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THE  
**HOLY BIBLE,**  
CONTAINING THE  
**OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS**

(ACCORDING TO THE PRESENT AUTHORIZED VERSION.)

WITH  
CRITICAL, EXPLANATORY, AND PRACTICAL  
**NOTES:**

THE MARGINAL READINGS OF THE MOST APPROVED PRINTED COPIES OF THE SCRIPTURES,

WITH SUCH OTHERS AS APPEAR TO BE COUNTENANCED BY THE

HEBREW AND GREEK ORIGINALS:

A COPIOUS COLLECTION OF PARALLEL TEXTS;

SUMMARIES OF EACH BOOK AND CHAPTER;

AND THE DATE OF EVERY TRANSACTION AND EVENT RECORDED IN THE SACRED  
ORACLES, AGREEABLY TO THE CALCULATIONS OF THE  
MOST CORRECT CHRONOLOGERS.

BY REV. JOSEPH BENSON.

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VOLUME III.—ECCLESIASTES TO MALACHI.

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THE

# BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES;

OR,

## THE PREACHER.

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### ARGUMENT.

As this book does not present us with the name of Solomon in the front of it, some, both ancient and modern writers, have ascribed it to other authors: as the Talmudists, to Hezekiah; R. Moses Kimchi, and some other Jews, to Isaiah; and Grotius, to Zerubbabel. But there are so many passages in it which agree to none but Solomon, that it is a wonder any person should ever think of attributing it to any other person. For instance, no one but he could ever truly affirm what we read chap. i. 16. And who but he could boast of such things as are mentioned chap. ii. 4-10, to represent the splendour wherein he lived above all that had been before him in Jerusalem? Or, on the contrary, who had such reason as he to make that sad complaint which we find ch. vii. 26, &c., of the mischief he had received by women? And to omit the rest, those words, in the last chapter, verses 9, 10, could belong to none but him, who *set in order many proverbs*, as appears by the foregoing book. Hence it has been ascribed to him, and that most justly, by the far greater part of interpreters, both Jewish and Christian. See Bishop Patrick.

Three particulars may be observed concerning this book:—1, That Solomon wrote it in his old age is more than probable from divers passages in it, as, that he did it after his buildings, (chap. ii. 4,) which yet took up twenty years of his life, (1 Kings ix. 10,) and after some considerable enjoyment of them, and planting of gardens, and orchards, and reaping the fruit of them, (chap. ii. 5, 6,) and after long and much consideration and experience of all those methods in which men expect to find happiness, chap. vii. 27, &c. So this book was written by him, as a public testimony of his repentance and detestation of those wicked courses to which he had addicted himself: wherein he followed the example of his father David, who, after his sad fall, penned the fifty-first psalm. And the truth of this opinion may be confirmed by that expression, (2 Chron. xi. 17,) *They walked in the way of David and Solomon*; that is, wherein they walked, both before their falls, and after their repentance. 2, The method of it. For whereas there are some passages in it which seem impious, it must be considered that it is in part dramatical; that Solomon speaks most things in his own name, but some things in the names of ungodly men, as is undeniably manifest both from the scope and design of the book, as it is expressed both in the beginning and in the conclusion of it, and from his serious and large disputation against those wicked principles and courses. And this way of writing was not unusual among both sacred and profane writers. 3, The design of it; which is, to describe man's true happiness, and the way leading to it. This he does both negatively, proving that it is not to be found either in secular wisdom, or in sensual pleasures, or in worldly greatness and glory, or in abundance of riches, or in a vain profession of religion: and positively, showing that it is to be had only in the fear of God and obedience to his laws, which alone can give a man a cheerful enjoyment of his present comforts, and assurance of his everlasting happiness.

## CHAPTER I.

The title of this book, 1. The general doctrine, All is vanity, 2, 3. Proved from the shortness of life, and the perpetual changes of all the creatures, 4-7. From the unsatisfying toil of men, and the return of the same things over again, 8-11. The vanity of knowledge, 12-18.

A. M. 3027. **T**HE words <sup>a</sup> of the Preacher, the  
B. C. 977. son of David, king of Jerusalem.

2 <sup>b</sup> Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; <sup>c</sup> all is vanity.

3 <sup>d</sup> What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun?

4 ¶ One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: <sup>e</sup> but the earth abideth for ever.

<sup>a</sup> Verse 12; Chap. vii. 27; xii. 8, 9, 10.—<sup>b</sup> Pea. xxxix. 5, 6; lxii. 9; cxliv. 4; Chap. xii. 8.—<sup>c</sup> Rom. viii. 20.—<sup>d</sup> Ch.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER I.

Verse 1. *The words of the Preacher*—Or, *discourses*. The Hebrew word קוֹרָא, here used, may either signify the person who assembles the people, or the person that addresses them when assembled. "We must not suppose that Solomon was like the common or ordinary preachers among the Hebrews; yet it is certain he spake much in public for the instruction of the people; for there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon: All the earth sought to Solomon to hear his wisdom, which God had put into his heart, 1 Kings iv. 31, 34, and x. 24. From whence it is plain that he made public discourses on several subjects, and that people were, in a manner, called together from all nations round about to hear them."—Dodd. "He was not only a king," says Poole, "but also a teacher of God's people: who, having sinned grievously in the eyes of all the world, thought himself obliged to publish his repentance, and to give public warning to all, to avoid those rocks upon which he had split."

Verse 2. *Vanity, &c.*—Not only *vain*, but *vanity* in the abstract, which denotes extreme vanity. *Saith the Preacher*—Upon deep consideration and long experience, and by divine inspiration. This verse contains the general proposition, which he intends particularly to demonstrate in the following book. *All*—All worldly things; *is vanity*—Not in themselves, for they are God's creatures, and therefore good in their kinds, but in reference to that happiness which men seek and expect to find in them. So they are unquestionably *vain*, because they are not what they seem to be, and perform not what they promise, but, instead of that, are the occasions of innumerable cares, and fears, and sorrows, and mischiefs. Nay, they are not only *vanity*, but *vanity of vanities*, the vainest vanity, vanity in the highest degree. And this is redoubled, because the thing is certain, beyond all possibility of dispute.

Verse 3. *What profit*—What real and abiding benefit? None at all. All is unprofitable as to the attainment of that happiness which all men are inquiring after. *Of all his labour*—Hebrew, *his toilsome labour*, both of body and mind, in the pursuit of riches, or pleasures, or other earthly things; un-

5 <sup>f</sup> The sun also ariseth, and the sun  
goeth down, and <sup>g</sup> hasteth to his place  
where he arose. A. M. 3027.  
B. C. 977.

6 <sup>h</sup> The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north: it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits.

7 <sup>i</sup> All the rivers run into the sea; yet the

ii. 22; iii. 9.—<sup>e</sup> Psalm civ. 5; cxix. 90.—<sup>f</sup> Psalm xix. 5, 6. <sup>g</sup> Heb. *paneth*.—<sup>h</sup> John iii. 8.—<sup>i</sup> Job xxxviii. 10; Ps. civ. 8, 9.

*der the sun*—In all worldly matters, which are usually transacted in the day-time, or by the light of the sun. By this restriction he implies, that the happiness which in vain is sought for in this lower world, is really to be found in heavenly places and things.

Verse 4. *One generation passeth away, &c.*—Men continue but for one, and that a short age, and then they leave all their possessions, and therefore they cannot be happy here, because the source of happiness must needs be unchangeable and eternal; and the certain knowledge of the approaching loss of all these things must rob a man of solid contentment in them. *But the earth abideth*—Through all successive generations of men; and therefore man is more mutable than the very earth upon which he stands, and which, together with all the comforts which he enjoyed in it, he leaves behind him to be possessed by others.

Verses 5, 6. *The sun also riseth*—The sun is in perpetual motion, rising, setting, and rising again, and so constantly repeating its course in all succeeding days, and years, and ages; and the like he observes concerning the winds and rivers, verses 6, 7; and the design of these similitudes seems to be, to show the vanity of all worldly things, and that man's mind can never be satisfied with them, because there is nothing in the world but a constant repetition of the same things, which is so irksome, that the consideration thereof hath made some persons weary of their lives; and there is *no new thing under the sun*, as is added in the foot of the account, (verse 9,) which seems to be given us as a key to understand the meaning of the foregoing passages. And this is certain from experience, that the things of this world are so narrow, and the mind of man so vast, that there must be something new to satisfy the mind; and even delightful things, by too frequent repetition, are so far from yielding satisfaction, that they grow tedious and troublesome. *The wind goeth, &c.*—The wind also sometimes blows from one quarter of the world, and sometimes from another; successively returning to the same quarters in which it had formerly been.

Verse 7. *The sea is not full*—So as to overflow

A. M. 3027. sea is not full : unto the place from  
B. C. 977.

whence the rivers come, thither they

<sup>2</sup>return again.

8 All things are full of labour ; man cannot utter it : <sup>1</sup>the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.

9 ¶ <sup>1</sup>The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be ; and that which is done is that which shall be done : and there is no new thing under the sun.

10 Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new ? it hath been already

<sup>1</sup> Heb. return to go.—<sup>2</sup> Prov. xxvii. 20.—<sup>3</sup> Chap. iii. 15.

the earth, which might be expected from such vast accessions of waters to it. Whereby also he intimates the emptiness of men's minds, notwithstanding the abundance of creature comforts. *Unto the place from whence the rivers come*—Unto their springs or fountains ; *thither they return*—By secret passages of the earth : or their waters, after flowing into the sea, and being mixed with its waters, are exhaled by the heat of the sun, become vapours and clouds, descend in showers on the hills and mountains, and feed the springs from which they flow again, in streams and rivers, into the lakes, seas, and oceans. He seems to speak of the visible and constant motion of the waters, both to the sea and from it, and then to it again in a perpetual reciprocation.

Verses 8, 9. *All things*—Not only the sun, and winds, and rivers, but all other creatures ; *are full of labour*—They are in continual restlessness and change, never abiding in the same state. *The eye is not satisfied*—As there are many things in the world vexatious to men, so even those things which are comfortable are not satisfactory, but men are constantly desiring some longer continuance or fuller enjoyment of them, or variety in them. *The eye and ear* are here put for all the senses, because these are most spiritual and refined, most curious and inquisitive, most capable of receiving satisfaction, and exercised with more ease and pleasure than the other senses. *The thing that hath been, &c.*—There is nothing in the world but a continued and tiresome repetition of the same things. The nature and course of the beings and affairs of the world, and the tempers of men, are the same that they ever were, and shall ever be ; and therefore, because no man ever yet received satisfaction from worldly things, it is vain for any person hereafter to expect it. *And there is no new thing*—In the nature of things, which might give us hopes of attaining that satisfaction which hitherto things have not afforded.

Verse 11. *There is no remembrance, &c.*—This seems to be added, to prevent the objection, that there are many inventions and enjoyments unknown to former ages. To this he answers, This objection is grounded only upon our ignorance of ancient times, which, if we exactly knew or remembered,

of old time, which was before A. M. 3027.  
B. C. 977.

11 *There is no remembrance of former things ;* neither shall there be any remembrance of things that are to come with those that shall come after.

12 ¶ <sup>1</sup>I the Preacher was king over Israel in Jerusalem.

13 And I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven : <sup>2</sup>this sore travail hath God given to the sons of man <sup>3</sup>to be exercised therewith.

<sup>1</sup> Verse 1.—<sup>2</sup> Gen. iii. 19 ; Chap. iii. 10.—<sup>3</sup> Or, to afflict them.

we should easily find parallels to all present occurrences. There are many thousands of remarkable speeches and actions done in this, and which will be done in the following ages, which neither are, nor ever will be, put into the public records or histories, and consequently must unavoidably be forgotten in succeeding ages ; and therefore it is just and reasonable to believe the same concerning former ages.

Verse 12. *I the Preacher was king*—Having asserted the vanity of all things in the general, he now comes to prove his assertion in those particulars wherein men commonly seek, and with the greatest probability expect to find, true happiness. He begins with secular wisdom. And to show how competent a judge he was of this matter, he lays down this character, that he was the *Preacher*, which implies eminent knowledge ; and a *king*, who therefore had all imaginable opportunities and advantages for the attainment of happiness, and particularly for the getting of wisdom, by consulting all sorts of books and men, by trying all manner of experiments ; and no ordinary king, but *king over Israel*—God's own people, a wise and a happy people, whose king he was by God's special appointment, and furnished by God with singular wisdom for that great trust ; and whose abode was in *Jerusalem*—Where were the house of God, and the most wise and learned of the priests attending upon it, and the seats of justice, and colleges, or assemblies of the wisest men of their nation. All these concurring in him, which rarely do in any other man, make the argument, drawn from his experience, more convincing.

Verse 13. *I gave my heart*—Which phrase denotes his serious and fixed purpose, and his great industry in it. *To search out by wisdom*—To seek diligently and accurately, by the help of that wisdom wherewith God had endowed me. *Concerning all things, &c.*—Concerning all the works of God and men in this lower world ; the works of nature ; the works of divine providence ; and the works and depths of human policy. *This sore travail*—This difficult and toilsome work of searching out these things, God hath inflicted as a just punishment upon man for his eating of the tree of

A. M. 3027. 14 I have seen all the works that  
B. C. 977. are done under the sun; and behold,  
all is vanity and vexation of spirit.

15 <sup>a</sup> *That which is crooked cannot be made straight: and that which is wanting cannot be numbered.*

16 I communed with mine own heart, saying, Lo, I am come to great estate, and have gotten <sup>o</sup> more wisdom than all *they* that have

<sup>a</sup> Chap. vii. 13.—<sup>o</sup> Heb. defect.—<sup>o</sup> 1 Kings iii. 12, 13; iv. 30; x. 7, 23; Chap. ii. 9.

knowledge. *To be exercised therewith*—To employ themselves in the painful study of these things.

Verses 14, 15. *I have seen all the works, &c.*—Diligently observed, and, in a great measure, understood them; and behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit—Not only unsatisfying, but also an affliction or breaking to a man's spirit. *That which is crooked, &c.*—All our knowledge serves only to discover our miseries, but is utterly insufficient to remove them; it cannot rectify those disorders which are either in our own hearts and lives, or in the men and things of the world. *That which is wanting*—In our knowledge, and in order to man's complete satisfaction and happiness; cannot be numbered—Or, counted out to us from the treasures of human learning, but what is wanting will be so still; all our enjoyments here, when we have done our utmost to bring them to perfection, are still defective: and that which is wanting in our own knowledge is so much, that it cannot be numbered. The more we know, the more we see of our own ignorance.

Verses 16, 17. *I communed with mine own heart*—I considered within myself in what condition I was, and what degrees of knowledge I had gained; and whether it was not my ignorance that made me unable to rectify those errors, and supply those wants of which I complain; and whether wiser men could not do it, though I could not; saying, *Lo! I am come to great estate*—Hebrew, הוגדלתי, *I am grown great*, namely, in wisdom, or, *I have magnified, or greatly enlarged; and have gotten*—Hebrew, והוסיפתי, *have added, more wisdom*—As I had a large stock of wisdom infused into me by God, so I have greatly improved it by conversation, study, and experience; than all they that were be-

been before me in Jerusalem: yea, A. M. 3027.  
B. C. 977. my heart <sup>b</sup> had great experience of wisdom and knowledge.

17 <sup>p</sup> And I gave my heart to know wisdom, and to know madness and folly: I perceived that this also is vexation of spirit.

18 For <sup>q</sup> in much wisdom is much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.

<sup>b</sup> Heb. had seen much.—<sup>p</sup> Chap. ii. 3, 12; vii. 23, 25; 1 Thess. v. 21.—<sup>q</sup> Chap. xii. 12.

fore me—Whether governors, priests, or private persons. This was no vain boast, but a known and confessed truth, and the profession of it was necessary to demonstrate his assertion; in Jerusalem—Which was then the most eminent place in the world for wisdom and knowledge. *I gave my heart to know wisdom, &c.*—That I might thoroughly understand the nature and difference of truth and error, of virtue and vice. *I perceived that this is vexation, &c.*—Or, *feeding upon wind*, as the Hebrew רעיון רוח, may be properly rendered, and as a similar phrase is rendered by many, both ancient and modern translators, in verse 14, and by our translators, Hosea xii. 1.

Verse 18. *In much wisdom is much grief*—Or displeasure to a man within himself, and against his present condition; and he that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow—Which he does many ways, because he gets his knowledge with hard and wearisome labour, both of mind and body, with the consumption of his spirits, and shortening of his life; because he is often deceived with knowledge, falsely so called, and often mistakes error for truth, and is perplexed with manifold doubts, from which ignorant men are wholly free; because he hath the clearer prospect into, and quicker sense of, his own ignorance, and infirmities, and disorders; and, withal, how vain and ineffectual all his knowledge is for the prevention or removal of them; and because his knowledge is very imperfect and unsatisfying, yet increasing his thirst after more knowledge; lastly, because his knowledge quickly fades and dies with him, and then leaves him in no better, and possibly in a much worse condition, than that of the meanest and most unlearned man in the world.

