be applied in the New Testament to times of the hottest persecution. 3-6. See Matthew 10:35, 36. Notwithstanding which a Jew is immediately introduced declaring, in the name of his captive people, the strongest faith in the mercy of God the most submissive resignation to his will, and the firmest hope in his favor in future times, when they should triumph over their enemies, 7-10. The prophet upon this resumes the discourse, and predicts their great prosperity and increase, 11, 12; although the whole land of Israel must first be desolated on account of the great wickedness of its inhabitants, 13. The prophet intercedes in behalf of his people, 14. After which God is introduced promising, in very ample terms, their future restoration and prosperity, 15-17. And then, to conclude, a chorus of Jews is introduced, singing a beautiful hymn of thanksgiving, suggested by the gracious promises which precede, 18-20.

NOTES ON CHAP. 7

Verse 1. *Wo is me!*— This is a continuation of the preceding discourse. And here the prophet points out the small number of the upright to be found in the land. He himself seemed to be the only person who was on God's side; and he considers himself as a solitary grape, which had escaped the general gathering. The word **יָפֵן** *kayits*, which is sometimes used for summer, and summer fruits in general, is here translated late figs; and may here, says Bishop Newcome, be opposed to the early ripe fig of superior quality. See on Hosea 9:10, and Amos 8:1, 2. He desired to see the first-ripe fruit-distinguished and eminent piety; but he found nothing but a very imperfect or spurious kind of godliness.

Verse 2. *The good man is perished out of the earth*— A similar sentiment may be found, Psalm 12:1; Isaiah 57:1. As the early fig of excellent flavor cannot be found in the advanced season of summer, or a choice cluster of grapes after vintage, so neither can the good and upright man be discovered by searching in Israel. This comparison, says Bp. Newcome, is beautifully implied.

They hunt every man his brother with a net.— This appears to be an allusion to the ancient mode of duel between the retiarius and secutor. The former had a casting net, which he endeavoured to throw over the head of his antagonist, that he might then despatch him with his short sword. The other parried the cast; and when the retiarius missed, he was obliged to run about the field to get time to set his net in right order for another throw. While he ran, the other followed, that he might despatch him before he should be able to recover the proper position of his net; and hence the latter was called secutor, the pursuer, as the other was called retiarius, or the net man. I have explained this before on Job, and other places; but because it is rarely noticed by commentators, I explain the allusion here once more. Abp. Newcome by not attending to this, has translated חרם צודו ish eth achihu yatsudu cherem, “They hunt every man his brother for his destruction;” though he put net in the margin.

Verse 3. *That they may do evil with both hands*— That is, earnestly, greedily, to the uttermost of their power. The Vulgate translates: Malum manuum suarum dicunt bonum; “The evil of their hands they call good.”

The prince asketh— A bribe, to forward claims in his court.

The judge asketh for a reward— That he may decide the cause in favor of him who gives most money, whether the cause be good or evil. This was notoriously the case in our own country before the giving of Magna Charta; and hence that provision, Nulli vendemus justitiam aut rectum: “We will not sell justice to any man.” And this was not the only country in which justice and judgment were put to sale.

The great man, he uttereth his mischievous desire— Such consider

themselves above law, and they make no secret of their unjust determinations. And so they wrap it up—they all conjoin in doing evil in their several offices, and oppressing the poor; so our translators have interpreted the original **ויעבטוה** vayeabtuha, which the versions translate variously. Newcome has, “And they do abominably.”

Verse 4. *The best of them is as a brier*— They are useless in themselves, and cannot be touched without wounding him that comes in contact with them. He alludes to the thick thorn hedges, still frequent in Palestine.

The day of thy watchmen— The day of vengeance, which the prophets have foreseen and proclaimed, is at hand. Now shall be their perplexity; no more wrapping up, all shall be unfolded. In that day every man will wish that he were different from what he is found to be; but he shall be judged for what he is, and for the deeds he has done.

Verse 5. *Trust ye not in a friend*— These times will be so evil, and the people so wicked, that all bonds will be dissolved; and even the most intimate will betray each other, when they can hope to serve themselves by it.

On this passage, in the year 1798, I find I have written as follows:—

“Trust ye not in a friend. — Several of those whom I have delighted to call by that name have deceived me.

“Put ye not confidence in a guide. — Had I followed some of these I should have gone to perdition.

“Keep the door of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom. — My wife alone never deceived me.”

It is now twenty-seven years since, and I find no cause to alter what I then wrote.

Verse 6. *For the son dishonoreth the father*— See the use our Lord has made of these words, where he quotes them, Matthew 10:21, 25, 36, and

the notes there.

Verse 7. *Therefore I will look unto the Lord*— Because things are so, I will trust in the Lord more firmly, wait for him more patiently, and more confidently expect to be supported, defended, and saved.

Verse 8. *Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy*— The captive Israelites are introduced as speaking here and in the preceding verse. The enemy are the Assyrians and Chaldeans; the fall is their idolatry and consequent captivity; the darkness, the calamities they suffered in that captivity; their rise and light, their restoration and consequent blessedness.

To rejoice over the fall or miseries of any man, betrays a malignant spirit. I have known several instances where people professing to hold a very pure and Christian creed, having become unfaithful and fallen into sin, their opponents, who held a very impure and unchristian creed, have exulted with “Ha, ha! so would we have it!” and have shown their malignity more fully, by giving all possible publicity and circulation to such accounts. Perhaps in the sight of God this was worse than the poor wretch’s fall, in which they exulted as having taken place in one who held a creed different from their own. But these arose again from their fall, while those jesters at holiness continued in the gall of bitterness and bonds of inward corruption.

Verse 9. *I will bear the indignation of the Lord*— The words of the penitent captives, acknowledging their sins and praying for mercy.

Until he plead my cause— And wo to the slanderers, when God undertakes to plead for the fallen who have returned to him with deep compunction of heart, seeking redemption in the blood of the cross.

Verse 10. *Then she that is mine enemy*— This may refer particularly to the city of Babylon.

Shall she be trodden down— Literally fulfilled in the package of that city by the Persians, and its consequent total ruin. It became as mire; its walls, formed of brick kneaded with straw and baked in the sun, becoming exposed to the wet, dissolved, so that a vestige of the city remains not,

except a few bricks digged from under the rubbish, several pieces of which now lie before me, and show the perishing materials of which the head of this proud empire was composed.

Verse 11. *In the day that thy walls are to be built*— This refers to Jerusalem; the decree, to the purpose of God to deliver the people into captivity. “This shall be far removed.” God having purposed their return, I cannot think, with some commentators, that this verse contains threatenings against Jerusalem, and not promises. See the first chapter of Haggai, where the subject is similar; and the restoration of Jerusalem is certainly what the prophet describes.

Verse 12. *In that day also he shall come*— Bp. Newcome translates:—

“And in that day they shall come unto thee From Assyria and the fenced cities; And from Egypt even unto the river.”

Calmet translates:—

“They shall come to thee from Assyria even unto Egypt; And from Egypt even to the river; (Euphrates;) And from one sea to another, and from one mountain to another.”

This, says he, gives an easy sense; whereas we cannot tell where to find those fortified cities sDokeu of by other translators. The Israelites were to return from their captivity, and re-occupy their ancient country from Assyria to Egypt; that is, from the river Euphrates to the river Nile; and from the Mediterranean Sea to the Ocean, and from Mount Libanus to the mountains of Arabia Petraea, or Mount Seir. See Amos 8:12. This prediction was literally fulfilled under the Asmoneans. The Jewish nation was greatly extended and very powerful under Herod, at the time that our Lord was born. See Calmet.

Verse 13. *Notwithstanding the land shall be desolate*— This should be translated in the preter tense, “Though the land HAD been desolate;” that is, the land of Israel had been desolate during the captivity, which captivity was the “fruit of the evil doings of them that had dwelt therein.”

Verse 14. *Feed thy people with thy rod*— בִּשְׁבֵטָךְ beshibtecha, “with thy crook.” The shepherd’s crook is most certainly designed, as the word flock immediately following shows. No rod of correction or affliction is here intended; nor does the word mean such.

Solitarily— They have been long without a shepherd or spiritual governor.

In the midst of Carmel— Very fruitful in vines.

Bashan and Gilead— Proverbially fruitful in pasturages.

Verse 15. *According to the days*— This is the answer to the prophet’s prayer; and God says he will protect, save, defend, and work miracles for them in their restoration, such as he wrought for their fathers in their return from Egypt to the promised land.

Verse 16. *The nations shall see and be confounded*— Whether the words in these verses (ver. 15-17) be applied to the return from the Babylonish captivity, or to the prosperity of the Jews under the Maccabees, they may be understood as ultimately applicable to the final restoration of this people, and their lasting prosperity under the Gospel.

Verse 18. *Who is a God like unto thee, etc.*— Here is a challenge to all idol worshippers, and to all those who take false views of the true God, to show his like. See his characters; they are immediately subjoined.

1. He pardoneth iniquity. This is the prerogative of God alone; of that Being who alone has power to save or to destroy.

2. He passeth by transgression. He can heal backsliding, and restore them that are fallen.

3. He retaineth not his anger forever. Though, justly displeased because of sin, he pours out his judgments upon the wicked; yet when they return to him, he shows “that he retaineth not his anger forever,” but is

indescribably ready to save them.

4. He delighteth in mercy. Judgment is his strange work: he is ever more ready to save than to destroy. Nothing can please him better than having the opportunity, from the return and repentance of the sinner, to show him that mercy without which he must perish everlastingly.

5. Because he is such a God-1. “He will turn again.” His face has been long turned from us, because of our sins. 2. “He will have compassion upon us” pity our state, and feel for our sorrows. 3. “He will subdue our iniquities.” Though they have been mighty, he will bring them down, and bruise them under our feet. 4. “He will cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.” Will fully pardon them, and never more remember them against us. Instead of **חַטֹּאתֵיהֶם** chattotham, THEIR sins, five MSS. of Kennicott’s and De Rossi’s, with the Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate, and Arabic read **חַטֹּאתֵינוּ** chattotheynu, OUR sins. He will plunge them into eternal oblivion, never more to come into sight or remembrance; like a stone dropped into the “depths of the sea.”

Verse 20. *Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob*— The promises which he has made to Jacob and his posterity. Not one of them can ever fall to the ground. “And the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn;” viz., that “in his Seed all the families of the earth should be blessed;” that the Messiah should come from ABRAHAM, through his son ISAAC, by JACOB and DAVID; be a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of his people Israel. And this promise, and this oath, God has most signally fulfilled by the incarnation of Christ, who was sent to bless us by turning away every one of us from his iniquities; and for this purpose he was delivered for our offenses, and rose again for our justification; and repentance and remission of sins are preached in his name to all nations. The proclamation was first made at Jerusalem; and that the prophet refers to this, is evident from the use made of these words by Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, when, under the full afflatus of the Spirit of God, he quoted this prophecy of Micah, as fulfilled in the incarnation of Christ, Luke 1:72, 73. The Chaldee paraphrases this last verse with spirit and propriety: “Thou wilt give the truth to Jacob his son, as thou hast promised by oath to him in Beth-el. And the mercy to Abraham and to his seed after him, as thou

didst swear to him amidst the divisions. Thou wilt be mindful of us on account of the binding of Isaac, who was bound upon the altar before thee. And thou wilt do us that good, which, from the most ancient days, thou hast promised to our fathers by an oath.” Between the divisions, refers to the covenant made between God and Abraham, Genesis 15:9-11, 17, 18. Well might the prophet exult in his challenge to earth and hell. WHO IS A GOD LIKE UNTO THEE! Hell is speechless, earth is dumb. Infidels dare not open their mouths!!! Hallelujah! מִי אֵל כַּמוֹךָ mi El camocha! JESUS is the mighty God and Savior, pardoning iniquity, transgression, and sin, and saving to the uttermost all that come unto God through him. Blessed be God! Reader, lay this to heart.

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK

OF THE

PROPHET NAHUM

NAHUM, the seventh of the twelve minor prophets, was a native of Elkoshai, a little village of Galilee, whose ruins were still in being in the time of St. Jerome. However there are some who think that Elkoshai is rather the name of his father, and that the place of his birth was Bethabor, or Bethabara, beyond JorDaniel They used to show the tomb of the prophet at a village called Beth-gabre, now called Gibbin, near Emmaus. The Chaldee calls him Nahum of Beth-koshi, or of Beth-kitsi; but the situation of this place is as much unknown as that of Elkoshai.

The particular circumstances of the life of Nahum are altogether unknown. His prophecy consists of three chapters, which make up but one discourse, wherein he foretells the destruction of Nineveh. He describes it in so lovely and pathetic a manner, that he seems to have been upon the spot to declare to the Ninevites the destruction of their city.

Opinions are divided as to the time in which he prophesied. Josephus will have it that he foretold the fall of Nineveh one hundred and fifteen years before it happened, which will bring the time of Nahum to that of King Ahaz. The Jews say that he prophesied under Manasseh. We are inclined to be of St. Jerome's opinion, that he foretold the destruction of Nineveh in the time of Hezekiah, and after the war of Sennacherib in Egypt, mentioned by Berosus. Nahum speaks plainly of the taking of No-Ammon, a city of Egypt; of the haughtiness of Rabshakeh; of the defeat of Sennacherib; and he speaks of them as things that were past. He supposes that the Jews were still in their own country, and that they there celebrated their festivals. He speaks of the captivity, and of the dispersion

of the ten tribes. All these evidences convince us that Nahum cannot be placed before the fifteenth year of Hezekiah, since the expedition of Sennacherib against this prince was in the fourteenth year of his reign.

This prophet gives us a fine description of the destruction of Nineveh. He says that this city should be ruined by a deluge of waters, which should overflow it and demolish its walls.

Diodorus Siculus and Athenaeus relate, that during the time this city was besieged by Belesis and by Arbaces, under Sardanapalus, the river Tigris swelled so as to overthrow twenty furlongs of the walls of Nineveh. But as the siege mentioned by Nahum was long after the taking of Nineveh under Sardanapalus, it must needs be that the same thing happened to Nineveh at the second and last siege, under Nebuchadnezzar and Astyages. Probably the besiegers at this second siege determined the course of the waters, and brought on the same fate to the city by the same means as at the first siege. And as the walls of those ancient cities were generally formed of brick kneaded with straw and baked in the sun, a flood of waters could easily effect their dissolution. Babylon was built in the same manner; and this is the reason why scarcely any vestiges of those cities are to be found. See on chap. 3:14.

The time of the prophet's death is not known. The Greek meneologies and the Latin martyrologies place his festival on the first of December. Petrus Natalis places it on the twenty-fourth of the same month, which he says was the day of his death, without acquainting us whence he had learned this circumstance.

The conduct and imagery of this prophetic poem are truly admirable.

The exordium sets forth with grandeur the justice and power of God, tempered by lenity and goodness, chap. 1:1-8.

A sudden address to the Assyrians follows; and a prediction of their perplexity and overthrow, as devisers of evil against the true God, ver. 9-11. Jehovah himself then proclaims freedom to his people from the Assyrian yoke, and the destruction of the Assyrian idols, ver. 12-14.

Upon which the prophet, in a most lively manner, turns the attention of Judah to the approach of the messenger who brings such glad tidings, and bids her celebrate her festivals and offer her thank-offerings, without fear of so powerful an adversary, ver. 15.

Chap. 2: In the next place Nineveh is called on to prepare for the approach of her enemies, as instruments in the hands of Jehovah; and the military array and muster of the Medes and Babylonians, their rapid approach to the city, the process of the siege, the capture of the place, the captivity, lamentation, and flight of the inhabitants, the sacking of the wealthy city, and the consequent desolation and terror, are described in the true spirit of Eastern poetry, and with many pathetic, vivid, and sublime images, ver. 1-10.

A grand and animated allegory succeeds this description, ver. 11, 12; which is explained and applied to the city of Nineveh in ver. 13.

Chap. 3: The prophet denounces a wo against Nineveh for her perfidy and violence, and strongly places before our eyes the number of her chariots and cavalry, her burnished arms, and the great and unrelenting slaughter which she spread around her, ver. 1-3.

He assigns her idolatries as one cause of her ignominious and unpitied fall, ver. 4-7.

He foretells that No-Ammon, (the Diospolis in the Delta,) her rival in populousness, confederacies, and situation, should share a like fate with herself, ver. 8-11; and beautifully illustrates the ease with which her strong holds should be taken, ver. 12, and her pusillanimity during the siege, ver. 13.

He pronounces that all her preparations, ver. 14, 15, her numbers, her opulence, her multitude of chief men, would be of no avail, ver. 15-17.

He foretells that her tributaries would desert her, ver. 18.

He concludes with a proper epiphonema; the topics of which are, the

greatness and incurableness of her wound, and the just triumph of others over her on account of her extensive oppressions, ver. 19.

To sum up all with the decisive judgment of an eminent critic: “Not one of the minor prophets equals the sublimity, genius, and spirit of Nahum. Besides, his prophecy is a perfect poem. The exordium is exceedingly

THE BOOK

OF THE

PROPHET NAHUM

Chronological Notes relative to this Book, upon the supposition that it was written about seven hundred and thirteen years before the commencement of the Christian era

- Year from the Creation, according to Archbishop Usher, 3291.
- Year of the Julian Period, 4001.
- Year since the Flood, 1635.
- Year from the vocation of Abram, 1208.
- Year since the first celebration of the Olympic games in Elis by the Idaeï Dactyli, 741.
- Year from the destruction of Troy, according to the general computation of chronologers, 471.
- Year since the commencement of the kingdom of Israel, by the Divine appointment of Saul to the regal dignity, 383.
- Year from the foundation of Solomon's temple, 299.
- Year since the division of Solomon's monarchy into the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, 263.
- Year since the restoration of the Olympic games at Elis by Lycurgus, Iphitus, and Cleosthenes, 172.
- Year from the foundation of the kingdom of Macedon by Caranus, 102.
- Year from the commencement of the reign of Ardysus over Lydia, 84.
- Year since the conquest of Coroebus at Olympia, usually called the first Olympiad, 64.
- Fourth year of the sixteenth Olympiad.
- Year from the building of Rome, according to the Varronian computation, 41.

- Year from the building of Rome, according to Cato and the *Fasti Consulares*, 40.
- Year from the building of Rome, according to Polybius the historian, 39.
- Year from the building of Rome, according to Fabius Pictor, 35.
- Year of the era of Nabonassar, 35.
- Year since the destruction of the kingdom of Israel by Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, 9.
- Year before the birth of Christ, 709.
- Year before the vulgar era of Christ's nativity, 713.
- Cycle of the Sun, 25.
- Cycle of the Moon, 11.
- Eleventh year of Zeuxidamus, king of Lacedaemon, of the family of the Proclidae.
- Twelfth year of Eurycrates, king of Lacedaemon, of the family of the Eurysthenidae.
- Sixth year of Gyges, king of Lydia.
- Tenth year of Hippomenes, decennial archon of the Athenians.
- Second year of Cordiccas, governor of the Medes, according to some chronologers.
- Seventeenth year of Perdiccas, king of Macedon.
- Third year of Numa Pompilius, the second king of Rome.
- Fourteenth year of Hezekiah, king of Judah.

CHAPTER 1

This chapter opens the prophecy against the Assyrians and their metropolis with a very magnificent description of the infinite justice, tender compassion, and uncontrollable power of God, 1-8. To this succeeds an address to the Assyrians; with a lively picture of their sudden overthrow, because of their evil device against Jerusalem, 9-11. Then appears Jehovah himself, proclaiming deliverance to his people from the Assyrian yoke, and the destruction of the Assyrian idols, 12-14; upon which the prophet, with great emphasis, directs the attention of Judah to the approach of the messenger who brings such glad tidings; and exultingly bids his people to celebrate their solemn feasts, and perform their vows, as a merciful Providence would not suffer these enemies of the Jewish state to prevail against them, 15.

NOTES ON CHAP. 1

Verse 1. *The burden of Nineveh.*—מַשָּׂא (massa) not only signifies a burden, but also a thing lifted up, pronounced, or proclaimed; also a message. It is used by the prophets to signify the revelation which they have received from God to deliver to any particular people: the oracle—the prophecy. Here it signifies the declaration from God relative to the overthrow of Nineveh, and the commission of the prophet to deliver it.

As the Assyrians under Pul, Tiglath-pileser, and Shalmaneser, three of their kinds, had been employed by a just God for the chastisement of his disobedient people; the end being now accomplished by them, God is about to burn the rod wherewith he corrected Israel; and Nineveh, the capital of the Assyrian empire, is to be destroyed. This prediction appears to have been accomplished a short time after this by Nebuchadnezzar and Cyaxares, the Ahasuerus of Scripture.

Nahum, נַחֻם (Nachum), signifies comforter. The name was very suitable,

as he was sent to comfort the people, by showing them that God was about to destroy their adversaries.

Verse 2. *God is jealous*— For his own glory.

And-revengeth— His justice; by the destruction of his enemies.

And is furious— So powerful in the manifestations of his judgments, that nothing can stand before him.

He reserveth wrath— Though they seem to prosper for a time, and God appears to have passed by their crimes without notice, yet he reserveth-treasureth up-wrath for them, which shall burst forth in due time.

Verse 3. *The Lord is slow to anger*— He exercises much longsuffering towards his enemies, that this may lead them to repentance. And it is because of this longsuffering that vengeance is not speedily executed on every evil work.

Great in power— Able at all times to save or to destroy.

The Lord hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm— These are the effects of his power; and when they appear unusual, they may be considered as the immediate effects of his power: and although he be in them to punish and destroy, he is in them to direct their course, to determine their operations, and to defend his followers from being injured by their violence. The pestilential wind which slew one hundred and eighty-five thousand of the Assyrians did not injure one Israelite. See 2 Kings 19:35.

The clouds are the dust of his feet.— This is spoken in allusion to a chariot and horses going on with extreme rapidity: they are all enveloped in a cloud of dust. So Jehovah is represented as coming through the circuit of the heavens as rapidly as lightning; the clouds surrounding him as the dust does the chariot and horses.

Verse 4. *He rebuketh the sea*— The Red Sea and the rivers: probably an allusion to the passage of the Red Sea and Jordan.

The description of the coming of Jehovah, from the third to the sixth verse, is dreadfully majestic. He is represented as controlling universal nature. The sea and the rivers are dried up, the mountains tremble, the hills melt, and the earth is burnt at his presence. Bashan, Carmel, and Lebanon are withered and languish: streams of fire are poured out, and the rocks are cast down to make him a passage. If then, the seas, the rivers, the mountains, the hills, the rocks, and the earth itself, fail before Jehovah, or flee from his presence, how shall Nineveh and the Assyrian empire stand before him?

Verse 7. *The Lord is good*— In the midst of judgment he remembers mercy; and among the most dreadful denunciations of wrath he mingles promises of mercy. None that trust in him need be alarmed at these dreadful threatenings; they shall be discriminated in the day of wrath, for the Lord knoweth them that trust in him.

Verse 8. *But with an overrunning flood*— Bishop Newcome thinks this may refer to the manner in which Nineveh was taken. The Euphrates overflowed its banks, deluged a part of the city, and overturned twenty stadia of the wall; in consequence of which the desponding king burnt himself, and his palace, with his treasures. — Diodor. Sic., Edit. Wessel., p. 140, lib. ii., s. 27.

Darkness shall pursue— Calamity. All kinds of calamity shall pursue them till they are destroyed.

Verse 9. *Affliction shall not rise up the second time*.— There shall be no need to repeat the judgment; with one blow God will make a full end of the business.

Verse 10. *While they be folden together*— However united their counsels may be, they shall be as drunken men-perplexed and unsteady in all their resolutions; and before God's judgments they shall be as dry thorns before a devouring fire.

Verse 11. *Imagineth evil against the Lord*— Such were Pul, 2 Kings 15:10, Tiglath-pileser, 2 Kings 15:29; Shalmaneser, 2 Kings 17:6; and Sennacherib, 2 Kings 18:17; 19:23.

A wicked counsellor.— Sennacherib and Rabshakeh.

Verse 12. *Though they be many*— Sennacherib invaded Judea with an army of nearly two hundred thousand men.

Thus shall they be cut down! The angel of the Lord (a suffocating wind) slew of them in one night one hundred and eighty-five thousand 2 Kings 19:35.

Verse 13. *Now will I break his yoke from off thee*— This refers to the tribute which the Jews were obliged to pay to the Assyrians, 2 Kings 17:14.

Verse 14. *No more of thy name be sown*— No more of you shall be carried away into captivity.

I Will make thy grave; for thou art vile— I think this is an address to the Assyrians, and especially to Sennacherib. The text is no obscure intimation of the fact. The house of his gods is to be his grave: and we know that while he was worshipping in the house of his god Nisroch, his two sons, Adrammelech and Sharezer, smote him there that he died, 2 Kings 19:37.

Verse 15. Behold upon the mountains! Borrowed probably from Isaiah 52:7, but applied here to the messengers who brought the good tidings of the destruction of Nineveh. Judah might then keep her solemn feasts, for the wicked Assyrian should pass through the land no more; being entirely cut off, and the imperial city razed to its foundations.

CHAPTER 2

Nineveh is now called upon to prepare for the approach of her enemies, the instruments of Jehovah's vengeance, 1; and the military array and muster, the very arms and dress, of the Medes and Babylonians in the reigns of Cyaxares and Nabopolassar; their rapid approach to the city; the process of the siege, and the inundation of the river; the capture of the place; the captivity, lamentation, and flight of the inhabitants; the sacking of this immense, wealthy, and exceedingly populous city; and the consequent desolation and terror, are all described in the pathetic, vivid, and sublime imagery of Hebrew poetry, 2-10. This description is succeeded by a very beautiful and expressive allegory, 11-12; which is immediately explained, and applied to the city of Nineveh, 13. It is thought by some commentators that the metropolitan city of the Assyrian empire is also intended by the tender and beautiful simile, in the seventh verse, of a great princess led captive, with her maids of honor attending her, bewailing her and their own condition, by beating their breasts, and by other expressions of sorrow.

NOTES ON CHAP. 2

Verse 1. *He that dasheth in pieces*— Or scattereth. The Chaldeans and Medes.

Keep the munition— Guard the fenced places. From this to the end of the fifth verse, the preparations made at Nineveh to repel their enemies are described. The description is exceedingly picturesque.

Watch the way— By which the enemy is most likely to approach.

Make thy loins strong— Take courage.

Fortify thy power— Muster thy troops; call in all thy allies.

Verse 2. *For the Lord hath turned away*— Bishop Newcome reads, for the Lord restoreth, by a slight alteration in the text. I do not see that we gain much by this. The Lord has been opposed to Jacob, and the enemy has prevailed against him.

Emptied them out— Brought them from their own land into captivity. This was the emptying!

Verse 3. *The shield of his mighty men is made red*— These things may refer to the war-like preparations made by the Ninevites: they had red shields, and scarlet or purple clothing; their chariots were finely decorated, and proceeded with amazing rapidity.

The fir trees shall be terribly shaken.— This may refer to the darts, arrows, and javelins, flung with destructive power.

Verse 4. *The chariots shall rage*— Those of the besiegers and the besieged, meeting in the streets, producing universal confusion and carnage.

Verse 5. *He shall recount his worthies*— Muster up his most renowned warriors and heroes.

Shall make haste to the wall— Where they see the enemies making their most powerful attacks, in order to get possession of the city.

Verse 6. *The gates of the rivers shall be opened*— I have already referred to this, see the note on chap. 1:8; but it will be necessary to be more particular. The account given by Diodorus Siculus, lib. ii., is very surprising. He begins thus: *ην δ' αυτω λογιον παραδεδομενον εκ προγονων, κ.τ.λ.* “There was a prophecy received from their forefathers, that Nineveh should not be taken till the river first became an enemy to the city. It happened in the third year of the siege, that the Euphrates [query, Tigris] being swollen with continued rains, overflowed part of the city, and threw down twenty stadia of the wall. The king then imagining that the oracle was accomplished, and that the river was now manifestly become an enemy to the city, casting aside all hope of safety, and lest he should fall into the hands of the enemy, built a large funeral

pyre in the palace, (*εν τοις βασιλειαυσις*), and having collected all his gold and silver and royal vestments, together with his concubines and eunuchs, placed himself with them in a little apartment built in the pyre; burnt them, himself, and the palace together. When the death of the king (Sardanapalus) was announced by certain deserters, the enemy entered in by the breach which the waters had made, and took the city.”

Thus the prophecy of Nahum was literally fulfilled: “the gates of the river were opened, and the palace dissolved,” i.e., burnt.

Verse 7. *And Huzzab shall be led away captive*— Perhaps Huzzab means the queen of Nineveh, who had escaped the burning mentioned above by Diodorus. As there is no account of the queen being burnt, but only of the king, the concubines, and the eunuchs, we may, therefore, naturally conclude that the queen escaped; and is represented here as brought up and delivered to the conqueror; her maids at the same time bewailing her lot. Some think Huzzab signifies Nineveh itself.

Verse 8. *But Nineveh is of old like a pool of water*— מִימֵי mimey, from days. Bp. Newcome translates the line thus: “And the waters of Nineveh are a pool of waters.” There may be reference here to the fact given in the preceding note, the overflowing of the river by which the city was primarily destroyed.