## CHAPTER II.

Solomon shows that there is no true happiness to be found in mirth and the pleasures of sense, 1–11. He considers wisdom again, and owns it to be an excellent thing, and yet insufficient to give happiness, 12–16. He shows that business and wealth are only vanity and vexation of spirit, 17–23. And that if there be any good therein, it is only to those who sit loose to them, 24–26.

A. M. 3027. I SAID in my heart, Go to now, I  
B. C. 977. will prove thee with mirth; therefore

enjoy pleasure: and behold, <sup>b</sup> this also is vanity.

2 <sup>c</sup> I said of laughter, *It is mad*: and of mirth, What doeth it?

3 <sup>d</sup> I sought in my heart <sup>1</sup> to give myself unto wine, yet acquainting my heart with wisdom; and to lay hold on folly, till I might see what *was* that good for the sons of men, which they should do under the heaven <sup>2</sup> all the days of their life.

4 I made me great works; I builded me houses; I planted me vineyards:

5 I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all *kind* of fruits:

6 I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees:

7 I got *me* servants and maidens, and had <sup>3</sup> servants born in my house; also I had great possessions of great and small cattle above all

<sup>a</sup> Luke xii. 19.—<sup>b</sup> Isa. l. 11.—<sup>c</sup> Prov. xiv. 13; Chap. vii. 6.  
<sup>d</sup> Chap. i. 17.—<sup>1</sup> Heb. *to draw my flesh with wine.*—<sup>2</sup> Heb. *the number of the days of their life.*—<sup>3</sup> Heb. *sons of my house.*

## NOTES ON CHAPTER II.

Verses 1, 2. *I said in my heart*—Being disappointed of my hopes from knowledge, I resolved to try another course. *Go to now*—O my soul! I will try whether I cannot make thee happy by the enjoyment of sensual delights. *This also is vanity*—Is vain, and unable to make men happy. *I said of laughter, It is mad*—This is an act of madness, more fit for fools who know nothing, than for wise men in this sinful, and dangerous, and deplorable state of mankind. *What doeth it*—What good doeth it? Or how can it make men happy? I challenge all the epicures in the world to give me a solid answer.

Verse 3. *I sought to give myself unto wine*—To gratify myself with delicious meats and drinks; yet acquainting, &c.—Yet resolving to use my wisdom, that I might try whether I could not arrive at satisfaction, by mixing wine and wisdom together. *To lay hold on folly, &c.*—To pursue sensual pleasure, which was my folly; *till I might see, &c.*—Till I might find out the true way to contentment and satisfaction, during this mortal life.

Verses 4-7. *I made me great works*—Magnificent works, for my honour and delight. *I builded me houses*—Of which see 1 Kings vii. 1, &c.; ix. 15, &c.; Cant. viii. 11. *I made me gardens*—Hebrew, *paradises*, or gardens of pleasure; *I planted trees, &c.*—Mixing pleasure and profit together. *I made me pools of water*—Because the rain there fell but seldom; *to water therewith the wood*—The nurseries of young trees, which, for the multitude of them, were like a wood or forest. *I had servants born in my house*—Of my bond-servants, which therefore were a part of my possessions.

that were in Jerusalem before A. M. 3027.  
B. C. 977. me;

8 <sup>e</sup> I gathered me also silver and gold, and the peculiar treasure of kings, and of the provinces: I gat me men-singers and women-singers, and the delights of the sons of men, *as* <sup>f</sup> musical instruments, and that of all sorts.

9 So <sup>g</sup> I was great, and increased more than all that were before me in Jerusalem: also my wisdom remained with me.

10 And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy; for my heart rejoiced in all my labour: and <sup>h</sup> this was my portion of all my labour.

11 Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and behold, all *was* <sup>i</sup> vanity and vexation of spirit, and *there was* no profit under the sun.

12 ¶ And I turned myself to behold wisdom,

<sup>e</sup> 1 Kings ix. 28; x. 10, 14, 21, &c.—<sup>f</sup> Heb. *musical instrument and instruments.*—<sup>g</sup> Chap. i. 16.—<sup>h</sup> Chap. iii. 22; v. 18; ix. 9.—<sup>i</sup> Chap. i. 3, 14.

Verse 8. *I gathered me silver and gold*—Vast riches; *and the peculiar treasure of kings*—Riches, answerable to the state of a king, or, he means, the greatest jewels and rarities of other kings, which they gave to me, either as a tribute, or by way of present; *and of the provinces*—Which were imposed upon or presented by all the provinces of my dominions.

Verses 9, 10. *So I was great*—In riches, and power, and glory. *My wisdom remained*—As yet I was not wholly seduced from God. *And whatsoever mine eyes desired*—Whatsoever was grateful to my senses, or my heart desired; *I kept not from them*—I denied myself nothing, at least, of lawful delights, but went to the very bounds of them; which was the occasion of his falling afterward into sinful pleasures. *I withheld not my heart, &c.*—As my heart was vehemently set upon pleasure, so I did not resist, or curb it therein, but made all possible provision to gratify it. *For my heart rejoiced*—I had the comfort of all my labours, and was not hindered from the full enjoyment of them by sickness or war, or any other calamity. *This was my portion*—This present enjoyment of them was all the benefit which I could expect from all my labours. So that I made the best of them.

Verse 11. *I looked on all the works, &c.*—I made a serious review of my former works and labours, and considered whether I had obtained that satisfaction in them which I had expected to find; *and behold, all was vanity*—I found myself disappointed, and wholly dissatisfied in this course. *And there was no profit, &c.*—The pleasure was past, and I was never the better for it, but as empty as before.

Verse 12. *And I turned myself, &c.*—Being frus-

A. M. 3027. <sup>1</sup> and madness, and folly: for what  
B. C. 977.

*can the man do that cometh after the king? <sup>6</sup> even that which hath been already done.*

13 Then I saw <sup>6</sup> that wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness.

14 <sup>1</sup> The wise man's eyes *are* in his head; but the fool walketh in darkness; and I myself perceived also that <sup>1</sup> one event happeneth to them all.

15 Then said I in my heart, As it happeneth to the fool, so it <sup>7</sup> happeneth even to me; and why was I then more wise? Then I said in my heart, that this also is vanity.

16 For *there is* no remembrance of the wise more than of the fool for ever; seeing that which now *is* in the days to come shall all be forgotten. And how dieth the wise *man*? as the fool.

17 Therefore I hated life; because the work

<sup>1</sup> Chap. i. 17; vii. 25.—<sup>3</sup> Or, in those things which have been already done.—<sup>6</sup> Heb. that there is an excellency in wisdom more than in folly, &c.

trated of my hopes in pleasure, I returned to a second consideration of my first choice, to see whether there was not more satisfaction to be gotten from wisdom, than I discovered at my first view. *For what can the man do*—To find out the truth in this matter; to discover the utmost satisfaction possible to be found in pleasure; *that cometh after the king*—That succeeds me in this inquiry. So this is added as a reason why he gave over the pursuit of pleasures, and directed his thoughts to another object; and why he so confidently asserted the vanity of pleasures, from his own particular experience; namely, because he had made the best of them, and it was a vain thing for any private man to expect that from them which could not be found by a king, and such a king, who had so much wisdom to invent, and such great riches to pursue and enjoy all imaginable delights; and who had made it his design and business to search this matter to the bottom. *Even that which hath been already done*—As by others, so especially by myself. They can make no new discoveries as to this point. They can make no more of the pleasures of sense than I have done. Let me then try, once more, whether wisdom can give happiness.

Verses 13, 14. *I saw that wisdom*—I allowed thus much. Although wisdom is not sufficient to make men happy, yet it is of far greater use than vain pleasures, or any other follies. *The wise man's eyes are in his head*—In their proper place. He hath the use of his eyes and reason, and foresees, and so avoids, many dangers and mischiefs. *But the fool walketh in darkness*—Manages his affairs ignorantly, rashly, and foolishly, whereby he shows that his eyes are not in his head, or are not used aright. *And, or yet, I myself perceived also, &c.*—

that is wrought under the sun is grievous unto me: for all *is* vanity and vexation of spirit.

18 ¶ Yea, I hated all my labour which I had <sup>8</sup> taken under the sun: because <sup>2</sup> I should leave it unto the man that shall be after me.

19 And who knoweth whether he shall be a wise *man* or a fool? yet shall he have rule over all my labour wherein I have laboured, and wherein I have showed myself wise under the sun. This *is* also vanity.

20 Therefore I went about to cause my heart to despair of all the labour which I took under the sun.

21 For there is a man whose labour *is* in wisdom, and in knowledge, and in equity; yet to a man that hath not laboured therein shall he <sup>9</sup> leave it *for* his portion. This also *is* vanity, and a great evil.

<sup>2</sup> Prov. xvii. 24; Chap. viii. 1.—<sup>1</sup> Psa. xlix. 10; Chap. ix. 2, 3, 11.—<sup>7</sup> Heb. happeneth to me, even to me.—<sup>8</sup> Heb. laboured.—<sup>9</sup> Psa. xlix. 10.—<sup>4</sup> Heb. give.

That, notwithstanding this excellence of wisdom above folly, at last they both come to one end. Both are subject to the same calamities, and to death itself, which takes away all difference between them.

Verses 15, 16. *Then I said—why was I more wise*—What benefit have I by my wisdom? or, to what purpose did I take so much pains to get wisdom. *For there is no remembrance of the wise*—Their memory, though it may flourish for a season, yet will, in a little time, be worn out; as we see in most of the wise men of former ages, whose very names, together with all their monuments, are utterly lost. *As the fool*—He must die as certainly as the fool.

Verses 17–19. *Therefore I hated life*—My life, though accompanied with so much honour, and pleasure, and wisdom, was a burden to me, and I was ready to wish, either that I had never been born, or that I might speedily die; *because the work, &c., is grievous*—All human designs and works are so far from yielding me satisfaction, that the consideration of them increases my discontent. *I hated all my labour*—All these riches and buildings, and other fruits of my labour, were aggravations of my misery. *Because I should leave it, &c.*—Because I must, and that everlastingly, leave them all behind me. *And who knoweth whether he shall be wise or a fool?*—Who will undo all that I have done, and turn the effects of my wisdom into instruments of his folly. Some think he had such an opinion of Rehoboam.

Verses 20, 21. *I went to cause my heart to despair*—I gave myself up to despair of ever reaping that satisfaction which I promised to myself. *For there is a man whose labour, &c.*—Who uses great industry, and prudence, and justice too, in the management of his affairs; *yet to a man that hath not*

A. M. 3027. 22 <sup>a</sup> For what hath man of all his  
B. C. 977.

labour, and of the vexation of his heart, wherein he hath laboured under the sun?

23 For all his days *are* <sup>o</sup> sorrows, and his travail grief; yea, his heart taketh not rest in the night. This is also vanity.

24 ¶ <sup>p</sup> *There is nothing better for a man than that he should eat and drink, and that he* <sup>10</sup> should make his soul enjoy good in his

<sup>a</sup> Chap. i. 3; iii. 9.—<sup>o</sup> Job v. 7; xiv. 1.—<sup>p</sup> Chap. iii. 12; xiii. 22; v. 18; viii. 15.

*laboured therein—shall he leave it for his portion—A portion which he will probably consume upon his lusts. This also is a great evil—A great disorder in itself, and a great torment to a considering mind.*

Verses 22, 23. *For what hath man*—"To what purpose," a man may well say, "is all this toil of my body, and these solicitous thoughts, and this anguish of my mind? For all that a man can enjoy himself of the anxious labours wherein he spends his days, amounts to little or nothing; and what comfort hath he in thinking who shall enjoy the fruit of them hereafter?" *For all his days are sorrows, &c.*—"And yet, such is our folly, there is no end of our cares; for we see many a man, whose life is nothing but a mere drudgery; who never is at leisure to enjoy any thing that he hath, but still engaged in one troublesome employment or other to get more; which he follows so eagerly, as if it were his business to disquiet and vex himself, and make his life uneasy to him! being not content with his daily toils, unless he rack his mind also with cares in the night! This is so void of all reason that nothing can be imagined more vain and foolish."—Bishop Patrick.

Verse 24. *There is nothing better—Or, Is there any thing better for a man?*—Which implies that there is nothing better, namely, for man's present comfort and satisfaction; *than that he should make his soul enjoy good in his labour*—That, studying first to free his mind from overmuch care and anxiety, he should, instead of heaping up perpetually for his heirs, allow himself a moderate and decent use of all the good things that he hath gotten by his honest labours; praising God for them, and cheerfully communicating them with his friends and neighbours, and to the relief of the necessitous poor and afflicted. *This also*—Namely, that a man should thankfully take, and freely and cheerfully enjoy and communicate with others, the comforts which God gives him; *I saw—was from the hand of God*—Was a singular gift of God, and not to be procured by a man's own wisdom and diligence.

Verse 25. *For who can eat, &c.*—For the truth of this you may rely upon my experience: for who can more freely and fully enjoy the comforts of this life than I did? *Or who else can hasten hereunto more than I?*—Who can pursue them with more diligence, obtain them with more readiness, or em-

labour. This also I saw, that it *was* <sup>a</sup> from the hand of God. A. M. 3027. B. C. 977.

25 For who can eat, or who else can hasten *hereunto* more than I?

26 For *God* giveth to a man that *is* good <sup>11</sup> in his sight, wisdom, and knowledge, and joy; but to the sinner he giveth travail, to gather and to heap up, that <sup>a</sup> he may give to *him that is* good before God. This also *is* vanity and vexation of spirit.

<sup>10</sup> Or, *delight his senses.*—<sup>11</sup> Heb. *before him*, Gen. vii. 1; Luke i. 6.—<sup>a</sup> Job xxvii. 16, 17; Prov. xxviii. 8.

brace them with more greediness? And yet, (as his words imply,) I had not comfort in these things till God was pleased to impart it unto me; till he gave me grace to see and consider that they were his gifts, to acknowledge his goodness in bestowing them upon me, and to use and enjoy them with prudence and moderation according to his will, not seeking my happiness in them, or in any creatures, but in himself, above all creatures. For this verse is evidently added to confirm, from his own experience, what he said in the foregoing verse: and surely no man's experience, in such a case, was ever greater; no man was ever a more capable judge in these matters: none could either have more creature-comforts, or more addict himself to the enjoyment of them, or improve them to better advantage than he did; and therefore he could best tell what was the greatest good to be found in them, and whether they were able of themselves, without God's special gift, to yield a man satisfaction.

Verse 26. *For God giveth to a man that is good in his sight*—Who not only seems to men to be good, as many bad men do, but is really and sincerely good; or, *who pleaseth him*, as the same phrase, *נָטַר לְפָנָיו*, is rendered, chap. vii. 26, and often elsewhere: whereby he seems to intimate the reason why he found no more comfort in his labours, namely, because his ways had been very displeasing to God, and therefore God justly denied him that gift; *wisdom and knowledge*—To direct him how to use his comforts right, that so they may be blessings, and not snares and curses to him; *and joy*—A mind thankful for, and contented with, his portion. "This is a blessing," says Bishop Patrick, "which God reserves for him whom he loves; whose sincere piety he rewards with wisdom to judge *when*, and with knowledge to understand *how*, he should enjoy and take the comfort of all he hath; especially with inward joy, satisfaction of heart, and tranquillity of mind in this favour of God to him; whereby the troublesome affairs of this life are tempered and seasoned." *But to the sinner he giveth travail*—He giveth him up to insatiable desires, and wearisome labours, to little or no purpose, that he may have no comfort in the riches he gains, but leave them to others, yea, to such as he least expected or desired, to good and virtuous men, into whose hands his estate falls, by the wise and all-disposing providence of God.

## CHAPTER III.

Solomon proves that we ought to make use of what God has given us, by showing the mutability of all human affairs, 1-10. The immutability and unsearchableness of the divine counsels, 11-15. The vanity of honour and power, often an instrument of oppression, for which God will judge the oppressors, 16, 17; whose condition in this world is no better than that of brutes, 18-21. Therefore live well, 22.

A. M. 3027. **T**O every thing there is a season,  
B. C. 977. and a <sup>a</sup>time to every purpose  
under the heaven :

2 A time <sup>1</sup> to be born, and <sup>b</sup> a time to die ; a  
time to plant, and a time to pluck up *that*  
*which is planted* ;

3 A time to kill, and a time to heal ; a time  
to break down, and a time to build up ;

4 A time to weep, and a time to laugh ; a  
time to mourn, and a time to dance ;

5 A time to cast away stones, and a time to

gather stones together ; a time to em- A. M. 3027.  
brace, and <sup>c</sup> a time <sup>2</sup> to refrain from B. C. 977.  
embracing ;

6 A time to <sup>3</sup> get, and a time to lose ; a time  
to keep, and a time to cast away ;

7 A time to rend, and a time to sew ; <sup>d</sup> a time  
to keep silence, and a time to speak ;

8 A time to love, and a time to <sup>e</sup> hate ; a time  
of war, and a time of peace.

9 <sup>f</sup> What profit hath he that worketh in that  
wherein he laboureth ?