Stand, stand— Consternation shall be at its utmost height, the people shall flee in all directions; and though quarter is offered, and they are assured of safety if they remain, yet not one looketh back.

Verse 9. *Take ye the spoil*— Though the king burnt his treasures, vestments, etc., he could not totally destroy the silver and the gold. Nor did he burn the riches of the city; these fell a prey to the conquerors; and there was no end of the store of glorious garments, and the most costly vessels and furniture.

Verse 10. *She is empty, and void, and waste*— The original is strongly emphatic; the words are of the same sound; and increase in their length as they point out great, greater, and greatest desolation.

בוקה ומבוקה ומבלקה

Bukah, umebukah, umebullakah.

She is void, empty, and desolate.

The faces of them all gather blackness.— This marks the diseased state into which the people had been brought by reason of famine, etc.; for, as Mr. Ward justly remarks, “sickness makes a great change in the countenance of the Hindoos; so that a person who was rather fair when in health, becomes nearly black by sickness.” This was a general case with the Asiatics.

Verse 11. Where is the dwelling of the lions— Nineveh, the habitation of bold, strong, and ferocious men.

The feeding place of the young lions— Whither her victorious and rapacious generals frequently returned to consume the produce of their success. Here they walked at large, and none made them afraid. Wheresoever they turned their arms they were victors; and all nations were afraid of them.

Verse 12. The lion did tear— This verse gives us a striking picture of the manner in which the Assyrian conquests and depredations were carried on. How many people were spoiled to enrich his whelps-his sons, princes, and nobles! How many women were stripped and slain, whose spoils went to decorate his lionesses-his queen, concubines, and mistresses. And they had even more than they could assume; their holes and dens-treasure-houses, palaces, and wardrobes-were filled with ravin, the riches which they got by the plunder of towns, families, and individuals. This is a very fine allegory, and admirably well supported.

Verse 13. Behold, I am against thee— Assyria, and Nineveh its capital. I will deal with you as you have dealt with others.

The voice of thy messengers— Announcing thy splendid victories, and the vast spoils taken-shall no more be heard-thou and thy riches, and ill-got spoils, shall perish together.

CHAPTER 3

The prophet denounces a wo against Nineveh for her perfidy and violence. He musters up before our eyes the number of her chariots and cavalry; points to her burnished arms, and to the great and unrelenting slaughter which she spreads around her, 1-3. Because Nineveh is a city wholly given up to the grossest superstition, and is an instructress of other nations in her abominable rites, therefore she shall come to a most ignominious and unpitied end, 3-7. Her final ruin shall be similar to that of No, a famous city of Egypt, 8-11. The prophet then beautifully describes the great ease with which the strong holds of Nineveh should be taken, 12, and her judicial pusillaninlity during the siege, 13; declares that all her preparation, her numbers, opulence, and chieftains, would be of no avail in the day of the Lord's vengeance, 14-17; and that her tributaries would desert her, 18. The whole concludes with stating the incurableness of her malady, and the dreadful destruction consequently awaiting her; and with introducing the nations which she had oppressed as exulting at her fall, 19.

NOTES ON CHAP. 3

Verse 1. *Wo to the bloody city!*— Nineveh: the threatenings against which are continued in a strain of invective, astonishing for its richness, variety, and energy. One may hear and see the whip crack, the horses prancing, the wheels rumbling, the chariots bounding after the galloping steeds; the reflection from the drawn and highly polished swords; and the hurled spears, like gashes of lightning, dazzling the eyes; the slain lying in heaps, and horses and chariots stumbling over them! O what a picture, and a true representation of a battle, when one side is broken, and all the cavalry of the conqueror fall in upon them, hewing them down with their swords, and trampling them to pieces under the hoofs of their horses! O! infernal war! Yet sometimes thou art the scourge of the Lord.

Verse 4. *Because of the multitude of the whoredoms*— Above, the

Ninevites were represented under the emblem of a lion tearing all to pieces; here they are represented under the emblem of a beautiful harlot or public prostitute, enticing all men to her, inducing the nations to become idolatrous, and, by thus perverting them, rendering them also objects of the Divine wrath.

Mistress of witchcrafts, that selleth nations through her whoredoms—
Using every means to excite to idolatry; and being, by menace or wiles, successful in all.

Verse 5. *I will discover thy skirts upon thy face—* It was an ancient, though not a laudable custom, to strip prostitutes naked, or throw their clothes over their heads, and expose them to public view, and public execration. This verse alludes to such a custom.

Verse 6. *I will cast abominable filth upon thee—* I will set thee as a gazing-stock. This was a punishment precisely like our pillory. They put such women in the pillory as a gazing-stock; and then, children and others threw mud, dirt, and filth of all kinds at them.

Verse 7. *Who will bemoan her?—* In such cases, who pities the delinquent? She has been the occasion of ruin to multitudes, and now she is deservedly exposed and punished. And so it should be thought concerning Nineveh.

Verse 8. *Art thou better than populous No—* No-Ammon, or Diospolis, in the Delta, on one branch of the Nile. This is supposed to be the city mentioned by Nahum; and which had been lately destroyed, probably by the Chaldeans.

The waters round about it— Being situated in the Delta, it had the fork of two branches of the Nile to defend it by land; and its barrier or wall was the sea, the Mediterranean, into which these branches emptied themselves: so that this city, and the place it stood on, were wholly surrounded by the waters.

Verse 9. *Ethiopia and Egypt were her strength—* The land of Cush, not

far from Diospolis; for it was in Arabia, on the Red Sea.

Put and Lubim— A part of Africa and Libya, which were all within reach of forming alliances with No-Ammon or Diospolis.

Verse 10. *They cast lots for her honorable men*— This refers still to the city called populous No. And the custom of casting lots among the commanders, for the prisoners which they had taken, is here referred to.

Great men were bound in chains— These were reserved to grace the triumph of the victor.

Verse 12. *Thy strong holds*— The effects of the consternation into which the Ninevites were cast by the assault on their city are here pointed out by a very expressive metaphor; the first-ripe figs, when at full maturity, fell from the tree with the least shake; and so, at the first shake or consternation, all the fortresses of Nineveh were abandoned; and the king, in despair, burnt himself and household in his own palace.

Verse 13. *Thy people-are women*— They lost all courage, and made no resistance. O vere Phrygiae, neque enim Phryges: “Verily, ye are Phrygian women, not Phrygian men.” So said Numanus to the Trojans. Virg., AEn. ix.

Verse 14. *Draw thee waters for the siege*— The Tigris ran near to Nineveh, and here they are exhorted to lay in plenty of fresh water, lest the siege should last long, and lest the enemy should cut off this supply.

Go into clay, and tread the mortar— This refers to the manner of forming bricks anciently in those countries; they digged up the clay, kneaded it properly by treading, mixed it with straw or coarse grass, moulded the bricks, and dried them in the sun. I have now some of the identical bricks, that were brought from this country, lying before me, and they show all these appearances. They are compact and very hard, but wholly soluble in water. There were however others without straw, that seem to have been burnt in a kiln as ours are. I have also some fragments or bats of these from Babylon.

Verse 15. *Make thyself many as the cankerworm*— On the locusts, and their operations in their various states, see the notes on Joel 2: The multitudes, successive swarms, and devastation occasioned by locusts, is one of the most expressive similes that could be used to point out the successive armies and all-destroying influences of the enemies of Nineveh. The account of these destroyers from Dr. Shaw, inserted Joel ii., will fully illustrate the verses where allusion is made to locusts.

Verse 16. *Thou hast multiplied thy merchants*— Like Tyre, this city was a famous resort for merchants; but the multitudes which were there previously to the siege, like the locusts, took the alarm, and fled away.

Verse 17. *Thy crowned are as the locusts*— Thou hast numerous princes and numerous commanders.

Which camp in the hedges in the cold day— The locusts are said to lie in shelter about the hedges of fertile spots when the weather is cold or during the night; but as soon as the sun shines out and is hot, they come out to their forage, or take to their wings.

Verse 18. *Thy shepherds slumber*— That is, the rulers and tributary princes, who, as Herodotus informs us, deserted Nineveh in the day of her distress, and came not forward to her succor.

Diodorus Siculus says, lib. ii., when the enemy shut up the king in the city, many nations revolted, each going over to the besiegers, for the sake of their liberty; that the king despatched messengers to all his subjects, requiring power from them to succor him; and that he thought himself able to endure the siege, and remained in expectation of armies which were to be raised throughout his empire, relying on the oracle that the city would not be taken till the river became its enemy. See the note on chap. 2:6.

Verse 19. *There is no healing of thy bruise*— Thou shalt never be rebuilt.

All that hear the bruit of thee— The report or account.

Shall clap the hands— Shall exult in thy downfall.

For upon whom hath not thy wickedness passed— Thou hast been a universal oppressor, and therefore all nations rejoice at thy fall and utter desolation.

Bp. Newton makes some good remarks on the fall and total ruin of Nineveh.

“What probability was there that the capital city of a great kingdom, a city which was sixty miles in compass, a city which contained so many thousand inhabitants, a city which had walls a hundred feet high, and so thick that three chariots could go abreast upon them, and which had one thousand five hundred towers, of two hundred feet in height; what probability was there that such a city should ever be totally destroyed? And yet so totally was it destroyed that the place is hardly known where it was situated. What we may suppose helped to complete its ruin and devastation, was Nebuchadnezzar’s enlarging and beautifying Babylon, soon after Nineveh was taken. From that time no mention is made of Nineveh by any of the sacred writers; and the most ancient of the heathen authors, who have occasion to say any thing about it, speak of it as a city that was once great and flourishing, but now destroyed and desolate. Great as it was formerly, so little of it is remaining, that authors are not agreed even about its situation. From the general suffrage of ancient historians and geographers, it appears to have been situated upon the Tigris, though others represent it as placed upon the Euphrates. Bochart has shown that Herodotus, Diodorus Siculus, and Ammianus Marcellinus, all three speak differently of it; sometimes as if situated on the Euphrates, sometimes as if on the Tigris; to reconcile whom he supposes that there were two Ninevehs; and Sir John Marsham, that there were three; the Syrian upon the Euphrates, the Assyrian on the Tigris, and a third built afterwards upon the Tigris by the Persians, who succeeded the Parthians in the empire of the East, in the third century, and were subdued by the Saracens in the seventh century after Christ. But whether this latter was built in the same place as the old Nineveh, is a question that cannot be decided.

“There is a city at this time called Mosul, situate upon the western side of

the Tigris; and on the opposite eastern shore are ruins of great extent, which are said to be those of Nineveh.

“Dr. Prideaux, following Thevenot, observes that Mosul is situated on the west side of the Tigris, where was anciently only a suburb of the old Nineveh; for the city itself stood on the east side of the river, where are to be seen some of its ruins of great extent even to this day. Even the ruins of old Nineveh, as we may say, have been long ago ruined and destroyed; such an utter end hath been made of it, and such is the truth of the Divine predictions!

“These extraordinary circumstances may strike the reader more strongly by supposing only a parallel instance. Let us then suppose that a person should come in the name of a prophet, preaching repentance to the people of this kingdom, or otherwise denouncing the destruction of the capital city within a few years. ‘With an overflowing flood will God make an utter end of the place thereof; he will make an utter end: its place may be sought, but it shall never be found.’ I presume we should look upon such a prophet as a madman, and show no farther attention to his message than to deride and despise it. And yet such an event would not be more strange and incredible than the destruction and devastation of Nineveh; for Nineveh was much the larger, stronger, and older city of the two. And the Assyrian empire had subsisted and flourished more ages than any form of government in this country; so there is no objecting the instability of Eastern monarchies in this case. Let us then since this event would not be more improbable and extraordinary than the other, suppose again, that things should succeed according to the prediction; that the floods should arise, and the enemies should come; the city should be overthrown and broken down, be taken and pillaged, and destroyed so totally that even the learned could not agree about the place where it was situated. What would be said or thought in such a case? Whoever of posterity should read and compare the prophecy and event together, must they not, by such an illustrious instance, be thoroughly convinced of the providence of God, and of the truth of his prophet, and be ready to acknowledge, ‘Verily, this IS the word which the Lord hath spoken; verily, there IS a God who judgeth the earth?’” -See Bp. Newton, vol. i., dissert. 9.

THE BOOK

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PROPHET HABAKKUK

Chronological Notes relative to this Book, upon the supposition that it was written a little before the destruction of Jerusalem, about six hundred years before the commencement of the Christian era.

- Year from the Creation, according to Archbishop Usher, 3404.
- Year of the Julian Period, 4114.
- Year since the Flood, 1748.
- Year since the vocation of Abram, 1321.
- Year from the foundation of Solomon's temple, 412.
- Year since the division of Solomon's monarchy into the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, 376.
- First year of the forty-fifth Olympiad.
- Year since the destruction of the kingdom of Israel by Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, 121.
- Year before the birth of Jesus Christ, 596.
- Year before the vulgar era of Christ's nativity, 600.
- Cycle of the Sun, 26.
- Cycle of the Moon, 10.
- Third year of AErupas, king of Macedon.
- Twentieth year of Alyattes II., king of Lydia.
- Twenty-sixth year of Cyaxares or Cyaraxes, king of Media.
- Sixth year of Agasicles, king of Lacedaemon, of the family of the Proclidae.
- Eighth year of Leon, king of Lacedaemon, of the family of the Eurysthenidae.

- Seventh year of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon.
- Seventeenth year of Tarquinius Priscus, king of the Romans.
- Eleventh year of Jehoiakim, king of Judah.

CHAPTER 1

The prophet enters very abruptly on his subject, his spirit being greatly indignant at the rapid progress of vice and impiety, 1-4. Upon which God is introduced threatening very awful and sudden judgments to be indicted by the ministry of the Chaldeans, 5-10. The Babylontans attribute their wonderful successes to their idols, 11. The prophet then, making a sudden transition, expostulates with God (probably personating the Jews) for permitting a nation much more wicked than themselves, as they supposed, to oppress and devour them, as fishers and foulers do their prey, 12-17.

We know little of this prophet; for what we find in the ancients concerning him is evidently fabulous, as well as that which appears in the Apocrypha. He was probably of the tribe of Simeon, and a native of Beth-zacar. It is very likely that he lived after the destruction of Nineveh, as he speaks of the Chaldeans, but makes no mention of the Assyrians. And he appears also to have prophesied before the Jewish captivity, see chap. 1:5; 2:1; 3:2, 16-19; and therefore Abp. Newcome thinks he may be placed in the reign of Jehoiakim, between the years 606 B.C. and 598 B.C.

As a poet, Habakkuk holds a high rank among the Hebrew prophets. The beautiful connection between the parts of his prophecy, its diction, imagery, spirit, and sublimity, cannot be too much admired; and his hymn, chap. 3., is allowed by the best judges to be a masterpiece of its kind. See Lowth's Praellect. xxi., xxviii.

NOTES ON CHAP. 1

Verse 1. *The burden*—**הַמַּשָּׂא** hammassa signifies not only the burdensome prophecy, but the prophecy or revelation itself which God presented to the mind of Habakkuk, and which he saw-clearly perceived, in the light of prophecy and then faithfully declared, as this book shows.

The word signifies an oracle or revelation in general; but chiefly, one relative to future calamities.

Verse 2. *O Lord, how long shall I cry*— The prophet feels himself strongly excited against the vices which he beheld; and which, it appears from this verse, he had often declaimed against, but in vain; the people continued in their vices, and God in his longsuffering.

Habakkuk begins his prophecy under a similar feeling, and nearly in similar words, as Juvenal did his Satires:—

*Semper ego auditor tantum?
Nunquamne reponam?
Vexatus toties rauci Theseide Codri?*

Sat. 1:1.

*“Shall I always be a hearer only?
Shall I never reply?
So often vexed?”*

Of violence— The most unlawful and outrageous acts.

Verse 3. *And cause me to behold grievance*— עמל *amal*, labor, toil, distress, misery, etc., the common fruits of sin.

Verse 4. *The law is slacked*— They pay no attention to it; it has lost all its vigor, its restraining and correcting power, it is not executed; right judgment is never pronounced; and the poor righteous man complains in vain that he is grievously oppressed by the wicked, and by those in power and authority. That the utmost depravity prevailed in the land of Judah is evident from these verses; and can we wonder, then, that God poured out such signal judgments upon them? When judgment doth not proceed from the seat of judgment upon earth, it will infallibly go forth from the throne of judgment in heaven.

Verse 5. *Behold ye among the heathen*— Instead of בגוים *baggoyim*,

among the nations or heathen, some critics think we should read בַּגְדִים bogedim, transgressors; and to the same purpose the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic have read; and thus it is quoted by St. Paul Acts 13:41. But neither this, nor any tantamount reading, is found in any of the MSS. yet collated. Newcome translates, “See, ye transgressors, and behold a wonder, and perish.”

I will work a work in your days— As he is speaking of the desolation that should be produced by the Chaldeans, it follows, as Bp. Newcome has justly observed, that the Chaldeans invaded Judah whilst those were living whom the prophet addressed.

Which ye will not believe— Nor did they, after all the declarations of various prophets. They still supposed that God would not give them up into the hands of their enemies, though they continued in their abominations!

It is evident that St. Paul, in the above place, accommodates this prediction to his own purpose. And possibly this sense might have been the intention of the Divine Spirit when he first spoke the words to the prophet; for, as God works in reference to eternity, so he speaks in reference to the same; and therefore there is an infinity of meaning in his WORD. These appear to be the words of God in answer to the prophet, in which he declares he will entirely ruin this wicked people by means of the Chaldeans.

Verse 6. *That bitter and hasty nation*— Cruel and oppressive in their disposition; and prompt and speedy in their assaults and conquests.

Verse 7. *Their judgment-shall proceed of themselves.*— By revolting from the Assyrians, they have become a great nation. Thus, their judgment and excellence were the result of their own valor. Other meanings are given to this passage.

Verse 8. *Their horses also are swifter than the leopards*— The Chaldean cavalry are proverbial for swiftness, courage, etc. In Jeremiah, chap. 4:13, it is said, speaking of Nebuchadnezzar, “His chariots are as a whirlwind;

his horses are swifter than eagles.”

Appian, speaking of the horses bred about the Euphrates, says, “They are by nature warhorses, and so intrepid that neither the sight nor the roaring of the lion appals them; and, besides, they are astonishingly fleet.”

The leopard, of all quadrupeds, is allowed to be the swiftest.

The evening wolves— The wolf is remarkable for his quick sight. Aelian says, οξυωτεστατον εστι ζωον, και μεντοι, και νυκτος και σεληνης ουκ ουσης οδε ορα; “The wolf is a very fleet animal; and, besides, it can see by night, even when there is no moonlight.” Some think the hyaena is meant: it is a swift, cruel, and untameable animal. The other prophets speak of the Chaldeans in the same way. See Deuteronomy 28:49; Jeremiah 48:40; 49:22; Ezekiel 17:5; Lamentations 4:19.

Verse 9. *Their faces shall sup up as the east wind*— This may be an allusion to those electrical winds which prevail in that country. Mr. Jackson, in his overland journey from India, mentions his having bathed in the Tigris. On his coming out of the river one of those winds passed over him, and, in a moment, carried off every particle of water that was on his body and in his bathing dress. So, the Chaldeans shall leave no substance behind them; their faces, their bare appearance, is the proof that nothing good shall be left.

Shall gather the captivity as the sand.— They shall carry off innumerable captives.

Verse 10. *They shall scoff at the kings*— No power shall be able to stand before them. It will be only as pastime to them to take the strongest places. They will have no need to build formidable ramparts: by sweeping the dust together they shall make mounts sufficient to pass over the walls and take the city.

Verse 11. *Then shall his mind change*— This is thought to relate to the change which took place in Nebuchadnezzar, when “a beast’s heart was given to him,” and he was “driven from the dwellings of men.” And this

was because of his offending-his pride and arrogance; and his attributing all his success, etc., to his idols.

Verse 12. *Art thou not frown everlasting*— The idols change, and their worshippers change and fail: but thou, Jehovah, art eternal; thou canst not change, and they who trust in thee are safe. Thou art infinite in thy mercy; therefore, “we shall not die,” shall not be totally exterminated.

Thou hast ordained them for judgment— Thou hast raised up the Chaldeans to correct and punish us; but thou hast not given them a commission to destroy us totally.

Instead of **לֹא נָמוּת** lo namuth, “we shall not die,” Houbigant and other critics, with a little transposition of letters, read **אֵל אֱמֶת** El emeth, “God of truth;” and then the verse will stand thus: “Art thou not from everlasting, O Jehovah, my God, my Holy One? O Jehovah, GOD OF TRUTH, thou hast appointed them for judgment.” But this emendation, however elegant, is not supported by any MS.; nor, indeed, by any of the ancient versions, though the Chaldee has something like it. The common reading makes a very good sense.

Verse 13. *Thou art of purer eyes*— Seeing thou art so pure, and canst not look on iniquity-it is so abominable-how canst thou bear with them who “deal treacherously, and hold thy tongue when the wicked devour the righteous?” All such questions are easily solved by a consideration of God’s ineffable mercy, which leads him to suffer long and be kind. He has no pleasure in the death of a sinner.

Verse 14. *Makest men as the fishes of the sea*— Easily are we taken and destroyed. We have no leader to guide us, and no power to defend ourselves. Nebuchadnezzar is here represented as a fisherman, who is constantly casting his nets into the sea, and enclosing multitudes of fishes; and, being always successful, he sacrifices to his own net-attributes all his conquests to his own power and prudence; not considering that he is only like a net that after having been used for a while, shall at last be thrown by as useless, or burnt in the fire.

Verse 16. *They sacrifice unto their net*— He had no God; he cared for none; and worshipped only his armor and himself. King Mezentius, one of the worst characters in the *Aeneid* of Virgil, is represented as invoking his own right hand and his spear in battle. *AEn.* 10:773.

*Dextra mihi
Deus, et telum quod missile libro,
Nunc adsint.*

*“My strong right hand and sword,
assert my stroke.
Those only gods Mezentius will invoke.”*

DRYDEN.

And Capaneus, in Statius, gives us a more decisive proof of this self-idolatry. *Thebaid*, lib. x.

Ades, O mihi dextera tantum Tu praeses belli, et inevitabile Numen, Te voco, te solum Superum contemptor adoro.

“Only thou, my right hand, be my aid; I contemn the gods, and adore thee as the chief in battle, and the irresistible deity.” The poet tells us that, for his impiety, Jupiter slew him with thunder.

This was an ancient idolatry in this country, and has existed till within about a century. There are relics of it in different parts of Europe; for when military men bind themselves to accomplish any particular purpose, it is usual to lay their hand upon their sword: but formerly they kissed it, when swearing by it. With most heroes, the sword is both their Bible and their God. To the present day it is a custom among the Hindoos annually to worship the implements of their trades. See *WARD*.

Verse 17. *And not spare continually to slay the nation?*— They are running from conquest to conquest; burning, slaying, sacking, and slaughtering. Like the fishermen, who throw cast after cast while any fish are to be caught, so Nebuchadnezzar is destroying one nation after

another. This last sentence explains the allegory of the net.

CHAPTER 2

The prophet, waiting for a return to his expostulation, is answered by God that the time for the destruction of the Jewish polity by the Chaldeans is not only fixed in the Divine counsel, but is awfully near; and he is therefore commanded to write down the vision relative to this appalling subject in the most legible characters, and in the plainest language, that all who read it with attention (those just persons who exercise an unwavering faith in the declaration of God respecting the violent irruption of the merciless Babylonians) may flee from the impending vengeance, 14. The fall of the Chaldeans, and of their ambitious monarch is then predicted, 5-10; and, by a strong and bold personification, the very stone and wood of those magnificent buildings, which the Babylonish king had raised by oppression and bloodshed, pronounce his wo, and in responsive taunts upbraid him, 11, 12. The prophet then beautifully sets forth the absolute impotence of every effort, however well conducted, which is not in concert with the Divine counsel: for though the wicked rage, and threaten the utter extermination of the people of God; yet when the SET time to favor Zion is come, the destroyers of God's heritage shall themselves be destroyed, and "the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of God, as the waters cover the sea," 13, 14. See Psalm cii. 13-16. For the cup of idolatry which Babylon has given to many nations, she will receive of the Lord's hand the cup of fury by the insurrection of mighty enemies (the Medes and Persians) rushing like wild beasts to destroy her, 15. In the midst of this distress the prophet very opportunely asks in what the Babylonians had profited by their idols, exposes the absurdity of trusting in them, and calls upon the whole world to stand in awe of the everlasting Jehovah, 16-19.

NOTES ON CHAP. 2

Verse 1. *I will stand upon my watch*— The prophets are always represented as watchmen, watching constantly for the comfort, safety, and

welfare of the people; and watching also to receive information from the Lord: for the prophetic influence was not always with them, but was granted only at particular times, according to the will of God. When, in doubtful cases, they wished to know what God was about to do with the country, they retired from society and gave themselves to meditation and prayer, waiting thus upon God to hear what he would say IN them.

What he will say unto me— בִּי bi, IN me-in my understanding and heart.

And what I shall answer when I am reproved.— What I shall say to God in behalf of the people; and what the Lord shall command me to say to the people. Some translate, “And what he will answer for my conviction.” Or, “what shall be answered to my pleading.”

Verse 2. *Write the vision*— Carefully take down all that I shall say.

Make it plain upon tables— Write it in a full plain, legible hand.

That he may run that readeth it.— That he who attentively peruses it may speed to save his life from the irruption of the Chaldeans, by which so many shall be cut off. The prophet does not mean that the words are to be made so plain, that a man running by may easily read them, and catch their meaning. This interpretation has been frequently given; and it has been incautiously applied to the whole of the Bible: “God’s book is so plain, that he that runs may read;” but it is very foolish: God never intends that his words shall be understood by the careless. He that reads, studies, meditates, and prays, shall understand every portion of this sacred book that relates immediately to his own salvation. But no trifler can understand it. If the contents of a play-bill were to be read as many read the Bible, they would know just as much of the one as they do of the other.

Verse 3. *The vision is yet for an appointed time*— The Chaldeans, who are to ruin Judea, shall afterwards be ruined themselves: but they must do this work before they receive their wages; therefore the vision is for an appointed time. But at the end it shall speak. When his work of devastation is done, his day of retribution shall take place.

Though it tarry— Though it appear to be long, do not be impatient; it will surely come; it will not tarry longer than the prescribed time, and this time is not far distant. Wait for it.

Verse 4. Behold, his soul which is lifted up— Hee that presumes on his safety without any special warrant from God, is a proud man; and whatever he may profess, or think of himself, his mind is not upright in him. But he that is just by faith shall live—he that believes what God hath said relative to the Chaldeans besieging Jerusalem, shall make his escape from the place, and consequently shall save his life. The words in the New Testament are accommodated to the salvation which believers in Christ shall possess. Indeed, the just—the true Christians, who believed in Jesus Christ’s words relative to the destruction of Jerusalem, when they found the Romans coming against it, left the city, and escaped to Pella in Coelesyria, and did live—their lives were saved: while the unbelieving Jews, to a man, either perished or were made slaves. One good sense is, He that believes the promises of God, and has found life through believing, shall live by his faith.

Verse 5. Because he transgresseth by wine— From the present translation, it is not easy to see either reason or meaning in the first clause of this verse. Newcome translates, “Moreover, as a mighty man transgresseth through wine, he is proud, and remaineth not at rest.” Houbigant thus: “For he, though he be a despiser, and powerful, and proud, yet shall he not have rest.”

Nebuchadnezzar is here represented in his usual character, proud, haughty, and ambitious; inebriated with his successes, and determined on more extensive conquests; and, like the grave, can never have enough: yet, after the subjugation of many peoples and nations, he shall be brought down, and become so despicable that he shall be a proverb of reproach, and be taunted and scorned by all those whom he had before enslaved.

And cannot be satisfied— When he has obtained all that is within his reach, he wishes for more; and becomes miserable, because any limits are opposed to his insatiable ambition. It is said of Alexander:—

*Unus Pellaeo juveni non sufficit orbis;
AEstuat infelix angusto limite mundi.*

Juv. Sat. 10:168.

*One world sufficed not Alexander's mind;
Coop'd up, he seem'd on earth and seas confined.*

And the poet justly ridicules him, because at last the sarcophagus was found too large for his body!

Verse 6. *Shall not all these take up a parable against hits* — His ambition, derangement, and the final destruction of his mighty empire by the Persians, shall form the foundation of many sententious sayings among the people. “He who towered so high, behold how low he is fallen!” “He made himself a god; behold, he herds with the beasts of the field!” “The disturber of the peace of the world is now a handful of dust!”

Verse 7. *Shall they not rise up suddenly*— Does not this refer to the sudden and unexpected taking of Babylon by Cyrus, whose troops entered into the city through the bed of the Euphrates, whose waters they had diverted by another channel; so that the Babylonians knew nothing of the matter till they saw the Persian soldiers rise up as in a moment, in the very heart of their city?

Verse 8. *For the violence of the land* — Or, for the violence done to the land of Judea, and to the city of Jerusalem.

Verse 9. *An evil covetousness to his house*— Nebuchadnezzar wished to aggrandize his family, and make his empire permanent: but both family and empire were soon cut off by the death of his son Belshazzar, and the consequent destruction of the Chaldean empire.

Verse 10. *Hast sinned against thy soul.*— Thy life is forfeited by thy crimes.

Verse 11. *The stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the*

timber shall answer it.— This appears to refer to the ancient mode of building walls; two or three courses of stone. and then one course of timber. See 1 Kings 6:36: thus was the palace of Solomon built. The splendid and costly buildings of Babylon have been universally celebrated. But how were these buildings erected? By the spoils of conquered nations, and the expense of the blood of multitudes; therefore the stones and the timber are represented as calling out for vengeance against this ruthless conqueror.

Verse 12. *Wo to him that buildeth a town with blood*— At the expense of much slaughter. This is the answer of the beam to the stone. And these things will refer to the vast fortunes gained, and the buildings erected, by means of the slave-trade; where, to a considerate and humane mind, the walls appear as if composed of the bones of negroes, and cemented by their blood! But the towns or houses established by this iniquity soon come to ruin; and the fortunes made have, in most cases, become as chaff and dust before the whirlwind of God's indignation. But where are the dealers in the souls and bodies of men? Ask him who has them in his keeping. He can tell.

Verse 13. *The people shall labor in the very fire*— All these superb buildings shall be burnt down. See the parallel passage, Jeremiah 51:58, and the note there.

Shall weary themselves for very vanity?— For the gratification of the wishes of ambition, and in buildings which shall be brought to naught.

Verse 14. *For the earth shall be filled*— This is a singular and important verse. It may be first applied to Babylon. God's power and providence shall be widely displayed in the destruction of this city and empire, in the humiliation of Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel 4:37, and in the captivity and restoration of his people. See Newcome, and see Isaiah 11:9.

Secondly. It may be applied to the glorious days of the Messiah. The land of Judea should by his preaching, and that of his disciples, be filled with the knowledge of God. God's great design fully discovered, and the scheme of salvation amply explained.

Thirdly. It may be applied to the universal spread of the Gospel over the habitable globe; when the fullness of the Gentiles should be brought in, and the Jews gathered in with that fullness. The earth cannot perish till every continent, island, and inhabitant, is illuminated with the light of the Gospel.

Verse 15. *Wo unto him that giveth his neighbor drink*— This has been considered as applying to Pharaoh-hophra, king of Egypt, who enticed his neighbors Jehoiachin and Zedekiah to rebel against Nebuchadnezzar, whereby the nakedness and imbecility of the poor Jews was soon discovered; for the Chaldeans soon took Jerusalem, and carried its kings, princes, and people, into captivity.

Verse 16. *The cup of the Lord's right hand*— Among the ancients, all drank out of the same cup; was passed from hand to hand, and each drank as much as he chose. The Chaldeans gave to the neighboring nations the cup of idolatry and of deceitful alliance: and in return they received from the Lord the cup of his fury. So Grotius.

Verse 17. *For the violence of Lebanon*— Or, the violence done to Lebanon; to men, to cattle, to Judea, and to Jerusalem. See the note on the parallel place, ver. 8. This may be a threatening against Egypt, as the former was against Chaldea.

Verse 18. *What profiteth the graven image*— This is against idolatry in general, and every species of it, as well as against those princes, priests, and people who practice it, and encourage others to do the same. See on the parallel passages in the margin.

Dumb idols?— **אלילים אלמים** *elilim illemim*, “dumb nothings.” This is exactly agreeable to St. Paul, 1 Corinthians 8:4, who says, “An idol is nothing in the world.” What signify the idols worshipped by the Chaldeans, Tyrians, and Egyptians? They have not been able to save their worshippers.

Verse 19. *Wo unto him*— How foolish and contemptible to worship a

thing formed by the hand of man out of wood, stone, gold, or silver! The meanest brute is superior to them all; it breathes and lives, but they have no breath in them. However, they are said above to be teachers of lies; that is, they appeared to give out oracles: but these were lies; and were not given by the statue, but by the priest.

Verse 20. *The Lord is in his holy temple*— Jehovah has his temple, the place where he is to be worshipped; but there there is no image. Oracles, however, are given forth; and every word of them is truth, and is fulfilled in its season. And this temple and its worship are holy; no abomination can be practiced there, and every thing in it leads to holiness of heart and life.

Let all the earth keep silence before him.— Let all be dumb. Let none of them dare to open their mouths in the presence of Jehovah. He alone is Sovereign. He alone is the arbiter of life and death. Let all hear his commands with the deepest respect, obey them with the promptest diligence, and worship him with the most profound reverence. When an Asiatic sovereign goes to the mosque on any of the eastern festivals, such as the Bairham, the deepest silence reigns among all his retinue, viziers, foreign ambassadors, etc. They all bow respectfully before him; but no word is spoken, no sound uttered. It is to this species of reverence that the prophet alludes, and with this he concludes the prophetic part of this book. What God has threatened or promised, that he will fulfill. Let every soul bow before him, and submit to his authority.

CHAPTER 3

The prophet, being apprised of the calamities which were to be brought on his country by the ministry of the Chaldeans, and the punishments which awaited the Chaldeans themselves, partly struck with terror, and partly revived with hope and confidence in the Divine mercy, beseeches God to hasten the redemption of his people, 1, 2. Such a petition would naturally lead his thoughts to the astonishing deliverance which God vouchsafed to the same people of old; and the inference from it was obvious, that he could with the same ease deliver their posterity now. But, hurried on by the fire and impetuosity of his spirit, he disdains to wait the process of connecting these ideas, and bounds at once into the midst of his subject: "God came from Teman," etc., 3. He goes on to describe the majesty and might which God displayed in conducting his people to the land of promise, selecting the most remarkable circumstances, and clothing them in the most lofty language. As he goes along, his fancy becomes more glowing, till at length he is transported to the scene of action, and becomes an eyewitness of the wonders he describes. "I beheld the tents of Cushan in affliction," 4-6. After having touched on the principal circumstances of that deliverance which he celebrates, he returns to what passed before them in Egypt; his enthusiasm having led him to begin in the midst of his subject, 7-15. And at last he ends the hymn as he began it, with expressing his awe of the Divine judgments, and his firm trust in the mercy and goodness of God while under them; and that in terms of such singular beauty, elegance, and sublimity, as to form a to proper conclusion to this admirable piece of Divinely inspired composition, 16-19. It would seem from the title, and the note appended at the end, that it was set to music, and sung in the service of the temple.

NOTES ON CHAP. 3

Verse 1. *A prayer of Habakkuk-upon Shigionoth.*— See the note on the title of Psalm vii., where the meaning of Shiggaion is given. The Vulgate has, pro ignorantibus, for ignorances, or sins committed in ignorance; and so

it is understood by the Chaldee. The Syriac has nothing but merely, A prayer of Habakkuk. And the septuagint, instead of Shigionoth, have *μετα ωδης*, with a hymn, which is copied by the Arabic.

I suspect that the title here given is of a posterior date to the prophecy. It appears to interrupt the connection between this and the termination of the preceding verse. See them together:—

Chap. 2:20: “But the Lord is in his holy temple:
Be silent before him, all the earth.

3:1: O Lord, I have heard thy speech:
I have feared, O Lord, thy work.
As the years approach thou hast shown;
As the years approach thou makest known.
In wrath thou rememberest mercy.”

The prophet may here refer to the speech which God had communicated to him, chap. 1:1-11, 2:4-20, and the terror with which he was struck, because of the judgments denounced against Jerusalem. I have followed the version of Apb. Newcome in this first verse. The critical reader may consult his notes, and the various readings of Kennicott and De Rossi.

Verse 2. *In the midst of the years*—*בקרֶב שָׁנִים* bekereb shanim, “As the years approach.” The nearer the time, the clearer and fuller is the prediction; and the signs of the times show that the complete fulfillment is at hand. But as the judgments will be heavy, (and they are not greater than we deserve,) yet, Lord, in the midst of wrath-infliction of punishment-remember mercy, and spare the souls that return unto thee with humiliation and prayer.

Verse 3. *God came from Teman*— Bp. Lowth observes: “This is a sudden burst of poetry, in the true spirit of the ode; the concealed connection being that God, who had formerly displayed such power in delivering the Israelites from Egyptian slavery, might succor their posterity in a like wonderful manner.” Hence the prophet selects the most striking facts of that first deliverance; and to decorate and render them

impressive, brings forth all the powers of his genius, in all the strength and elegance of his language. “What crowns the sublimity of this piece,” says Bp. Lowth, “is the singular elegance of the close; and were it not that antiquity has here and there thrown its veil of obscurity over it, there could not be conceived a more perfect and masterly poem of its kind.” See, for more particulars, his twenty-eighth Prelection.

I shall endeavor to show the facts in the deliverance from Egypt, to which the prophet refers.

Temán— This was a city, the capital of a province of Idumea, to the south of the land of Canaan. Numbers 20:21; Jeremiah 49:7.

Parán— Was a city which gave its name to a province in Arabia Petrea. Genesis 21:21; Deuteronomy 33:2.

Selah— This word is not well known; probably it means a pause or alteration in the music. See it in the Psalms, and its explanation there.

His glory covered the heavens— His glory when he descended on Mount Sinai, and in the pillar of fire by night.

The earth was full of his praise.— All the land was astonished at the magnificence of his works in behalf of his people. Instead of praise, some translate splendor. The whole land was illuminated by his glory.

Verse 4. *He had horns coming out of his hand*— קרניים karnayim, rays. His hand-his power-was manifested in a particular place, by the sudden issuing out of pencils of rays, which diverged in coruscations of light, so as to illuminate the whole hemisphere. Yet “there was the hiding of his power.” His Majesty could not be seen, nor any kind of image, because of the insufferable splendor. This may either refer to the lightnings on Mount Sinai or to the brightness which occasionally proceeded from the shechinah or glory of God between the cherubim, over the mercy-seat. See Capellus and Newcome. If lightnings are intended, the dense cloud from which they proceeded may be meant by the “hiding of his power;” for when the lightnings burst forth, his power and energy became manifest.

Probably from this the Jupiter Keraunos or Jupiter Brontes of the heathens was borrowed; who is always represented with forked or zigzag lightnings in his hand.

Verse 5. *Before him went the pestilence*— This plague was several times inflicted on the disobedient Israelites in the wilderness; see Numbers 11:33; 14:37; 16:46; and was always the proof that the just God was then manifesting his power among them.

Burning coals event forth at his feet.— Newcome translates, “And flashes of fire went forth after him.” The disobedient Israelities were consumed by a fire that went out from Jehovah; see Leviticus 10:2; Numbers 11:1; 16:35. And the burnt-offering was consumed by a fire which came out from before Jehovah, Leviticus 11:24.

Verse 6. *He stood, and measured the earth*— ארץ erets, the land; he divided the promised land among the twelve tribes. This is the allusion; and this the prophet had in his eye. God not only made a general assignment of the land to the Hebrews; but he even divided it into such portions as the different families required. Here were both power and condescension. When a conqueror had subdued a country, he divided it among his soldiers. Among the Romans, those among whom the conquered lands were divided were termed beneficiary; and the lands beneficia, as being held on the beneficence of the sovereign.

He beheld, and drove asunder the nations— The nations of Canaan, the Hittites, Hivites, Jebusites, etc., and all who opposed his people. Even his look dispersed them.

The everlasting mountains were scattered— Or, broken asunder. This may refer to the convulsions on Mount Sinai; and to the earth quake which announced the descent of the Most High. See Exodus 19:18. “God occupied the summit of the eternal Mount Sinai; and led his people over the eternal mountains of Arabia Petraea; and this sense is preferable to the figurative one, that his ways or doings are predetermined front everlasting.”-Newcome.

The epithets **עַד** ad, and **עוֹלָם** olam, eternal, and everlasting, are applied to mountains and immense rocks, because no other parts of nature are less subject to decay or change, than these immense masses of earth and stone, and that almost indestructible stone, granite, out of which Sinai appears to be formed. A piece of the beautiful granite of this mountain now lies before me. This is a figurative description of the passage of the Israelites through the deserts of Arabia, over mountains, rocks, and through the trackless wilderness; over and through which God, by his power and providence, gave them a safe passage.

The following beautiful piece from the Fragments of AEschylus will illustrate the preceding description, and please the learned reader. **χωριζε θνητων τον θεον, και μη δοκει ομοιον αυτω σαρκινον καθεσταναι ουκοισθα δ' αυτον ποτε μεν ως πυρ φαινεται απλαστον ορμη ποτε δ' υδωρ, ποτε δε γνοφος. και θηρσιν αυτος γινεται παρεμφερης, ανεμω, νεφει τε, καστραπη, βροντη, βροχη. ὑπηρετει δ' αυτω θαλασσα, και πετραι, και πασα πηγη, χ' υδατος συστηματα τρεμει δ' ορη και γαια και πελωριος βυθος θαλασσης, κωρεων υψος μεγα, οταν επιβλεψη γοργον ομμα δεσποτου.**
AESCHYLI Fragm.

Confound not God with man; nor madly deem His form is mortal, and of flesh like thine. Thou know'st him not. Sometimes like fire he glows In wrath severe; sometimes as water flows; In brooding darkness now his power conceals And then in brutes that mighty power reveals. In clouds tempestuous we the Godhead find; He mounts the storm, and rides the winged wind; In vivid lightning's flashes from on high; In rattling thunders rends the lowering sky; Fountains and rivers, seas and floods obey, And ocean's deep abyss yields to his sway; The mountains tremble, and the hills sink down, Crumbled to dust by the Almighty's frown. When God unfolds the terrors of his eye, All things with horror quake, and in confusion lie. J. B. B. CLARKE.

Verse 7. I saw the tents of Cushan in affliction—Cush is Arabia. The Arabians dwelt in tents, hence they were called Scenitae. When the Lord appeared on Mount Sinai, the Arabs of the Red Sea abandoned their tents, being terror-struck; and the Midianites also were seized with fear. See the

desolation wrought among this people by Phinehas, Numbers 31:1, etc., on account of their having enticed the Israelites to idolatry, Numbers 25:1, etc. Either Cush and Midian lay contiguous to each other; or, these names are poetically used to express the same place.

Verse 8. *Was the Lord displeased against the rivers?*—Floods; here is a reference to the passage of the Red Sea. The Lord is represented as heading his troops, riding in his chariot, and commanding the sea to divide, that a free passage might be left for his army to pass over.

Verse 9. *Thy bow was made quite naked*—That is, it was drawn out of its case; as the arrows had their quiver, so the bows had their cases. A fine oriental bow and bow-case, with quiver and arrows, are now before me; they show with what propriety Jehovah is represented as taking his bow out of its case, in order to set his arrow upon the cord, to shoot at his enemies. It is not the drawing out, or making bare the arrow, that is mentioned here; but the taking the bow out of its case to prepare to shoot.

This verse appears to be an answer to the questions in the preceding: “Was the Lord displeased,” etc. The answer is, All this was done “according to the oaths of the tribes;” the covenant of God, frequently repeated and renewed, which he made with the tribes, to give them the land of the Canaanites for their inheritance.

Thou didst cleave the earth with rivers.—Or, “Thou didst cleave the streams of the land.” Or, “Thou cleavedst the dry land into rivers.” This may be a reference to the passage of Jordan, and transactions at Arnon and the brook Jabbok. See Numbers 21:13-15.

In this verse we have *Selah* again, which, as before, may signify a pause, or some alteration in the music.

Verse 10. *The mountains saw thee*—This is the continued answer to the questions in ver. 8. These are figures highly poetic, to show with what ease God accomplished the most arduous tasks in behalf of his people. As soon as the mountains saw him, they trembled, they were in pangs. When he appeared, the sea fled to right and left, to give him a passage. “It uttered

its voice.” The separation of the waters occasioned a terrible noise. “And it lifted up its hands on high.” Its waters, being separated, stood in heaps on the right hand and left. These heaps or waves are poetically represented here as the hands of the sea.

Verse 11. *The sun and moon stood still*— This was at the prayer of Joshua, when he fought against the Amorites. See Joshua 10:11, 12, and the notes there.

At the light of thine arrows they went— I think we should translate:—

By their light, thine arrows went abroad; By their brightness, the lightning of thy spear.

Calvin very justly remarks that the arrows and spears of the Israelites are called those of God, under whose auspices the people fought: the meaning is, that by the continuation of the light of the sun and moon, then stayed in their course, the Israelites saw how to continue the battle, till their enemies were all defeated.

Verse 12. *Thou didst march through the land*— This refers to the conquest of Canaan. God is represented as going at the head of his people as general-in-chief; and leading them on from conquest to conquest-which was the fact.

Thou didst thresh the heathen in anger.— Thou didst tread them down, as the oxen do the sheaves on the threshing-floor.

Verse 13. *Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people*— Their deliverance would not have been effected but through thy interference.

For salvation with thine anointed— That is, with Joshua, whom God had anointed, or solemnly appointed to fill the place of Moses, and lead the people into the promised land. If we read, with the common text, משיח meshichecha, “thy anointed,” the singular number, Joshua is undoubtedly meant, who was God’s instrument to put the people in possession of Canaan: but if, with several MSS. and some copies of the

Septuagint, we read משיחִיךָ meshicheycha, “thy anointed ones,” the Israelites must be intended. They are frequently called God’s anointed, or God’s saints. The sense is very far-fetched when applied to Jesus Christ.

Thou woundedst the head out of the house of the wicked— This alludes to the slaying of the first-born through all the land of Egypt. These were the heads of the houses or families.

By discovering the foundation unto the neck.— The general meaning of this clause is sufficiently plain: the government of these lands should be utterly subverted; the very foundations of it should be razed. But what means unto the neck, עַד צוֹאֵר ad tsavvar? Several critics read עַד צוֹר ad tsar, “Unto the ROCK,” that on which the house is founded: and this very intelligible reading is obtained by the omission of a single letter, אַ aleph, from the word צוֹעֵר, This conjecture has been adopted by Newcome, though unsupported either by MS. or version. But is the conjecture necessary? I think not: read the verse as it ought to be read, and all will be plain. “Thou hast wounded the head even unto the neck, in the house of the wicked, by laying bare the foundation.” The whole head, neck, and all are cut off. There was no hope left to the Egyptians, because the first-born of every family was cut off, so that the very foundation was laid bare, no first-born being left to continue the heirship of families.

Verse 14. *Thou didst strike through*— The Hebrew will bear this sense: “Thou hast pierced amidst their tribes the head of their troops,” referring to Pharaoh and his generals, who came like a whirlwind to fall upon the poor Israelites, when they appeared to be hemmed in by sea, and no place for their escape. If we follow the common reading, it seems to intimate that the troops of Pharaoh, in their confusion (for God shone out upon them from the cloud) fell foul of each other; and with their staves, or weapons, slew one another: but the head of the villages or towns, i.e., Pharaoh was drowned with his army in the Red Sea.

Verse 15. *Thou didst walk through the sea*— There was no occasion to hurry across; all was safe, for God had divided the waters: and his terrible cloud had removed from before, and stood behind them, so that it was

between them and the Egyptians. See Exodus 14:19, 20.

Verse 16. *When I heard, my belly trembled*— The prophet, having finished his account of the wonders done by Jehovah, in bringing their fathers from Egypt into the promised land, now returns to the desolate state of his countrymen, who are shortly to be led into captivity, and suffer the most grievous afflictions; and although he had a sure word of prophecy that they should be ultimately delivered, yet the thoughts of the evils they must previously endure filled his soul with terror and dismay; so that he wishes to be removed from earth before this tribulation should come, that his eyes might not behold the desolations of his country.

When he (Nebuchadnezzar) cometh up unto the people, (the Jews,) he will invade them (overpower and carry them away captive) with his troops.

Verse 17. *Although the fig tree shall not blossom*— תִּפְרַח *tiphrach*, “shall not flourish,” shall not put forth its young figs, for the fig tree does not blossom. The young figs appear as soon as the old ones are ripe, as I have often had occasion to observe.

This verse most nervously paints the desolate state of the land of Judea during the captivity. In its hemistich form, it may be translated thus:—

For the fig tree shall not flourish, And there shall be no fruit on the vines;
The fruit of the olive shall fail, And the fields shall supply no food:
The flocks shall be cut off from the fold, And no herds shall be found in the stalls:
Yet in Jehovah will I exult; I will joy in the God of my salvation.

The Vulgate has:—

Yet I in the Lord will rejoice, And will exult in Jesus my God.

The Targum countenances this version:—

וְאֲנִי בְּמִימְרָא דִּי אֲבוּעַ veana bemeimra dayai abua, “But in the WORD of the Lord will I rejoice,” i.e., the personal, substantial Word of

Jehovah.

These two verses give the finest display of resignation and confidence that I have ever met with. He saw that evil was at hand, and unavoidable, he submitted to the dispensation of God, whose Spirit enabled him to paint it in all its calamitous circumstances. He knew that God was merciful and gracious. He trusted to his promise, though all appearances were against its fulfillment; for he knew that the word of Jehovah could not fail, and therefore his confidence is unshaken.

No paraphrase can add any thing to this hymn, which is full of inexpressible dignity and elegance, leaving even its unparalleled piety out of the question.

Verse 19. *The Lord God is my strength*— This is an imitation, if not a quotation, from Psa 18:32, 33, where see the notes.

Will make me to walk upon mine high places— This last verse is spoken in the person of the people, who seem to anticipate their restoration; and that they shall once more rejoice in the hills and mountains of Judea.

To the chief singer on my stringed instruments.— This line, which is evidently a superscription, leads me to suppose that when the prophet had completed his short ode, he folded it up, with the above direction to the master singer, or leader of the choir, to be sung in the temple service. Many of the Psalms are directed in the same way. “To the master singer;” or, “chief musician;” to be sung, according to their nature, on different kinds of instruments, or with particular airs or tunes.

Neginoth, נגינות, which we translate stringed instruments, means such as were struck with a plectrum, or excited by some kind of friction or pulsation; as violins and cymbals or tambarines are. I do not think that the line makes any part of the prophecy, but merely the superscription or direction of the work when it was finished. The ending will appear much more dignified, this line being separated from it.

THE BOOK

OF THE

PROPHET ZEPHANIAH

Chronological Notes relative to this Book, upon the supposition that it was written in the twelfth year of the reign of Josiah, king of Judah

- Year from the Creation, according to Archbishop Usher, 3374.
- Year of the Julian Period, 4084.
- Year since the Flood, 1718.
- Year from the vocation of Abram, 1291.
- Year from the foundation of Solomon's temple, 382.
- Year since the division of Solomon's monarchy into the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, 346.
- Year since the conquest of Coroebus at Olympia, usually called the first Olympiad, 147.
- Third year of the thirty-seventh Olympiad.
- Year from the building of Rome, according to the Varronian computation, 124.
- Year of the era of Nabonassar, 118.
- Year since the destruction of the kingdom of Israel by Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, 92.
- Year before the birth of Christ, 626.
- Year before the vulgar era of Christ's nativity, 630.
- Cycle of the Sun, 24.
- Cycle of the Moon, 18.
- Eighteenth year of Phraortes, king of Media. This monarch is supposed by some to have been the same with the Arphaxad of the Apocrypha.
- Eleventh year of Philip I., king of Macedon.

- Twenty-second year of Archidamus, king of Lacedaemon, of the family of the Proclidae.
- Fifteenth year of Eurycrates II., king of Lacedaemon, of the family of the Eurysthenidae.
- Twenty-ninth year of Cypselus, who had seized upon the government of Corinth.
- Forty-second year of Psammitichus, king of Egypt, according to Helvicus.
- Tenth year of Kiniladachus, king of Babylon, according to the same chronologer. This monarch was the immediate predecessor of Nabopolassar, the father of Nebuchadnezzar.
- Second year of Sadyattes, king of Lydia.
- Eleventh year of Ancus Martius, the fifth king of the Romans.
- Twelfth year of Josiah, king of Judah.

CHAPTER 1

This chapter begins with denouncing God's judgments against Judah and Jerusalem, 1-3. Idolaters, and sinners of several other denominations, are then particularly threatened; and their approaching visitation enlarged on, by the enumeration of several circumstances which tend greatly to heighten its terrors, 4-18.

NOTES ON CHAP. 1

Verse 1. *The word of the Lord which came unto Zephaniah*— Though this prophet has given us so large a list of his ancestors, yet little concerning him is known, because we know nothing certain relative to the persons of the family whose names are here introduced. We have one chronological note which is of more value for the correct understanding of his prophecy than the other could have been, how circumstantially soever it had been delivered; viz., that he prophesied in the days of Josiah, son of Amon, king of Judah; and from the description which he gives of the disorders which prevailed in Judea in his time, it is evident that he must have prophesied before the reformation made by Josiah, which was in the eighteenth year of his reign. And as he predicts the destruction of Nineveh, chap. 2:13, which, as Calmet remarks, could not have taken place before the sixteenth of Josiah, allowing with Berossus twenty-one years for the reign of Nabopolassar over the Chaldeans; we must, therefore, place this prophecy about the beginning of the reign of Josiah, or from B.C. 640 to B.C. 609. But see the chronological notes.

Verse 2. *I will utterly consume all things*— All being now ripe for destruction, I will shortly bring a universal scourge upon the land. He speaks particularly of the idolaters.

Verse 3. *I will consume man and beast*— By war, and by pestilence. Even the waters shall he infected, and the fish destroyed; the air become contaminated, and the fowls die.

Verse 4. *I will cut off the remnant of Baal*— I think he refers here, partly at least, to the reformation which Josiah was to bring about. See the account, 2 Kings 23:5.

The Chemarims— The black-robed priests of different idols. See the note on 2 Kings 23:6. These were put down by Josiah.

Verse 5. *The host of heaven*— Sun, moon, planets, and stars. This worship was one of the most ancient and the most common of all species of idolatry; and it had a greater semblance of reason to recommend it. See 2 Kings 23:6, 12; Jeremiah 19:13; 32:29.

That swear by the Lord, and that swear by Malcham— Associating the name of an idol with that of the Most High. For Malcham, see on Hosea 4:15, and Amos 5:26.

Verse 6. *Them that are turned back*— Who have forsaken the true God, and become idolaters.

Nor inquired for him— Have not desired to know his will.

Verse 7. *Hold thy peace at the presence of the Lords God*— חָשׁ has, the same as hush, hist, among us. Remonstrances are now useless. You had time to acquaint yourselves with God; you would not: you cry now in vain; destruction is at the door.

The Lord hath prepared a sacrifice— A slaughter of the people.

He hath bid his guests— The Babylonians, to whom he has given a commission to destroy you. In all festivals sacrifices, 1. The victims were offered to God, and their blood poured out before the altar. 2. The people who were invited feasted upon the sacrifice. See on Isaiah 34:6.

Verse 8. *I will punish the princes, and the king's children*— After the death of Josiah the kingdom of Judah saw no prosperity, and every reign terminated miserably; until at last King Zedekiah and the king's children

were cruelly massacred at Riblah, when Nebuchadnezzar had taken Jerusalem.

Strange apparel— I really think this refers more to their embracing idolatrous customs and heathen usages, than to their changing their dress. They acquired new habits, as we would say; customs, that they used as they did their clothing—at all times, and in every thing.

Verse 9. *That leap on the threshold*— Or, that leap over the threshold. It is most probable that the Philistines are here meant. After the time that Dagon fell before the ark, and his hands were broken off on the threshold of his temple, his worshippers would no more set a foot upon the threshold, but stepped or leaped over it, when they entered into his temple. The Chaldee understands this of the Philistines, without giving this reason for it. Some understand it of haughtiness and pride: others think that leaping on the threshold refers to the customs of the Arabs, who used to ride into people's houses and take away whatever they could carry; and that this is the reason why, in several parts of the East, they have their doors made very low, to prevent those depredators from entering. In this manner, we learn the Persians have frequently oppressed the poor Armenians, going on horseback into their houses, and taking whatever they thought proper. Mr. Harmer understands it in this way.

Verse 10. *A cry from the fish-gate*— This gate, which is mentioned Nehemiah 3:3, was opposite to Joppa; and perhaps the way in which the news came of the irruption of the Chaldean army, the great crashing from the hills.

The second— Or second city, may here mean a part of Jerusalem, mentioned 2 Kings 22:14; 2 Chronicles 34:22.

Verse 11. *Maktesh*— Calmet says this signifies a mortar, or a rock in form of a mortar, and was the name of a quarter of Jerusalem where they hulled rice, corn, etc., according to St. Jerome. Some think the city of Jerusalem is meant, where the inhabitants should be beat and pounded to death as grain is pounded in a mortar.

Newcome translates it, the lower city, and considers it the valley in Jerusalem, which divided the upper from the lower city.

They that bear silver— The merchants, moneychangers, usurers, rich men.

Verse 12. *I will search Jerusalem with candles*— I will make a universal and thorough search.

That are settled on their lees— Those who are careless, satisfied with the goods of this life; who trust in their riches, and are completely irreligious; who, while they acknowledge that there is a God, think, like the Aristotelians, that he is so supremely happy in the contemplation of his own excellences, that he feels it beneath his dignity to concern himself with the affairs of mortals.