<sup>a</sup> Verse 17 ; Chap. viii. 6.—<sup>1</sup> Heb. to bear.—<sup>b</sup> Heb. ix. 27.  
<sup>c</sup> Joel ii. 16 ; 1 Cor. vii. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. to be far from.—<sup>3</sup> Or, seek.—<sup>d</sup> Amos v. 13.—<sup>e</sup> Luke  
xiv. 26.—<sup>f</sup> Chap. i. 3.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER III.

Verse 1. *To every thing, &c.*—Solomon having mentioned God's overruling providence in the latter end of the foregoing chapter, proceeds in this to illustrate the imperfection of human wisdom, which is confined to a certain season for all things that it would effect, which if we neglect, or let slip, all our contrivances signify nothing. He then shows that the utmost perfection at which our wisdom can arrive in this world, consists, 1st, In being contented with this order in which God hath placed all things, and not disquieting ourselves about that which it is not in our power to alter. 2d, In observing and taking the fittest opportunity of doing every thing, as the most certain means to tranquillity. 3d, In taking the comfort of what we have at present, and making a seasonable and legitimate use of it ; and, lastly, in bearing the vicissitudes which we find in all human things with an equal mind ; because they are ordered by a powerful, wise, and gracious Providence. These were the things he had suggested in the conclusion of the former chapter, and this may be considered as having a relation to every one of them. See Bishop Patrick. *There is a season*—A certain time appointed by God for its being and continuance, which no human wisdom or providence can alter. And by virtue of this appointment of God, all vicissitudes which happen in the world, whether comforts or calamities, come to pass ; which is here added to prove the principal proposition, that all things below are vain, and happiness is not to be found in them, because of their great uncertainty, and mutability, and transitoriness, and because they are so much out of the reach and power of men, and wholly in the disposal of God. *And a time to every purpose*—Not only things natural, but even the voluntary actions of men, are ordered and disposed by God. But it must be considered, that he does not here speak of a time allowed by God, wherein all the following things may lawfully be

done, but only of a time fixed by God, in which they are actually done.

Verses 2-8. *A time to die*—And as there is a time to die, so there is a time to rise again, a set time, when they that lie in the grave shall be remembered. *A time to kill*—When men die a violent death. *A time to heal*—When he who seemed to be mortally wounded is healed. *A time to weep*—When men have just occasion for weeping, as they frequently have in the present life, both for their own sins and for the sins and miseries of mankind. "It is in vain," says Castalio, here, "to expect our happiness in this world : for this is no more the time and the place for it, than the seed-time is the harvest. But we must stay till the next life for it ; which is the proper time for complete happiness : here we must be content with a great many tears." *A time to cast away stones*—Which were brought together in order to the building of a wall, or house, but are now cast away, either because the person who gathered them hath changed his mind, and desists from his project, or for other causes. *A time to embrace*—When persons enter into friendship, and perform all friendly offices one to another ; *and a time to refrain, &c.*—Either through alienation of affection, or grievous calamities. *A time to get, and a time to lose*—"In our traffic and commerce one with another, there is a time of gaining much ; but there are other times, when a man must be content to lose by his commodities." *A time to keep, &c.*—"Sometimes also it is fit for a man to keep and lay up what he hath gotten ; but at another time it will be as fit for him to spend or to give it away to those that need." *A time to rend*—When men rend their garments, as they did in great and sudden griefs. *A time to love*—When God stirs up love, or gives occasion for the exercise of it.

Verse 9. *What profit hath he that worketh, &c.*—Seeing then all events are out of man's power, and no man can do or enjoy any thing at his pleasure,

A. M. 3027. 10 <sup>a</sup> I have seen the travail, which  
B. C. 977. God hath given to the sons of men to  
be exercised in it.

11 ¶ He hath made every *thing* beautiful in  
his time: also he hath set the world in their  
heart, so that <sup>b</sup> no man can find out the work  
that God maketh from the beginning to the  
end.

12 ¶ <sup>i</sup> I know that *there is* no good in them,  
but for *a man* to rejoice, and to do good in his  
life.

13 And also <sup>k</sup> that every man should eat and  
drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour; it  
*is* the gift of God.

<sup>a</sup> Chap. i. 13.—<sup>b</sup> Chapter viii. 17; Rom. xi. 33.—<sup>i</sup> Ver. 22.  
<sup>k</sup> Chap. ii. 24.—<sup>j</sup> James i. 17.—<sup>m</sup> Chap. i. 9.

but only when God pleaseth, as has been shown  
in many particulars, and is as true and certain in all  
others, hence it follows that all men's labours, with-  
out God's blessing, are unprofitable, and utterly in-  
sufficient to make them happy.

Verse 10. *I have seen the travail, &c.*—I have di-  
ligently observed men's various employments, and  
the different successes of them. *Which God hath  
given, &c.*—Which God hath imposed upon men as  
their duty; to which therefore men ought quietly to  
submit. *To be exercised*—That hereby they might  
have constant matter of exercise for their diligence,  
and patience, and submission to God's will and pro-  
vidence.

Verse 11. *He hath made every thing beautiful in  
his time*—This seems to be added as an apology for  
God's providence, notwithstanding all the contrary  
events and confusions which are in the world. *He  
hath made*—Or, *doth make*, or *do*, by his providence  
in the government of the world; *every thing*  
—Which he doth, either immediately, or by the mi-  
nistry of men, or other creatures; *beautiful*—Con-  
venient, so that, all things considered, it could not  
have been better; *in its time*—Or *season*, when it  
was most fit to be done. Many events seem to men's  
shallow judgments to be very irregular and unbe-  
coming, as when wicked men prosper and good  
men are oppressed; but when men shall thoroughly  
understand God's works, and the whole frame and  
contexture of them, and see the end of them, they  
will say, All things were done wisely. *He hath set  
the world, &c.*—It is true, God hath put the world  
into men's hearts, or made them capable of observ-  
ing all his dispensations in the world; but this is to  
be understood with a limitation, because there are  
some more mysterious works of God which no man  
can fully understand, because he cannot search them  
out from the beginning to the end.

Verses 12, 13. *I know*—By clear reason, and my  
own long and certain experience; *that there is no  
good in them*—No other satisfaction or felicity that  
*a man* can enjoy in creatures or worldly things;  
*but for a man to rejoice and to do good*—To em-

14 I know that, whatsoever God <sup>A. M. 3027.</sup>  
doeth, it shall be for ever: <sup>B. C. 977.</sup> <sup>1</sup> nothing  
can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it:  
and God doeth *it*, that *men* should fear before  
him.

15 <sup>m</sup> That which hath been is now; and that  
which is to be hath already been; and God  
requireth <sup>4</sup> that which is past.

16 ¶ And moreover <sup>n</sup> I saw under the sun the  
place of judgment, *that* wickedness *was* there;  
and the place of righteousness, *that* iniquity  
*was* there.

17 I said in my heart, <sup>o</sup> God shall judge the  
righteous and the wicked: for *there is* <sup>p</sup> a time

<sup>4</sup> Heb. *that which is driven away*.—<sup>m</sup> Chap. v. 8.—<sup>o</sup> Rom. ii.  
6, 7, 8; 2 Cor. v. 10; 2 Thess. i. 6, 7.—<sup>p</sup> Verse 1.

ploy them freely and cheerfully in acts of charity  
and liberality toward others, or to use them to the  
glory of God, living in his fear, which is necessary  
to the happiness of this as well as of the other life.  
*And also that every one should eat, &c.*—Use what  
God hath given him. See the note on chap. ii. 24.

Verse 14. *Whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for  
ever*—All God's counsels or decrees are eternal and  
unchangeable. *Nothing can be put to it*—Men can  
neither do any thing against God's counsel and pro-  
vidence, nor hinder any work or act of it. *God  
doth it, that men should fear before him*—That, by  
the consideration of his power, in the disposal of  
all persons and things, men should learn to trust in  
him, to submit to him, to fear to offend him, and  
more carefully study to please him.

Verse 15. *That which hath been is now*—Things  
past, present, and to come, are all ordered by one  
constant counsel, in all parts and ages of the world.  
There is a continual return of the same motions of  
the heavenly bodies, of the same seasons of the  
year, and a constant succession of new generations  
of men and beasts, but all of the same quality.  
*God requireth*—Or *reneweth*, as the Hebrew *שָׁקַף*,  
may be rendered; *that which is past*—That time  
and those things which are irrecoverably gone in  
themselves; but are, as it were, recalled, because  
others of the same kind arise and come in their  
stead.

Verse 16. *And moreover, &c.*—This is another  
argument of the vanity of worldly things, and a  
hinderance of that comfort which men expect in this  
life, because they are oppressed by their rulers. *I  
saw the place of judgment*—In the thrones of prin-  
ces, and tribunals of magistrates, where judgment  
should be duly executed. Solomon is still showing  
that every thing in this world, without the fear of  
God, is vanity. In these verses he shows that  
power, of which men are so ambitious, and life itself,  
are nothing worth without it.

Verse 17. *I said in my heart*—I was sorely  
grieved at this, but I quieted myself with this con-  
sideration. *God shall judge, &c.*—Absolving the

A. M. 3027. there for every purpose and for every  
B. C. 977. work.

18 ¶ I said in my heart concerning the estate of the sons of men,<sup>5</sup> that God might manifest them, and that they might see that they themselves are beasts.

19 ¶ For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no pre-eminence above a beast: for all is vanity.

<sup>5</sup> Or, that they might clear God and see, &c.—<sup>9</sup> Psa. xlix. 12, 20; lxxiii. 22; Chap. ii. 16.—<sup>10</sup> Gen. iii. 19.—<sup>11</sup> Chap. xii. 7. <sup>6</sup> Heb. of the sons of man.

just, and condemning the wicked. *For there is a time there*—Namely, at the judgment-seat of God; a time fixed by God's unalterable decree. He implies, that as this life is the sinner's time, in which he doth whatsoever seemeth good in his own eyes, so God will have his time to reckon with sinners, and rectify all these disorders; *for every purpose, and for every work*—For examining not only men's actions, but all their thoughts and purposes. The design of this verse is both to strike a terror into oppressing potentates, and to satisfy the doubts and support the spirits of good men, who are oppressed in this life.

Verse 18. *I said in my heart, &c.*—And I further considered concerning their condition in this present world. *That God might manifest them*—God suffers these disorders among men, that he might discover men to themselves, and show what strange creatures they are, and what vile hearts they have. *That they are beasts*—That although God made them men, yet they have made themselves beasts by their brutish practices, and that, considered only with respect to the present life, they are as vain and miserable creatures as the beasts themselves.

Verse 19. *For that which befalleth, &c.*—They are subject to the same diseases, pains, and casualties. *So dieth the other*—As certainly, and no less painfully. *They have all one breath*—One breath of life, which is in their nostrils; by which the

20 All go unto one place; <sup>7</sup> all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again. A. M. 3027. B. C. 977.

21 ¶ <sup>8</sup> Who knoweth the spirit <sup>6</sup> of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?

22 ¶ <sup>9</sup> Wherefore I perceive that *there is* nothing better, than that a man should rejoice in his own works; for <sup>10</sup> that is his portion: <sup>11</sup> for who shall bring him to see what shall be after him?

<sup>7</sup> Hebrew, is ascending.—<sup>8</sup> Verse 12; Chapter ii. 24; v. 18; xi. 9.—<sup>9</sup> Chapter ii. 10.—<sup>10</sup> Chapter vi. 12; viii. 7; x. 14.

beasts perform the same animal functions. For he speaks not here of man's rational and immortal spirit, nor of the future life. *So that a man hath no pre-eminence, &c.*—In respect of the present life.

Verses 20, 21. *All go unto one place*—To the earth, as it is expressed verse 21, out of which they were both taken. *All turn to dust again*—All their bodies, as it is explained chap. xii. 7. *Who knoweth the spirit of a man*—True it is, there is a difference, which is known by good men, but the generality of mankind never mind it; their hearts are wholly set on present and sensible things, and take no thought for the things of the future and invisible world.

Verse 22. *I perceive there is nothing better*—For a man's present satisfaction, and the happiness of this life; *than that a man should rejoice in his own works*—That he should comfortably enjoy what God hath given him, and not disquiet himself with cares about future events. He seems to speak this not in the person of an epicure, but as his own judgment, which also he declares, chap. ii. 24, and v. 18, 19, and viii. 15. *For that is his portion*—This is the benefit of his labours: he hath no more than he uses, for what he leaves behind him is not his, but another man's. *For who shall bring him to see, &c.*—When once he is dead he shall never return to see into whose hands his estate falls, and how it is either used or abused; nor is he at all concerned in those matters.

## CHAPTER IV.

*The misery of the oppressed and the oppressor, 1-3. Of being envied, which occasions sloth in others, 4-6. The folly of hoarding up wealth, 7, 8. The benefit of society, 9-12. The mutability even of the royal dignity, through the foolishness of the prince, and the fickleness of the people, 13-16.*

A. M. 3027. SO I returned, and considered all  
B. C. 977. the <sup>a</sup> oppressions that are done

<sup>a</sup> Chapter

under the sun: and behold the tears  
of such as were oppressed, and they

iii. 16; v. 8.

### NOTES ON CHAPTER IV.

Verse 1. *So I returned, and considered*—I considered again more seriously; *all the oppressions*—

*under the sun*—Whether by princes, magistrates, or other potent persons; *and the tears of such as were oppressed*—Their grievous sufferings, sighs, and

A. M. 3027. had no comforters; and on the <sup>1</sup> side  
B. C. 977. of their oppressors *there was* power;  
but they had no comforter.

2 <sup>b</sup> Wherefore I praised the dead which are already dead more than the living which are yet alive.

3 <sup>o</sup> Yea, better *is he* than both they, which hath not yet been, who hath not seen the evil work that is done under the sun.

4 ¶ Again, I considered all travail, and <sup>2</sup> every right work, that <sup>3</sup> for this a man is envied of his neighbour. This *is* also vanity and vexation of spirit.

5 ¶ <sup>d</sup> The fool foldeth his hands together, and eateth his own flesh.

<sup>1</sup> Heb. *hand*.—<sup>b</sup> Job iii. 17.—<sup>c</sup> Job iii. 11, 16, 21; Chap. vi. 3.—<sup>2</sup> Heb. *all the rightness of work*.—<sup>3</sup> Heb. *this is the envy of a man from his neighbour*.

groans. *And they had no comforter*—None afforded them either pity or succour. For such was the greatness and power of their oppressors, that, as they could not defend themselves against them, so none else durst express their compassion toward them, much less plead for them, for fear of being made to suffer in the same way themselves.

Verses 2, 3. *Wherefore I praised the dead, &c.*—I judged them less miserable. For this is certain, that setting aside the future life, which Solomon doth not meddle with in the present debate, and considering the uncertainty, and vanity, and manifold calamities of the present life, a wise man would not account it worth his while to live. *Yea, better is he than both they*—“Much more desirable than either of these is it not to have come into the world at all; and so to have had no sense of the miseries which the dead have formerly felt, and which the living now undergo.”

Verse 4. *Again I considered all travail*—Hebrew כל עמל, *all the labour, toil, or trouble*, which men undertake or undergo; and *every right work*—All the worthy designs of virtuous men; *that for this a man is envied of his neighbour*—Instead of that honour and recompense which he deserves, he meets with nothing but envy, and obloquy, and many evil fruits thereof.

Verse 5. *The fool foldeth his hands, &c.*—Is careless and idle: perceiving that diligence is attended with envy, he runs into the other extreme. *And eateth his own flesh*—Wastes his substance, and brings himself to poverty, whereby his very flesh pines away for want of bread.

Verse 6. *Better is a handful with quietness, &c.*—These are the words, either, 1st, Of the sluggard, making this apology for his idleness, that his little, with ease, is better than great riches got with much trouble; or, 2d, of Solomon, who elsewhere speaks to the same purpose, and here proposes this antidote against the vanity of immoderate cares and labours for worldly goods, against which he industriously directs his speech in divers

6 ¶ *Better is a handful with quietness, than both the hands full with travail and vexation of spirit.*

7 ¶ Then I returned, and I saw vanity under the sun.

8 There is one *alone*, and *there is* not a second; yea, he hath neither child nor brother: yet *is there* no end of all his labour; neither is his <sup>f</sup> eye satisfied with riches: <sup>e</sup> neither *saiith he*, For whom do I labour, and bereave my soul of good? This *is* also vanity, yea, it *is* a sore travail.

9 ¶ Two *are* better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour.

<sup>d</sup> Proverbs vi. 10; xxiv. 33.—<sup>e</sup> Proverbs xv. 16, 17; xvi. 8.—<sup>f</sup> Proverbs xxvii. 20; 1 John ii. 16.—<sup>g</sup> Psalm xxxix. 6.

places of this book, and particularly in the following passage.