Verse 13. *Their goods (in which they trust) shall become a booty*— To the Chaldeans. They shall have no profit of all their labors. The houses they have built they shall not inhabit; of the wine of the vineyards they have planted, they shall not drink. See Amos 5:11, where we find the same evils threatened.

Verse 14. *The great day of the Lord is near*— It commenced with the death of the good king Josiah, who was slain by Pharaoh-necho at Megiddo, and continued to the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar.

Verse 15. *That day is a day of wrath*— See the parallel passages in the margin, and the notes there. From the fourteenth to the sixteenth verse inclusive there is a most beautiful amplification of the disasters that were coming on Jerusalem; the invasion, incursion, attack, carnage, confusion, horrible din occasioned by the sound of the trumpet, the cries of the people, and the shrieks and groans of the dying, are pointed out with great force and mighty effect.

Verse 17. *They shall walk like blind men*— Be in the most perplexing doubt and uncertainty; and while in this state, have their blood poured out by the sword of their enemies, and their flesh trodden under foot.

Verse 18. *Their silver nor their gold*— In which they trusted, and from which they expected happiness; these shall not profit them in this awful day. And God will bring this about speedily; and a speedy riddance—a universal desolation, shall in a short time take place in every part of the land.

CHAPTER 2

The prophet, having declared the judgments which were ready to fall on his people, earnestly exhorts them to repentance, that these judgments may be averted, 1-3. He then foretells the fate of other neighboring and hostile nations: the Philistines, 4-7; Moabites and Ammonites, 8-11; Ethiopians, 12; and Assyrians, 13. In the close of the chapter we have a prophecy against Nineveh. These predictions were accomplished chiefly by the conquests of Nebuchadnezzar.

NOTES ON CHAP. 2

Verse 1. *Gather yourselves*— Others, sift yourselves. Separate the chaff from the wheat, before the judgments of God fall upon you. O nation not desired-unlovely, not delighted in; hated because of your sin. The Israelites are addressed.

Verse 3. *Ye meek of the earth*— עֲנָוִי anavey, ye oppressed and humbled of the land.

It may be ye shall be hid— The sword has not a commission against you. Ask God, and he will be a refuge to you from the storm and from the tempest.

Verse 4. *Gaza shall be forsaken*— This prophecy is against the Philistines. They had been greatly harassed by the kings of Egypt; but were completely ruined by Nebuchadnezzar, who took all Phoenicia from the Egyptians; and about the time of his taking Tyre, devastated all the seignories of the Philistines. This ruin we have seen foretold by the other prophets, and have already remarked its exact fulfillment.

Verse 5. *The sea-coasts, the nation of the Cherethites*— The sea-coasts mean all the country lying on the Mediterranean coast from Egypt to Joppa and Gaza. The Cherethites—the Cretans who were probably a

colony of the Phoenicians. See on 1 Samuel 30:14, and Amos 9:7.

Verse 6. *And the sea-coasts shall be dwellings*— Newcome considers כרת kereth as a proper name, not cottages or folds. The Septuagint have κρηνη, Crete, and so has the Syriac. Abp. Secker notes, Alibi non extat כרת, et forte notat patriam twm כרתים. “The word כרת is not found elsewhere, and probably it is the name of the country of the Cherethim.”

Verse 7. *The coast shall be for the remnant*— Several devastations fell on the Philistines. Gaza was ruined by the army of Alexander the Great, and the Maccabees finally accomplished all that was predicted by the prophets against this invariably wicked people. They lost their polity, and were at last obliged to receive circumcision.

Verse 8. *I have heard the reproach of Moab*— God punished them for the cruel part they had taken in the persecutions of the Jews; for when they lay under the displeasure of God, these nations insulted them in the most provoking manner. See on Amos 1:13, and the parallel texts in the margin.

Verse 9. *The breeding of nettles*— That is, their land shall become desolate, and be a place for nettles, thorns, etc., to flourish in, for want of cultivation.

Verse 10. *Because they have reproached*— See on ver. 8.

Verse 11. *He will famish all the gods of the earth*— They shall have no more sacrifices; their worship shall be entirely destroyed. Idolaters supposed that their gods actually fed on the fumes and spirituous exhalations that arose from the burnt-offerings which they made unto their idols. It is in reference to this opinion that the Lord says, “He will famish all the gods of the land.”

Verse 12. *Ye Ethiopians also*— Nebuchadnezzar subdued these. See Jeremiah 46:2, 9; Ezekiel 30:4, 10. See also on Amos 9:17.

Verse 13. *7Be will-destroy Assyria*— He will overthrow the empire, and

Nineveh, their metropolitan city. See on Jonah and Nahum.

Verse 14. *And flocks shall lie down in the midst of her*— Nineveh was so completely destroyed, that its situation is not at present even known. The present city of Mossoul is supposed to be in the vicinity of the place where this ancient city stood.

The cormorant קאת kaath; and the bittern, קפד kippod. These Newcome translates, “The pelican and the porcupine.”

Their voice shall sing in the windows— The windows shall be all demolished; wild fowl shall build their nests in them, and shall be seen coming from their sills, and the fine cedar ceilings shall be exposed to the weather, and by and by crumble to dust. See the note on Isaiah 34:11, 14, where nearly the same terms are used.

CHAPTER 3

The prophet reproves Jerusalem, and all her guides and rulers, for their obstinate perseverance in impiety, notwithstanding all the warnings and corrections which they had received from God, 1-7. They are encouraged, however, after they shall have been chastised for their idolatry, and cured of it, to look for mercy and restoration, 8-13; and exited to hymns of joy at the glorious prospect, 14-17. After which the prophet concludes with large promises of favor and prosperity in the days of the Messiah, 18-20. We take this extensive view of the concluding verses of this chapter, because an apostle has expressly assured us that in EVERY prophetic book of the Old Testament Scriptures are confined predictions relative to the Gospel dispensation. See Acts 3:24.

NOTES ON CHAP. 3

Verse 1. *Wo to her that is filthy*— This is a denunciation of Divine judgment against Jerusalem.

Verse 2. *She obeyed not the voice*— Of conscience, of God, and of his prophets.

She received not correction— Did not profit by his chastisements; was uneasy and ill-tempered under her afflictions, and derived no manner of good from these chastisements.

She trusted not in the Lord— Did not consider him as the Fountain whence all help and salvation should come; and rather sought for support from man and herself, than from God.

She drew not near to her God.— Did not worship him; did not walk in his ways; did not make prayer and supplication to him.

Verse 3. *Her princes-are roaring lions*— Tearing all to pieces without shadow of law, except their own despotic power.

Her judges are evening wolves— Being a little afraid of the lion-like princes, they practice their unjust dealings from evening to morning, and take the day to find their rest.

They gnaw not the bones till the morrow.— They devour the flesh in the night, and gnaw the bones and extract the marrow afterwards. They use all violence and predatory oppression, like wild beasts; they shun the light, and turn day into night by their revellings.

Verse 4. *Her prophets are light and treacherous persons*— They have no seriousness, no deep conviction of the awful nature of their office, no concern for the immortal souls of the people. Treacherous persons-they betray the souls of the people for the sake of worldly honor, pleasure, and profit. Even in our own enlightened country we find prophets who prefer hunting the hare or the fox, and pursuing the partridge and pheasant, to visiting the sick, and going after the strayed, lost sheep of the house of Israel. Poor souls! They know neither God nor themselves; and if they did visit the sick, they could not speak to them to exhortation, edification, or comfort. God never called them to his work; therefore they know nothing of it. But O, what an account have these pleasure-taking false prophets to render to the Shepherd of souls!

They have done violence to the law.— They have forced wrong constructions on it in order to excuse themselves, and lull the people into spiritual slumber. So we find that it was an ancient practice for men to wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction.

Verse 5. *The just Lord is in the midst thereof*— He sees, marks down, and will punish all these wickednesses.

Every morning doth he bring his judgment to light— The sense is, says Bp. Newcome, “Not a day passes but we see instances of his goodness to righteous men, and of his vengeance on the wicked.”

Verse 6. *I have cut off the nations*— Syria, Israel, and those referred to, Isaiah 36:18, 20. — Newcome.

Verse 7. *Surely thou wilt fear me*— After so many displays of my sovereign power and judgments.

But they rose early— And instead of returning to God, they practiced every abomination. They were diligent to find out times and places for their iniquity. This is the worst state of man.

Verse 8. *Wait ye upon me*— Expect the fulfilment of all my promises and threatenings: I am God, and change not.

For all the earth— All the land of Judah.

Verse 9. *Will I turn to the people*— This promise must refer to the conversion of the Jews under the Gospel.

That they may all call— That the whole nation may invoke God by Christ, and serve him with one consent; not one unbeliever being found among them.

The pure language, שפה ברורה saphah berurah, may here mean the form of religious worship. They had been before idolaters: now God promises to restore his pure worship among them. The word has certainly this meaning in Psalm 81:6; where, as God is the speaker, the words should not be rendered, “I heard a language which I understood not,” but, “I heard a religious confession, which I approved not.” See Isaiah 19:18; Hosea 14:3; and see Joel 2:28, where a similiar promise is found.

Verse 10. *From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia*— This may denote both Africa and the southern Arabia. Bochart thinks that Arabia Chusae is meant; and that the rivers are Besor, which flows into the Mediterranean; Rhinocorura, which flows into the Lake Sirbonis; Trajanus Amnis, which flows into the Red Sea; and the river Corys. Calmet thinks that these rivers mean the Nile, which by seven mouths falls into the Mediterranean. The Nile comes from Ethiopia, properly so called; and runs through all

Egypt, and falls into the sea at that part of Arabia which the Scripture calls Cush or Ethiopia.

My dispersed— The Jews, scattered through different parts of the world. Shall bring mine offering. Shall acknowledge my mercy in sending them the Messiah to bless them, by turning every one of them away from their iniquities.

Verse 11. *Shalt thou not be ashamed*— Thy punishment shall cease, for God shall pardon thy sin.

For then I will take away out of the midst of thee— The wicked Jewish priests and scribes who blasphemed Christ, and would not come under his yoke.

Because of my holy mountain.— Thou wilt no more boast in my temple, but become meek and lowly in following him who is meek and lowly in heart, that ye may obtain rest to your souls.

Verse 12. *An afflicted and poor people*— In such a state will the Jews be found when they shall hear the universal call, and believe in Christ Jesus. Indeed, this is the general state of the Jews in the present day; except a Jew that are called Jews, who are very rich; and who believe just as much in the God of Jacob, as they do in Jesus Christ.

Verse 13. *The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity*— O what a change! And then, how different shall they be from their present selves! Iniquity, lying, and deceit shall not be found among them! A Jew once said to me “Tere are shome of you Christians who are making wonderful efforts to convert the Tshews (Jews.) Ah, dere ish none but Gott Almighty dat can convert a Tshew.” Truly I believe him. Only God can convert any man; and if there be a peculiar difficulty to convert any soul, that difficulty must lie in the conversion of the Jew.

Verse 14. *Sing, O daughter of Zion*— Here is not only a gracious prophetic promise of their restoration from captivity, but of their conversion to God through Christ.

Verse 15. *The King of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of thee*—

They have never had a king since the death of Zedekiah, and never shall have one till they have the King Messiah to reign among them; and this promise refers to that event.

Verse 16. *Fear thou not*— Thou shalt have no more captivities nor national afflictions.

Let not thine hands be slack.— This may refer, first, to the rebuilding of the temple of God, after the return from Babylon; and, secondly, to their diligence and zeal in the Christian Church.

Verse 17. *The Lord thy God*— יהוה אלהיך Yehovah Eloheycha, “The self-existent and eternal Being, who is in covenant with you;” the character of God in reference to the Jews when standing in the nearest relation to them.

Is mighty— גבור gibbor, is the prevailing One, the all-conquering Hero. The character which is given to Christ, Isaiah 9:6: “His name shall be called אל גבור El gibbor, the prevailing Almighty God.”

Ye will save— Deliver thee from all the power from all the guilt, and from all the pollution of thy sins; and when thus saved “he will rejoice over thee with joy,” with peculiar gladness. “He will rest in his love,”-he will renew his love. He will show the same love to you that he did of old to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

He will joy over thee with singing.— The conversion of the Jews will be a subject of peculiar delight and exultation to God himself! There will be a more than ordinary joy in heaven, when the Jews return to God through Christ. This event cannot be at a great distance; they are as wretched and as ungodly as they can well be. The arms of Christians are open to receive them; and all things are now ready!

Verse 18. *I will gather-sorrowful*— This may refer to those who, during

the captivity, mourned for their former religious assemblies; and who were reproached by their enemies, because they could not enjoy their religious solemnities. See Psalm cxxxvii.: “By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat

and at this time, and at this only, will they have a name and praise among all the people of the earth, not only among the Jews, but the Gentiles.

Before your eyes— Some read before THEIR eyes; that is, the eyes of all people. On their conversion to Christianity, they shall become as eminent as they ever were in the most illustrious days of their history, Lord, hasten the conversion of Israel! Amen.

THE BOOK

OF THE

PROPHET HAGGAI

Chronological Notes relative to this book

- Year from the Creation, according to Archbishop Usher, 3484.
- Year of the Julian Period, 4194.
- Year since the flood, 1828.
- Year from the vocation of Abram, 1301.
- Year since the first celebration of the Olympic games in Elis by the Idaei Dactyli, 934.
- Year since the foundation of the monarchy of the Israelites by the Divine appointment of Saul to the regal dignity, 576.
- Year from the foundation of the temple, 492.
- Year from the division of Solomon's monarchy into the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, 456.
- Year since the re-establishment of the Olympic games at Elis by Lycurgus, Iphitus, and Cleosthenes, 365.
- Year since the conquest of Coroebus at Olympia, usually called the first Olympiad, 257.
- First year of the sixty-fifth Olympiad.
- Year from the building of Rome, according to the Varronian or generally received computation, 234.
- Year from the building of Rome, according to Cato and the Fasti Consulares, 233.
- Year from the building of Rome, according to Polybius the historian, 232.
- Year from the building of Rome, according to Fabius Pictor, 228.
- Year of the era of Nabonassar, 228.

- Year since the destruction of the kingdom of Israel by Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, 202.
- Year since the destruction of the kingdom of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, 68.
- Year since the destruction of the Chaldean empire by the Persians, 18.
- Year before the birth of Christ, 516.
- Year before the vulgar era of Christ's nativity, 520.
- Cycle of the Sun, 22.
- Cycle of the Moon, 14.
- Second year of Darius I., king of Persia.
- Twenty-eighth year of Amyntas, king of Macedon.
- Seventh year of Demaratus, king of Lacedaemon, of the family of the Proclidae.
- Eleventh year of Cleomenes, king of Lacedaemon, of the family of the Eurysthenidae.
- Fifteenth year of Tarquinius Superbus, the last king of the Romans.
- This was about twelve years before the abolition of the regal government of the Romans by the expulsion of the Tarquins.
- Confucius, the celebrated Chinese philosopher, is supposed to have flourished about this time.

CHAPTER 1

The prophet reproves the people, and particularly their ruler and high priest, for negligence and delay in rebuilding the temple; and tells them that their neglect was the cause of their having been visited with unfruitful seasons, and other marks of the Divine displeasure, 1-11. He encourages them to set about the work, and on their doing so, promises that God will be with them, 12-15.

We know nothing of the parentage of Haggai. He was probably born in Babylon during the captivity, and appears to have been the first prophet sent to the Jews after their return to their own land. He was sent particularly to encourage the Jews to proceed with the building of the temple, which had been interrupted for about fourteen years. Cyrus, who had published an edict empowering the Jews to return to Jerusalem and rebuild their city and temple, revoked this edict in the second year of his reign, through the evil advice of his courtiers and other enemies of the Jews. After his death Cambyses renewed the prohibition, but after the death of Cambyses, Darius, the son of Hystaspes, renewed the permission; and Haggai was sent to encourage his countrymen to proceed with the work. Darius came to the throne about the year B.C. 521, and published his edict of permission for the Jews to rebuild the city and temple in the second year of his reign, which was the sixteenth of their return from Babylon.

NOTES ON CHAP. 1

Verse 1. *In the sixth month*— Called Elul by the Hebrews. It was the sixth month of the ecclesiastical year, and the last of the civil year, and answered to a part of our September.

Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel— Who was son of Jeconiah, king of Judah, and of the family of David, and exercised the post of a governor among the people, but not over them, for both he and they were under the

Persian government; but they were permitted to have Zerubbabel for their own governor, and Joshua for their high priest; and these regulated all matters relative to their peculiar political and ecclesiastical government. But it appears from Ezra, 5:3, that Tatnai, the governor on this side the river, had them under his cognizance. None of their own governors was absolute. The Persians permitted them to live under their own laws and civil regulations; but they always considered them as a colony, over which they had a continual superintendence.

Joshua the son of Josedech— And son of Seraiah, who was high priest in the time of Zedekiah, and was carried into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar, 1 Chronicles 6:15. But Seraiah was slain at Riblah, by order of Nebuchadnezzar, 2 Kings 25:18-21.

Verse 2. *The time is not come*— They thought that the seventy years spoken of by Jeremiah were not yet completed, and it would be useless to attempt to rebuild until that period had arrived. But Abp. Usher has shown that from the commencement of the last siege of Jerusalem unto this time, precisely sixty-nine years had been completed.

Verse 4. *Is it time for you*— If the time be not come to rebuild the temple, it cannot be come for you to build yourselves comfortable houses: but ye are rebuilding your houses; why then do ye not rebuild the house of the Lord? The foundation of the temple had been laid fourteen years before, and some considerable progress made in the building; and it had been lying waste in that unfinished state to the present time.

Verse 5. *Consider your ways*— Is it fit that you should be building yourselves elegant houses, and neglect a place for the worship of that God who has restored you from captivity?

Verse 6. *Ye have sown much*— God will not bless you in any labor of your hands, unless you rebuild his temple and restore his worship. This verse contains a series of proverbs, no less than five in the compass of a few lines.

Verse 8. *Go up to the mountain, and bring wood*— Go to Lebanon, and

get timber. In the second year of the return from the captivity, they had procured cedar trees from Lebanon, and brought them to Joppa, and had hired masons and carpenters from the Tyrians and Sidonians; but that labor had been nearly lost by the long suspension of the building. Ezra 3:7.

Verse 9. *Ye looked for much*— Ye made great pretensions at first; but they are come to nothing. Ye did a little in the beginning; but so scantily and unwillingly that I could not but reject it.

Ye run every man unto his own house.— To rebuild and adorn it; and God's house is neglected!

Verse 10. *Therefore the heaven over you is stayed from dew*— It appears from the following verse that God had sent a drought upon the land, which threatened them with scarcity and famine.

Verse 12. *Then Zerubbabel*— The threatening of Haggai had its proper effect. — The civil governor, the high priest, and the whole of the people, united together to do the work. When the authority of God is acknowledged, his words will be carefully obeyed.

Verse 13. *Then spake Haggai*— He was the Lord's messenger, and he came with the Lord's message, and consequently he came with authority. He is called מלאך יהוה malach Yehovah, the angel of Jehovah, just as the pastors of the seven Asiatic churches are called ANGELS of the Churches, Revelation 1:2.

I am with you, saith the Lord.— Here was high encouragement. What may not a man do when God is his helper?

Verse 14. *And the Lord stirred up the spirit*— It is not only necessary that the judgment should be enlightened, but the soul must be invigorated by the Spirit of God, before any good work can be effectually done.

Verse 15. *In the four and twentieth day*— Haggai received his commission on the first day of this month and by the twenty-fourth day he had so completely succeeded that he had the satisfaction to see the

whole people engaged heartily in the Lord's work; they left their own houses to build that of the Lord. Here was a faithful reprovcr, and he found obedient ears; and the Lord's work was done, for the people had a mind to work.

CHAPTER 2

When this prophecy was uttered, about four years before the temple was finished, and sixty-eight after the former one was destroyed, it appears that some old men among the Jews were greatly dispirited on account of its being so much inferior in magnificence to that of Solomon. Compare Ezra 3:12. To raise the spirits of the people, and encourage them to proceed with the work, the prophet assures them that the glory of the second temple should be greater than that of the first, alluding perhaps to the glorious doctrines which should be preached in it by Jesus Christ and his apostles, 1-9. He then shows the people that the oblations brought by their priests could not sanctify them while they were unclean by their neglect of the temple; and to convince them that the difficult times they had experienced during that neglect proceeded from this cause, he promises fruitful seasons from that day forward, 10-19. The concluding verses contain a prediction of the mighty revolutions that should take place by the setting up of the kingdom of Christ under the type of Zerubbabel, 20-23. As the time which elapsed between the date of the prophecy and the dreadful concussion of nations is termed in verse 6, A LITTLE WHILE, the words may likewise have reference to some temporal revolutions then near, such as the commotions of Babylon in the reign of Darius, the Macedonian conquests in Persia, and the wars between the successors of Alexander; but the aspect of the prophecy is more directly to the amazing victories of the Romans, who, in the time of Haggai and Zechariah, were on the VERY EVE of their successful career, and in the lapse of a few centuries subjugated the whole habitable globe; and therefore, in a very good sense, God may be said by these people to have shaken "the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land;" and thus to have prepared the way for the opening of the Gospel dispensation. See Hebrews 12:25-29. Others have referred this prophecy to the period of our Lord's second advent, to which there is no doubt it is also applicable; and when it will be in the most signal manner fulfilled. That the convulsion of the nations introducing this most stupendous event will be very great and terrible, is sufficiently plain from Isaiah 34., 35., as well as from many other passages of holy writ.

NOTES ON CHAP. 2

Verse 1. *In the seventh month*— This was a new message, and intended to prevent discouragement, and excite them to greater diligence in their work.

Verse 3. *Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory?*— Who of you has seen the temple built by Solomon? The foundation of the present house had been laid about fifty-three years after the destruction of the temple built by Solomon and though this prophecy was uttered fifteen years after the foundation of this second temple, yet there might still survive some of those who had seen the temple of Solomon.

Is it not in your eyes— Most certainly the Jews at this time had neither men nor means to make any such splendid building as that erected by Solomon. The present was as nothing when compared with the former.

Verse 4. *Yet now be strong*— Do not let this discourage you. The chief glory of the temple is not its splendid building, but my presence; and as I covenanted to be with you when ye came out of Egypt, so I will fulfill my covenant; for my Spirit remaineth among you, fear not; ver. 5. What is the most splendid cathedral, if God be not in it, influencing all by his presence and Spirit? But he will not be in it unless there be a messenger of the Lord there, and unless he deliver the Lord's message.

Verse 6. *Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens*— When the law was given on Mount Sinai, there was an earthquake that shook the whole mountain, Exodus 19:18. "The political or religious revolutions which were to be effected in the world, or both, are here," says Abp. Newcome, "referred to; compare ver. 21, 22; Matthew 24:29; Hebrews 12:26-28. The political ones began in the overthrow of the Persian monarchy by Alexander, within two centuries after this prediction; and if the Messiah's kingdom be meant, which is my opinion, this was erected in somewhat more than five centuries after the second year of Darius; a short period of time when compared with that which elapsed

from the creation to the giving of the law, or from the giving of the law to the coming of the Messiah's kingdom. It must be understood that the word **אָחַת** achath, once, has a clear sense, if understood of the evangelical age; for many political revolutions succeeded, as the conquest of Darius Codomanus, and the various fortunes of Alexander's successors; but only one great and final religious revolution."-Newcome.

Verse 7. And the Desire of all nations shall come— The present Hebrew text is as follows: **וּבָאוּ חֲמַדַּת כָּל הַגּוֹיִם**. This is a difficult place if understood of a person: but **חֲמַדַּת** chemdath, desire, cannot well agree with **בָּאוּ** bau, they shall come. It is true that some learned men suppose that **חֲמַדוֹת** chemdoth, desirable things, may have been the original reading: but this is supported by no MS., nor is **בָּאוּ** found in the singular number in any. It is generally understood of the desirable or valuable things which the different nations should bring into the temple; and it is certain that many rich presents were brought into this temple. All are puzzled with it. But the principal difficulty lies in the verb **וּבָאוּ** ubau, they shall come. If we found **וּבָאָה חֲמַדַּת** ubaa chemdath in the singular, then it would read as in our text, And the Desire of all nations shall come: but no such reading appears in any MS.; nor is it fairly acknowledged, except by the Vulgate, which reads, Et veniet desideratus cunctis gentibus, "And that which is desired," or the desired Person, "shall come to all nations." In ver. 7 God says he will shake or stir up all nations; that these nations shall bring their desirable things; that the house shall be filled with God's glory; that the silver and gold, which these nations are represented as bringing by way of gifts, are the Lord's; and that the glory of this latter house shall exceed the former. Bp. Chandler labors to vindicate the present translation; but he makes rash assertions, and is abandoned by the Hebrew text. The **בָּא** ba, to come, is often used in the sense of bring, and that **חֲמַדַּת** chemdath, desire, may be considered as the plural for **חֲמַדוֹת**, having the point holem instead of the **ו** vau, and thus mean desirable things, will not be denied by those who are acquainted with the genius and construction of the Hebrew language. Bp. Chandler thinks that **בָּא**, he came, cannot be used of things, but of persons only. Here he is widely mistaken, for it is used of days perpetually; and of the ark, 2 Samuel 6:9;

and of mounts coming against Jerusalem, Jeremiah 32:24; and of trees coming to adorn the temple, Isaiah 60:13; and of silver and gold coming into the temple, Joshua 6:19; and Jeremiah 6:20, Why doth incense come to me ? See Abp. Secker's notes. I cannot see how the words can apply to Jesus Christ, even if the construction were less embarrassed than it is; because I cannot see how he could be called THE DESIRE OF ALL NATIONS. The whole seems to be a metaphorical description of the Church of Christ, and of his filling it with all the excellences of the Gentile world, when the fullness of the Gentiles shall be brought in.

Verse 9. *And in this place will I give peace*— **שלום** shalom a peace-offering, as well as peace itself; or Jesus Christ, who is called the Prince of peace, through whom peace is proclaimed between God and man, between man and his fellows; and through whom peace is established in the disconsolate soul. And at this temple this peace was first promulgated and proclaimed.

But it is said that the glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former. Now this cannot be said because Jesus Christ made his personal appearance in that temple, or rather in that built by Herod; for, though we allow that Jesus Christ is equal with God, we do not grant that he is greater. Now the first temple was the dwelling-place of God: here he manifested his glory between the cherubim, and it was his constant residence for more than four hundred years. But the glory of this latter house was greater because under it the grand scheme of human salvation was exhibited, and the redemption price paid down for a lost world. As all probably applies to the Christian Church, the real house of God, its glory was most certainly greater than any glory which was ever possessed by that of the Jews. See on ver. 22, 23.

Verse 10. *In the four and twentieth day of the ninth month*— Three months after they had begun to rebuild the temple, Haggai is ordered to go and put two questions to the priests. 1. If one bear holy flesh in the skirt of his garment, and he touch any thing with his skirt, is that thing made holy? The priests answered, No! ver. 12. 2. If one has touched a dead body and thereby become unclean, does he communicate his uncleanness to whatever he may touch? And the priests answered, YES! ver. 13.

Verse 14. *Then answered Haggai—So is this people*— As an unclean man communicates his uncleanness to every thing he touches, so are ye unclean; and whatever ye have hitherto done is polluted in the sight of God. For your neglect of my temple has made you unclean, as if you had contracted legal pollution by touching a dead body.

Verse 16. *Since those days were*— I have shown my displeasure against you, by sending blasting and mildew; and so poor have been your crops that a heap of corn which should have produced twenty measures produced only ten; and that quantity of grapes which in other years would have produced fifty measures, through their poverty, smallness, etc., produced only twenty. And this has been the case ever since the first stone was laid in this temple; for your hearts were not right with me, and therefore I blasted you in all the labors of your hands; and yet ye have not turned to me, ver. 17.

Verse 18. *Consider now from this day*— I will now change my conduct towards you: from, this day that ye have begun heartily to rebuild my temple, and restore my worship, I will bless you. Whatever you sow, whatever you plant, shall be blessed; your land shall be fruitful, and ye shall have abundant crops of all sorts.

Verse 20. *Again the word of the Lord came*— This was a second communication in the same day.

Verse 21. *I will shake the heavens and the earth*— Calmet supposes that the invasion of Cambyses, and his death, are what the prophet has in view by this shaking of the heavens and the earth: but this invasion and defeat happened three years before they had begun to work at the temple; and how could it be made a matter of interest to Zerubbabel? Calmet answers this, by translating the words in the past tense; and shows that the fact was recalled to Zerubbabel's attention, to fix his confidence in God, etc. Bp. Newcome says we may well understand this and the twenty-second verse of the calamity undergone by Babylon in the reign of Darius; of the Macedonian conquests in Persia; and of the wars which the successors of Alexander waged against each other: others understand it of the Romans.

Verse 23. *In that day, saith the Lord*— Some think, says this same learned writer, that Zerubbabel is put here for his people and posterity: but it may well be said that the commotions foretold began in the rebellion of Babylon, which Darius besieged and took; and exercised great cruelties upon its inhabitants. — Herod. lib. iii., sec. 220. Justin. 1:10. Prideaux places this event in the fifth year of Darius; others with more probability, in the eighth year. Compare Zechariah 2:9.

ions will make thee as a signet— I will exalt thee to high dignity, power, and trust, of which the seal was the instrument or sign in those days. Thou shalt be under my peculiar care, and shalt be to me very precious. See Jeremiah 22:24; Cant. 8:6; and see the notes on these two places.