Verse 8. *There is one alone*—Who has none but himself to care for. *Yea, he hath neither child nor brother*—To whom he may leave his vast estate; *yet is there no end of his labours*—He lives in perpetual restlessness and toil. *Neither is his eye satisfied*—His covetous mind or desire, fitly expressed by the eye, both because the eye is frequently the incentive to this sin of covetousness, (Josh. vii. 21,) and because the covetous man hath no good by his riches, *save the beholding them with his eyes*, as is affirmed, chap. v. 11. *Neither saith he*—Within himself: for he considers nothing but how he may get more and more: *For whom do I labour?*—Having no posterity or kindred to enjoy it; *and bereave my soul of good?*—Deny myself those comforts and conveniences which God has allowed me? Shall I take all this pains, and endure all these toils and hardships for a stranger, possibly for an enemy, who will reap the fruit of all my cares and labours? *This is also vanity, yea, a sore travail*—A dreadful judgment and misery, as well as a great sin.

Verse 9. *Two*—Or more, who live together in any kind of society, and join their powers together in pursuit of any important object; *are better than one*—Act more cheerfully, and accomplish their designs more readily, than any of them could do in a solitary state; *because they have a good reward for their labour*—Have great benefit by such combinations and conjunctions of their counsels and abilities, whereby they exceedingly support, encourage, and strengthen each other, and effect many things which none of them could have effected alone. Gregory Thaumaturgus, says Bishop Patrick, understands Solomon as speaking here of *κοινωνια βίης*, *living in communion*, or fellowship together, which he shows to be profitable, both to procure us greater happiness, which is the subject of the ninth verse, and to preserve us in the enjoyment of it when we have attained it, which is the subject of the three following verses.

A. M. 3027. 10 For if they fall, the one will lift  
B. C. 977.

up his fellow: but wo to him *that is* alone when he falleth; for *he hath* not another to help him up.

11 Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone?

12 And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

13 ¶ Better is a poor and a wise child, than

<sup>4</sup> Hebrew, *he who knoweth*

Verses 10–12. *For, if they fall*—If one or more of them fall in any way; as into any mistakes, and errors, or sins, dangers, or distresses. *The one will lift up his fellow*—Will hold him up, if he be falling, or raise him up, if he be fallen. *If two lie together, then they have heat*—They will be sooner warm in a cold bed and a cold season. So virtuous and gracious affections are excited by good society; and Christians warm one another, by *provoking one another to love and good works*. *But how can one be warm alone?*—How can the warmth and fervency of true Christian love and zeal be retained by him who stands aloof from, and has no intercourse with, his fellow-Christians? *If one prevail against him*—If an enemy, visible or invisible, might easily prevail against either or any of them, if not associated with others, two or more, uniting their counsels and efforts, will be able to withstand him; *and a three-fold cord is not quickly broken*—If a man have not only one, but two or more friends to assist him, he is so much the more secure against all assaults, and therefore the more happy. Thus, in our spiritual warfare, we may be helpful to each other, as well as in our spiritual work. And next to the comfort of communion with God, is that of the communion of saints. *For they that dwell in love dwell in God, and God in them*.

Verses 13, 14. He now proceeds to another vanity, even that of honour and power, and the highest places. *Better*—More happy; *is a poor and wise child*—Who is doubly contemptible, both for his age and for his poverty; than an old and foolish king, who, though venerable for his age, and gravity, and royal dignity, yet hath neither wisdom to govern himself, nor to receive the counsels or admonitions of wiser men, but is foolish, rash, and incorrigible. *For out of prison he*—The poor and wise child; *cometh to reign*—Is oftentimes advanced by his wisdom to the highest power and dignity; which was the case with Joseph, Mordecai, and many others; *whereas he that is born in his kingdom*—That old king, who was born of the royal race, and had possessed his kingdom for a long time; *becometh poor*—Is deprived of his kingdom, either by the rebellion of his subjects, provoked by his folly, or by the power of some other and wiser prince.

Verse 15. *I considered all the living*—The gene-

an old and foolish king, <sup>4</sup> who will no more be admonished. A. M. 3027. B. C. 977.

14 For out of prison he cometh to reign; whereas also *he that is* born in his kingdom becometh poor.

15 I considered all the living which walk under the sun, with the second child that shall stand up in his stead.

16 *There is* no end of all the people, *even of* all that have been before them: they also that come after shall not rejoice in him. Surely this also is vanity and vexation of spirit.

not to be admonished.

ral disposition of common people in all kingdoms, that they are fickle and inconstant, weary of their old governors, and desirous of changes; *with the second child that shall stand up*—That shall arise to reign. This may be understood of the king's child, or son and heir, called *second* in respect to his father, whose successor he is. Some join this clause with the preceding, thus: *I considered all the living which walk*—Or, *that they walk; under the sun*—That is, upon earth; *with the second child*—That is, that they follow, favour, and worship him, as the rising sun, upon which the eyes and hopes of most people are fixed. Probably Solomon observed this disposition in his own people, who were growing weary of his government, and beginning to desire a change, and to turn their eyes to Rehoboam his successor. At least he remembered the rebellion that had been raised against his father David in favour of Absalom, and might have reason to think the same leaven was still working in his kingdom. The verse is thus paraphrased by Bishop Patrick: "Such is the infelicity of princes, that I have seen a king left with nothing but the bare title, and the outward state of royalty; the hearts and affections of all, nobles, gentry, and common people, from one end of the kingdom to the other, inclining to his son (or next heir) that is to succeed him; unto whom they do obeisance, as if he were already upon the throne; but neglect his old father, who sees himself robbed of those honours in which he placed his happiness."

Verse 16. *There is no end of the people*—The sense seems to be, either, 1st, The people who have this humour are without end, or innumerable; or, 2d, This humour of the common people hath no end, but passes from one generation to another: they ever were, and are, and will be, unstable and restless, and given to change: which sense the following words favour: *Even of all that have been before them*—Before the present generation of subjects, who earnestly desired and promoted the change of government here expressed. And so, here are three generations of people mentioned; the authors of the present change, and their parents, and their children; and all are observed to have the same inclinations in these matters. *They also that come after shall not rejoice in him*—They shall be

as weary of the successor, though a wise and worthy prince, as their parents were of his foolish predecessor. *Surely, this also is vanity*—From all this it appears, that happiness is not to be found in honour and power; no, not in the very high-

est pitch of it: for there also is not only dissipation to be found, but many dangers, troubles and vexatious cares, which much disturb and perplex the minds of those that possess it. See Bishop Patrick.

## CHAPTER V.

In this chapter Solomon discourses concerning the worship of God, prescribing that as a remedy against all those vanities which he had already observed to be in wisdom, learning, pleasure, honour, power, and business. In order that we may not be deceived by those things, nor have our spirits vexed with the disappointments we meet with in them, we must make conscience of our duty to God, and keep up communion with him in his ordinances. But as vanities may be, and often are, found, even in religious exercises, through which they lose their excellence, and become unable to help us against other vanities, he here first cautions us against these, 1-7. He then directs us to eye God as our judge, 8. Shows the vanity of riches, 9-17. And recommends the cheerful use of what God has given us, 18-20.

A. M. 3027.  
B. C. 977. **K**EEP <sup>a</sup>thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, <sup>b</sup> than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil.

2 Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be hasty to utter *any* <sup>1</sup> thing before

<sup>a</sup> See Exod. iii. 5; Isa. i. 12, &c.—<sup>b</sup> 1 Sam. xv. 22; Psa. l. 8; Prov. xv. 8; xxi. 27; Hos. vi. 6.—<sup>1</sup> Or, word.—<sup>2</sup> Prov.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER V.

Verse 1. *Keep thy foot*—Thy thoughts and affections, by which men go to God, and walk with him. See that your hearts be upright before him, devoted to him, and furnished with those graces essential to the true worship of him, especially with reverence, humility, resignation, meekness, faith, and love. It is a metaphor taken from a person's walking in a very slippery path, in which more than ordinary care is requisite to keep him from falling: *when thou goest to the house of God*—The place of God's solemn and public worship, whether the temple or a synagogue; *and be more ready to hear*—To hearken to, and obey, God's word; *than to give the sacrifice of fools*—Such as foolish and wicked men are wont to offer, who vainly think to please God with their sacrifices, without true piety and obedience. *For they consider not that they do evil*—They are not sensible of the great sinfulness of such thoughts and practices, but, like fools, think they do God good service.

Verse 2. *Be not rash with thy mouth*—Speak not without due consideration; *and let not thy heart be hasty*—Do not give way to every sudden motion of thy heart, nor suffer it to break out of thy lips till thou hast well weighed it. We must think, and think twice, before we speak, when we are to speak, either from God in preaching, or to God in prayer, or in solemn vows and promises made in his presence; which were very much in use in those times, and of which he speaks in the following verses. *For God is in heaven*—Is a God of infinite majesty, holiness, and knowledge, and therefore not even to

God; for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words <sup>o</sup> be few.

3 For a dream cometh through the multitude of business; and <sup>d</sup> a fool's voice is known by multitude of words.

4 <sup>a</sup> When thou vowest a vow unto God,

x. 19; Matt. vi. 7.—<sup>d</sup> Prov. x. 19.—<sup>o</sup> Num. xxx. 2; Deut. xxiii. 21, 22, 23; Psa. l. 14; lxxvi. 11.

be thought of, and much more not to be worshipped, without profound veneration, great solemnity, and much serious consideration; *and thou upon earth*—Thou art a poor worm of the earth, infinitely below him, and therefore oughtest to stand in awe of him, and fear to offend him; *therefore let thy words be few*—1st, In prayer: use not vain repetitions, nor a multitude of words, as if they were necessary to inform God of thy wants, or to prevail with him to grant thy requests; or as if thou shouldst certainly be heard upon that very account: see Matt. vi. 7. 2d, In vowing: be not too prodigal in making more vows and promises than thou art either able or willing and resolved to perform. Remember that God looks down from heaven, hears all thy vows, and expects a punctual accomplishment of them.

Verse 3. *For a dream cometh, &c.*—When men's minds are distracted and oppressed with too much business in the day, they are frequently disturbed with confused and perplexed dreams in the night. And as such dreams proceed from, and are the evidence of, a hurry of business filling the head, so many and hasty words flow from, and are a proof of, folly reigning in the heart.

Verse 4. *When thou vowest a vow unto God*—When thou obligest thyself by a solemn promise to honour God, and serve the interest of his kingdom; or to do good to any of thy fellow-creatures in some particular way, to do which thou wast not under any antecedent obligation: when, for instance, under the sense of some affliction, or through thy desire of obtaining, or in thankfulness for having obtained, some particular mercy, thou hast vowed such a vow

A. M. 3027. defer not to pay it; for *he hath* no  
B. C. 977. pleasure in fools: 'pay that which  
thou hast vowed.

5 <sup>6</sup> Better is it that thou shouldest not vow,  
than that thou shouldest vow and not pay.

6 Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to  
sin; <sup>h</sup> neither say thou before the angel, that  
it was an error: wherefore should God be  
angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of  
thy hands?

7 For in the multitude of dreams and many  
words *there are* also divers vanities: but <sup>1</sup> fear  
thou God.

<sup>f</sup> Psa. lxxvi. 13, 14.—<sup>g</sup> Prov. xx. 25; Acts v. 4.—<sup>h</sup> 1 Cor. xi.  
10.—<sup>i</sup> Chap. xii. 13.

as this unto God, know that thou hast opened thy  
mouth unto the Lord, and thou canst not go back;  
*defer not to pay it*—Perform thy vow while the  
sense of thine obligation is fresh and strong upon  
thy mind; lest thou either seem to repent of thy  
promises, or delay should end in denials and resolu-  
tions of non-performance: see on Lev. xxvii. 2;  
Num. xxx. 2. *For he hath no pleasure in fools*—  
In hypocritical and perfidious persons, who, when  
they are in distress, make liberal vows, and when  
the danger is past, neglect and break them. He  
calls them fools, because it is the highest folly, as to  
think of mocking or deceiving the all-seeing and  
almighty God, so also to despise and provoke him.  
*Better is it that thou shouldest not vow*—For this  
would be no sin, because men are free to make such  
vows, or not to make them, as they think best; but,  
having made them, they cannot forbear to pay them,  
without sin.

Verse 6. *Suffer not thy mouth*—By any rash vow,  
or in any other way; *to cause thy flesh to sin*—  
That is, thyself: the word *flesh* being often put for  
the whole man; *neither say thou before the angel*—  
That is, as some interpret the expression, before the  
blessed angels, (the singular number being put for  
the plural,) who are present in the public assemblies,  
in which these vows were generally paid, (Psa.  
lxxvi. 13,) where they observe men's religious per-  
formances, (1 Cor. xi. 10,) and, as they rejoice in  
the conversion of a sinner, so are displeased with  
the sins of men. Or, 2d, Christ may be meant, *the  
Angel of the covenant*, as he is called Mal. iii. 1;  
who, even in these ancient times, acted as God's  
messenger, appearing and speaking to the patri-  
archs and prophets in his Father's name; and who  
was, and, according to his promise, is, in an espe-  
cial manner, present in all religious assemblies, ob-  
serving the whole conduct of all that worship in  
them. Or, 3d, as many think more probable, the  
priest, or minister of holy things, is here intended.  
Such persons are often called *angels*, or, as the He-  
brew word here used is commonly rendered, *mes-  
sengers*. And this title may be given to the priest  
here, because the vow made to God was to be paid

8 ¶ If thou <sup>1</sup> seest the oppression A. M. 3027.  
of the poor, and violent perverting of B. C. 977.  
judgment and justice in a province, marvel not  
<sup>2</sup> at the matter: for <sup>1</sup> *he that is* higher than  
the highest regardeth; and *there be* higher  
than they.

9 ¶ Moreover, the profit of the earth is for  
all: the king *himself* is served by the field.

10 He that loveth silver shall not be satis-  
fied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance  
with increase: this *is* also vanity.

11 When goods increase, they are increased  
that eat them: and what good *is there* to the

<sup>k</sup> Chap. iii. 16.—<sup>l</sup> Heb. at the will, or, purpose.—<sup>m</sup> Psa. xii. 5;  
lviii. 11; lxxxii. 1.

to the priest, as one standing and acting in God's  
name and stead; and it belonged to him, as God's  
angel or ambassador, to discharge persons from their  
vows when there was just occasion. *It was an  
error*—I did unadvisedly in making such a vow.  
*Wherefore should God be angry*—Why wilt thou  
provoke God to anger by these frivolous excuses?  
*And destroy the work of thy hands*—Blast all thy  
labours, and particularly that work or enterprise for  
the success whereof thou didst make these vows.

Verse 7. *For in the multitude, &c.*—There is a  
great deal of folly, as in a multitude of dreams,  
which for the most part are vain and insignificant,  
so also in many words, especially in making many  
vows, whereby a man is exposed to many snares and  
temptations. *But fear thou God*—Fear the wrath  
of God, and therefore be sparing in making vows,  
and just in performing them.

Verse 8. *If thou seest the oppression, &c.*—Here  
is an account of another vanity, and a sovereign an-  
tidote against it. *Marvel not*—As if it were in-  
consistent with God's wisdom and justice to suffer such  
disorders. *For he that is higher than the highest*—  
The most high God, who is infinitely above the  
greatest of men. *Regardeth*—Not like an idle spec-  
tator, but a judge, who diligently observes, and will  
effectually punish them. *And there be higher than  
they*—Namely, God; it is an emphatical repetition  
of the same thing.

Verse 9. *The profit of the earth is for all*—The  
fruits of the earth are necessary and beneficial to all  
men. The wise man, after some interruption, re-  
turns to his former subject, the vanity of riches; one  
evidence whereof he mentions in this verse, that the  
poor labourer enjoys the fruits of the earth as well  
as the greatest monarch, and that the richest man in  
the world depends as much upon them as the poor-  
est. *The king himself is served by the field*—Is  
supported by the fruits of the field.

Verses 10, 11. *He that loveth silver shall not, &c.*  
—The greatest treasures of silver do not satisfy the  
covetous possessor of it, both because his mind is in-  
satisfiable, his desires being increased by and with his  
gains, and because silver of itself cannot satisfy his

A. M. 3027. owners thereof, saying the beholding  
B. C. 977. of them with their eyes ?

12 The sleep of a labouring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much : but the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep.

13 <sup>a</sup> There is a sore evil which I have seen under the sun, namely, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt.

14 But those riches perish by evil travail : and he begetteth a son, and there is nothing in his hand.

15 <sup>a</sup> As he came forth of his mother's womb, naked shall he return to go as he came, and

shall take nothing of his labour, which A. M. 3027.  
he may carry away in his hand. B. C. 977.

16 And this also is a sore evil, that in all points as he came, so shall he go : and ° what profit hath he <sup>b</sup> that hath laboured for the wind ?

17 All his days also <sup>c</sup> he eateth in darkness, and he hath much sorrow and wrath with his sickness.

18 ¶ Behold that which I have seen : <sup>d</sup> it <sup>e</sup> is good and comely for one to eat and to drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labour that he taketh under the sun <sup>f</sup> all the days of his life, which God giveth him : <sup>g</sup> for it is his portion.

<sup>a</sup> Chap. vi. 1.—<sup>b</sup> Job i. 21 ; Psalm xlix. 17 ; 1 Timothy vi. 7.—<sup>c</sup> Chapter i. 3.—<sup>d</sup> Proverbs xi. 29.—<sup>e</sup> Psalm cxvii. 2.

<sup>f</sup> Chap. ii. 24 ; iii. 12, 13, 22 ; ix. 7 ; xi. 9 ; 1 Timothy vi. 17. <sup>g</sup> Heb. there is a good which is comely, &c.—<sup>h</sup> Heb. the number of the days.—<sup>i</sup> Chap. ii. 10 ; iii. 22.

natural desires and necessities, as the fruits of the field can do, and the miserable creature grudges to part with his silver, though it be to purchase things needful and convenient for him. *When goods increase, they are increased that eat them*—As the rich man's estate increases, the greater family and retinue, if he will live like himself, he must maintain ; and these have a larger share than himself in the daily provision that is made by his expenses, and enjoy the same comforts which he doth in partaking of it, without his cares, fears, and troubles. And as for the rest, that is not expended, which he calls peculiarly his, he hath no other benefit from it, but only that it feeds and entertains his eyes.

Verse 12. *The sleep of a labouring man is sweet*—Because he is free from those cares and fears wherewith the minds of rich men are often distracted, and their sleep disturbed ; *whether he eat little*—For his weariness disposes him to sleep ; *or much*—In which case his healthful constitution, and laborious course of life, prevent those crudities and indigestions which oftentimes break the sleep of rich men : *but the abundance of the rich*—Hebrew, רִשְׁוֹן, *the fulness*, either, 1st, Of his diet, which commonly discomposes the rich man's stomach, and hinders his rest : or, 2d, Of his wealth, which is generally attended with many perplexing cares, both by day and night. The Hebrew word is used in Scripture both ways, and probably is here intended to include both significations.

Verses 13, 14. *There is a sore evil, &c.*—“There is another thing, which is very calamitous, and may rather be called a grievous plague than a mere affliction ; that these very treasures, which men have heaped up with a great deal of care, from thence expecting their felicity, prove, in the issue, their utter undoing ;” being incentives to pride, luxury, and other hurtful lusts, which waste their bodies, shorten their lives, and destroy their souls ; and being also great temptations to tyrants or thieves to take away their lives, in order to possess their property. Nay, it often happens, that “some of these miserable men are murdered by their servants, and

even by their own children, with a view to become masters of their riches ; which riches bring them also at last to the same or like destruction.”—Bishop Patrick. *But*—Or for, or moreover, as the Hebrew particle may be rendered ; *those riches perish*—If they be kept, it is to the owner's hurt, and if not, they are lost to his grief ; *by evil travail*—By some wicked practices, either his own, or of other men. *And he begetteth a son, and there is nothing, &c.*—Either, 1st, In the father's power to leave to his son, for whose sake he engaged in, and went through, all those hard labours ; which is a great aggravation of his grief and misery. Or, 2d, In the son's possession after the father's death.

Verses 15–17. *As he came forth, &c., naked shall he return*—Into the womb, or belly of the earth, the common mother of all mankind. *And shall take nothing of his labour*—This is another vanity. If his estate be neither lost nor kept to his hurt, yet when he dies he must leave it behind him, and cannot carry one handful of it into another world. *And what profit hath he that hath laboured for the wind*—For riches, which are empty and unsatisfying, uncertain and transitory ; which no man can hold or stay in their course ; all which are the properties of the wind. *All his days also*—Namely, of his life ; *he eateth in darkness*—He hath no comfort in his estate, but even when he eats, he doth it with anxiety and discontent. *And wrath with his sickness*—When he falls sick, and presages his death, he is filled with rage, because he is cut off before he hath accomplished his designs, and because he must leave that wealth and world in which all his hopes and happiness lie.

Verse 18. *Behold that which I have seen*—That is, learned by study and experience ; *it is good and comely*—Good, or comfortable to a man's self, and comely, or amiable in the eyes of other men, as penuriousness is base and dishonourable ; *for one to enjoy the good of his labour*—Both for the constant supply of all the necessities of nature, and for the entertainment of his friends, and the relief of his poor neighbours ; *all the days of his life*—All the

A. M. 3027. 19 'Every man also to whom  
B. C. 977. God hath given riches and wealth,  
and hath given him power to eat thereof,  
and to take his portion, and to rejoice in his

<sup>1</sup> Chap. ii. 24; iii. 13; vi. 2.

time God shall be pleased to continue him in this world. *For it is his portion*—This is all that falls to his share of the good things of this life. It is his portion of worldly goods: if a truly pious man, he hath a better portion in heaven. This liberty is given him by God, and this is the best advantage, as to this life, which he can make of them.

Verses 19, 20. *Every man also, &c.*—“And whosoever he be whom God hath blessed, not only with plenty of worldly goods, but also with such a noble and generous mind that he is not their slave, but truly master of them,” (so the Hebrew, *השליט* signifies,) “being able to enjoy them innocently, and that with cheerfulness, and to delight in doing good

labour; this *is* the gift of God. A. M. 3027.  
B. C. 977. 20 <sup>5</sup>For he shall not much re-  
member the days of his life; because God an-  
swereth *him* in the joy of his heart.

<sup>5</sup> Or, *Though he give not much, yet he remembereth, &c.*

to others with them; let him be very thankful to Almighty God for so great a happiness, and acknowledge it to be a singular gift of his bounty.” *For he shall not much remember the days of his life*—“For he that is thus highly favoured by God, will not think life tedious or irksome; but, forgetting his past toils, and taking no” anxious “care for the future, will spend his time most comfortably; because God hath given him his heart’s desire, in that inward tranquillity of mind, or, rather, joy and gladness of heart, wherewith God hath compensated all his pains, and testified his extraordinary kindness to him.”—Bishop Patrick. See notes on chap. ii. 24; and iii. 12, 13.

CHAPTER VI.

We have here, (1,) A continuation of the argument handled in the latter part of the foregoing chapter, namely, the vanity of riches in the possession of a covetous person, 1-6. (2,) Their unsatisfactory nature, 7-10. (3,) The folly of thinking to find happiness in the things of the world, 11, 12.

A. M. 3027. **T**HERE <sup>a</sup>is an evil which I have  
B. C. 977. seen under the sun, and it is  
common among men :

2 A man to whom God hath given riches, wealth, and honour, <sup>b</sup>so that he wanteth nothing for his soul of all that he desireth, <sup>c</sup>yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof, but

<sup>a</sup> Chap. v. 13.—<sup>b</sup> Job xxi. 10; Psa. xvii. 14; lxxiii. 7  
<sup>c</sup> Luke xii. 20.

NOTES ON CHAPTER VI.

Verses 1, 2. *There is an evil which I have seen, &c.*—A most wretched, miserable disposition reigning among mankind: *A man to whom God hath given riches, &c.*—When a man is blessed by God with all sorts of riches, as gold and silver, cattle and lands, &c. *So that he wanteth nothing that he desireth*—Which he does or can reasonably desire; yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof—Either because his riches are unexpectedly taken away from him by the hand of God, or rather, because, as a punishment of his ingratitude to God, and uncharitableness to men, or of his inattention to, and neglect of, spiritual and eternal things, God gives him up to a base and covetous mind; but a stranger eateth it—Not his children, not any relation, however distant; not a friend, nor even an acquaintance; but, it may be, an entire stranger enjoys all the good things which he has saved: *this is vanity, and an evil*

a stranger eateth it: this *is* vanity, A. M. 3027.  
and it *is* an evil disease. B. C. 977.

3 ¶ If a man beget a hundred children, and live many years, so that the days of his years be many, and his soul be not filled with good, and <sup>d</sup>also *that* he have no burial; I say, *that* <sup>e</sup>an untimely birth *is* better than he.

<sup>d</sup> 2 Kings ix. 35; Isa. xiv. 19, 20; Jer. xxii. 19.—<sup>e</sup> Job iii. 16;  
Psa. lviii. 8; Chap. iv. 3.

*disease*—For surely what we possess we possess in vain, if we do not use it; and that temper of mind is certainly a most wretched distemper which prevents our using it.

Verses 3-6. *If a man beget a hundred children—Very many, to whom he intends to leave his estate; and live many years*—Which is the chief thing that he desires, and which gives him opportunity of increasing his estate vastly; and *his soul be not filled with good*—If he have not a contented mind, and a comfortable enjoyment of his estate; and *also have no burial*—And if, after his death, he have either none, or a mean and dishonourable burial, because his sordid and covetous conduct made him hateful and contemptible to all persons, his children and heirs not excepted, so that he was by all sorts of men thought unworthy of any testimonies of honour, either in his life, or after his death: *I say, an untimely birth is better than he*—Which, as it never

A. M. 3027. 4 For he cometh in with vanity, and  
B. C. 977. departeth in darkness, and his name  
shall be covered with darkness.

5 Moreover he hath not seen the sun, nor known  
*any thing*: this hath more rest than the other.

6 Yea, though he live a thousand years  
twice *told*, yet hath he seen no good: do not  
all go to one place?

7 ¶ All the labour of man *is* for his mouth,  
and yet the appetite <sup>1</sup> is not filled.

<sup>1</sup> Prov. xvi. 26.—<sup>2</sup> Heb. *soul*.—<sup>3</sup> Heb. *than the walking*

enjoyed the comforts, so it never felt the calamities of life. For, or rather, *although, he*—The abortive; of whom alone that clause, *He hath not seen the sun, (verse 5,) is true; cometh in with vanity*—Cometh into the world to no purpose, without any comfort or benefit by it, which is also, in a great measure, the case with the covetous person here mentioned; and *departeth in darkness*—Dieth in obscurity, without any observation or regard of men; and *his name shall be covered with darkness*—Shall be speedily and utterly forgotten. *Moreover he hath not known any thing*—Hath had no knowledge, sense, or experience of any thing, whether good or evil; *this, namely, the untimely birth, hath more rest than the other*—Because it is free from all those incumbrances and vexations to which the covetous man is long exposed. *Yea, though he live a thousand years*—Wherein he seems to have a privilege above an untimely birth; *yet hath he seen no good*—He hath enjoyed little or no comfort in it, and, therefore, long life is rather a curse than a blessing to him. *Do not all*—Whether born before their time or in due time, whether their lives be long or short; *go to one place*—To the grave! And so, after a little time, all are alike, as to this life, of which only he here speaks: and as to the other life, the condition of the covetous man, if he die impenitent, and therefore unpardoned and unrenewed, is infinitely worse than that of an untimely birth.

Verses 7, 8. *All the labour of man is for his mouth*—For meat and other necessary provisions of this life; and *yet the appetite is not filled*—Although all that a man can obtain by his labours is but a provision for his bodily wants, which the meanest sort of men commonly enjoy, yet such is the vanity of the world, and the folly of mankind, that men are insatiable in their desires, and restless in their endeavours after more and more, and never say they have enough. *What hath the wise more than the fool*—Namely, in these matters? Both are subject to the same calamities, and partakers of the same comforts of this life. *What hath the poor*—Especially? What advantage in this respect? *That knoweth*—Even though he knoweth; *to walk before the living*?—Though he be ingenious and industrious; that is, fit for service and business, and knows how to conduct himself toward his superiors so as to deserve and gain their favour, and to

8 For what hath the wise more A. M. 3027.  
than the fool? what hath the poor, B. C. 977.  
that knoweth to walk before the living?

9 Better *is* the sight of the eyes <sup>2</sup> than the  
wandering of the desire: this *is* also vanity  
and vexation of spirit.

10 ¶ That which hath been is named already,  
and it is known that it *is* man: <sup>3</sup> neither may  
he contend with him that is mightier than  
he.

of the soul.—<sup>4</sup> Job ix. 32; Isa. xlv. 9; Jer. xlix. 19.

procure a livelihood; what more hath he than the poor that do not know this? The verse is obscure, and some think it should be rendered, *For what hath the wise more than the fool? And what than the poor, who knoweth how to walk before the living?* That is, who knows how to act prudently: and they think the meaning is, that the wise and the fool, and even the poor, if they be industrious, and know how to behave themselves properly, all enjoy the necessaries of life, food and raiment. The only objection to this interpretation is, that though it seems to improve the sense, it is not consistent with the Hebrew text, כה לעני, signifying literally, *not than the poor*, but, *What is there to the poor?* or, *what hath the poor?* The Hebrew, however, may be rendered, *What excellence hath the wise man more than the fool? What excellence, especially, hath the poor that knoweth, that is, although he knoweth, &c.*

Verse 9. *Better is the sight of the eyes*—That is, The comfortable enjoyment of what a man hath, *seeing* being often put for *enjoying*; *than the wandering of the desire*—Than restless and insatiable desires of what a man hath not. *This is also vanity*—This wandering of the desire, wherein many indulge themselves; and *vexation of spirit*—It is not the way to satisfaction, as they imagine, but to vexation.

Verse 10. *That which hath been*—Or, *that which is*, for the Hebrew כה שרה, may be rendered either way; namely, Man, considered with all his endowments and enjoyments, whether he be wise or foolish, rich or poor; man, who is the chief of all visible and sublunary beings, for whom they all were made, *is named already*, namely, by God, who immediately after his creation called him *Adam*, (Gen. v. 2,) to signify what his nature and condition were or would be. This verse seems to be added as a further instance of the vanity of all things in this life. *And it is known that it is man*—This is certain and manifest, that that being, which makes all this noise in the world, however magnified by himself, and almost adored by flatterers; and however differenced from, or advanced above others, by wisdom or riches, or such like things, is but a mean, earthly, mortal, and miserable creature, as his very name signifies, which God gave him for this very end, that he might be always sensible of his vain and miserable estate in this world, and therefore never expect satisfac-

A. M. 3027. 11 Seeing there be many things  
B. C. 977. that increase vanity, what is man the  
better?

12 For who knoweth what is good for man

<sup>a</sup> Heb. the number of the days of the life of his vanity.—<sup>b</sup> Psa. cii. 11; cix. 23; cxliv. 4; James iv. 14.

tion or happiness from it. *Neither may he contend with him that is mightier than he*—That is, with Almighty God, with whom men are very apt to contend upon every slight occasion; and against whom they are ready to murmur on account of this their vanity, and mortality, and misery, although they brought it upon themselves by their sins. Bishop Patrick's interpretation of this obscure verse is very nearly to the same purpose, thus: "What if a man have already arrived at great renown, as well as riches, still it is notorious that he is but a man, made out of the dust, and therefore weak and frail, and subject to many disasters; which it is not possible for him, by his most anxious cares, to prevent, or by his power and wealth to throw off when he pleases." "This sense," adds he, in a note, "seems to me the most simple, and most agreeable to the whole discourse, and it is that which Melancthon hath expressed in these words, 'Although a man grow famous, yet it is known that he is but a man; and he cannot contend with that which is stronger than himself;' that is, he cannot govern events."

Verses 11, 12. *Seeing there be many things which increase vanity*—This seems to be added as a conclusion from all the foregoing chapters; seeing not only man is a vain creature in himself, but there are

in this life, <sup>a</sup> all the days of his vain life which he spendeth as <sup>b</sup> a shadow? <sup>c</sup> for who can tell a man what shall be after him under the sun?

<sup>1</sup> Psa. xxxix. 6; Chap. viii. 7.

also many other things, which, instead of diminishing, do but increase this vanity, as wisdom, pleasure, power, wealth; seeing even the good things of this life bring so much toil, and cares, and fears with them; *what is man the better*—By all that he can either desire or enjoy here? *For who knoweth what is good for a man*—No man certainly knows what is best for him here, whether to be high or low, rich or poor, because those things which men generally desire and pursue, are very frequently the occasions of their utter ruin, as has been observed again and again in this book; *all the days of his vain life*—Life itself, which is the foundation of all men's comforts and enjoyments here, is a vain, uncertain, and transitory thing, and therefore all things that depend upon it must needs be so too; *which he spendeth as a shadow*—Which, while it abides, hath nothing solid or substantial in it, and which speedily passes away, and leaves no sign behind it; *for who can tell a man, &c.*—And as no man can be happy with these things while he lives, so he can have no satisfaction in leaving them to others, because he knows not either who shall possess them, or how the future owners will use or abuse them, or what mischief they may do by them, either to others, or even to themselves.

## CHAPTER VII.

*Having discoursed, in the foregoing part of this book, of the vain courses men take to make themselves happy; Solomon now proceeds to prescribe the best remedies that can be found against that vanity to which we are subject, giving many wise precepts for our direction, support, and comfort in this troublesome world; wherein it is confessed, that our happiness can be but imperfect; yet so much we may attain as may make us well satisfied and contented during our abode in it. In particular he recommends seriousness, 1-6. Calmness of spirit, 7-10. Wisdom, 11, 12. Suiting ourselves to every condition, 13, 14. The advice of an infidel answered, 15-18. The praise of wisdom, 19. All men are sinners, 20. Mind not the censures of others, 21, 22. Solomon's experience of men and women, 23-29.*

A. M. 3027. A <sup>a</sup> GOOD name is better than  
B. C. 977. precious ointment; and the day

of death than the day of one's birth. A. M. 3027.  
B. C. 977.

<sup>a</sup> Proverbs xv.

30; xxii. 1.