For I have chosen thee— He had an important and difficult work to do, and it was necessary that he should be assured of God's especial care and protection during the whole.

ON the three last verses of this prophecy a sensible and pious correspondent sends me the following illustration, which I cheerfully insert. Though in many respects different from that given above, yet I believe that the kingdom of Christ is particularly designed in this prophecy.

“I think there is an apparent difficulty in this passage, because the wars of the Persians and Babylonians were not so interesting to the rising commonwealth of the Jews as many subsequent events of less note in the world, but which were more directly levelled at their own national prosperity; and yet neither the one nor the other could be termed ‘a shaking of the heavens and the earth, and an overthrow of the throne of kingdoms.’

“I know not if the following view may be admitted as an explanation of this difficult passage. I take ‘the shaking of the heavens and earth’ here (as in ver. 6) to have a more distant and comprehensive meaning than can belong to Zerubbabel's time, or to his immediate posterity; and that it extends not only to the overthrow of kingdoms then existing, but of the

future great monarchies of the world; and not excepting even the civil and ecclesiastical establishments of the Jews themselves. For I take ‘the heavens,’ in the prophetic language, uniformly to denote the true Church, and never the superstitions and idols of the nations.

“What, then, are we to understand by the promise made to Zerubbabel, ‘I will make thee as a signet?’ In the first place, the restitution of the religious and civil polity of the people of Israel, conformably to the promises afterwards given in the four first chapters of Zechariah. And, secondly, as the royal signet is the instrument by which kings give validity to laws, and thereby unity and consistence to their empire; so Jehovah, the God and King of Israel, condescends to promise he will employ Zerubbabel as his instrument of gathering and uniting the people again as a distinguished nation; and that such should be the permanency of their political existence, that, whilst other nations and mighty empires should be overthrown, and their very name blotted out under heaven, the Jews should ever remain a distinct people, even in the wreck of their own government, and the loss of all which rendered their religion splendid and attractive.

“In confirmation of this interpretation, I would refer to the threatening denounced against Jeconiah, (called Coniah, Jeremiah xxii.,) the last reigning king of Judah, and the progenitor of Zerubbabel. I apprehend I may be authorized to read Jeremiah 22:24 thus: ‘As I live, saith the Lord, though Coniah, the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, be the signet upon my right hand, yet will I pluck thee thence, and I will give thee into the hand of them that seek thy life,’ etc.

“If it be considered that the kings of Judah were in an especial and peculiar manner the delegates of Jehovah, governing in his name and by his authority, a peculiar propriety will appear in their being resembled to signets, or royal seals contained in rings. Compare Genesis 41:42; Esther 3:10, 12; 8:2, 8; Daniel 6:7. And the promise to Zerubbabel will be equivalent to those which clearly predict the preservation of the Jewish people by the Divine command. see Zechariah ii.; and the faithfulness of God to his covenant concerning the Messiah, who should be born of the seed of Abraham, and in the family of David, of whose throne he was the

rightful Proprietor.

“According to this view, by the promise, ‘In that day;-I will make thee as a signet,’ etc., must be understood, that the preservation of the Jews as a distinct people, when all the great empires of the heathen were overthrown, would manifest the honor now conferred on Zerubbabel as the instrument of their restoration after the Babylonish-captivity. Thus the promise to Abraham, Genesis xii., ‘I will make of thee a great nation-and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed,’ evidently referred to a very distant future period and the honor connected with it could not be enjoyed by Abraham during his mortal life.” M. A. B.

I think, however, that we have lived to see the spirit of this prophecy fulfilled. The earth has been shaken; another shaking, and time shall be swallowed up in eternity.

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK

OF THE

PROPHET ZECHARIAH

ZECHARIAH, the eleventh of the twelve minor prophets, was son of Berechiah, and grandson of Iddo. He returned from Babylon with Zerubbabel: and began to prophesy in the second year of the reign of Darius, son of Hystaspes, in the year of the world 3484; before Christ, 516; before the vulgar era, 520; in the eighth month of the holy year; and two months after Haggai had begun to prophesy.

These two prophets, with united zeal, encouraged at the same time the people to go on with the work of the temple, which had been discontinued for some years.

The time and place of the birth of Zechariah are unknown. Some will have him to have been born at Babylon, during the captivity; others think he was born at Jerusalem, before the tribes of Judah and Benjamin were carried away. Some maintain that he was a priest; but others affirm that he was no priest. Many say he was the immediate son of Iddo; others believe, with much more reason, that he was son of Berechiah, and grandson of Iddo.

He has been confounded with one Zechariah, the son of Barachiah, who lived in the time of Isaiah; and with Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist; which opinion is plainly incongruous. Lastly, he has been thought to be Zechariah the son of Barachiah, whom our Savior mentions, and says he was killed between the temple and the altar; though no such thing is anywhere said of our prophet. A tomb is shown to this day at the foot of

the Mount of Olives, which, it is pretended, belongs to the prophet Zechariah. Dorotheus maintains that he was buried in a place called Bethariah, one hundred and fifty furlongs from Jerusalem.

Zechariah is the longest and the most obscure of all the twelve minor prophets. His style is interrupted, and without connection. His prophecies concerning the Messiah are more particular and express than those of the other prophets. Some modern critics, as Mede and Hammond, have been of opinion that the ninth, tenth, and eleventh chapters of this prophet were written by Jeremiah; because in Matthew, 27:9, 10, under the name of Jeremiah, we find quoted Zechariah; (chap. 11:12;) and as the aforesaid chapters make but one continued discourse, they concluded from thence that all three belonged to Jeremiah. But it is much more natural to suppose that, by some unlucky mistake, the name of Jeremiah has slipped into the text of St. Matthew instead of that of Zechariah.

The prophet Zechariah exactly foretold the siege of Babylon by Darius, son of Hystaspes. This prince laid siege to that rebellious city at the beginning of the fifth year of his reign, and reduced it at the end of twenty months. The prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah had foretold this calamity, and had admonished the Jews, that inhabited there to make their escape when they perceived the time draw nigh. Isaiah says to them, “Go ye forth to Babylon, flee from the Chaldeans; with a voice of singing declare ye, tell this, utter it even to the end of the earth; say ye, The Lord hath redeemed his servant Jacob.” And Jeremiah says, “Remove out of the midst of Babylon, and go forth out of the land of the Chaldeans, and be as the he-goats before the flocks.” And elsewhere, “Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul; be not cut off in her iniquity: for this is the time of the Lord’s vengeance, He will render unto her a recompense.” Lastly, Zechariah, a little before the time of her fall, writes thus to the Jews that were still in this city: “Ho, ho, come forth, and flee from the land of the north, saith the Lord; for I have spread you abroad as the four winds of heaven, saith the Lord. Deliver thyself, O Zion, that dwellest with the daughter of Babylon. For thus saith the Lord of hosts, after the glory hath he sent me unto the nations which spoiled you, for he that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye. For, behold, I will shake mine hand upon them, and they shall be a spoil to their servants; and ye

shall know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me.”

It is probable that the Jews took advantage of these admonitions, and returned from Babylon into their country; or, at least, withdrew into a place of more security till the city was taken. We do not hear, either from the history or the prophecies, that they suffered any thing by this siege, or that Darius, son of Hystaspes, bore them any grudge for the revolt of Babylon; which seems to indicate that they had no part in it.

The Mohammedans do not distinguish between the prophet Zechariah, and Zachariah the father of John the Baptist. Some of them make him to be descended from David; and others, from Levi. By an anachronism that is still more insupportable, these confound Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ, with Mary or Miriam, the sister of Moses, which they derive even from the Koran itself.

The author of Tarik Montekhib relates that, when Jesus Christ was born of the virgin the prophet Zechariah could not believe that a child could be born without a father; and that, declaring his sentiments upon this point, the Jews entertained a suspicion of him, and obliged him to betake himself to flight. He withdrew; and hid himself in a hollow oak, which the Jews sawed in two.

Such is the ignorance of the Mussulmans as regards the history both of the Old and New Testaments.

THE BOOK

OF THE

PROPHET ZECHARIAH

Chronological Notes relative to this Book

- Year from the Creation, according to Archbishop Usher, 3484.
- Year of the Julian Period, 4194.
- Year of the Jewish era of the world, 3241.
- Year from the Flood, 1828.
- Year from the vocation of Abram, 1401.
- Year since the first celebration of the Olympic games in Elis, by the Idaeï Dactyli, 934.
- Year since the destruction of Troy, according to the general account, 664.
- Year since the foundation of the monarchy of the Israelites by the Divine appointment of Saul to the regal dignity, 576.
- Year from the foundation of Solomon's temple, 492.
- Year from the division of Solomon's monarchy into the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, 456.
- Year since the re-establishment of the Olympic games in Elis by Lycurgus, Iphitus, and Cleosthenes, 365.
- Year since the conquest of Coroebus at Olympia, usually called the first Olympiad, 257.
- First year of the sixty-fifth Olympiad.
- Year from the building of Rome, according to the Varronian or generally received computation, 234.
- Year from the building of Rome, according to Cato and the Fasti Consulares, 233.
- Year from the building of Rome, according to Polybius the historian,

232.

- Year from the building of Rome, according to Fabius Pictor, 228.
- Year of the era of Nabonassar, 228.
- Year since the destruction of the kingdom of Israel by Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, 202.
- Year since the destruction of the kingdom of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, 68.
- Year since the destruction of the Chaldean empire by the Persians, 18.
- Year before the birth of Christ, 516.
- Year before the vulgar era of Christ's nativity, 520.
- Cycle of the Sun, 22.
- Cycle of the Moon, 14.
- Second year of Darius I., king of Persia.
- Twenty-eighth year of Amyntas, king of Macedon.
- Seventh year of Demaratus, king of Lacedaemon, of the family of the Proclidae.
- Eleventh year of Cleomenes, king of Lacedaemon, of the family of the Eurysthenidae.
- Fifteenth year of Tarquinius Superbus, the last king of the Romans.
- This was about twelve years before the commencement of the consular government. According to some chronologers this was the age of Confucius.

CHAPTER 1

The prophet earnestly exhorts the people to repentance, that they may escape such punishments as had been inflicted on their fathers, 1-6. The vision of the horses, with the signification, 7-11. The angel of the Lord successfully intercedes in behalf of Jerusalem, 12-17. The vision of the four horns, and of the four carpenters, 18-21.

NOTES ON CHAP. 1

Verse 1. *In the eighth month, in the second year of Darius*— This was Darius Hystaspes; and from this date we find that Zechariah began to prophecy just two months after Haggai.

Son of Iddo— There are a number of various readings on this name, ידו Iddo, and ידעו Iddo, both in MSS. and in editions; but they are only different ways of writing the same name.

Verse 2. *The Lord hath been sore displeased with your fathers.*— For their ingratitude idolatry, iniquity, and general rebellion.

Verse 3. *Turn ye unto me*— This shows that they had power to return, if they would but use it.

And I will turn unto you— I will show you mercy and grant you salvation, if you will use the grace I have already given you. Men are lost, because they turn not unto God; but no man is lost because he had not power to return. God gives this, and he will require it.

Verse 5. *Your fathers, where are they?*— Israel has been destroyed and ruined in the bloody wars with the Assyrians; and Judah, in those with the Chaldeans.

The prophets, do they live for ever?— They also, who spoke unto your fathers, are dead; but their predictions remain; and the events, which have taken place according to those predictions, prove that God sent them.

Verse 6. *Did they not take hold of your fathers?*— Every thing happened according to the predictions, and they were obliged to acknowledge this; and yet they would not turn from their evil way.

Verse 7. *Upon the four and twentieth day of the eleventh month*— This revelation was given about three months after the former, and two months after they had recommenced the building of the temple.

Sebat— Answers to a part of our February. See Haggai 2:18.

Verse 8. *I saw*

prophet, ver. 13.

Verse 10. *The man that stood among the myrtle trees*— The angel of the Covenant, as above, ver. 11.

Whom the Lord hath sent— Who are constituted guardians of the land.

Verse 11. *All the earth sitteth still, and is at rest.*— There is general peace through the Persian empire, and other states connected with Judea; but the Jews are still in affliction; their city is not yet restored, nor their temple built.

Verse 12. *Then the angel of the Lord*— He who was among the myrtles—the Lord Jesus.

O Lord of hosts, how long— Jesus Christ was not only the “Lamb slain from the foundation of the world,” but was always the sole Mediator and intercessor between God and man.

These threescore and ten years?— This cannot mean the duration of the captivity for that was nearly twenty years past. It must mean simply the time that had elapsed from the destruction of the temple to the time in which the angel spoke. As the temple was destroyed in the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar, and this vision took place in the second year of Darius, the term of seventy years was completed, or nearly so, between these two periods.

Verse 13. *The Lord answered the angel*— And the angel told the prophet that the answer was gracious and comfortable. This answer is given in the next verse.

Verse 14. *I am jealous for Jerusalem*— I have for them a strong affection; and indignation against their enemies.

Verse 15. *I was but a little displeased*— I was justly displeased with my people, and I gave their enemies a commission against them; but they carried this far beyond my design by oppression and cruelty; and now

they shall suffer in their turn.

Verse 16. *I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies*— Before, he came to them in judgments; and the principal mercy is, the house of the Lord shall be rebuilt, and the ordinances of the Lord re-established.

And a line shall be stretched forth— The circuit shall be determined, and the city built according to the line marked out.

Verse 17. *By cities-shall yet be spread abroad*— The whole land of Judea shall be inhabited, and the ruined cities restored.

Verse 18. *And behold four horns*.— Denoting four powers by which the Jews had been oppressed; the Assyrians, Persians, Chaldeans, and Egyptians. Or these enemies may be termed four, in reference to the four cardinal points of the heavens, whence they came:—

1. NORTH. The Assyrians and Babylonians.
2. EAST. The Moabites and Ammonites.
3. SOUTH. The Egyptians.
4. WEST. The Philistines. See Martin.

Verse 20. *Four carpenters*.— Four other powers, who should defeat the powers intended by the horns. These are the same as the four chariots mentioned chap. 6:1-3, 6, 7. The first was NABOPOLASSAR, father of Nebuchadnezzar, who overturned the empire of the Assyrians. The second was CYRUS, who destroyed the empire of the Chaldeans. The third was ALEXANDER the Great, who destroyed the empire of the Persians. And the fourth was PTOLEMY, who rendered himself master of Egypt. Some of these had already been cast down; the rest were to follow. Calmet gives this interpretation, and vindicates it at length.

Verse 21. *These are come to fray them*— To break, pound, and reduce them to powder. Fray, from the French, frayer, to rub. חרשים charashim

signifies either carpenters or smiths; probably the latter are here intended, who came with hammers, files, and such like, to destroy these horns, which no doubt seemed to be of iron.

From a sensible correspondent I have received the following note:—

“The word we translate carpenters, **חַרְשִׁים** charashim, is a root which, according to Mr. Parkhurst, denotes silent thought or attention; and in kal and hiphil, to contrive, devise secretly, or in silence; hence applied as a noun to an artificer of any kind, and to any work which disposes to silent attention. Thus, to potters’ ware, Leviticus 6:28; Job 2:8; and in many other places. So also to ploughing, Deuteronomy 22:10; Proverbs 20:4, which requires constant attention to make ‘the right-lined furrow.’ Let it be remembered that in ancient times such works were more esteemed than the useless ones we have learned to admire. So again, in Genesis 24:21, and elsewhere, it implies to be silent, as in deep thought or great attention.

“Now it is evident that the purport of this vision is the same with the gracious declarations which precede it, viz., to express the return of the protecting mercies of God to his people, delivering them from their enemies. I should therefore be inclined to render **חַרְשִׁים** charashim here, watchers or inspectors, in the sense which our translators have rendered the Chaldee **עִיר** ir, a watcher, in the fourth chapter of Daniel, ver. 13; understanding thereby ‘spirits of the heavens, which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth,’ Zechariah 6:6, and are described in the first vision as ‘sent to walk to and fro through the earth.’ This gives to the whole narrative a sublime and important sense, affording us some glimpse of the Divine government by the ministration of angels, such as Jacob was favored with in his vision at Beth-el, and which our Savior himself informed Nathanael constituted part of the glory of his mediatorial kingdom.” M. A. B.

CHAPTER 2

The vision with which this chapter opens, portended great increase and prosperity to Jerusalem. Accordingly Josephus tells us, (Wars 5:4:2,) that “the city, overflowing with inhabitants, extended beyond its walls,” as predicted in the fourth verse, and acquired much glory during the time of the Maccabees; although these promises, and particularly the sublime image in the fifth verse, has certainly a still more pointed reference to the glory and prosperity of the Christian Church in the latter days, 1-5. See Revelation 21., 22: In consequence of these promises, the Jews, still inhabiting Babylon and the regions round about, are called upon to hasten home, that they might not be involved in the fate of their enemies, who were destined to fall a prey to the nations which they had formerly subdued; God’s great love and zeal for his people moving him to glorify them by humbling all their adversaries, 6-9. The most gracious promises of God’s presence with his Church, and her consequent increase and prosperity, set forth in the remaining verses, 10-13, were to a certain extent fulfilled in the great number of proselytes made to Judaism after the return from the captivity; but shall be more fully accomplished after the restoration of the Jews to the favor of God under the Gospel. “For if the casting away of the natural Israel be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead?”

NOTES ON CHAP 2

Verse 1. A man with a measuring-line in his hand.— Probably a representation of Nehemiah, who got a commission from Artaxerxes Longimanus to build up the walls of Jerusalem; for hitherto it had remained without being enclosed.

Verse 4. Run, speak to this young man— *Nehemiah must have been a young man when he was [P] sakee, or cup-bearer, to Artaxerxes.*

As towns without walls— It shall be so numerously inhabited as not to be

contained within its ancient limits. Josephus, speaking of this time, says, WARS 5:4:2, “The city, overflowing with inhabitants, by degrees extended itself beyond its walls.”

Verse 5. *I will be unto her a wall of fire*— Her safety shall consist in my defense. I shall be as fire round about her. No adversary shall be permitted to touch her. Much of this must refer to the New Jerusalem.

Verse 6. *Flee from the land of the north*— From Chaldee, Persia, and Babylon, where several of the Jews still remained. See ver. 7.

Verse 8. *After the glory*— After your glorious deliverance from the different places of your dispersion; He hath sent me unto the nations which spoiled you, that they may fall under grievous calamities, and be punished in their turn. On Babylon a great calamity fell, when besieged and taken by the Persians.

The following note I received from a sensible and pious correspondent:—

5. “For I, saith the Lord, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her.

8. “For thus saith the Lord of hosts, who hath sent me, the future glory (or the glory which is to come) unto the nations which spoiled you; for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye. Behold, I will shake mine hand upon them, and they shall be a spoil to their servants; and ye shall know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me. Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion; for lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord. And many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day, and shall be my people; and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto thee. And the Lord shall inherit Judah his portion in the holy land, and shall choose Jerusalem again.

“If in the eighth verse **אחר כבוד** may be rendered the future, or the glory that is to come, it will harmonize with the context as a prophecy of the Messiah, whereas in our English translation the words after the glory are unintelligible. And so the Seventy.

“It is evident the person speaking is distinguished from the Lord of hosts, as being sent by him; yet this person sent is also called Jehovah; and the nations who shall be joined to Jehovah in that day are called his people; and he (the person sent) will dwell in the midst of thee, (i.e., Zion,) and shall inherit Judah his portion, etc.

“In confirmation of my view of the eighth verse, I think Exodus 33: may be compared with it. Moses besought God that he would show him his glory; upon which it was said to him, “Whilst my glory passeth by,’ I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand whilst I pass by; and I will take away my hand, and thou shalt see my אֶחָד achar. Now as this was a fulfillment of Moses’s request, who entreated to behold the glory, it follows that this אֶחָד was the Divine glory, which alone he was capable of seeing.

“No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, (the Lord Jesus Christ,) which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.”
M. A. B.

Toucheth the apple of his eye.— בַּבַּת עֵינוּ bebabath eyno, the babet of his eye. This is a remarkable expression. Any person, by looking into the eye of another, will see his own image perfectly expressed, though in extreme minature, in the pupil. Does our English word babbet or baby come from this? And does not the expression mean that the eye of God is ever on his follower, and that his person is ever impressed on the eye, the notice, attention, providence, and mercy of God?

Verse 9. *I will shake mine hand upon them*— I will threaten first, and then stretch out my hand of judgment against them.

A spoil to their servants— To those whom they had formerly subjected to their sway. As the Babylonians to the Medes and Persians; and so of the rest in the subversion of empires.

Verse 10. *I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord*— This must

chiefly refer to the Christian church, in which God ever dwells by the power of his Spirit, as he had done by the symbol of his presence in the first Jewish temple.

Verse 11. *Many nations shall be joined to the Lord*— This most certainly belongs to the Christian church. No nation or people ever became converts to the Jewish religion, but whole nations have embraced the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Verse 12. *The Lord shall inherit Judah his portion in the holy land*— This is a promise of the final restoration of the Jews, and that they should be God's portion in their own land.


Verse 13. *Be silent, O all flesh*— Let all the nations of the world be astonished at this. God will arise, and deliver this ancient people, and bring them into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

CHAPTER 3

While the Jews were rebuilding their temple, their adversaries endeavored to stop the work, Ezra 5: This vision is therefore calculated to give them the strongest encouragement that God, after plucking them as brands out of the fire (or captivity of Babylon,) would not now give them up, but would continue to prosper and favor them; and that notwithstanding the interruptions they should meet with, the work should be finished under the gracious superintendence of Providence; and their high priest, clothed in his pontifical robes, would soon officiate in the holy of holies, 1-7. The subject is then, by an easy transition, applied to a much greater future deliverance and restoration, of which Joshua and his companions, delivered now, are declared to be figures or types; for that the Messiah or Branch, the great high priest typified by Joshua, would be manifested; and, like the principal stone represented in the vision, become the chief corner stone of his Church; that the all-seeing eye of God would constantly guard it; and that by his atonement he would procure for it peace and pardon, 8-10.

NOTES ON CHAP. 3

Verse 1. *And he showed me Joshua the high priest*— The Angel of the Lord is the Messiah, as we have seen before; Joshua, the high priest, may here represent the whole Jewish people; and Satan, the grand accuser of the brethren. What the subject of dispute was, we perhaps learn from Jude 9. Michael and Satan disputed about the body of Moses. This could not refer to the natural body of the Jewish lawgiver, which had been dead about one thousand years; it must therefore refer to that body of laws given to the Jews by Moses, for the breach of which Satan, who was their tempter to disobedience, now comes forward as their accuser; that, exciting the justice of God against them, they may be all brought to perdition. There is a paronomasia here:—

Satan standing at his right hand to resist him.—  Satan signifies an

adversary. לשטנו lesiteno, to be his adversary, or accuser.

Verse 2. *Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?*— The Jews were nearly destroyed because of their sins; a remnant of them is yet left, and God is determined to preserve them. He has had mercy upon them, and forgiven them their sins. Wouldst thou have them destroyed? It is God that hath justified them; who art thou that condemnest them? The Lord rebuke thee! God confound thee for what thou hast done, and for what thou desirest farther to do! It is evident that Jude 9 relates to this circumstance—the very same phraseology which occurs here. See the notes on Jude 9, where the subject is largely considered. With difficulty has this remnant escaped, and God will not permit fresh evils to fall upon them, by which they might be totally consumed. This was Satan's design, who accuses the followers of God day and night. See Revelation 12:10.

Verse 3. *Joshua was clothed with filthy garments*— The Jewish people were in a most forlorn, destitute, and to all human appearance despicable, condition; and besides all, they were sinful, and the priesthood defiled by idolatry; and nothing but the mercy of God could save them.

Verse 4. *Take away the filthy garments*— The Jews wore sackcloth in times of public calamity; probably the filthy garments refer to this. Let their clothing be changed. I have turned again their captivity; I will fully restore them, and blot out all their iniquities.

Verse 5. *A fair mitre upon his head*— To signify that he had renewed to him the office of the high priesthood, which had been defiled and profaned before. The mitre was the bonnet which the high priest put on his head when he entered into the sanctuary, Exodus 28:4, etc.

Clothed him with garments— Referring to the vestments of the high priest. The true high priest, who is over the house of God, will establish his office among them, when they shall acknowledge him as their Messiah, and seek redemption in the blood of the sacrifice which he has offered for their sins; and not for theirs only, but for the sins of the whole world.

Verse 7. *If thou wilt walk in my ways*— If ye, Israelites, priests and

people, now restored to your own land, will walk in my ways, etc., ye shall be a part of my family; and have places-mansions-in eternal glory, with all them that are sanctified.

Verse 8. *O Joshua-thou, and thy fellows*— Thy countrymen, who have now returned from your captivity, in a very wonderful manner. מופת אנשי anshey mopheth, figurative men, men whose office and ministration prefigured the Lord Jesus Christ; and therefore it is immediately added, “I will bring forth my servant The BRANCH.” Abp. Newcome thinks this means Zerubbabel, so called because he was the grandson of Jehoiakim, or Jeconiah, king of Judah, Matthew 1:12, and heir to the throne of Judah. The Chaldee has, “My servant the Messiah.” See the note on Isaiah 4:2. I think the word cannot apply to Zerubbabel, except as a type of Christ; in that sense it may be understood of him. See chap. 6:11, 12.

Verse 9. *For behold the stone that I have laid*— Alluding no doubt to the foundation stone of the temple: but this represented Christ Jesus: “Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a STONE, a tried stone, a precious CORNER STONE, a SURE FOUNDATION,” Isaiah 28:16. This means Christ, and none other; on him his whole Church rests, as a building does on its foundation.

Upon one stone shall be seven eyes— This is supposed to mean the providence of God, as under it all the work should be completed.

There may be an allusion to the seven counsellors, which stood always about the persons of the Asiatics sovereigns; and those who were the governors of provinces were termed the eyes of the king. To this there is an allusion in Revelation 1:4. In Christ there is a plentitude of wisdom, power, goodness, mercy, truth, love, and compassion, to direct, protect, save, uphold, purify, govern, and preserve all the souls that trust in him.

I will engrave the graving thereof— This is an allusion to engraving precious stones, in which the ancients greatly excelled. Heads, animals, and various devices were the subjects of those engravings. But what was this engraving? Was it not the following words? I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day;” and was not this when Jesus Christ expired upon

the cross? This was the grand, the only atonement, satisfaction, and sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Does not our Lord refer to this place, John 6:27? Him hath God thy Father sealed; and on the inscription there was, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." See the note on the above passage.

Verse 10. *Shall ye call every man his neighbour*— See on Isaiah 36:16. Every one shall be inviting and encouraging another to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ; and thus taste and see that God is good. See on Isaiah 2:2, 3. And there shall be the utmost liberty to preach, believe on, and profess the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER 4

The prophet, overpowered by his last vision, is roused by the angel to behold another, 1; intended also to assure the Jews of the success of Joshua and Zerubbabel in building the temple, and surmounting every obstacle in the way; till at length, by the good providence of God, it should be finished, amidst the joyful acclamations of the spectators, 2-10. The angel's explanation of the golden candlestick, and of the two olive trees, 11-14.

NOTES ON CHAP. 4

Verse 1. *The angel-came again, and waked me*— Abp. Newcome considers this vision as represented on the same night, chap. 1:8, with the preceding ones. See the latter part of ver. 10, compared with chap. 3:9. After some interval the prophet, overpowered with the vision which had been presented to him, was awakened from his prophetic trance as from a sleep.

Verse 2. *A candlestick all of gold*— This candlestick is formed in some measure after that of the sanctuary, Exodus 25:31, 32: but in that of the sanctuary there was no bowl, nor seven pipes, nor seven lamps, nor the two olive trees. The two olive trees were to supply the bowl with oil; the bowl was to communicate the oil to the seven pipes; and the seven pipes were to supply the seven lamps. In general, the candlestick, its bowl, pipes, lamps, and olive trees, are emblems of the pure service of God, and the grace and salvation to be enjoyed by his true worshippers. The candlestick may, however, represent the whole Jewish state, ecclesiastical and civil; the oil, producing the light, the grace and mercy of God; and the two olive trees, the source of infinite love, whence that grace proceeds. The pipes may signify all means of grace; and the seven lamps, the perfection and abundance of the light and salvation provided. Some may take them in the following way: — 1. The olive trees, the Divine goodness, yield the oil from the olive berry, which is its fruit. 2. From each comes a

pipe to convey the oil to the bowl. 3. This oil is collected in the bowl, which is supposed to represent Jesus, the great Mediator, through whom alone all grace and mercy descend to man. 4. The seven pipes, the various means of grace-reading, hearing, prayer, sacraments, etc. — through which Christ dispenses his grace and blessing to his followers. 5. The seven lamps—the Spirit of God in its plenitude of graces, gifts, and light, dispensed to the Christian Church.