### NOTES ON CHAPTER VII.

Verse 1. *A good name*—A good and well grounded report from wise and worthy persons; a name for wisdom and goodness with those that are wise and good; *is better than precious ointment*—Which was very fragrant, acceptable, and useful, and of great price in those countries. *And the day of death, than the day of one's birth*—Namely, the death of a good man, or of one who hath left a good name behind him; for to a wicked man, the day of death is

far worse, and most terrible. Or, if this clause be considered as spoken of this life only, abstracted from the future life, as many passages in this book are to be understood, then it may be true of all men, and is a consequence of all the former discourse. As if he had said, Seeing this life is so full of vanity and misery, it is a more desirable thing for a man to go out of it than to come into it: an observation that is the more worthy of regard, because it is contrary to the opinion and practice of almost all man-

A. M. 3027. 2 ¶ *It is better to go to the house*  
B. C. 977.

of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for that *is* the end of all men; and the living will lay *it* to his heart.

3 <sup>1</sup> Sorrow *is* better than laughter: <sup>b</sup> for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better.

4 The heart of the wise *is* in the house of mourning; but the heart of fools *is* in the house of mirth.

5 <sup>c</sup> *It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise,*

<sup>1</sup> Or, *Anger*.—<sup>b</sup> 2 Cor. vii. 10.—<sup>c</sup> See Psa. cxli. 5; Prov. xiii. 18; xv. 31, 32.—<sup>d</sup> Psa. cxviii. 12; Chap. ii. 2.

kind, who celebrate their own, and their children's birth-days, with solemn feasts and rejoicings, and their deaths with all expressions of sorrow.

Verse 2. *It is better to go to the house of mourning*—Where mourners meet together to celebrate the funerals of deceased friends; *than to the house of feasting*—Where people meet to indulge their appetites in eating and drinking, in which they frequently go to excess. *For that*—Namely, death, the cause of that mourning; *is the end of all men*—Is a lot that awaits all mankind, and to see instances of it tends to bring them to the serious consideration of their own last end, which is their greatest wisdom and interest; *and the living will lay it to his heart*—Will be seriously affected with it, and awakened to prepare for it: whereas feasting is commonly attended with levity and manifold temptations, and renders men's minds indisposed for spiritual and heavenly thoughts. Hence it is evident, those passages of this book, which seem to favour a sensual and voluptuous life, were not spoken by Solomon in his own name, or as his opinion, but in the person of an epicure.

Verses 3, 4. *Sorrow is better than laughter*—Either sorrow for sin, or even sorrow on other accounts; *for by the sadness of the countenance*—Sadness seated in the heart, but manifested in the countenance; *the heart is made better*—Is more weaned from the lusts and vanities of this world, by which most men are ensnared and destroyed; and more quickened to seek after and embrace that true and everlasting happiness which God offers to them in his word. *The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning*—Even when their bodies are absent. They are constantly, or very frequently, meditating upon serious things, such as death and judgment, the vanity of this life, and the reality and eternity of the next; because they know that these thoughts, though they be not grateful to man's carnal mind, yet are absolutely necessary and highly profitable, and productive of great comfort in the end, which every wise man most regards. *But the heart of fools is in the house of mirth*—Their minds and affections are wholly set upon feasting, jollity, and merriment, because, like fools and irrational animals, they regard only their present delight, and mind not how dearly they must pay for it.

than for a man to hear the song of fools: A. M. 3027. B. C. 977.

6 <sup>d</sup> For as the <sup>2</sup> crackling of thorns under a pot, so *is* the laughter of the fool: this also *is* vanity.

7 ¶ Surely oppression maketh a wise man mad; <sup>e</sup> and a gift destroyeth the heart.

8 Better *is* the end of a thing than the beginning thereof: *and* <sup>f</sup> the patient in spirit *is* better than the proud in spirit.

9 <sup>g</sup> Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of fools.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. *sound*.—<sup>c</sup> Exod. xxiii. 8; Deut. xvi. 19.—<sup>f</sup> Prov. xiv. 29.—<sup>g</sup> Prov. xiv. 17; xvi. 32; James i. 19.

Verses 5, 6. *It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise*—Which, though it cause some grief, yet frequently brings great benefit, even reformation, and salvation both from temporal and from eternal destruction; *than the song of fools*—Their flatteries, or merry discourses, which are as pleasant to corrupt nature as songs or music. *For as the crackling of thorns*—Which, for a time, make a great noise and blaze, but presently go out; *so is the laughter of a fool*—So vanishing and fruitless.

Verse 7. *Oppression maketh a wise man mad*—Either, 1st, When a wise man falls into the sin of oppressing others, he is infatuated by it, and by the riches which he gains in this way: or, rather, 2d, When a man is oppressed by wicked men, it often makes him fret and vex himself, and speak or act unadvisedly and foolishly. *And a gift destroyeth the heart*—A bribe given to a wise man deprives him of the use of his understanding. So this verse discovers two ways whereby a wise man may be made mad, by suffering oppression from others, or by receiving bribes to oppress others. And this also is an argument of the vanity of worldly wisdom, that is so easily corrupted and lost; and so it serves the main design of this book.

Verses 8, 9. *Better is the end of a thing than the beginning*—The good or evil of things is better known by their end than by their beginning; which is true, not only respecting evil counsels and practices, which perhaps seem pleasant at first, but, at last, bring destruction; but also concerning all noble enterprises, the studies of learning, and the practice of virtue and godliness, in which the beginnings are difficult and troublesome, but in the progress and conclusion they are most easy and comfortable; and it is not sufficient to begin well unless we persevere to the end, which crowns all; *and the patient in spirit*—Who quietly waits for the issue of things, and is willing to bear hardships and inconveniences in the mean time; *is better than the proud in spirit*—Which he puts instead of *hasty or impatient*, because pride is the chief cause of impatience. *Be not hasty in thy spirit, &c.*—Be not angry with any man without due consideration, and just and necessary cause: see on Mark iii. 5. *For anger resteth in the bosom of fools*—That is, sinful anger, implying not only displeasure at the sin or folly of an-

A. M. 3027. 10 Say not thou, What is the cause  
B. C. 977. that the former days were better than  
these? for thou dost not inquire <sup>3</sup> wisely concerning this.

11 ¶ Wisdom <sup>4</sup> is good with an inheritance : and *by it there is profit* <sup>5</sup> to them that see the sun.

12 For wisdom is a <sup>6</sup> defence, and money is a defence : but the excellency of knowledge is, that wisdom giveth life to them that have it.

13 Consider the work of God : for <sup>1</sup> who can make *that* straight, which he hath made crooked ?

<sup>3</sup> Heb. out of wisdom.—<sup>4</sup> Or, as good as an inheritance, yea, better too.—<sup>5</sup> Chap. xi. 7.—<sup>6</sup> Heb. shadow.—<sup>1</sup> See Job xii. 14 ; Chap. i. 15 ; Isa. xiv. 27.

other, which is lawful and proper, but ill-will and a desire of revenge, hath its quiet abode in the heart of fools : is ever at hand upon all occasions, whereas wise men resist, mortify, and banish it.

Verse 10. *Say not thou*—Namely, by way of impatient expostulation and complaint against God, either for permitting such disorders in the world, or for bringing thee into the world in such an evil time and state of things: otherwise a man may say this by way of prudent and pious inquiry, that by searching out the cause, he may, as far as it is in his power, apply remedies to make the times better; *What is the cause that the former days were better?*—More quiet and comfortable. For this is an argument of a mind unthankful for the many mercies which men enjoy even in evil times. And *thou dost not inquire wisely concerning this*—This question shows thy folly in contending with thy Lord and Governor, and opposing thy shallow wit to his unsearchable wisdom.

Verses 11, 12. *Wisdom is good*—That is, very good; the positive being put for the superlative, as it frequently is in the Hebrew text; *with an inheritance*—When wisdom and riches meet in one man, it is a happy conjunction, for wisdom without riches wants opportunities and instruments of doing that good in the world which it is willing and desirous of doing; and riches without wisdom are like a sword in a madman's hand, and an occasion of much sin and mischief both to himself and others. *And by it there is profit*—By wisdom joined with riches there comes great benefit to them that see the sun—That is, to mortal men; not only to a man's self, but many others who live with him in this world. *For wisdom is a defence*—Hebrew, *is a shadow*; which in Scripture signifies both protection and refreshment; and *money is a defence*—Thus far wisdom and money agree; *but the excellency of knowledge*—But herein knowledge or wisdom excels riches, that whereas riches frequently expose men to destruction, true wisdom doth often preserve a man from temporal, and always from eternal ruin.

Verse 13. *Consider the work of God*—Not of creation, but of providence; his wise, and just, and powerful government of all events, which is proposed as

14 <sup>1</sup> In the day of prosperity be joyful, A. M. 3027  
but in the day of adversity consider : B. C. 977.  
God also hath <sup>6</sup> set the one over against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him.

15 All things have I seen in the days of my vanity : <sup>1</sup> there is a just man that perisheth in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man that prolongeth his life in his wickedness.

16 <sup>m</sup> Be not righteous overmuch ; <sup>n</sup> neither make thyself overwise : why shouldest thou <sup>7</sup> destroy thyself ?

<sup>1</sup> Chap. iii. 4 ; Deut. xxviii. 47.—<sup>6</sup> Heb. made.—<sup>1</sup> Chap. viii. 14.—<sup>m</sup> Prov. xxv. 16.—<sup>n</sup> Rom. xii. 3.—<sup>7</sup> Hebrew, be desolate.

the last and best remedy against all murmurings. *For who can make that straight, &c.*—No man can correct or alter any of God's works; and therefore all frettings at the injuries of men, or calamities of the times, are not only sinful, but also vain and fruitless. This implies that there is a hand of God in all men's actions, either effecting them, if they be good, or permitting them, if they be bad, and ordering and overruling them, whether they be good or bad.

Verse 14. *In the day of prosperity be joyful*—Enjoy God's favours with thankfulness. *In the day of adversity consider*—Namely, God's work, that it is his hand, and therefore submit to it: consider also why he sends it: for what sins, and with what design? *God also hath set the one against the other*—Hath wisely ordained, that prosperity and adversity should succeed one another; *that man should find nothing after him*—Or, rather, *after it*, as it may be rendered; that is, after his present condition, whether it be prosperous or afflictive: that no man might be able to foresee what shall befall him afterward; and therefore might live in a constant dependance upon God, and neither despair in trouble, nor be secure or presumptuous in prosperity.

Verse 15. *All things have I seen*—All sorts of events, both such as have been already mentioned, and such as I am about to declare. *In the days of my vanity*—Since I have come into this vain life. *A just man perisheth in his righteousness*—Notwithstanding his righteousness; whom his righteousness does not deliver in common calamities, or, *for his righteousness*, which exposes him to the envy, anger, or hatred of wicked men. *And a wicked man prolongeth his life, &c.*—Notwithstanding all his wickedness, whereby he provokes and deserves the justice and wrath both of God and men; and yet for many wise and just reasons he is permitted to live long unpunished and secure.

Verse 16. *Be not righteous overmuch*—This verse and the next have a manifest reference to verse 15, being two inferences drawn from the two clauses of the observation there recorded. Solomon may here be considered as speaking in the person of an ungodly man, who takes occasion to dissuade men from righteousness, because of the danger which attends

A. M. 3027. 17 Be not overmuch wicked, nei-  
B. C. 977. ther be thou foolish : ° why shouldst thou die ° before thy time ?

18 It is good that thou shouldst take hold of this ; yea, also from this withdraw not thy hand : for he that feareth God shall come forth of them all.

19 Wisdom strengtheneth the wise more

° Job xv. 32 ; Psa. lv. 23 ; Prov. x. 27.—° Heb. not in thy time. Prov. xxi. 22 ; xxiv. 5 ; Chap. ix. 16, 18.—° 1 Kings viii. 46 ;

it. Therefore, saith he, take heed of strictness, zeal, and forwardness in religion. And in consistency with this the next verse may be viewed as containing an antidote to this suggestion ; “Yea, rather,” saith he, “be not wicked or foolish overmuch ; for that will not preserve thee, as thou mayest imagine, but will occasion and hasten thy ruin.” It must, however, be acknowledged, “there are many parts or appearances of religion which may be carried to an extreme. A man may be over tenacious of insignificant forms or human inventions : he may pretend to kinds and degrees of righteousness which the Scriptures do not require. His conscientiousness may degenerate into superstition and scrupulousness ; his benevolence into indiscretion, and his candour and good nature into folly : and in affecting to be acquainted with the whole of divine truth, he may become presumptuously curious, and intrude into unrevealed things. Thus many run into extremes, and expose themselves to needless persecution.”—Scott. Dr. Waterland renders it, *Do not exercise justice too rigorously*, according to the interpretation which Bishop Hall gives of it, namely, “Be not too rigorous in exacting the extremity of justice upon every occasion ; neither do thou affect too much semblance and ostentation of more justice than thou hast. Neither do thou arrogate more wisdom to thyself than is in thee.” Others again expound this and the next verse of the public administration of justice, which ought to be neither too rigid nor too remiss and negligent. “*Non dubium est, &c.* There is no doubt,” says Melancthon, “but he speaks of political justice, which governs the things of this life ; and consists of a mean between cruelty and negligence. Too much severity becomes cruelty : and too much indulgence confirms men in wickedness. A good governor takes a middle course. The like admonition,” adds he, “is subjoined about wisdom ; for, as too much severity becomes cruelty, so too much wisdom, that is, subtlety, becomes caviling, sophistry, and cheating.” Dr. Hammond, however, understands these verses according to the interpretation first given, considering verse 16, *Be not righteous overmuch*, as the objection of a carnal, worldly man, or of a lukewarm professor ; “who takes that for an excess of duty which brings any damage, or worldly loss, upon him, which objection is answered,” says he, “in verse 17, *Be not wicked overmuch, &c.*, that is, the fears, and, from thence, the prudential, but oftentimes very impious prac-

than ten mighty men which are in the city. A. M. 3027. B. C. 977.

20 For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.

21 Also take no heed unto all words that are spoken ; lest thou hear thy servant curse thee :

22 For oftentimes also thine own heart

2 Chron. vi. 36 ; Prov. xx. 9 ; Rom. iii. 23 ; 1 John i. 8.—° Heb. give not thy heart.

tices of the worldling, are the more probable path to the most hasty ruin.”—See Bishop Patrick. This interpretation certainly appears the most probable, and most consistent with the context.

Verses 18-20. *It is good that thou shouldst take hold of this*—Embrace and practise this counsel last given. *Also from this withdraw not thy hand*—From the practice of the preceding advice : for he that feareth God—Who orders his actions so as to please God, and keep his commandments, walking by the rule of his word ; shall come forth of them all—Shall be delivered from all extremes, and from all the evil consequences of them. This verse seems more exactly rendered by a late writer thus : “The good which thou shouldst take hold of consists in this, (nay, thou shouldst never withdraw thine hand from it,) that he who feareth God shall avoid all these inconveniences.” *Wisdom strengtheneth the wise*—Hebrew, *החכמה תעזק*, that wisdom will strengthen the wise, namely, that fear of God, mentioned above, which is the true wisdom, and will teach a man to keep close to the rule of his duty, without turning either to the right hand or to the left ; more than ten mighty men which are in the city—It will support him better in troubles, and secure him more effectually against dangers, than many men uniting their forces to assist and protect him. Or, he shall be better enabled to go through this world, than any town can be to stand the attacks of her enemies, though ten powerful princes should unite in her favour, and join their forces to defend her bulwarks. This is a support which can never fail ; whereas, that of a man’s own righteousness and strength cannot but be weak and precarious. For, (verse 20,) *there is not a just man upon earth*—Rather, *a righteous man*, as *אדם צדיק* properly signifies, and is generally rendered, namely, one that is, and always has been righteous, according to God’s law, the rule of righteousness, which is holy, just, and good, and by which shall no flesh living be justified, Psa. cxliii. 2 ; Rom. iii. 20 ; Gal. ii. 16. Thus St. Paul, quoting the words of David, testifies, *There is none righteous, no, not one*. Solomon adds, *that doeth good, and sinneth not*—Who is universally and perfectly good and holy, and free from sin, in thought, word, and deed.

Verses 21, 22. *Take no heed unto all words that are spoken*—Namely, concerning thee, or against thee. Do not severely observe, or strictly search into them, or listen to hear them, as many persons,

A. M. 3027. knoweth that thou thyself likewise  
B. C. 977. hast cursed others.

23 ¶ All this have I proved by wisdom:  
I said, I will be wise; but it *was* far from me.

24 \*That which is far off, and †exceeding deep, who can find it out?

25 ¶ <sup>10</sup>I <sup>11</sup>applied my heart to know, and to search, and to seek out wisdom, and the reason of things, and to know the wickedness of

\* Rom. i. 22.—† Job xxviii. 12, 20; 1 Tim. vi. 16.—‡ Rom. xi. 33.—<sup>10</sup> Heb. *I and my heart compassed*.—<sup>11</sup> Chap. i. 17; ii. 12.

out of curiosity, are wont to do. Under this one kind of offences which are most frequent, namely, those of the tongue, he seems to comprehend all injuries which we suffer from others, and advises that we should not too rigidly examine them, nor too deeply resent them, but rather neglect and forget them. *Lest thou hear thy servant curse thee*—Which would vex and grieve thee, and might, perhaps, provoke thee to treat him with severity, if not with vengeance and cruelty. *For oftentimes also thine own heart*—Thy mind or conscience, *knoweth*—Bears thee witness; *that thou thyself likewise*—Either upon some great provocation, and sudden passion, or possibly upon a mere mistake, or false report, *hast cursed others*—Hast censured them unjustly, and spoken ill of them, if not wished ill to them. If therefore thy servant, or any other, act thus toward thee, thou art only paid in thy own coin. Observe, reader, when any affront or injury is done us, it is seasonable to examine our consciences whether we have not done the same, or as bad, to others: and if, upon reflection, we find we have, we must take that occasion to renew our repentance for it, must justify God, and make use of it to qualify our own resentments. If we be truly displeased and grieved at ourselves for censuring and backbiting others, we shall be less angry at others for censuring and backbiting us. We must *show all meekness toward all men, because we ourselves were formerly foolish*, Titus iii. 2.

Verses 23, 24. *All this have I proved*—All these things, of which I have here discoursed, I have diligently examined and found to be true; *by wisdom*—By the help of that singular wisdom which God had given me. *I said, I will be wise*—I determined that I would, by all possible means, seek to attain perfection of wisdom, and I persuaded myself that I should attain it; *but it was far from me*—I found myself greatly disappointed, and the more I knew the more I saw mine own folly. *That which is far off, &c.*—No human understanding can attain to perfect wisdom, or to the exact knowledge of God's counsels and works, and the reasons of them, because they are unsearchably deep, and far above out of our sight; some of them being long since past, and therefore utterly unknown to us, and others yet to come, which we cannot foreknow.

folly, even of foolishness *and* madness: A. M. 3027. B. C. 977.

26 \* And I find more bitter than death the woman whose heart *is* snares and nets, *and* her hands *as* bands: <sup>11</sup>whoso pleaseth God shall escape from her; but the sinner shall be taken by her.

27 Behold, this have I found, saith † the preacher, <sup>12</sup>counting one by one, to find out the account;

\* Prov. v. 3, 4; xxii. 14.—<sup>11</sup> Heb. *he that is good before God*. † Chap. i. 1, 2.—<sup>12</sup> Or, *weighing one thing after another, to find out the reason*.

Verse 25. *I applied my heart to know*—I was not discouraged, but provoked, by the difficulty of the work, to undertake it. *To know, search, and seek out wisdom*—He useth three words signifying the same thing, to intimate his vehement desire, and vigorous and unwearied endeavours after it. *And the reason of things*—Both of God's various providences, and of the counsels and courses of men. *To know the wickedness, &c.*—Clearly and fully to understand the great evil of sin.

Verse 26. *And I find*—By my own sad experience, which Solomon here records as a testimony of his true repentance for his foul miscarriages, for which he was willing to take shame to himself, not only from the present, but from all succeeding generations; *more bitter than death is the woman*—The strange woman, of whom he speaks so much in the Proverbs; more vexatious and pernicious, as producing those horrors of conscience, those reproaches, diseases, and other plagues, both temporal and spiritual, from God, which are far worse than the mere death of the body, and, after all these, everlasting destruction; *whose heart is snares and nets*—Who is full of crafty devices to ensnare men; *and her hands*—By gifts, or lascivious actions, *as bands*—Wherewith she holds them in cruel bondage, so that they have neither power nor will to forsake her, notwithstanding all the dangers and mischiefs which they know attend upon such practices. *Whoso pleaseth God*—Hebrew, *he that is good before God*, who is sincerely, and in the judgment of God, truly pious; *shall escape her*—Shall be preserved from falling into her hands. Hereby he intimates, that neither a good temper of mind, nor great discretion, nor a good education, nor any other thing, except God's grace, is a sufficient preservative from the dominion of fleshy lusts; *but the sinner*—Who rests satisfied without the saving grace of God and true piety, and therefore lives in known and wilful sin; *shall be taken by her*—Shall be entangled and held in her chains.

Verses 27, 28. *Behold, saith the preacher*—Or, *the penitent*, who speaks what he hath learned, both by deep study and costly experience; *this have I found*—And it is a strange thing, and worthy of your serious observation; *counting one by one*—Considering things or persons, very exactly and dis-

A. M. 3027. 28 Which yet my soul seeketh, but  
B. C. 977. I find not : \* one man among a thousand have I found ; but a woman among all those have I not found.

\* Job xxxiii. 23 ; Psa. xii. 1.

tinctly, one after another ; to find out the account—That I might make a true and just estimate in this matter ; or, as it is in the margin, to find out the reason. Which yet my soul seeketh—It seems so wonderful to me, that I suspected that I had not made a sufficient inquiry, and therefore I returned and searched again, with more earnestness ; but I find not—That it was so he found, but the reason of the thing he could not find out. One man—A wise and virtuous man ; among a thousand—With whom I have conversed ; have I found—He is supposed to mention this number in allusion to his thousand wives and concubines, as they are numbered, 1 Kings xi. 3 ; but a woman—One worthy of that name, one who is not a dishonour to her sex ; among all those, have I not found—In that thousand whom I have taken into intimate society with myself. It is justly observed by different commentators here, that “we are not hence to infer, that Solomon thought there were fewer good women than men : but that he knew he had not gone the right way to find the virtuous woman, when he deviated so widely from the original law of marriage ; and instead of seeking one rational companion, the sole object of his endeared affections, he had collected a vast multitude for magnificence and indulgence. The more valuable part of the sex would

29 Lo, this only have I found, A. M. 3027.  
B. C. 977. \* that God hath made man upright ; but <sup>b</sup> they have sought out many inventions.

\* Gen. i. 27.—<sup>b</sup> Gen. iii. 6, 7.

not willingly form one in such a group ; and, if any of them were previously well disposed, the jealousies, party interests, contests, and artifices which take place in such situations, would tend exceedingly to corrupt them, and render them all nearly of the same character. Solomon therefore here speaks the language of a penitent, warning others against the sins into which he had been betrayed ; and not that of a waspish satirist, lashing indiscriminately one half of the human species.”—Scott.

Verse 29. Lo, this only have I found—Though I could not find out all the streams of wickedness, and their infinite windings and turnings, yet I have discovered the fountain of it, original sin, and the corruption of nature, which is both in men and women ; that God made our first parents, Adam and Eve, upright—Hebrew, right : without any imperfection or corruption, conformable to his nature and will, after his own likeness : but they—Our first parents, and after them their posterity ; have sought out many inventions—Were not contented with their present state, but studied new ways of making themselves more wise and happy than God had made them. And we, their wretched children, are still prone to forsake the certain rule of God’s word, and the true way to happiness, and to seek new methods of attaining it.

CHAPTER VIII.

The benefit of wisdom, 1. Honour the king and obey God, 2–5. Prepare for sudden evils, and for death, 6–8. Marvel not at oppression, or the present impunity of the wicked, 9–11. It shall be well with the good, and ill with the wicked, though not immediately, 12–14. Therefore cheerfully use the gifts of God, and acquiesce in his will, 15–17.

A. M. 3027. WHO is as the wise man? and who  
B. C. 977. knoweth the interpretation of a thing? \* a man’s wisdom maketh his face to shine, and <sup>1</sup> the <sup>b</sup> boldness of his face shall be changed.

\* Prov. iv. 8, 9 ; xvii. 24 ; see Acts vi. 15.—<sup>1</sup> Heb. the strength.  
<sup>b</sup> Deut. xxviii. 50.

NOTES ON CHAPTER VIII.

Verse 1. Who is wise?—There are few wise men in this world. Who knoweth, &c.—How few understand the reasons of things, and can rightly expound the word and works of God! A man’s wisdom makes his face, &c.—Makes a man venerable, cheerful, mild, and amiable. The face is put for the mind, because the mind discovers itself in the countenance. The boldness of his face—The

2 ¶ I counsel thee to keep the A. M. 3027.  
king’s commandment, \* and that in A. D. 977.  
regard of the oath of God.

3 <sup>d</sup> Be not hasty to go out of his sight : stand

<sup>c</sup> 1 Chronicles xxix. 24 ; Ezekiel xvii. 18 ; Romans xiii. 5.  
<sup>d</sup> Chap. x. 4.

roughness or fierceness of it, shall be changed—Into gentleness and humility.

Verses 2–4. I counsel thee to keep the king’s commandment—All his commands which are not contrary to the will of God, who must be obeyed rather than any man, even rather than a king. In regard of the oath of God—Because of that oath which thou hast taken to keep all God’s laws, whereof this of obedience to superiors is one. Be

A. M. 3027. not in an evil thing; for he doeth  
B. C. 977. whatsoever pleaseth him.

4 Where the word of a king is, there is power: and <sup>o</sup> who may say unto him, What doest thou?

5 Whoso keepeth the commandment <sup>2</sup> shall feel no evil thing: and a wise man's heart discerneth both time and judgment.

6 Because <sup>f</sup> to every purpose there is time and judgment, therefore the misery of man is greater upon him.

7 <sup>g</sup> For he knoweth not that which shall be: for who can tell him <sup>3</sup> when it shall be?

<sup>o</sup> Job xxxiv. 18.—<sup>2</sup> Hebrew, shall know.—<sup>f</sup> Chap. iii. 1.  
<sup>g</sup> Prov. xxiv. 22; Chap. vi. 12; ix. 12; x. 14.

not hasty to go out of his sight—Hebrew, to go from his face or presence, namely, in dislike or discontent to withdraw thyself from the king's service, or from obedience to him: stand not in an evil thing—If thou hast offended him, persist not to do so, but humbly acknowledge thine offence, and beg his pardon; for he doth whatsoever pleaseth him—His power is uncontrollable. Where the word of a king is, there is power—Whatsoever he commands he wants not power nor instruments to execute, and therefore can easily punish thee as he pleases. And who may say unto him—Hebrew, who shall say? who will presume, or dare to say so? He does not affirm that it is unlawful to say so; for Samuel spoke in that manner to Saul, and Nathan to David, and several other prophets to the kings of Judah and Israel; but only that it is difficult and dangerous.

Verse 5. Whoso keepeth the commandment—Solomon here passes to a new subject; shall feel no evil thing—Shall be delivered from those mischiefs which befall the disobedient. A wise man's heart discerneth, &c.—Both when, and in what manner, he must keep the commands of God.

Verses 6, 7. Because to every purpose there is a time, &c.—There is a fit way and season for the accomplishment of every business, which is known to God, but for the most part hidden from man. See notes on chap. iii. 1. Therefore the misery of man is great—Because there are few who have wisdom to discern this, most men expose themselves to manifold miseries. For he knoweth not that which shall be—Men are generally ignorant of future events, and of the success of their endeavours, and therefore their minds are disquieted, and their expectations frequently are disappointed, and they fall into many mistakes and miscarriages, which they might prevent if they foresaw the issues of things; who can tell when it shall be?—No wise man, no astrologer, no soothsayer can discover this.

Verse 8. No man hath power over the spirit—That is, over the soul of man; to retain the spirit—To keep it in the body beyond the time which God hath allotted to it. This is added as another evidence of man's misery. Neither hath he power

8 <sup>h</sup> There is no man that hath power <sup>1</sup> over the spirit to retain the spirit: nei-

ther hath he power in the day of death: and there is no <sup>4</sup> discharge in that war; neither shall wickedness deliver those that are given to it.

9 All this have I seen, and applied my heart unto every work that is done under the sun: there is a time wherein one man ruleth over another to his own hurt.

10 And so I saw the wicked buried, who had come and gone from the place of the holy, and they were forgotten in the city where they had so done: this is also vanity.

<sup>h</sup> Or, how it shall be.—<sup>b</sup> Psalm xlix. 6, 7.—<sup>1</sup> Job xiv. 5.  
<sup>4</sup> Or, casting off weapons.

in the day of death—Or, against the day, that is, to avoid, or delay that day; and there is no discharge—As there is in other wars; in that war—In that fatal conflict between life and death, when a man is struggling with death, though to no purpose, for death will be always conqueror. Neither shall wickedness deliver, &c.—And although wicked men, who most fear death, use all possible means to free themselves from it, yet they shall not escape it. The most subtle wickedness cannot out-wit death, nor the most daring wickedness out-brave it.

Verses 9, 10. All this I have seen—All these things before mentioned; and applied my heart unto every work—I have been a diligent observer of all actions and events. There is a time when one man ruleth, &c.—There are some kings, who use their power tyrannically, whereby they not only oppress their people, but hurt themselves, bringing the vengeance of God upon their own heads. And so I saw—In like manner; the wicked—Wicked princes or rulers, buried—With state or pomp; who had come and gone—Had administered public justice, which is frequently signified by the phrase of coming in and going out before the people; from the place of the holy—The seat of majesty and judgment, which may well be termed, the place, or seat, of the holy—That is, of God, often called the holy one; who is in a special manner present in, and presides over those places where justice is administered: and for whom, and in whose name and stead, magistrates act, who, therefore, are called gods. And the tribunal seems to be so called here, to aggravate their sin, who, being advanced by God into so high and sacred a place, betrayed so great a trust, and both practised and encouraged that wickedness which, by their office, they were obliged to suppress and punish. And they were forgotten—Although they designed to perpetuate their names and memories to succeeding ages; in the city where they had so done—Where they had lived in great splendour, and were buried with great magnificence, which one might have thought would have kept up their remembrance, at least, in that place. This is also vanity—That men should so earnestly thirst after,

A. M. 3027. 11 ¶ <sup>k</sup> Because sentence against an  
B. C. 977. evil work is not executed speedily,  
therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully  
set in them to do evil.

12 ¶ <sup>l</sup> Though a sinner do evil a hundred  
times, and his *days* be prolonged, yet surely I  
know that <sup>m</sup> it shall be well with them that fear  
God, which fear before him :

13 But it shall not be well with the wicked,  
neither shall he prolong *his days*, which are as  
a shadow ; because he feareth not before God.

14 There is a vanity which is done upon the  
earth ; that there be just *men*, unto whom it  
<sup>n</sup> happeneth according to the work of the wicked :  
again, there be wicked *men*, to whom it hap-  
peneth according to the work of the righte-

<sup>k</sup> Psa. x. 6 ; i. 21 ; Isa. xxvi. 10.—Isa. lxx. 20 ; Rom. ii. 5.  
<sup>l</sup> Psa. xxxvii. 11, 18, 19 ; Prov. i. 32, 33 ; Isa. iii. 10, 11 ; Matt.  
xxv. 34, 41.

and please themselves with worldly glory, which is  
so soon extinct, and the very memory of which is  
so quickly worn out of the minds of men.

Verse 11. *Because sentence against an evil work*  
—God's determinate counsel for the punishment of  
all evil doers ; *is not executed speedily*—But is often-  
times delayed for some time, to give them space for  
repentance ; *therefore the heart of the sons of men*  
*is fully set in them*—Hebrew, כלל לב, *their heart*  
*is filled*, or, as the LXX, render it ελληφορορηθη καρδια  
*is carried on with full sail*, like a ship with a  
strong and violent wind ; or, *is bold*, or *presumptu-*  
*ous*, as the same phrase is used elsewhere.

Verses 12, 13. *Though a sinner do evil a hun-*  
*dred times*—Frequently, and innumerable ; *and his*  
*days be prolonged*—The time of his life and prospe-  
rity ; *yet it shall be well with them that fear God*  
—This implies both that good men might for a time  
suffer grievous things from tyrants, oppressors, and  
persecutors, and that it should be very ill with the  
wicked, which, indeed, is expressed in the following  
verse : *which fear before him*—Who stand in awe  
of God, and fear and forbear to sin, out of a sincere  
regard and reverence for him. *But it shall not be*  
*well with the wicked*—That is, it shall go very ill  
with him ; great miseries are prepared for him ;  
*neither shall he prolong his days*—Namely, very  
long, as he desires ; *which are as a shadow*—His  
life, though it may seem long, yet in truth is but a  
shadow, which will quickly vanish and disappear.  
*Because he feareth not God*—He is cut off, and this  
misery is prepared for him as the punishment of his  
casting off the fear and service of God.

Verses 14, 15. *There is a vanity which is done*  
*upon the earth*—Either by wicked potentates, who  
do commonly advance unworthy men, and oppress  
persons of the greatest virtue and merit : or, by  
God's providence, who sees it fit for many weighty  
reasons so to manage the affairs of the present world.  
*To whom it happeneth, &c.*—Who meet with such

ous : I said that this also *is* vanity. A. M. 3027.

15 ¶ <sup>o</sup> Then I commended mirth,  
because a man hath no better thing under the  
sun than to eat, and to drink, and to be merry :  
for that shall abide with him of his labour the days  
of his life, which God giveth him under the sun.

16 ¶ When I applied my heart to know wis-  
dom, and to see the business that is done upon  
the earth : (for also *there is that* neither day  
nor night seeth sleep with his eyes :)

17 Then I beheld all the work of God, that  
<sup>p</sup> a man cannot find out the work that is done  
under the sun : because though a man labour  
to seek *it* out, yet he shall not find *it* ; yea  
further ; though a wise *man* think to know *it*,  
<sup>q</sup> yet shall he not be able to find *it*.