Verse 6. *This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel*— This prince was in a trying situation, and he needed especial encouragement from God; and here it is:

Not by might, (of thy own,) nor by power, (authority from others,) but by my Spirit—the providence, authority, power, and energy of the Most High. In this way shall my temple be built; in this way shall my Church be raised and preserved. No secular arm, no human prudence, no earthly policy, no suits at law, shall ever be used for the founding, extension, and preservation of my Church. But the spirit of the world says, “These are all means to which as we must have recourse; otherwise the cause of God may be ruined.” Satan, thou liest!

Verse 7. *O great mountain*?— The hinderances which were thrown in the way; the regal prohibition to discontinue the building of the temple.

Before Zerubbabel—a plain— The sovereign power of God shall remove them. March on, Zerubbabel; all shall be made plain and smooth before thee. I have given thee the work to do, and I will remove all hinderances out of thy way.

He shall bring forth the headstone— As he has laid the foundation stone, so shall he put on the headstone: as he has begun the building, so shall he finish it!

With shoutings— The universal acclamation of the people.

Grace, grace unto it.— How beautiful is this structure! May the favor of God ever rest upon it, and be manifested in it!

Verse 10. *Who hath despised the day of small things?*— The poverty, weakness, and unbefriended state of the Jews. It was said, “What do these feeble Jews?” “Will they build,” etc.? No. But God will build by them, and perfect his building too.

And shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel— He is master builder under God, the grand architect.

Those seven-are the eyes of the Lord— Either referring to his particular and especial providence; or to those ministering spirits, whom he has employed in behalf of the Jews, to dispense the blessings of that providence. See the reading in the margin.

Verse 11. *What are these two olive trees*— See on ver. 2.

Verse 12. *What be these two olive branches*— That is, two boughs laden with branches of olive berries.

Verse 14. *These are the two anointed ones*— Joshua, the high priest; and Zerubbabel the governor. These are anointed-appointed by the Lord; and stand by him, the one to minister in the ecclesiastical, the other in the civil state.

Probably we may not be able to comprehend the whole of this hieroglyphical vision; for even the interpreting angel does not choose to answer the questions relative to this, which were put to him by the prophet. See ver. 4, 11. But though the particulars are hard to be understood; yet the general meaning has, I hope, been given.

CHAPTER 5

The vision of the large flying roll, with the angel's explanation, 1-4. The vision of the ephah, and of the woman sitting on it, with the signification, 5-11.

NOTES ON CHAP. 5

Verse 1. *Behold a flying roll.*— This was twenty cubits long, and ten cubits broad; the prophet saw it expanded, and flying. Itself was the catalogue of the crimes of the people, and the punishment threatened by the Lord. Some think the crimes were those of the Jews; others, those of the Chaldeans. The roll is mentioned in allusion to those large rolls on which the Jews write the Pentateuch. One now lying before me is one hundred and fifty-three feet long, by twenty-one inches wide, written on fine brown Basle goat-skin; some time since brought from Jerusalem, supposed to be four hundred years old.

Verse 3. *Every one that stealeth-and every one that sweareth*— It seems that the roll was written both on the front and back: stealing and swearing are supposed to be two general heads of crimes; the former, comprising sins against men; the latter, sins against God. It is supposed that the roll contained the sins and punishments of the Chaldeans.

Verse 4. *Into the house of him*— Babylon, the house or city of Nebuchadnezzar, who was a public plunderer, and a most glaring idolater.

Verse 6. *This is an ephah that goeth forth.*— This, among the Jews, was the ordinary measure of grain. The woman in the ephah is supposed to represent Judea, which shall be visited for its sins; the talent of lead on the ephah, within which the woman was enclosed, the wrath of God, bending down this culprit nation, in the measure of its sins; for the angel said, “This is wickedness;” that is, the woman represents the mass of iniquity of this nation.

Verse 9. *There came out two women*— As the one woman represented the impiety of the Jewish nation; so these two women who were to carry the ephah, in which the woman INIQUITY was shut up, under the weight of a talent of lead, may mean the desperate UNBELIEF of the Jews in rejecting the Messiah; and that IMPIETY, or universal corruption of manners, which was the consequence of their unbelief, and brought down the wrath of God upon them. The strong wings, like those of a stork, may point out the power and swiftness with which Judea was carried on to fill up the measure of her iniquity, and to meet the punishment which she deserved.

Between the earth and the heaven.— Sins against GOD and MAN, sins which heaven and earth contemplated with horror.

Or the Babylonians and Romans may be intended by the two women who carried the Jewish ephah to its final punishment. The Chaldeans ruined Judea before the advent of our Lord; the Romans, shortly after.

Verse 11. *To build it a house in the land of Shinar*— The land of Shinar means Babylon; and Babylon means Rome, in the Apocalypse. The building the house for the woman imprisoned in the ephah may signify, that there should be a long captivity under the Romans, as there was under that of Shinar or Babylon, by which Rome may here be represented. That house remains to the present day: the Jewish woman is still in the ephah; it is set on its own base—continues still as a distinct nation; and the talent of lead—God's displeasure—is still on the top. O Lord, save thy people, the remnant of Israel!

CHAPTER 6

The vision of the four chariots drawn by several sorts of horses, 1-8. The other vision in this chapter may refer in its primary sense to the establishment of the civil and religious polity of the Jews under Joshua and Zerubbabel; but relates in a fuller sense, to the Messiah, and to that spiritual kingdom of which he was to be both king and high priest. In him all these types and figures were verified; on him all the promises are yea and amen, 9-15.

NOTES ON CHAP. 6

Verse 1. *There came four chariots*— Four monarchies or empires. This is supposed to mean the same with the vision of the four horns, in chap. i.

Mountains of brass.— The strong barriers of God's purposes, which restrained those powers within the times and limits appointed by Jehovah.

Verse 2. *In the first chariot were red horses*— The empire of the Chaldeans, which overthrew the empire of the Assyrians.

The second chariot black horses— The empire of the Persians founded by Cyrus, which destroyed the empire of the Chaldeans.

Verse 3. *The third chariot white horses*— The empire of the Greeks, founded by Alexander the Great, which destroyed the empire of the Persians.

The fourth chariot grisled and bay horses.— That is party-coloured horses, or with horses, some grisled and some bay. The empire of the Romans or of the Greeks. The Greeks divided after the death of Alexander; one part pointing out the Lagidae, who attacked and subdued Egypt; and the other, the seleucidae, who subdued Syria under Seleucus.

Verse 5. *The four spirits of the heavens*— Ministers of God's wrath against the sinful nations of the world.

Verse 6. *The black horses*— This refers to the second chariot; of the first the angel makes no mention, because the empire designed by it had ceased to exist. This had red horses, to show the cruelty of the Chaldeans towards the Jews, and the carnage they committed in the land of Judea.

The black— Cyrus, at the head of the Persians and Medes, bringing devastation and death among the Chaldeans, called the north in many parts of Scripture.

The white— Alexander, who was splendid in his victories, and mild towards all that he conquered.

The grisled— The Lagidae or Ptolemies, who founded an empire in Egypt; of these some were good, some bad, some despotic, some moderate, some cruel, and some mild, represented by the party-coloured horses.

Verse 7. *And the bay went forth*— The Seleucidae, who conquered Syria and the upper provinces, and who wished to extend their conquests, and "sought to go, that they might walk to and fro throughout the earth," were of unbounded ambition, and sought universal empire; such as Antiochus the Great. "So they walked to and fro," did extend their conquests; and harassed many countries by their vexatious and almost continual wars. Some think the Romans are meant, who carried their conquests hither and thither, just as the Divine providence permitted them.

Verse 8. *Have quieted my spirit in the north country.*— They have fulfilled my judgments on Assyria and Chaldea. Nabopolassar and Cyrus first, against the Assyrians and Chaldeans; and Alexander next, against the Persians. On this vision Abp. Newcome remarks:—

The black horses seem to denote the Persian empire; which, by subduing the Chaldeans, and being about to inflict a second heavy chastisement on Babylon, quieted God's spirit with respect to Chaldea; a country always spoken of as lying to the north of the Jews.

The white horses seem to be the Macedonian empire; which, like the Persian, overcame Chaldea.

The spotted bay horses seem to be the Roman empire. This description suits it because it was governed by kings, consuls, dictators, and emperors. It penetrated southward to Egypt and Africa. The Roman empire is mentioned twice, ver. 6, 7, under each epithet given it, ver. 3.

Verse 10. *Take of them of the captivity*— The names that follow were probably those to whom the silver and golden vessels of the temple were intrusted; and who might have had bullion of silver and gold, for particular purposes, about the ornaments of the temple.

The house of Josiah— Probably an artificer in silver, gold, etc.

Verse 11. *Make crowns*— עֲטֹרוֹת ataroth; but seven MSS. of Kennicott's and De Rossi's, and one ancient of my own, with the Syriac and Chaldee, have עֲטֶרֶת atereth, a crown, or tiara. And as Joshua the high priest is alone concerned here, I think one crown only is intended.

Verse 12. *Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH!*— I cannot think that Zerubbabel is here intended; indeed, he is not so much as mentioned in chap. 3:8. Joshua and his companions are called אֲנָשֵׁי מוֹפֵת anshey mopheth, figurative or typical men; the crowning therefore of Joshua in this place, and calling him the BRANCH, was most probably in reference to that glorious person, the Messiah, of whom he was the type or figure. The Chaldee has, “whose name is my MESSIAH,” or CHRIST.

And he shall grow up out of his place— That is, out of David's root, tribe, and family.

And he shall build the temple of the Lord.— This cannot refer to the building of the temple then in hand, for Zerubbabel was its builder: but to that temple, the Christian Church, that was typified by it; for Zerubbabel is not named here, and only Joshua or Jesus (the name is the same) is the

person who is to be crowned and to build this spiritual temple.

Verse 13. *Even he shall build the temple*— Joshua, not Zerubbabel.

He shall bear the glory— Have all the honor of it; for none can do this but himself. The Messiah is still intended.

And shall sit and rule upon his throne— For the government of the Church shall be upon his shoulder.

And he shall be a priest upon his throne— He shall, as the great high priest, offer the only available offering and atonement; and so he shall be both king and priest, a royal king and a royal priest; for even the priest is here stated to sit upon his throne.

And the counsel of peace shall be between them both.— Whom? Zerubbabel and Joshua? Certainly not Zerubbabel, for he is not mentioned in all this prediction; but, as the Messiah is intended, the counsel of peace—the purpose to establish peace between heaven and earth, must be between the Father and the Son.

Verse 14. *Anca the crowns shall be*— One of my MSS. has אַטְרוֹת ataroth, crowns, corrected into אַטְרֶת atereth, crown; and so the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic. The Chaldee has, “And praise shall be,” etc. The meaning appears to be this, that the crown made for Joshua should be delivered to the persons mentioned here and in ver. 10, to be laid up in the temple of the Lord, as a memorial of this typical transaction.

Verse 15. *And they that are far off shall come*— The Gentiles shall come to the Savior of the world; and build-become a part of this new temple; for they, as living stones, shall become a holy temple, a habitation of God through the Spirit.

Ye shall know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me— These predictions, relative to the regal and sacerdotal offices of the Messiah, shall be so circumstantially fulfilled, that ye, Jews, shall be obliged to acknowledge that the Lord of hosts hath sent me with this message.

And this shall come to pass— Your own temple shall be rebuilt, and God shall dwell among you now, if ye will diligently obey the voice of Jehovah your God.

CHAPTER 7

Some Jews being sent from those who remained at Babylon to inquire of the priests and prophets at Jerusalem whether they were still bound to observe those fasts which had been appointed on occasion of the destruction of Jerusalem, and kept during the captivity, the prophet is commanded to take this opportunity of enforcing upon them the weightier matters of the law, judgment and mercy, that they might not incur such calamities as befell their fathers. He also intimates that in their former fasts they had regarded themselves more than God; and that they had rested too much on the performance of external rites, although the former prophets had largely insisted on the superior excellence of moral duties, 1-14.

NOTES ON CHAP. 7

Verse 1. *The fourth year of King Darius*— Two years after they began to rebuild the temple, see chap. 1:1, A.M. 3486.

The ninth month, even in Chisleu— This answers to a part of our November and December. The names of the month appear only under and after the captivity.

Verse 2. *When they had sent-Sherazer and Regem-melech*— To inquire whether the fasts should be continued, which they had hitherto observed on account of their ruined temple; and the reason why they inquired was, that they were rebuilding that temple, and were likely to bring it to a joyful issue.

Verse 5. *When ye fasted and mourned in the fifth-month*— This they did in the remembrance of the burning of the temple, on the tenth day of that month; and on the seventh month, on the third of which month they observed a fast for the murder of Gedaliah, and the dispersion of the remnant of the people which were with him. See Jeremiah 41:1, and 2

Kings 25:25.

Verse 6. *And when ye did eat*— They had not observed those fasts as they should have done. They deplored the loss of their temple, and its riches, etc., but they did not humble themselves because of those iniquities which had brought the displeasure of God upon them, their temple, and their city.

Verse 7. *The words which the Lord hath cried by the former prophets*— **נְבִיאִים הָרִאשׁוֹנִים** *nebiim harishonim*, is the title which the Jews give to Joshua, Judges, the two books of Samuel, and the two books of Kings.

The latter prophets, **נְבִיאִים אַחֲרוֹנִים** *nebiim acharonim*, are Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the twelve minor prophets.

The hagiographa, **כְּתוּבִים** *kethubim*, holy writings, are the Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Canticles, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, and the two books of Chronicles. But the above words, the former prophets, seem to apply to Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel.

The south and the plain?— From Eleutheropolis to the sea, Obadiah 19. The south was the wilderness and mountainous parts of Judea: and the plain, the plains of Jericho.

Verse 9. *Execute true judgment*— See the parallel texts in the margin.

Verse 10. *Evil against his brother in your heart.*— Do not indulge an unfavourable opinion of another: do not envy him; do not harbour an unbrotherly feeling towards him.

Verse 11. *Pulled away the shoulder*— From under the yoke of the law, like an unbroken or restive bullock in the plough.

Verse 12. *Made their hearts as an adamant stone*— **שָׁמִיר** *shamir* may mean the granite. This is the hardest stone with which the common people could be acquainted. Perhaps the corundum, of which emery is a species,

may be intended. Bochart thinks it means a stone used in polishing others. The same name, in Hebrew, applies to different stones.

Verse 14. *I scattered them with a whirlwind*— This refers to the swift victories and cruel conduct of the Chaldeans towards the Jews; they came upon them like a whirlwind; they were tossed to and fro, and up and down, everywhere scattered and confounded.

CHAPTER 8

In thus chapter God promises the continuance of his favor to those who are returned from the captivity; so that upon the removal of his judgments, the fasts they had observed during the captivity may now be converted to so many occasions of rejoicing. He likewise promises in due time a general restoration of his people, and the enlargement of the Church by the accession of the Gentiles, 1-20. The conclusion of the chapter intimates farther that the Jews, after their restoration, will be instrumental in converting many other nations, 21-23. Compare Romans 11:15, 16.

NOTES ON CHAP. 8

Verse 2. *I was jealous*— Some refer this to the Jews themselves. They were as the spouse of Jehovah: but they were unfaithful, and God punished them as an injured husband might be expected to punish an unfaithful wife. Others apply it to the enemies of the Jews. Though I gave them a commission to afflict you, yet they exceeded their commission: I will therefore deal with them in fury-in vindictive justice.

Verse 3. *I am returned unto Zion*— I have restored her from her captivity. I will dwell among them. The temple shall be rebuilt, and so shall Jerusalem; and instead of being false, unholy, and profligate, it shall be the city of truth. and my holy mountain. TRUTH shall dwell in it.

Verse 4. *There shall yet old men and old women*— In those happy times the followers of God shall live out all their days, and the hoary head be always found in the way of righteousness.

Verse 5. *The streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls*— The progeny shall be numerous, healthy, and happy. Their innocent gambols and useful exercises shall be a means of health, and a proof of happiness. To be healthy, children must have exercise. But they cannot take exercise,

except in the way of play and diversion: ergo, such playfulness cannot be sinful. Let them be kept from evil words, lying, swearing, and scurrility; and all the rest may be innocent.

Verse 6. *If it be marvellous*— You may think that this is impossible, considering your present low condition: but suppose it be impossible in your eyes, should it be so in mine! saith the Lord of hosts.

Verse 7. *I will save my people from the east country, and from the west*— From every land in which any of them may be found. But these promises principally regard the Christian Church, or the bringing in the Jews with the fullness of the Gentiles.

Verse 9. *By the mouth of the prophets*— The day or time of the foundation was about two years before, as this discourse of the prophet was in the fourth year of Darius. After this God raised up prophets among them.

Verse 10. *For before these days there was no hire for man*— Previously to this, ye had no prosperity; ye had nothing but civil divisions and domestic broils. I abandoned you to your own spirits, and to your own ways.

Verse 12. *For the seed shall be prosperous*— Ye shall be a holy and peaceable people; and God will pour down his blessing on yourselves, your fields, and your vineyards.

Verse 13. *As ye were a curse*— Instead of being execrated among the people, ye shall be blessed; instead of being reproached, ye shall be commended. Ye shall be a blessing to all the nations round about. All these promises we may expect to be completely fulfilled when the Jews acknowledge their Messiah.

O house of Judah, and house of Israel— The restoration shall be complete, when both Israel and Judah are brought back.

Verse 16. *Speak ye every man the truth*— See chap. 7:9, 10.

Verse 19. *The fast of the fourth month*— To commemorate the taking of Jerusalem; 2 Kings 25:3; Jeremiah 39:2; 52:6, 7.

The fast of the fifth— In memory of the ruin of the temple, 2 Kings 25:8; Jeremiah 52:12, 13.

The fast of the seventh— For the murder of Gedaliah, Jeremiah 41:1-17.

The fast of the tenth— In commemoration of the siege of Jerusalem, which began on the tenth day of the tenth month; 2 Kings 25:1; Jeremiah 52:4; Ezekiel 24:1, 2; and see on chap. 7:3, 5.

Cheerful feasts— Ye shall find all your evils so completely redressed, that these mournful fasts shall be turned into joyful feasts.

Verse 20. *There shall come people*— Similar promises to those in Isaiah 2:3 and in Micah 4:1, 2. Many Gentiles, as well as Jews, will then be found devoting themselves to the Lord.

Verse 21. *I will go also*.— This is the answer of the person invited. It is a good work. We must have God for our friend. We cannot expect this unless we seek him: and as we know not what an hour may bring forth, let us go speedily.

Verse 22. *And strong nations*— This may refer to the conversion of the Mohammedan tribes; especially to those in the vicinity of Palestine. Perhaps even the Egyptians, inhabitants of Arabia Petraea, of Syria, etc.

Verse 23. *Ten men shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew*— The converts from among the Gentiles shall be to the Jews as ten to one. But ten may here signify a great number, without comparison. And from this scripture it appears as if the Jews, converted to God, should be the instruments of converting many Gentiles. See on Isaiah 3:6. Catching hold of the skirt is a gesture naturally used to entreat assistance and protection. This and the three foregoing verses, says Abp. Newcome, refer to the great accession of converts which the Jewish Church received between the

captivity and the coming of Christ; to the number of Christian disciples which the Jewish preachers made, and to the future conversions of which the restoration of the Jews will be an eminent cause.

CHAPTER 9

Syria, Phoenicia, and Palestine, were conquered by Nebuchadnezzar, and afterwards by Alexander. Some apply the beginning of this chapter (1-7) to the one event, and some to the other. The close of the seventh verse relates to the number of Philistines that should become proselytes to Judaism; (see JosEphesians Antiq. 14:15, 4;) and the eighth, to the watchful providence of God over his temple in those troublesome times. From this the prophet passes on to that most eminent instance of God's goodness to his Church and people, the sending of the Messiah, with an account of the peaceable tendency and great extent of his kingdom, 9, 10. God then declares that he has ratified his covenant with his people, delivered them from their captivity, and restored them to favor, 11, 12. In consequence of this, victory over their enemies is promised them in large and lofty terms, with every other kind of prosperity, 13-17. Judas Maccabeus gained several advantages over the troops of Antiochus, who was of Grecian or Macedonian descent. But without excluding these events, it must be allowed that the terms of this prophecy are much too strong to be confined to them; their ultimate fulfillment must therefore be referred to Gospel times.

NOTES ON CHAP. 9

Verse 1. *The burden of the word of the Lord*—The oracle contained in the word which Jehovah now speaks.

This is a prophecy against Syria, the Philistines, Tyre, and Sidon, which were to be subdued by Alexander the Great. After this the prophet speaks gloriously concerning the coming of Christ, and redemption by him.

Most learned men are of opinion that this and the succeeding chapters are not the work of Zechariah, but rather of Jeremiah; Hosea, or some one before the captivity. It is certain that chap. 11:12, 13, is quoted Matthew

27:9, 10, as the language of Jeremiah the prophet. The first eight chapters appear by the introductory parts to be the prophecies of Zechariah: they stand in connection with each other, are pertinent to the time when they were delivered, are uniform in style and manner, and constitute a regular whole; but the six last chapters are not expressly assigned to Zechariah, and are unconnected with those that precede: — the three first of them are unsuitable in many parts to the time when Zechariah lived; all of them have a more adorned and poetical turn of composition than the eight first chapters, and they manifestly break the unity of the prophetic book.

I conclude, from internal marks, that these three chapters, (9., 10., 11.,) were written much earlier than the time of Jeremiah, and before the captivity of the ten tribes. They seem to suit Hosea's age and manner; but whoever wrote them, their Divine authority is established by the two quotations from them, chap. 9:9; 11:12, 13. See below.

The twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth chapters form a distinct prophecy, and were written after the death of Josiah, chap. 12:11; but whether before or after the captivity, and by what prophet, is uncertain, although I incline to think that the author lived before the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians. See on chap. 13:2-6. They are twice quoted in the New Testament, chap. 12:10; 13:7. — Newcome.

My own opinion is, that these chapters form not only a distinct work, but belong to a different author. If they do not belong to Jeremiah, they form a thirteenth book in the minor prophets, but the inspired writer is unknown.

The land of Hadrach— The valley of Damascus, or a place near to Damascus. Alexander the Great gained possession of Damascus, and took all its treasures; but it was without blood; the city was betrayed to him.

Damascus shall be the rest thereof— The principal part of this calamity shall fall on this city. God's anger rests on those whom he punishes, Ezekiel 5:13; 16:42; 24:13. And his rod, or his arm, rests upon his enemies, Psalm 125:3; Isaiah 30:23. See Newcome.

When the eye of man— Newcome translates thus:

“For the eye of Jehovah is over man, And over all the tribes of Israel.”

This is an easy sense, and is followed by the versions.

Verse 2. *And Hamath also shall border thereby*— Hamath on the river Orontes; and Tyre and Sidon, notwithstanding their political wisdom, address, and cunning, shall have a part in the punishment.

These prophecies are more suitable to the days of Jeremiah than to those of Zechariah; for there is no evidence—although Alexander did take Damascus, but without bloodshed—that it was destroyed from the times of Zechariah to the advent of our Lord. And as Tyre and Sidon were lately destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, it is not likely that they could soon undergo another devastation.

Verse 3. *And Tyrus did build herself*— The rock on which Tyre was built was strongly fortified; and that she had abundance of riches has been already seen, Ezekiel 28:1, etc.

Verse 4. *Will smite her power in the sea*— See Ezekiel 26:17. Though Alexander did take Tyre, Sidon, Gaza, etc.; yet it seems that the prediction relative to their destruction was fulfilled by Nebuchadnezzar. See Amos 1:6-8; Zephaniah 2:4, 7.

Verse 5. *Ashkelon shall see it, and fear*— All these prophecies seem to have been fulfilled before the days of Zechariah; another evidence that these last chapters were not written by him.

Her expectation shalt be ashamed— The expectation of being succoured by Tyre.

Verse 6. *A bastard shall dwell in Ashdod*— This character would suit Alexander very well, who most certainly was a bastard; for his mother Olympia said that Jupiter Ammon entered her apartment in the shape of a dragon, and begat Alexander! Could her husband Philip believe this? The word signifies a stranger.

Verse 7. *I will take away his blood out of his mouth*— The Philistines, when incorporated with the Israelites, shall abstain from blood, and every thing that is abominable.

And Ekron as a Jebusite.— As an inhabitant of Jerusalem. Many of the Philistines became proselytes to Judiasm; and particularly the cities of Gaza, and Ashdod. See JosEphesians Antiq. lib. xlii., c. 15, s. 4.

Verse 8. *I will encamp about mine house*— This may apply to the conquests in Palestine by Alexander, who, coming with great wrath against Jerusalem, was met by Jaddua the high priest and his fellows in their sacred robes, who made intercession for the city and the temple; and, in consequence, Alexander spared both, which he had previously purposed to destroy. He showed the Jews also much favor, and remitted the tax every seventh year, because the law on that year forbade them to cultivate their ground. See this extraordinary account in JosEphesians Antiq. lib. xi., c. 8, s. 5. Bishop Newcome translates: “I will encamp about my house with an army, so that none shall pass through or return.”

Verse 9. *Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion*— See this prophecy explained on Matthew 21:5.

Behold, thy King cometh— Not Zerubbabel, for he was never king; nor have they had a king, except Jesus the Christ, from the days of Zedekiah to the present time.

He is just— The righteous One, and the Fountain of righteousness.

Having salvation— He alone can save from sin, Satan, death, and hell.

Lowly— Without worldly pomp or splendor; for neither his kingdom, nor that of his followers, is of this world.

Riding upon an ass— God had commanded the kings of Israel not to multiply horses. The kings who broke this command were miserable themselves, and scourgers to their people. Jesus came to fulfill the law.

Had he in his title of king rode upon a horse, it would have been a breach of a positive command of God; therefore, he rode upon an ass, and thus fulfilled the prophecy, and kept the precept unbroken. Hence it is immediately added:—

Verse 10. *I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem*— No wars shall be employed to spread the kingdom of the Messiah; for it shall be founded and established, “not by might nor by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord of hosts,” chap. 4:6.

Verse 11. *As for thee also (Jerusalem) by the blood of thy covenant*— The covenant made with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the Israelites in general, and ratified by the blood of many victims; until the time should come in which the Messiah should shed his blood, as typified by the ancient sacrifices.

I have sent forth thy prisoners— Those who were under the arrest of God’s judgments; the human race, fast bound in sin and misery, and who by the pitifulness of his tender mercy were loosed, he dying in their stead.

Verse 12. *Turn you to the strong hold*— Ye who feel your sins, and are shut up under a sense of your guilt, look up to him who was delivered for your offenses, and rose again for your justification. Ye have hope, let that hope lead you to faith, and that faith to the blood of the covenant; and, through that blood, to GOD, the Father of all.

I will render double unto thee— Give thee an abundance of peace and salvation.

Verse 13. *When I have bent Judah*— Judah is the bow, and Ephraim is the arrows; and these are to be shot against the Greeks. I am inclined, with Bp. Newcome, to consider that the language of this prophecy is too strong to point out the only trifling advantage which the Maccabees gained over Antiochus, who was of Macedonian descent; and it is probable that these prophecies remain to be fulfilled against the present possessors of Javan or Greece, Macedonia, and a part of Asia Minor.

Verse 14. *The Lord shall be seen over them*— Shadowing and refreshing them, as the cloud did the camp in the wilderness.

His arrow shall go forth as the lightning— They shall be conquered in a way that will show that God fights for his followers.

The description here is very sublime; we have a good imitation of it in Nonnus:—

kai tote gaian apasan epeklusen uetiov zeuv, puknwsav nefeessin olon polonù ouranìh gar brontaioiv patagoisi diov mukhsato salpigx. NONN. DIONYS., lib. 6. ver. 229.

“When heaven’s dread trumpet, sounding from on high, Breaks forth in thunders through the darken’d sky; The pregnant clouds to floods of rain give birth. And stormy Jove o’erwhelms the solid earth.” J. B. B. C.

In these two verses there is a fine image, and an allusion to a particular fact, which have escaped the notice of every oommelltor. I must repeat the verses: 13: When I have bent Judah for me, filled the bow with Ephraim, and raised up thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Greece, and made thee as the sword of a mighty man. 14: And the LORD shall be seen over them, and his arrows shall go forth like lightning. The reader will consult what is said on Hosea 7:16, relative to the oriental bow, which resembles a [figure C] in its quiescent state, and must be recurved in order to be strung. Here, Judah is represented as the recurved bow; Ephraim, as an arrow placed on the string, and then discharged against the Javanites or Greeks with the momentum of lightning; the arrow kindling in its course through the air, and thus becoming the bolt of death to them against whom it was directed.

*Volat illud, et incandescit eundo,
Et quos non habuit, sub nubibus invenit ignes.*

*“It flies apace; and, heating, mounts on high,
Glows in its course, and burns along the sky.”*

Verse 15. *The Lord of hosts shall defend them*— He alone is the sure trust of his Church.

Subdue with sling-stones— This was an ancient and powerful instrument in the hands of the Hebrews. See the note on Judges 20:16.

They shall drink— After the victory gained as above, thy people shall hold a feast, and drink and be filled with wine. There is no intimation here that they shall drink the blood of their enemies, as some barbarous nations were accustomed to do. When they have gained the victory, they shall banquet abundantly on the spoils taken from the enemy.

As the corners of the altar.— They shall pour out libations of wine at the foot of the altar, as the priests were accustomed to pour out the blood of the victims.

Verse 16. *Shall save them in that day*— They are his flock, and he is their Shepherd; and, as his own, he shall save and defend them.

As the stones of a crown— אבני נזר מתנוססות abney nezer mithnosoth, “crowned stones erecting themselves;” i.e., being set up by themselves, as monuments of some deliverance, they seem to be lifting themselves up; offering themselves to the attention of every passenger. It may however refer to stones anointed with oil; a sort of temporary altars set up to the Lord for a victory gained. The same word is used, Leviticus 21:12: “Because the crown, נזר nezer, of the anointing oil of his God is upon him.” Perhaps most of those upright stones, standing in circles, which pass for druidical monuments, were erected to commemorate victories, or to grace the tomb of an illustrious chief. These verses may refer to some final victory over the enemies of God’s people.

Verse 17. *How great is his goodness*— In himself and towards them.

And how great is his beauty!— His comeliness, holiness, and purity, put in and upon them.

Corn shall make the young men cheerful— They shall be gladdened and

strengthened by plenty of food; and they shall speak aloud of God's mercies in their harvest home.

And new wine the maids.— Who shall prepare the wine from an abundant vintage.

CHAPTER 10

The promise of prosperity and plenty in the close of the preceding chapter leads the prophet to suggest, next, the means of obtaining them; supplication to Jehovah, and not to idols, whose worship had already proved a fertile source of calamities, 1-3. The rest of the chapter (like the preceding) promises to the Jews a restoration to their own land under rulers and governors, victory over their enemies, and much increase and prosperity; and this in a manner so miraculous, that it is described, 4-12, by allusions to the deliverance from Egypt.

NOTES ON CHAP. 10

Verse 1. Ask ye of the Lord rain— Rain in the due seasons-1. To impregnate the seed when sown; and 2. To fill the ear near the time of harvest-was so essential to the fertility of the land, and the well-being of the people, that it stands well among the chief of God's mercies and the promise of it here shows that God designs to ensure the prosperity promised, by using those means by which it was promoted.

Verse 2. The idols have spoken vanity— This is spoken of the Jews, and must refer to their idolatry practiced before the captivity, for there were no idols after.

Therefore they went their way— They were like a flock that had no shepherd, shifting from place to place, and wandering about in the wilderness, seeking for pasture, wherever they might find it. Some think that the idols and diviners were those of the Seleucidae Greeks, who excited their masters with promises of success against the Maccabees. Others think that the Babylonish captivity is foretold; for a determined future event is frequently spoken of by the prophets as past.

Verse 3. Mine anger was kindled against the shepherds— Bad kings and bad priests. I will punish the goats; these were the wicked priests, who

were shepherds by their office, and goats by the impurity of their lives.

As his goodly horse in the battle.— The honorable war horse, or the horse that carried the general's equipage. In the unaccountable variation of interpreters on these chapters, this, among other things, is thought to be spoken of Matthias, and Judas Maccabeus, who assembled the people from all quarters, as a shepherd gathers his sheep together; and led them against the sons of Greece, the Seleucidae Greeks. Others refer every thing here to times before the captivity.

Verse 4. Out of him came forth the corner— This is spoken of the tribe of Judah: all strength, counsel, and excellence came from that tribe. The corner stone, the ornament and completion of the building; the nail, by which the tents were fastened, and on which they hung their clothes, armor, etc., the battlebow, the choicest archers.

Every oppressor together.— Those heroes and generals, by whom, under God, their foes should be totally routed. Newcome translates, "Every ruler together." Perhaps all this is spoken of the Messiah.

Verse 5. They shall be as mighty men— The Maccabees and their successors.

Riders on horses— The Macedonians, who opposed the Maccabees, and had much cavalry; whereas the Jews had none, and even few weapons of war; yet they overcame these horsemen.

Verse 6. I will strengthen the house of Judah— I doubt whether the sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth verses are not to be understood of the future ingathering of the Jews in the times of the Gospel. See Jeremiah 3:14; 23:6; Hosea 1:2; 6:11.

Verse 7. Ephraim shall be like a mighty man— This tribe was always distinguished for its valor.

Verse 8. I will hiss for them— אֶשְׂרֵקָה *eshrekah*, "I will shriek for them;" call them with such a shrill strong voice, that they shall hear me,

and find that it is the voice of their redemption.

Verse 9. *I Will sow them among the people*— Wherever they have been dispersed, my voice in the preaching of the Gospel shall reach them. And they shall remember me, and they and their children shall turn again to the Lord, through Messiah their King.

Verse 10. *Out of the land of Egypt*— I will bring them out of all the countries where they have been dispersed, and bring them back to their own land; and they shall be so numerous that they shall scarcely find there, in all its length and breadth, a sufficiency of room. If all the Jews that are now scattered over the face of the earth were gathered together, they would make a mighty nation. And God will gather them together. As a wonderful providence has preserved them in every place, so a wondrous providence will collect them from every place of their dispersion. When the great call comes, no one soul of them shall be left behind.

Verse 11. *And he shall pass through the sea*— Here is an allusion to the passage of the Red Sea, on their coming out of Egypt, and to their crossing Jordan, when they went into the promised land; the waves or waters of both were dried up, thrown from side to side, till all the people passed safely through. When they shall return from the various countries in which they now sojourn, God will work, if necessary, similar miracles to those which he formerly worked for their forefathers; and the people shall be glad to let them go, however much they may be profited by their operations in the state. Those that oppose, as Assyria and Egypt formerly did, shall be brought down, and their scepter broken.

Verse 12. *I will strengthen them in the Lord*— I, the God of Israel, will strengthen them in the Lord-Jesus, the Messiah; and thus indeed the Chaldee: I will strengthen them, **בִּמְרָא דִּי** *bemeymre dayai*, in or by the WORD of Jehovah, the same personal WORD which we so often meet with in the Chaldee paraphrases or Targum.

They shall walk up and down in his name— In the name of the Messiah. Saith the Lord-GOD speaks here, not of himself, but concerning his Christ. The Jews shall have complete liberty; they shall appear everywhere as a

part of the flock of Christ, and no difference be made between them and the converted Gentiles. They shall be all one fold under one Shepherd and Bishop of all souls.

CHAPTER 11

The commencement of this chapter relates to the destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish polity, probably by the Babylonians; at least in the first instance, as the fourth verse speaks of the people thus threatened as the prophet's charge, 1-6. The prophet then gives an account of the manner in which he discharged his office, and the little value that was put on his labors. And this he does by symbolical actions, a common mode of instruction with the ancient prophets, 7-14. After the prophet, on account of the unsuccessfulness of his labors, had broken the two crooks which were the true badges of his pastoral office, (to denote the annulling of God's covenant with them, and their consequent divisions and dispersions,) he is directed to take instruments calculated to hurt and destroy, perhaps an iron crook, scrip, and stones, to express by these symbols the judgments which God was about to inflict on them by wicked rulers and guides, who should first destroy the flock, and in the end be destroyed themselves, 15-17. Let us now view this prophecy in another light, as we are authorized to do by Scripture, Matthew 27:7. In this view the prophet, in the person of the Messiah, sets forth the ungrateful returns made to him by the Jews, when he undertook the office of shepherd in guiding and governing them; how they rejected him, and valued him and his labors at the mean and contemptible price of thirty pieces of silver, the paltry sum for which Judas betrayed him. Upon which he threatens to destroy their city and temple; and to gwc them up to the hands of such guides and governors as should have no regard to their welfare.

NOTES ON CHAP. 11

Verse 1. *Open thy doors, O Lebanon*— I will give Mr. Joseph Mede's note upon this verse:—

“That which moveth me more than the rest, is in chap. 11., which contains a prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem, and a description of the

wickedness of the inhabitants, for which God would give them to the sword, and have no more pity upon them. It is expounded of the destruction by Titus; but methinks such a prophecy was nothing seasonable for Zachary's time, (when the city yet for a great part lay in her ruins, and the temple had not yet recovered hers,) nor agreeable to the scope. Zachary's commission, who, together with his colleague Haggai, was sent to encourage the people, lately returned from captivity, to build their temple, and to instaurate their commonwealth. Was this a fit time to foretell the destruction of both, while they were yet but a-building? And by Zachary too, who was to encourage them? Would not this better befit the desolation by Nebuchadnezzar?" I really think so. See Mr. J. Mede's 61:Epistle.

Lebanon signifies the temple, because built of materials principally brought from that place.

Verse 2. *Howl, fir tree*— This seems to point out the fall and destruction of all the mighty men.

Verse 3. *Young lions*— Princes and rulers. By shepherds, kings or priests may be intended.

Verse 4. *Feed the flock of the slaughter*— This people resemble a flock of sheep fattened for the shambles; feed, instruct, this people who are about to be slaughtered.

Verse 5. *Whose possessors*— Governors and false prophets, slay them, by leading them to those things that will bring them to destruction.

And they that sell them— Give them up to idolatry; and bless God, strange to tell, that they get secular advantage by the establishment of this false religion.

Verse 6. *For I will no more pity*— I have determined to deliver them into the hands of the Chaldeans.

Verse 7. *And I will feed the flock of slaughter*— I showed them what

God had revealed to me relative to the evils coming upon the land; and I did this the more especially for the sake of the poor of the flock.

Two staves— Two shepherd's crooks. One I called Beauty—that probably by which they marked the sheep; dipping the end into vermillion, or some red liquid. And this was done when they were to mark every tenth sheep, as it came out of the field, when the tithe was to be set apart for the Lord.

The other I called Bands— Probably that with the hook or crook at the head of it, by which the shepherd was wont to catch the sheep by the horns or legs when he wished to bring any to hand.

And I fed the flock.— These two rods show the beauty and union of the people, while under God as their Shepherd. It was the delight of God to see them in a state of peace and harmony.

Verse 8. Three shepherds also I cut off in one month— Taking this literally, some think the three shepherds mean the three Maccabees, Judas, Jonathan, and Simon; others, the three wicked high priests, Jason, Alcimus, and Menelaus; others, the three last princes of the Asmonean race, Alexander, Hyrcanus, and Antigonus.

Perhaps three orders may be intended: 1. The priesthood. 2. The dictatorship, including the Scribes, Pharisees, etc. 3. The magistracy, the great sanhedrin, and the smaller councils. These were all annihilated by the Roman conquest.

Verse 9. I will not feed you— I shall instruct you no longer: some of you are appointed to death by famine; others, to be cut off by the sword; and others of you, to such desparation that ye shall destroy one another.

Verse 10. I took my staff-Beauty, and cut it asunder— And thus I showed that I determined no longer to preserve them in their free and glorious state. And thus I brake my covenant with them, which they had broken on their part already.

Verse 11. So the poor of the flock— The pious, who attended to my

teaching, saw that this was the word-the design, of God.

Verse 12. *If ye think good, give me my price*— “Give me my hire.” And we find they rated it contemptuously; thirty pieces of silver being the price of a slave, Exodus 21:32.

Verse 13. *And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter*— Jehovah calls the price of his prophet his own price; and commands that it should not be accepted, but given to a potter, to foreshadow the transaction related Matthew 27:7.

“Earthen vessels were used in the temple; and we may suppose that some Levites were employed within the sacred precincts to furnish them. To these, the humblest of his ministers in the temple, God commands that the degrading price should be cast.” This is the substance of the notes on these two verses, given by Abp. Newcome.

We may look at it in another light, Give me my price! **הבו שכרי** *habu sichri*, bring my price, or give him any price; that is, Give the money to Judas which you have agreed to give him; for he can neither betray me nor you crucify me, but my own permission. But if not, forbear; take time to consider this bloody business, and in time forbear. For though I permit you to do it, yet remember that the permission does not necessitate you to do it; and the salvation of the world may be effected without this treachery and murder.

See my notes on this place, Matthew 27:9, where I have examined the evidence for the reading of “Zechariah the prophet,” instead of “Jeremiah.”

Verse 14. *That I might break the brotherhood*— I cannot, says Newcome, explain this passage, without supposing that the kingdom of Israel subsisted when the prophet wrote it; and that either the wars between Judah and Israel are referred to, (see 2 Kings 16:5,) or the captivity of the ten tribes, when the brotherly connection between these kingdoms ceased.

Verse 15. *The instruments of a foolish shepherd*.— Such as a bag without

bread, a scrip without measure, and a staff without a hook, etc., things that were needless or of no use; to point out to the Jewish pastors, who took no care of the flock, but devoured them, or ruled them with force and with cruelty.

Verse 16. *I will raise up a shepherd in the land*— Some wicked king; and Newcome supposes Hoshea may be meant. See 2 Kings 17:1, 2, and to such an abominable sovereign the prophecy may well apply.

Verse 17. *Wo to the idol shepherd*— רעי האליל roi haelil, “the worthless,” or “good for nothing shepherd.” The shepherd in name and office, but not performing the work of one. See John 10:11.

The sword shall be upon his arm— Punishment shall be executed upon the wicked Jews, and especially their wicked kings and priests. See ver. 16.

Arm—the secular power; right eye—the ecclesiastical state.

His arm shall be clean dried up— The secular power shall be broken, and become utterly inefficient.

His right eye shall be utterly darkened— Prophecy shall be restrained; and the whole state, ecclesiastical and civil, shall be so completely eclipsed, that none of their functions shall be performed. This may refer to the worthless and wicked governor mentioned in the preceding verse.

There are several things in this chapter that are very obscure, and we can hardly say what opinion is right; nor is it at all clear whether they refer to a very early or late period of the Jewish history.

CHAPTER 12

The first part of this chapter, with several passages in chap. 14., relates to an invasion that shall be made on the inhabitants of Judea and Jerusalem in the latter ages of the world, some time after the restoration and settlement of the Jews in their own land. It also describes, in very magnificent terms, the signal interposition of God in their favor. From this the prophet proceeds in the latter part of the chapter, 10-14, to describe the spiritual mercies of God to converting his people; and gives a very pathetic and affecting account of the deep sorrow of that people, when brought to a sense of their great sin in crucifying the Messiah, comparing it to the sorrow of a parent for his first-born and only son, or to the lamentations made for Josiah in the valley of Megiddon, 2 Chronicles 35:24, 25. A deep, retired sorrow, which will render the mourners for a season insensible to all the comforts and enjoyments of the most endearing society.

NOTES ON CHAP. 12

Verse 1. *The burden of the word of the Lord*— This is a new prophecy. It is directed both to Israel and Judah, though Israel alone is mentioned in this verse.

Which stretcheth forth the heavens— See on Isaiah 42:5.

Formeth the spirit of man within him.— Then it is not the same substance with his body. It is a SPIRIT within HIM.

Verse 2. *Jerusalem a cup of trembling*— The Babylonians, who captivated and ruined the Jews, shall in their turn be ruined.

I incline to think that what is spoken in this chapter about the Jews and Jerusalem, belongs to the “glory of the latter times.”

Shall be in the siege— This may refer to some war against the Church of Christ, such as that mentioned Revelation 20:9.

Verse 3. *A burdensome stone*— Probably referring to that stone which was thrown on the breast of a culprit adjudged to lose his life by stoning, by which the whole region of the thorax, heart, lungs, liver, etc., was broken to pieces.

Verse 4. *I will smite every horse*— Some apply this to the wars of the Maccabees with the Syrians; but it is more likely to be a prophecy not yet accomplished. The terms are too strong for such petty and evanescent victories as those of the Maccabees.

Verse 5. *The governors of Judah*— This supposes a union between the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah.

Verse 6. *Jerusalem shall be inhabited again*— This seems to refer to the future conversion of the Jews, and their “return to their own land.”

Verse 7. *The Lord also shall save the tents of Judah first*— This, I suppose, refers to the same thing. The Gospel of Christ shall go from the least to the greatest. Eminent men are not the first that are called; the poor have the Gospel preached to them. And this is done in the wise providence of God, that the “glory of the house of David,” etc., that secular influence may appear to have no hand in the matter; and that God does not send his Gospel to a great man, because he is such.

Verse 8. *He that is feeble among them shall be as David*— Here is a marked difference between Judaism and Christianity. So clear, full, and efficient shall be the salvation of believers under the Gospel that the feeblest among them shall be as strong, as full of courage, and as successful as David when he went against Goliath. The least in the kingdom of heaven was greater than John the Baptist.

And the house of David-as the angel of the Lord— The family the Church of the true David, the Lord Jesus, shall be as the angel of the Lord;

shall stand in the Divine presence like Gabriel; for Christ hath said, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” So “we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed from glory into glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord.” Thus the house of David, the true Christians, shall here walk with, after, and before God.

Verse 9. *I will seek to destroy all the nations*— When this time shall arrive, all nations that “will not receive the faith of our Lord Jesus” shall be destroyed, when the longsuffering of God shall no longer wait upon them. This seems to belong to a period yet very remote.

Verse 10. *I will pour upon the house of David*— This is the way in which the Jews themselves shall be brought into the Christian Church. 1. “They shall have the spirit of grace,” God will show them that he yet bears favor to them. 2. They shall be excited to fervent and continual prayer for the restoration of the Divine favor. 3. Christ shall be preached unto them; and they shall look upon and believe in him whom they pierced, whom they crucified at Jerusalem. 4. This shall produce deep and sincere repentance; they shall mourn, and be in bitterness of soul, to think that they had crucified the Lord of life and glory, and so long continued to contradict and blaspheme, since that time.

Verse 11. *A great mourning*— A universal repentance.

As the mourning of Hadadrimmon— Thea shall mourn as deeply for the crucified Christ as their forefathers did for the death of Josiah, who was slain at Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon. See 2 Chronicles 35:24, 25.

Verse 12. *Every family apart*— The meaning of the word apart, which recurs here so often, may be this: Their sorrow shall be so deep and distressing, that every one will endeavor to avoid another, and vent his grief and distress of soul in private. And even husbands and wives shall separate from each other in this general mourning, as they were obliged to do by law in certain circumstances. See 1 Corinthians 7:5, and the note there.

CHAPTER 13

After the humiliation and conversion of the Jews, foretold in the preceding chapter, they are here promised the full pardon of their sins, and a deliverance from idolatry and false prophets, 1-6. Prophecy concerning the death of the Messiah, and the persecution of his disciples, 7. The remaining verses may refer to those Jewish converts to Christianity who survived the calamities which their country suffered from the Romans, 8, 9.

NOTES ON CHAP. 13

Verse 1. *In that day there shall be a fountain opened*— This chapter is a continuation of the preceding, and should not have been separated from it.

A fountain— The source of mercy in Christ Jesus; perhaps referring to the death he should die, and the piercing of his side, when blood and water issued out.

To the house of David— To David's family, and such like persons as it included. See the history of David and his sons, and then learn for whom Christ shed his blood.

Inhabitants of Jerusalem— Such like persons as the Jews were in every part of their history, and in their last times, when they clamoured for the blood of Christ, and pursued him unto death! Learn from this also for whom Christ died! These were the worst of the human race; and if he died for them, none need despair. They rejected, betrayed, crucified, slew, and blasphemed Christ, and afterwards persecuted his followers. For these he died! Yes: and he tasted death for EVERY MAN.

For sin and for uncleanness.— For the removal of the guilt of sin, and for the purification of the soul from the uncleanness or pollution of sin.

Verse 2. *I will cut off the names of the idols*— There shall not only be no idolatry, but the very names of the idols shall be forgotten, or be held in such abhorrence that no person shall mention them. This prophecy seems to be ancient, and to have been delivered while idolatry had prevalence in Israel and Judah.

I will cause the prophets— All false teachers.

And the unclean spirit— That which leads to impurity, the spirit of divination; the lust of the flesh, and of the eye, and the pride of life. Satan shall have neither a being in, nor power over, the hearts of sincere believers in Christ.

Verse 3. *When any shall yet prophesy*— Falsely; such shall be the horror of such an evil, that there shall be no toleration of it. Itself, and they who practice it, shall be everywhere destroyed.

Verse 4. *Neither shall they wear a rough garment*— A rough garment made of goats' hair, coarse wool, or the course pile of the camel, was the ordinary garb of God's prophets. And the false prophets wore the same; for they pretended to the same gifts, and the same spirit, and therefore they wore the same kind of garments. John Baptist had a garment of this kind.

Verse 5. *But he shall say, I am no prophet*— This must be the case of a false prophet or diviner, who had been obliged to give up his infamous practice, and become even a laborer in the land. But having been known to be such, he is questioned by the people to see if he still were addicted in heart to the same practices. He declares he is no prophet, neither true nor false; that he is now a husbandman, and was brought up a herdsman.

Verse 6. *What are these wounds in thine hands?*— Marks which he had received in honor of his idols. But he shall excuse himself by stating that he had received these marks in his own family; when, most probably, they had been dedicated to some of those idols. See the note on Isaiah 44:5. I do not think that these words are spoken at all concerning Jesus Christ. I have heard them quoted in this way; but I cannot hear such an application of

them without horror. In quoting from the Old Testament in reference to the New, we cannot be too cautious. We may wound the truth instead of honoring it.

Verse 7. *Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd*— This is generally understood of Jesus Christ. The sword is that of Divine justice which seemed to have been long asleep, and should long ago have struck either MAN, or his SUBSTITUTE, the Messiah. Jesus is here called God’s Shepherd, because he had appointed him to feed and govern, as well as to save, the whole lost world. This is a prosopopoeia, and the address to the sword is very poetic. There is a fine passage in AEschylus to the same effect:—

ξενος δε κληροις επινωμα,
χαλυβος ζκυθων αποικας,
κτεανων χρηματοδαιτας
πικρος, ωμοφρων σιδαρος,
χθονα ναιειν διαπηλας
’οποσαν αν και φθιμενοισι κατεχειν,
των μεγαλων πεδιων αμοιροις,

AESCHYL. Sept. cont. Hebrews 733.

*“The rude barbarian, from the mines
Of Scythia, o’er the lots presides;
Ruthless to each his share assigns,
And the contested realm divides:
To each allots no wider a domain
Than, on the cold earth as they lie,
Their breathless bodies occupy,
Regardless of an ampler reign:
Such narrow compass does the sword —
A cruel umpire—their high claims afford.”*

POTTER.

The man that is my Fellow— **ועל גבר עמייתי** veal geber amithi, “upon the strong man,” or “the hero that is with ME;” my neighbor. “The WORD

was God, and the WORD was WITH God;” John 1:1. “I and my Father are ONE;” John 10:30.

Smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered— This is quoted by our Lord, Matthew 26:31, in relation to his disciples, who should be scattered on his crucifixion: and they were so; for every one, giving up all for lost, went to his own house.

And I will turn mine hand upon the little ones.— I will take care of the little flock, and preserve them from Jewish malice and Gentile persecution. And so this little flock was most wondrously preserved, and has been increasing from year to year from that time to the present day.

Verse 8. *Two parts therein shall be cut off*— In the war with the Romans.

But the third shall be left— Those who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ shall be preserved alive; and not one of these perished in the siege, or afterwards, by those wars.

Verse 9. *I will bring the third part through the fire*— The Christian Church shall endure a great fight of afflictions, by which they shall be refined-not consumed.

They shall call on my name— In this way shall they offer all their prayers and supplications to God.

I will say, It is my people— The Church that I have chosen in the place of the Jews who have filled up the measure of their iniquity.

And they shall say, The Lord is my God— And thus communion shall be established between me and them for ever. Thus there shall be a general restoration.

CHAPTER 14

The commencement of this chapter relates to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, and to the calamities consequent on that event. From this great Jewish tragedy the prophet immediately passes to the utter extermination of the enemies of Christianity in the latter days. God will display his power in behalf of his people in a manner so astonishing and miraculous, that even they themselves, and much more their enemies, shall be struck with terror, 4, 5. The national prosperity of the Jews shall then be permanent and unmixed, 6, 7; and these people shall be made the instruments of converting many to the faith of the Messiah, 8, 9. The great increase and prosperity of the Christian Church, the New Jerusalem, is then described in terms accommodated to Jewish ideas; and the most signal vengeance denounced against all her enemies, 10-19. From that happy period God's name will be honored in every thing, and his worship every where most reverently observe, 20, 21.

NOTES ON CHAP. 14

Verse 1. Behold, the day of the Lord cometh— This appears to be a prediction of that war in which Jerusalem was finally destroyed, and the Jews scattered all over the face of the earth; and of the effects produced by it.

Verse 2. I will gather all nations— The Romans, whose armies were composed of all the nations of the world. In this verse there is a pitiful account given of the horrible outrages which should be committed during the siege of Jerusalem, and at its capture.

The residue of the people shad not be cut off— Many were preserved for slaves, and for exhibition in the provincial theatres.

Verse 3. Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations— Against the Romans, by means of the northern nations; who shall destroy

the whole empire of this once mistress of the world. But this is an obscure place.

Verse 4. *And his feet shall stand*— He shall appear in full possession of the place, as a mighty conqueror.

And the mount of Olives shall cleave— God shall display his miraculous power as fully in the final restoration of the Jews, as he did when he divided the Red Sea that their forefathers might pass through dry-shod. Some refer this to the destruction of the city by the Romans. It was on the mount of Olives that Titus posted his army to batter Jerusalem. Here the tenth legion that came to him from Jericho was placed. JOSEPH. De Bello, lib. 6:c. 3. It was from this mountain that our Lord beheld Jerusalem, and predicted its future destruction, Luke 19:41, with Matthew 24:23; and it was from this mountain that he ascended to heaven, (Acts 1:12,) utterly leaving an ungrateful and condemned city.

And half of the mountain shall remove— I really think that these words refer to the lines of circumvallation, to intrenchments, redoubts, etc., which the Romans made while carrying on the siege of this city; and particularly the lines or trenches which the army made on Mount Olivet itself.

Verse 5. *Ye shall flee to the valley*— Some think this refers to the valley through which Zedekiah and others endeavored to escape when Nebuchadnezzar pressed the siege of Jerusalem: but it appears to speak only of the Jewish wars of the Romans.

Azal— This, as a place, is not known. If a place, it was most probably near to Jerusalem; and had its name from that circumstance.

Verse 6. *The light shall not be clear, nor dark*— Metaphorically, there will be a mixture of justice and mercy in all this; or a bright light and darkness. Mercy shall triumph over judgment. There shall be darkness-distress, etc.; but there shall be more light-joy and prosperity-than darkness.

Verse 7. *At evening time it shall be light.*— At the close of this awful visitation, there shall be light. The light of the glorious Gospel shall go forth from Jerusalem; and next, from the Roman empire to every part of the earth.

Verse 8. *Living waters shall go out*— There shall be a wide diffusion of Divine knowledge, and of the plan of human salvation, which shall go out by apostles and preachers, first from Jerusalem, then to Syria, Asia Minor, Greece, Italy, the isles of the sea, Britain, etc.

The former sea, and-the hinder sea— The Dead Sea and the Mediterranean; see on Joel 2:20. These are metaphors.

In summer— In time of drought; or in the countries where there was no knowledge of God, there shall these waters flow. The stream shall never cease; it shall run in summer as well as winter. These are living waters-perennial, incessant, and waters that shall preserve life. See John 7:37.

Verse 9. *And the Lord shall be King*— When this universal diffusion of Divine knowledge shall take place. Wherever it goes, the laws of God shall be acknowledged; and, consequently, he shall be King over the whole earth.

One Lord, and his name one.— There shall be in those blessed days, only one religion, and one form of religion. There shall not be gods many, and lords many. All mankind shall be of one religion, the essence of which is, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, soul, mind, and strength; and thy NEIGHBOR as thyself.”

Verse 10. *All the land shall be turned as a plain*— Or rather, “He shall encompass the whole land as a plain.” He shall cast his defence all around it; from Geba, in Benjamin, north of Jerusalem, (Joshua 21:17,) to Rimmon in Judah, to the south of Jerusalem, Joshua 15:32.

It shall be lifted up— The city shall be exalted.

And inhabited in her place— Jerusalem, shall be rebuilt In the very place in which it originally stood. From Benjamin's gate, which was probably on the north side of Jerusalem, unto the place of the first gate, supposed to be that called the old gate, Nehemiah 3:6; 12:39, placed by Lightfoot towards the southwest.

Unto the corner gate— See 2 Kings 14:13.

The tower of Hananeel— This tower and the corner gate seem to be placed as two extremities of the city.

Unto the king's wine-presses— Near to the king's gardens, southward. — See Newcome.

Verse 11. *There shall be no more utter destruction*— After this final restoration of Jerusalem it shall never more be destroyed; but as this was the first city of the living God upon earth, so shall it be the last; it shall be safely inhabited. It shall see war no more.

Verse 12. *And this shall be the plague*— All her enemies shall be destroyed.

Their flesh shall consume away— These are the effects of famine which are described in this verse.

Verse 13. *A great tumult from the Lord*— Among those enemies of his Church, who shall engage and destroy each other.

Verse 14. *And Judah also shall fight*— They shall have little else to do than take the spoil, the wealth of all the heathen round about; gold, silver, and apparel.

Verse 15. *So shall be the plague of the horse, and the mule*— There shall be plagues on the substance of the enemies of the Church, as there were on the cattle and goods of the Egyptians.

Verse 16. *Shall even go up from year to year*— The Jews had three grand

original festivals, which characterized different epochs in their history, viz.:—

1. The feast of the passover, in commemoration of their departure from Egypt.
2. The feast of pentecost, in commemoration of the giving of the law upon Mount Sinai.
3. The feast of tabernacles, in commemoration of their wandering forty years in the wilderness.

This last feast is very properly brought in here to point out the final restoration of the Jews, and their establishment in the light and liberty of the Gospel of Christ, after their long wandering in vice and error.

Verse 17. *Upon them shall be no rain.*— Those who do not worship God shall not have his blessing; and those who do not attend Divine ordinances cannot have the graces and blessings which God usually dispenses by them. On such slothful, idle Christians, there shall be no rain!

Verse 18. *If the family of Egypt*— This may allude to those Jews who, flying from the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes, settled in Egypt, and built a temple at Heliopolis, under the direction of Onias, son of the high priest. JosEphesians Antiq. lib. xiii., c. 6, and WAR, lib. vii., c. 36. If these do not rejoin their brethren, they shall have no rain, no interest in the favor of God.

Verse 19. *This shall be the punishment-of all nations that come not up*— God will have his public worship established everywhere, and those who do not worship him shall lie under his curse.

Verse 20. *Upon the bells of the horses*— They appear, formerly, to have had bells on horses, camels, etc., as we have now, to amuse the animals, and encourage them in their work. In some very fine Asiatic paintings now before me, I see bells both on horses, mules, and camels; little bells tied to

their legs, and larger ones about their necks, particularly in the representation of a caravan passing through the valley of serpents, in the island of Serendib, now Ceylon. The margin reads bridles.

HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD— As the Gospel is a holy system, preaching holiness and producing holiness in those who believe, so all without, as well as within, shall bear this impress; and even a man's labor shall be begun and continued, and ended in the Lord; yea, and the animals he uses, and the instruments he works with, shall be all consecrated to God through Christ.

The pots— “The meanest utensil in the house of God, Nehemiah 10:29, shall be as the vessels of silver, and gold used in solemn sacrifice; they shall be like the bowls before the altar.”-See Newcome.

Verse 21. Yea, every pot in Jerusalem— “The utensils of the Jews shall be treated as holy, and the worshippers shall use them reverently. The idea of preparing food in them (they that-seethe therein) is taken from the custom of feasting after sacrifice. And no trafficker (see Ezekiel 18:4) shall pollute the house of God, as was the custom when our blessed Lord cleansed the temple.”-See Newcome. This is what is called the Canaanite in the house of God. The Canaanite is the merchant; and where such are tolerated in a place dedicated to Divine worship, that is not the house of the Lord of hosts. In churches and chapels, collections may be made for the simple purpose of supporting and extending the worship of Jehovah; but for no other purpose, especially on the Lord's day. Amen.

THE BOOK
OF THE
PROPHET MALACHI

Chronological Notes relative to this Book

- Year from the Creation, according to Archbishop Usher, 3607.
- Year from the vocation of Abram, 1524.
- Year since the destruction of Troy, 787.
- Year since the commencement of the kingdom of Israel by the Divine appointment of Saul to the regal dignity, 698.
- Year from the division of Solomon's monarchy into the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, 578.
- Fourth year of the ninety-fifth Olympiad.
- Year from the building of Rome, according to the Varronian computation, 356.
- Year before the vulgar era of Christ's nativity, 397.
- Cycle of the Sun, 5.
- Cycle of the Moon, 4.

CHAPTER 1

This chapter begins with showing the great and free favor which God had manifested to the Israelites, above what he had done to the Edomites, who are threatened with farther marks of the Divine displeasure; alluding, perhaps, to the calamities which they suffered from Judas Maccabeus and John Hyrcanus, (see 1 Macc. 5:65, and JosEphesians Antiq. 13:9,) 1-5. God then reproaches his people, and especially their priests, for their ungrateful returns to his distinguished goodness, 6. They are particularly charged with sacrificing the refuse of beasts, 7-9, for which God threatens to reject them, 10, and choose other nations who will show more reverence to his name and worship, 11-14.

NOTES ON CHAP. 1

Verse 1. *The burden of the word of the Lord to Israel by Malachi.*— This prophet is undoubtedly the last of the Jewish prophets. He lived after Zechariah and Haggai; for we find that the temple, which was begun in their time, was standing complete in his. See chap. 3:10. Some have thought that he was contemporary with Nehemiah; indeed, several have supposed that Malachi, is no other than Ezra under the feigned name of angel of the Lord, or my angel. John the Baptist was the link that connected Malachi with Christ. According to Abp. Usher he flourished B.C. 416, but the authorized version, which we have followed in the margin, states this event to have happened nineteen years later. Both the Hebrew language and poetry had declined in his days.

Israel. — Here means the Jewish people in general.

Verse 2. *Was not Esau Jacob's brother?*— Have I not shown a greater partiality to the Israelites than I have to the Edomites?

I loved Jacob— My love to Jacob has been proved by giving him greater privileges and a better inheritance than what I have given to Esau.

Verse 3. *And I hated Esau*— I have shown him less love; Genesis 29:30, 31. I comparatively hated him by giving him an inferior lot. And now, I have not only laid waste the dwelling-place of the Edomites, by the incursions of their enemies; but (ver. 4) they shall remain the perpetual monuments of my vengeance. On the subject of loving Jacob and hating Esau, see the notes on Genesis xxvii., and Romans 9:13. Let it be remembered, 1. That there is not a word spoken here concerning the eternal state of either Jacob or Esau. 2. That what is spoken concerns merely their earthly possessions. And, 3. That it does not concern the two brothers at all, but the posterity of each.

Verse 4. *They shall build, but I will throw down*— We have already seen enough of the wickedness of the Edomites to justify the utmost severity of Divine justice against them. The pulling down predicted here was by Judas Maccabeus; see 1 Mac. 5:65; and by John Hyrcanus; see JosEphesians Antiq., lib. 13:c. 9. s. 1.

They shall call them, The border of wickedness— A wicked land. Among this people scarcely any trace of good could ever be noted.

Verse 5. *Your eyes*— Ye Israelites shall see, in your succeeding generations, that:—

The Lord will be magnified— By his kindness in Israel, and his judgments beyond.

Verse 6. *A son honoreth his father*— I am your Father-where, then, is my honor? Where your filial obedience?

If I be a master, where is my fear?— The respect due to me.

Verse 7. *Ye offer polluted bread*— The priests, probably to ingratiate themselves with the people, took the refuse beasts, etc., and offered them to God; and thus the sacrificial ordinances were rendered contemptible.

Verse 8. *Offer it now unto thy governor*— פֶּחַת pechath, a word

signifying a lieutenant, or viceroy, among the Chaldeans, Syrians, and Persians; for neither at this time, nor ever after, was there a king in Israel.

Verse 9. *Beseech God*— There were evident marks of God's displeasure in the land, and it was occasioned by these pollutions through the priests. And now he exhorts them to pray to God that they may be pardoned: for, if this practice be persisted in, God will not accept any offering made by them.

Verse 10. *Who is-among you*— From this we learn that there was not one sincere or honest priest among them. They were selfish and worldly; and so basely so, that not one of them would even kindle a fire on the hearth of the altar unless he were paid for it.

Verse 11. *From the rising of the sun*— The total abolition of the Mosaic sacrifices, and the establishment of a spiritual worship over the whole earth, is here foretold. The incense of praise, and the pure offering of the Lamb without spot, and through him a holy, loving heart, shall be presented everywhere among the Gentiles; and the Jews and their mock offerings shall be rejected.

Verse 12. *Ye have profaned it*— Ye have desecrated God's worship; is it any wonder that God should cast you off, and follow you with his judgments?

Verse 13. *Ye have snuffed at it*— A metaphor taken from cattle which do not like their fodder. They blow strongly through their nose upon it; and after this neither they nor any other cattle will eat it.

Ye brought that which was torn, and the lame, and the sick— There had never been such abominations in the Divine worship before. What was of no worth in itself, and what could not be used by its owner, was brought to God's altar, and offered for sacrifice! Was not the punishment of these wretches less than their crimes?

Verse 14. *Cursed be the deceiver*— Those who act thus, as they cannot elude God's notice, so neither shall they escape his curse.

And voweth, and sacrificeth-a corrupt thing— The history of Ananias and Sapphira, Acts 5:1, etc., is a complete comment on this. It was high time to break up this corrupt service; and after this time God does not appear to have paid any regard to it, for he sent them no other prophet.

CHAPTER 2

The priests reproved for their unfaithfulness in their office, for which they are threatened to be deprived of their share of the sacrifice, (the shoulder,) and rewarded only with ignominy and ordure, 1-3. The degeneracy of the order is then complained of, and they are again threatened, 4-9. The rest of the chapter reproves the people for marrying strange and idolatrous women; and multiplying divorces, with all their consequent distress, in order to make way for such illicit alliances, 10-17. See Nehemiah 10:30; 13:33, etc.

NOTES ON CHAP. 2

Verse 2. *If ye will not hear*— What I have spoken, lay it to heart, and let it sink down into your souls.

Give glory unto my name— That honor that is due to me as a Father, and that fear that belongs to me as a Master, chap. 1:6.

I will even send a curse upon you— I will dispense no more good.

I will curse your blessings— Even that which ye have already shall not profit you. When temporal blessings are not the means of leading us to God and heaven, they will infallibly lead us to hell. In speaking of the abuse of temporal blessings, one of our old poets, in his homely phrase, expresses himself thus:—

Thus God's best gifts, usurped by wicked ones,
To poison turn by their con-ta-gi-ons.

Yea. I have cursed them already— This may refer, generally, to unfruitful seasons; or, particularly, to a dearth that appears to have happened about this time. See Haggai 1:6-11.

Verse 3. *Behold, I will corrupt your seed*— So as to render it unfruitful. Newcome translates, — “I will take away from you the shoulder.” This was the part that belonged to the priest, Leviticus 7:32; Deuteronomy 18:3.

Spread dung upon your faces— Instead of receiving a sacrifice at your hands, I will throw your offerings back into your faces. Here God shows his contempt for them and their offerings.

Verse 4. *This commandment*— That in the first verse; to drive such priests from his presence and his service.

That my covenant might be with Levi— I gave the priesthood and the service of my altar to that tribe.

Verse 5. *My covenant was with him of life and peace*— These are the two grand blessings given to men by the NEW Covenant, which was shadowed by the OLD. To man, excluded from the favor of God, and sentenced to death because of sin, God gave בְּרִית *berith*, a covenant sacrifice, and this secured life-exemption from the death deserved by transgressors; communication of that inward spiritual life given by Christ, and issuing in that eternal life promised to all his faithful disciples. And, as it secured life, so it gave peace, prosperity, and happiness; peace between God and man, between man and man, and between man and his own conscience.

Verse 6. *The law of truth was in his mouth*— See the qualifications of Levi: 1. “He feared me;” he was my sincere worshipper. 2. “He was afraid;” he acted as in the presence of a just and holy God, and acted conscientiously in all that he did. 3. “My law of truth was ever in his mouth;” by this he directed his own conduct and that of others. 4. “No iniquity;” nothing contrary to justice and equity ever proceeded “from his lips.” 5. “He walked with me in peace;” he lived in such a way as to keep up union with me. 6. “He did turn many away from iniquity;” by his upright administration, faithful exhortations, and pious walk, he became the instrument of converting many sinners. This character suits every genuine minister of God. And as the priest’s lips should preserve

knowledge, so the people should seek “the law at his mouth;” for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts, ver. 7.

Verse 8. *But ye are departed out of the way*— Ye are become impure yourselves, and ye have led others into iniquity.

Verse 9. *Therefore have I also made you contemptible*— The people despised you because they saw that you acted contrary to your functions. This has happened repeatedly since, to several classes of priests. Not maintaining, by purity of life and soundness of doctrine, the dignity of the ministerial function, they became contemptible before the people; their Uneager preaching was disregarded, and their persons at last cast out as a general loathing to the universe! See what happened to the truly abominable priesthood of France and Rome 1796-8. They were the sole cause of that infidelity that brought about the revolution. They are now partially restored; and are endeavouring to supply by grimace, paltry superstition, and jesuitical cunning, what they want in purity of morals, soundness of doctrine, and unction from God. They must mend, or look for another revolution. Mankind will no longer put up with the chaff of puerile and fanatical ceremonies in place of the wheat of God’s word and worship.

Verse 10. *Have we not all one Father?*— From this to ver. 16 the prophet censures the marriages of Israelites with strange women, which the law had forbidden, Deuteronomy 7:3. And also divorces, which seem to have been multiplied for the purpose of contracting these prohibited marriages. — Newcome.

Why do we deal treacherously— Gain the affections of the daughter of a brother Jew, and then profane the covenant of marriage, held sacred among our fathers, by putting away this same wife and daughter! How wicked, cruel, and inhuman!

Verse 11. *Daughter of a strange god.*— Of a man who worships an idol.

Verse 12 *The master and the scholar*— He who teachers such doctrine, and he who follows this teaching, the Lord will cut off both the one and

the other.

Verse 13. *Covering the altar of the Lord with tears*— Of the poor women who, being divorced by cruel husbands, come to the priests, and make an appeal to God at the altar; and ye do not speak against this glaring injustice.

Verse 14. *Ye say, Wherefore?*— Is the Lord angry with us? Because ye have been witness of the contract made between the parties; and when the lawless husband divorced his wife, the wife of his youth, his companion, and the unite of his covenant, ye did not execute on him the discipline of the law. They kept their wives till they had passed their youth, and then put them away, that they might get young ones in their place.

Verse 15. *And did not he make one?*— ONE of each kind, Adam and Eve. Yet had he the residue of the Spirit, he could have made millions of pairs, and inspired them all with living souls. Then wherefore one? He made one pair from whom all the rest might proceed, that he might have a holy offspring; that children being a marked property of one man and one woman, proper care might be taken that they should be brought up in the discipline of the Lord. Perhaps the holy or godly seed, זרע אלהים zera Elohim, a seed of God, may refer to the MESSIAH. God would have the whole human race to spring from one pair, that Christ, springing from the same family, might in his sufferings taste death for every man; because he had that nature that was common to the whole human race. Had there been several heads of families in the beginning, Jesus must have been incarnated from each of those heads, else his death could have availed for those only who belonged to the family of which he was incarnated.

Take heed to your spirit— Scrutinize the motives which induce you to put away your wives.

Verse 16. *For the Lord-hateth putting away*— He abominates all such divorces, and him that makes them.

Covereth violence with his garment— And he also notes those who frame idle excuses to cover the violence they have done to the wives of their

youth, by putting them away, and taking others in their place, whom they now happen to like better, when their own wives have been worn down in domestic services.

Verse 17. *Ye have wearied the Lord*— He has borne with you so long, and has been prosoked so often, that he will bear it no longer. It is not fit that he should.

Every one that doeth evil— Ye say that it is right in the sight of the Lord to put away a wife, because she has no longer found favor in the sight of her husband. And because it has not been signally punished hitherto, ye blaspheme and cry out, “Where is the God of judgment?” Were he such as he is represented, would he not speak out? All these things show that this people were horribly corrupt. The priests were bad; the prophets were bad; the Levites were bad; and no wonder that the people were irreligious, profane, profligate, and cruel.

CHAPTER 3

In allusion to the custom of sending pioneers to prepare the way for the march of an eastern monarch, the coming of Christ's forerunner is described, and then the coming of Christ himself, 1; with the terrible judgments which were to accompany that event, in order to refine and purify his people and his priests, 2-6. The following verses reprehend them for withholding the legal tithes and offerings, with large promises in case of their repentance and amendments, 7-12. The prophet expostulates with the people for their hard and profane speeches against the conduct of Providence, and declares God will one day make a fearful and final distinction between the righteous and the wicked, whose different characters are in the mean time carefully recorded, 13-18.

NOTES ON CHAP. 3

Verse 1. Behold, I will send my messenger— מלאכי Malachi, the very name of the prophet. But this speaks of John the Baptist. I, the Messiah, the Seed of God, mentioned above, will send my messenger, John the Baptist.

He shall prepare the way— Be as a pioneer before me; a corrector of civil abuses, and a preacher of righteousness.

And the Lord, whom ye seek— The Messiah, whom ye expect, from the account given by the prophet Daniel, in his seventy weeks, chap. 9:24.

Shall suddenly come to his temple— Shall soon be presented before the Lord in his temple; cleanse it from its defilement, and fill it with his teaching and his glory.

The Messenger of the covenant— He that comes to fulfill the great design, in reference to the covenant made with Abram, that in his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed. See the parallel texts in the margin,

and the notes on them.

Verse 2. *But who may abide the day of his coming?*— Only they who shall believe on his name; for they that will not, shall be blinded, and the unbelieving nations shall be destroyed by the Romans.

Like fuller's soap— כְּבוֹרִית keborith, from בָּרַר barar, to cleanse, any thing that deterges. Kali, or fern ashes, or such things. I doubt whether the composition which we call soap, was known in ancient times.

Verse 3. *He shall sit as a refiner*— Alluding to the case of a refiner of metals, sitting at his fire; increasing it when he sees necessary, and watching the process of his work.

The sons of Levi— Those who minister in their stead under the NEW covenant, for the OLD Levitical institutions shall be abolished; yet, under the preaching of our Lord, a great number of the priests became obedient to the faith, Acts 6:7; and, as to the others that did not believe, this great Refiner threw them as dross into the Roman fire, that consumed both Jerusalem and the temple.

Verse 5. *I will come near to you to judgment*— And what fearful cases does he get to judge! Sorcerers, adulterers, false swearers, defrauders of the wages of the hireling, oppressors of widows and orphans, and perverters of the stranger and such as do not fear the Lord: a horrible crew; and the land at that time was full of them. Several were converted under the preaching of Christ and his apostles, and the rest the Romans destroyed or carried into captivity.

Verse 6. *I am the Lord, I change not*— The new dispensation of grace and goodness, which is now about to be introduced, is not the effect of any change in my counsels; it is, on the contrary, the fulfillment of my everlasting purposes; as is also the throwing aside of the Mosaic ritual, which was only intended to introduce the great and glorious Gospel of my Son.

And because of this ancient covenant, ye Jews are not totally consumed;

but ye are now, and shall be still, preserved as a distinct people-monuments both of my justice and mercy.

Verse 7. *Gone away from mine ordinances*— Never acting according to their spirit and design.

Return unto me— There is still space to repent.

Wherein shall we return?— Their consciences were seared, and they knew not that they were sinners.

Verse 8. *Will a man rob God?*— Here is one point on which ye are guilty; ye withhold the tithes and offerings from the temple of God, so that the Divine worship is neglected.

Verse 9. *Ye are cursed with a curse*— The whole nation is under my displeasure. The curse of God is upon you.

Verse 10. *Bring ye all the tithes*— They had so withheld these that the priests had not food enough to support life, and the sacred service was interrupted. See Nehemiah 13:10.

And prove me now herewith— What ye give to God shall never lessen your store. Give as ye should, and see whether I will not so increase your store by opening the windows of heaven-giving you rain and fruitful seasons—that your barns and granaries shall not be able to contain the abundance of your harvests and vintage.

Verse 11. *I wilt rebuke the devourer*— The locusts, etc., shall not come on your crops; and those that are in the country I will disperse and destroy.

Neither shall your vine cast her fruit— Every blossom shall bear fruit, and every bunch of grapes come to maturity.

Verse 12. *All nations shall call you blessed*— They shall see that a peculiar blessing of God rests upon you, and your land shall be

delightful; like Paradise, the garden of the Lord.

Verse 13. *Your words have been stout against me*— He speaks here to open infidels and revilers.

What have we spoken— They are ready either to deny the whole, or impudently to maintain and defend what they had spoken!

Verse 14. *Ye have said, It is vain to serve God*— They strove to destroy the Divine worship; they asserted that it was vanity; that, if they performed acts of worship, they should be nothing the better; and if they abstained, they should be nothing the worse. This was their teaching to the people.

Walked mournfully— Even repentance they have declared to be useless. This was a high pitch of ungodliness; but see what follows; behold the general conclusions of these reprobates:—

Verse 15. *And now we call the proud happy*— Proud and insolent men are the only happy people, for they domineer everywhere, and none dares to resist them.

They that work wickedness are set up— The humble and holy are depressed and miserable; the proud and wicked are in places of trust and profit. Too often it is so.

They that tempt God are even delivered.— Even those who despise God, and insult his justice and providence, are preserved in and from dangers; while the righteous fall by them.

Verse 16. *They that feared the Lord*— There were a few godly in the land, who, hearing the language and seeing the profligacy of the rebels above, concluded that some signal mark of God's vengeance must fall upon them; they, therefore, as the corruption increased, cleaved the closer to their Maker. There are three characteristics given of this people, viz.:—

1. They feared the Lord. They had that reverence for Jehovah that caused

them to depart from evil, and to keep his ordinances.

2. They spake often one to another. They kept up the communion of saints. By mutual exhortation they strengthened each other's hands in the Lord.

3. They thought on his name. His name was sacred to them; it was a fruitful source of profound and edifying meditation. The name of God is God himself in the plenitude of his power, omniscience, justice, goodness, mercy, and truth. What a source for thinking and contemplation! See how God treats such persons: The Lord hearkened to their conversation, heard the meditations of their hearts; and so approved of the whole that a book of remembrance was written before the Lord—all their names were carefully registered in heaven. Here is an allusion to records kept by kings, Esther 6:1, of such as had performed signal services, and who should be the first to be rewarded.

Verse 17. *They shall be mine*— I will acknowledge them as my subjects and followers; in the day, especially, when I come to punish the wicked and reward the righteous.

When *I make up my jewels*— סגולה segullah, my peculium, my proper treasure; that which is a man's own, and most prized by him. Not jewels; for in no part of the Bible does the word mean a gem or precious stone of any kind. The interpretations frequently given of the word in this verse, comparing saints to jewels, are forced and false.

I will spare them— When I come to visit the wicked, I will take care of them. I will act towards them as a tender father would act towards his most loving and obedient son.

Verse 18. *Then shall ye return*— To your senses, when perhaps too late; and discern-see the difference which God makes, between the righteous and the wicked, which will be most marked and awful.

Between him that serveth God— Your obedience to whom, ye said, would be unprofitable to you.

And hits that serveth him not.— Of whom ye said, his disobedience would be no prejudice to him. You will find the former received into the kingdom of glory; and the latter, with yourselves, thrust down into the bitter pains of an eternal death. Reader, ponder these things.

In the great day of the Lord, at least, if not long before, it will be fully discovered who have been the truly wise people; those who took up their cross and followed Christ; or those who satisfied the flesh, with its affections and desires, following a multitude to do evil.

CHAPTER 4

God's awful judgments on the wicked, 1. Great blessedness of the righteous, 2, 3. The prophet then, with a solemnity becoming the last of the prophets, closes the Sacred Canon with enjoining the strict observance of the law till the forerunner already promised should appear, in the spirit of Elijah, to introduce the Messiah, and begin a new and everlasting dispensation, 4-6.

NOTES ON CHAP. 4

Verse 1. *Behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven*— The destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans.

And all the proud— This is in reference to ver. 15 of the preceding chapter.

The day that cometh shall burn them up— Either by famine, by sword, or by captivity. All those rebels shall be destroyed.

It shall leave them neither root nor branch.— A proverbial expression for total destruction. Neither man nor child shall escape.

Verse 2. *You that fear my name*— The persons mentioned in the sixteenth verse of the preceding chapter, ye that look for redemption through the Messiah.

The Sun of righteousness— The Lord Jesus, the promised Messiah; the Hope of Israel.

With healing in his wings— As the sun, by the rays of light and heat, revives, cheers, and fructifies the whole creation, giving, through God, light and life everywhere; so Jesus Christ, by the influences of his grace and Spirit, shall quicken, awaken, enlighten, warm, invigorate heal, purify, and

refine every soul that believes in him, and, by his wings or rays, diffuse these blessings from one end of heaven to another; everywhere invigorating the seeds of righteousness, and withering and drying up the seeds of sin. The rays of this Sun are the truths of his Gospel, and the influences of his Spirit. And at present these are universally diffused.

And ye shall go forth— Ye who believe on his name shall go forth out of Jerusalem when the Romans shall come up against it. After Cestius Gallus had blockaded the city for some days, he suddenly raised the siege. The Christians who were then in it, knowing, by seeing Jerusalem encompassed with armies, that the day of its destruction was come, when their Lord commanded them to flee into the mountains, took this opportunity to escape from Jerusalem, and go to Pella, in Coelesyria; so that no Christian life fell in the siege and destruction of this city.

But these words are of more general application and meaning; “ye shall go forth” in all the occupations of life, but particularly in the means of grace; and:—

Grow up as calves of the stall— Full of health, of life, and spirits; satisfied and happy.

Verse 3. *Ye shall tread down*— This may be the commission given to the Romans: Tread down the wicked people, tread down the wicked place; set it on fire, and let the ashes be trodden down under your feet.

Verse 4. *Remember ye the law of Moses*— Where all these things are predicted. The Septuagint, Arabic, and Coptic, place this verse the last.

Verse 5. *Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet*— This is meant alone of John the Baptist, as we learn from Luke 1:17, (where see the note,) in whose spirit and power he came.

Verse 6. *And he shall turn (convert) the heart of the fathers* (על *al*, ***WITH***) ***the children***— Or, together with the children; both old and young. Lest I come, and, finding them unconverted, smote the land with a curse, חרם *cherem*, utter extinction. So we find that, had the Jews turned to

God, and received the Messiah at the preaching of John the Baptist and that of Christ and his apostles, the awful כְּרֵחַ cherech of final excision and execration would not have been executed upon them. However, they filled up the cup of their iniquity, and were reprobated, and the Gentiles elected in their stead. Thus, the last was first, and the first was last. Glory to God for his unspeakable gift!

There are three remarkable predictions in this chapter: — 1. The advent of John Baptist, in the spirit and authority of Elijah. 2. The manifestation of Christ in the flesh, under the emblem of the Sun of righteousness. 3. The final destruction of Jerusalem, represented under the emblem of a burning oven, consuming every thing cast into it. These three prophecies, relating to the most important facts that have ever taken place in the history of the world, announced here nearly four hundred years before their occurrence, have been most circumstantially fulfilled.

In most of the Masoretic Bibles the fifth verse is repeated after the sixth- “Behold, I send unto you Elijah the prophet, before the great and terrible day of Jehovah come;” for the Jews do not like to let their sacred book end with a curse; and hence, in reading, they immediately subjoin the above verse, or else the fourth- “Remembering ye the law of Moses my servant.”

In one of my oldest MSS. the fifth verse is repeated, and written at full length: “Behold, I send you Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.” In another, only these words are added: “Behold, I will send you Elijah.” It is on this ground that the Jews expect the reappearance of Elijah the prophet, and at their marriage-feast always set a chair and knife and fork for this prophet, whom they suppose to be invisibly present. But we have already seen that John the Baptist, the forerunner of our Lord, was the person designed; for he came in the spirit and power of Elijah, (see on chap. 3:1,) and has fulfilled this prophetic promise. John is come, and the Lord Jesus has come also; he has shed his blood for the salvation of a lost world; he has ascended on high; he has sent forth his Holy Spirit; he has commissioned his ministers to proclaim to all mankind redemption in his blood; and he is ever present with them, and is filling the earth with righteousness and true holiness. Hallelujah! The kingdoms of this world are about to become the kingdoms

of God and our Lord Jesus! And now, having just arrived at the end of my race in this work, and seeing the wonderful extension of the work of God in the earth, my heart prays:—

O Jesus, ride on, till all are subdued, Thy mercy make known, and sprinkle thy blood; Display thy salvation, and teach the new song, To every nation, and people, and tongue!

In most MSS. and printed Masoretic Bibles there are only three chapters in this prophet, the fourth being joined to the third, making it twenty-four verses.

In the Jewish reckonings the Twelve Minor Prophets make but one book; hence there is no Masoretic note found at the end of any of the preceding prophets, with accounts of its verses, sections etc.; but, at the end of Malachi we find the following table, which, though it gives the number of verses in each prophet, yet gives the total sum, middle verse, and sections, at the end of Malachi, thereby showing that they consider the whole twelve as constituting but one book.

MASORETIC NOTES

On the Twelve Minor Prophets

Hosea has	197 verses
Joel	73
Amos	146
Obadiah	21
Jonah	48
Micah	105
Nahum	57
Zephaniah	53
Habakkuk	56
Haggai	38
Zechariah	211
Malachi	55

The sum of all the verses of the Twelve Minor Prophets is 1060

The middle verse is Micah, chap. 3:ver. 12.

Number of Sections, 21.

TO GOD THE FATHER, SON, AND HOLY GHOST, BE ETERNAL PRAISES.
AMEN.

I have this day completed this Commentary on which I have labored above thirty years, and which, when I began, I never expected to live long enough to finish. May-it be a means of securing glory to God in the highest, and peace and good will among men upon earth! Amen, Amen. ADAM CLARKE.

Heydon Hall, Middlesex, Monday, March 28, A.D. 1825. Adam Clarke

PUBLISHERS NOTES

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