<sup>o</sup> Psa. lxxiii. 14 ; Chap. ii. 14 ; vii. 15 ; ix. 1, 2, 3.—<sup>o</sup> Chap.  
ii. 24 ; iii. 12, 22 ; v. 18 ; ix. 7.—<sup>p</sup> Job v. 9 ; Chap. iii. 11 ; Rom.  
xi. 33.—<sup>q</sup> Psa. lxxiii. 16.

usage as the worst of men deserve. *There be wicked*  
*men to whom it happeneth*—Who, instead of those  
punishments which they deserve, receive those  
rewards which are due to virtuous men. *This*  
*also is vanity*—This is a very unreasonable thing,  
if it be considered without respect unto another  
life, as it is here, where Solomon is discoursing  
of the vanity of the present life, and of the impossi-  
bility of finding satisfaction and happiness in it.  
*Then I commended mirth*—Hebrew, השמחה, joy or  
gladness. Upon these considerations I concluded,  
that it was most advisable for a man not to perplex  
and torment himself with the thoughts of the seem-  
ing inequality of the dispensations of Divine Provi-  
dence, and of the great disorders which are in the  
world, or with cares and fears about future temporal  
events, or with insatiable desires of worldly things,  
but quietly, cheerfully, and thankfully to enjoy the  
comforts which God gives him. See notes on chap.  
ii. 24, and iii. 12, 13 ; *for that shall abide with him of*  
*his labour, &c.*—This is the best advantage which he  
can make of this world's goods, as to the present life.

Verse 16. *When I applied my heart to know*  
*wisdom*—He seems to be here assigning the reason  
of that judgment which he had now passed, (verse  
15,) which reason is, that he had diligently studied  
wherein man's wisdom consists, and had observed  
the restlessness of men's minds and bodies in other  
courses ; *and to see the business*—To observe men's  
various designs and employments, and their unwea-  
ried labours about worldly things. *For there is that*  
*neither day nor night seeth sleep*—Having now  
mentioned the *business which is done*, or which  
man doth, *upon earth*, he further adds, as an evi-  
dence of man's eagerness in pursuing his business,  
*For even by day and by night he*—The busy man ;  
*seeth not sleep with his eyes*—He grudges himself  
necessary refreshments, and disquiets himself with  
endless cares and labours.

Verse 17. *Then*—Hebrew, and, or, moreover, I

beheld all the work of God—I considered the counsels and ways of God, and the various methods of his providence toward good and bad men, and the reasons of them. *That a man cannot find out the work, &c.*—No man, though ever so wise, is able fully and perfectly to understand these

things. And therefore, it is best for man not to perplex himself with endless and fruitless inquiries about those matters, but quietly to submit to God's will and providence, and to live in the fear of God, and the comfortable enjoyment of his blessings.

CHAPTER IX.

Outward things come to good and bad men alike, 1-3. Death puts an end to all, 4-6. Therefore enjoy the comforts and mind the business of life while it lasts, 7-10. God's providence disposes all things, 11, 12. Wisdom often makes men very useful, and yet gains them little respect, 13-18.

A. M. 3027. B. C. 977. **FOR** all this <sup>1</sup>I considered in my heart even to declare all this, <sup>a</sup>that the righteous, and the wise, and their works, are in the hand of God: no man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before them.

<sup>2</sup> <sup>b</sup>All things come alike to all: there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked; to the good, and to the clean, and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not: as is the good, so is the sinner; and he that sweareth, as he that feareth an oath.

<sup>3</sup> This is an evil among all things that are

done under the sun, that there is one <sup>A. M. 3027. B. C. 977.</sup> event unto all: yea, also the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their heart while they live, and after that they go to the dead.

<sup>4</sup> ¶ For to him that is joined to all the living there is hope: for a living dog is better than a dead lion.

<sup>5</sup> For the living know that they shall die: but <sup>c</sup>the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for <sup>d</sup>the memory of them is forgotten.

<sup>6</sup> Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any

<sup>1</sup> Heb. I gave, or, set to my heart.—<sup>a</sup> Chap. viii. 14.—<sup>b</sup> Job xxi. 7; Psa. lxxiii. 3, 12, 13; Mal. iii. 15.

<sup>c</sup> Job xiv. 21; Isa. lxiii. 16.—<sup>d</sup> Job vii. 8, 9, 10; Isaiah xxvi. 14.

NOTES ON CHAPTER IX.

Verse 1. *For, or therefore, as the LXX. render it, all this I considered in my heart*—All that I have said concerning the methods of divine providence, toward good and bad men; *to declare all this*—To make this evident, first to myself, and then to others; *that the righteous*—Whom he mentions, not exclusively, as if wicked men were not also in God's hand, for the next clause relates both to the good and bad; but eminently, because, by the course of God's providence toward them, they might seem to be quite neglected by God; *and their works are in the hand of God*—All their actions and employments; all events which befall them are governed by his providence, and therefore, although we cannot fully understand the reasons of all, yet we may be assured they are done righteously. *No man knoweth either love or hatred*—No man can judge by their present outward condition, whether God loves or hates them; for whom he loves he chastens, and permits those whom he hates to prosper in the world.

Verses 2, 3. *All things come alike to all*—The good and evil things of this world equally happen to good and bad men; *as is the good, so is the sinner*—As to all outward things. *This is an evil, &c.*—A great trouble and temptation to a considerate and good man; *yea, also the heart of the sons of men*—

Of wicked men, such as the generality of mankind are; *is full of evil*—Of wickedness; *and madness is in their heart*—Upon this account they go on madly and desperately in evil courses, without any fear of an after reckoning; *and after that they go to the dead*—And after all they appear to die in the same manner as the best men do. So hitherto there is no difference. For Solomon here forbears to take into consideration the future life: he intimates, however, that as the madness, so the happiness of the wicked, is ended by death: which is more fully expressed in the following words.

Verses 4-6. *For to him that is joined to all the living*—That continues with living men; *there is hope*—He hath not only some comfort for the present, but also hopes of further and greater happiness in this world, which men are very prone to entertain and cherish in themselves. Yea, he may have the hopes of a better life, if he improve his opportunities. *For a living dog is better than a dead lion*—Much happier as to the comforts of this world. "The meanest and most contemptible person here, in this world, hath the advantage of the greatest king, when he is gone out of it." *For the living know that they shall die*—Whereby they are taught to improve life while they have it. *But the dead know not any thing*—Of the actions and events of

A. M. 3027. more a portion for ever in any thing  
B. C. 977. that is done under the sun.

7 ¶ Go thy way, ° eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God now accepteth thy works.

8 Let thy garments be always white; and let thy head lack no ointment.

9 ² Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity: ˆ for that is thy portion in this life, and in thy labour which thou takest under the sun.

10 Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it

° Chap. viii. 15.—² Heb. See, or, enjoy life.—ˆ Chap. ii. 10, 24; iii. 13, 22; v. 18.

this world, as this is limited in the next verse. *Neither have they any more a reward*—In this world. The reward or fruit of their labours is utterly lost to them, and enjoyed by others. See chap. ii. 21. For otherwise, that there are future rewards after death, is asserted by Solomon elsewhere, as we have seen, and shall hereafter see. *For the memory of them is forgotten*—Namely, among living men, and even in those places where they had lived in great power and glory. *Also their love and hatred, &c., is now perished*—They neither love, nor hate, nor envy any thing in this world, but are unconcerned in what is done under the sun.

Verses 7–9. *Go thy way*—Make this use of what I have said. *Eat thy bread*—Thy necessary and convenient food; *with joy, &c.*—Cheerfully enjoy thy comforts, avoiding all distracting care and grief for the occurrences of this world. *For God now accepteth thy works*—Whosoever thou art, that art truly pious and upright before him, he is gracious unto thee, accepts thy services for his honour, and allows thee a comfortable enjoyment of his blessings. *Let thy garments be always white*—In all convenient times and circumstances; for there are times of mourning. The eastern people of the best sort used white garments, especially in times of rejoicing. But by this whiteness of garments he seems to intend a pleasant and cheerful conversation. *And let thy head lack no ointment*—Which, upon joyful occasions, was poured upon men's heads. *Live joyfully with thy wife*—The one wife, whom thou lovest. Love her, and keep thyself only to her, avoiding all improper intercourse and familiarity with all other women, and thou wilt live comfortably with her; *all the days of thy vanity*—Of this vain and frail life: which expression he uses to moderate men's affections even toward lawful pleasures, and to admonish them of their duty and interest in making sure of a better life, and more solid comforts. *For that is thy portion*—Allowed thee by God; and the best part of worldly enjoyments; *in this life*—By which addition he again reminds him of the duty of seeking another and better portion in a future life.

with thy might; for *there is* no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.

11 ¶ I returned, ˆ and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all.

12 For ˆ man also knoweth not his time: as the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in the snare; so are the sons of men ˆ snared in an evil time when it falleth suddenly upon them.

ˆ Amos ii. 14, 15; Jer. ix. 23.—ˆ Chap. viii. 7.—ˆ Prov. xxix. 6; Luke xii. 20, 39; xvii. 26; 1 Thess. v. 3.

Verse 10. *Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, &c.*—Whatever thou hast opportunity and ability to, in the duties of thy calling, or for the glory of God and the good of thy fellow creatures; *do it with all thy might*—With unwearied diligence, vigour, and expedition. Hereby again Solomon shows, that he does not persuade men to an idle and sensual life, but only to a sober enjoyment of their comforts in God's fear, and with an industrious prosecution of the business of their vocations. *For there is no work, &c., in the grave*—Thou canst neither design nor act any thing tending to the glory of God, or to thine own comfort or advantage there. Therefore neglect not thine only season.

Verse 11. *I returned and saw*—This may have some respect to the foregoing verse: for having urged men to labour with all their might, he now adds, by way of caution, that yet they must not be confident of their own strength, as if they were sure of success by it, but must look up to God for his blessing, without which all their endeavours would be in vain. But it seems chiefly to be added, either, as another instance of the liberty and power of God's providence, in the disposing of human affairs, of which he spake verses 1, 2; or as another of the vanities of this present life; *that the race is not to the swift*—Either ability to run, or success and victory in running; *nor the battle to the strong*—The victory in battle; *nor riches to men of understanding*—Who yet are most likely to get and keep riches; *nor yet favour*—Acceptance and love from men; *to men of skill*—Who know how to conduct themselves and all affairs, and therefore are most likely to find favour, at least, in the eyes of such as need their services; *but time and chance happeneth to them all*—There are times or seasons, casual to men, but known by God, in which alone he will give men success.

Verse 12. *For man also knoweth not his time*—Namely, the time of his death, or of some other sore distress, which God is bringing upon him; *as fishes are taken in an evil net*—While they are sporting and feeding themselves, are suddenly and unexpect-

A. M. 3027. 13 ¶ This wisdom have I seen also  
B. C. 977.

under the sun, and it *seemed* great unto me :

14 <sup>k</sup> *There was* a little city, and few men within it ; and there came a great king against it, and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it :

15 Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the

<sup>k</sup> See 2 Sam. xx. 16-22.—¶ Prov. xxi. 22 ; xxiv. 5 ; Chap. vii. 19 ;

edly ensnared to their ruin ; *so are the sons of men snared*—When they are most careless and secure.

Verses 13-16. *This wisdom have I seen*—I have observed this among many other instances and effects of wisdom. Which he adds for the commendation of wisdom, notwithstanding its insufficiency for man's safety and happiness without God's blessing. *And it seemed great unto me*—I judged it very praiseworthy, though others despised it, as it follows. *There was a little city, &c.*—It is doubtful whether Solomon be here relating a certain fact which had occurred in some neighbouring country, or delivering a parable to represent the value of wisdom, and the ingratitude and neglect with which those who have greatly benefited others by it, are often treated by them. St. Jerome, as appears by the following paraphrase, considers him as alluding to several facts of the same or a similar kind, "It hath often been seen that a small city and few inhabitants, being beset by an army of innumerable enemies, and besieged so straitly that they were in danger, if not otherways, of perishing by famine ; were, on a sudden, contrary to all men's expectation, delivered by a mean person, who, having more wisdom than all the great and powerful citizens,

city ; yet no man remembered that A. M. 3027.  
same poor man. B. C. 977.

16 <sup>1</sup> Then said I, Wisdom *is* better than strength : nevertheless <sup>m</sup> the poor man's wisdom *is* despised, and his words are not heard.

17 The words of wise *men are* heard in quiet more than the cry of him that ruleth among fools.

18 <sup>n</sup> Wisdom *is* better than weapons of war : but <sup>o</sup> one sinner destroyeth much good.

Ver. 18.—<sup>m</sup> Mark vi. 2, 3.—<sup>n</sup> Ver. 16.—<sup>o</sup> Josh. vii. 1, 11, 12-

thought of a way to save them, when they gave themselves up for lost, and effected that of which they utterly despaired. And yet, O the ungratefulness of mankind ! after the siege was raised, no one thought of this poor man ;" namely, to give him thanks, much less to reward him for their safety. "It sets forth," says Lord Bacon, "the depraved and malignant nature of mankind ; who, in extremities and straits commonly flee to men of wisdom and courage, whom before they despised ; but, so soon as the storm is over, they become unthankful wretches to their preservers."

Verse 17. *The words of wise men*—Though poor ; *are heard in quiet*—Are uttered with a modest and low voice, and are, or should be, *heard* by wise men ; *more than the cry*—The clamorous and senseless discourses ; *of him that ruleth among fools*—Of a rich and potent, but foolish man, who has some influence on fools like himself, but is justly neglected, and his words disregarded by wise men. Or, as Aben Ezra interprets the verse, connecting it with the preceding, "The words of the wise are despised by the people when they are in prosperity, but when they are in distress, and silenced by fear and grief, then they listen eagerly and diligently."

## CHAPTER X.

Observations on wisdom and folly, 1-3. On rulers, 4-7. Miscellaneous observations, 8-11. On governing the tongue, 12-14. More miscellaneous observations, 15-20.

A. M. 3027. DEAD <sup>1</sup> flies cause the ointment of  
B. C. 977. the apothecary to send forth a stink-

ing savour : *so doth* a little folly him that A. M. 3027.  
is in reputation for wisdom *and* honour. B. C. 977.

<sup>1</sup> Heb. *Flies*

of death.

### NOTES ON CHAPTER X.

Verse 1. *Dead flies, &c.*—Solomon seems in these words to be prosecuting what he had said in the last clause of the preceding chapter ; showing how much good one foolish action may destroy, what evil may result from it, and how a man, otherwise famed for wisdom, may thereby lose his reputation. So most interpreters understand the verse. "The wiser or better," says Bishop Patrick, "any man is, so much the more cautious ought he to be in all his words

and actions, if he mean to preserve that credit, esteem, and authority in the world, which give him great advantages for doing good. For, as dead flies, though very small creatures, falling into a pot of ointment," and abiding and being putrified in it, "corrupt that precious composition, and turn the perfume into a stink ; so doth a small error or miscarriage blemish him who was highly valued for his discretion and virtue." And this comes to pass, partly, because all the actions, and consequently the

A. M. 3027. 2 A wise man's heart is at his right  
B. C. 977. hand; but a fool's heart is at his left.

3 Yea also, when he that is a fool walketh by the way, <sup>2</sup> his wisdom faileth him, <sup>a</sup> and he saith to every one that he is a fool.

4 If the spirit of the ruler rise up against thee, <sup>b</sup> leave not thy place; for <sup>c</sup> yielding pacifieth great offences.

5 There is an evil which I have seen under the sun, as an error which proceedeth <sup>3</sup> from the ruler.

<sup>1</sup> Heb. his heart.—<sup>2</sup> Prov. xiii. 16; xviii. 2.—<sup>b</sup> Chap. viii. 3.  
<sup>c</sup> 1 Sam. xxv. 24, &c.; Prov. xxv. 15.—<sup>3</sup> Heb. from before.

follies of such men are most diligently observed, whereas the actions and follies of persons known to be ignorant and weak are generally disregarded; and, partly, because of that envious and malicious disposition which is in the minds of too many, and makes them quick-sighted to discover, and glad to hear, and forward to declare, the faults of such as, by their greater eminence, outshone and obscured them.

Verses 2, 3. *A wise man's heart is at his right hand*—His understanding or wisdom is always present with him, and ready to direct him in all his actions. He manages all his affairs prudently and piously. He mentions the right hand because that is the common instrument of action. *But a fool's heart is at his left*—His understanding and knowledge serve him only for idle speculation and vain ostentation, but is not useful or effectual to govern his affections and actions. *Yea also, when he walketh by the way*—Not only in great undertakings, but in his daily conversation; *his wisdom faileth him*—Hebrew, לְבוֹחֵר, *his heart is wanting*; he acts preposterously and foolishly, as if he were without a heart. *He saith, &c.*—He discovers his folly to all that meet him or converse with him.

Verses 4. *If the spirit of a ruler*—His passion or wrath; *rise up against thee*—Upon some misinformation given him, or mismanagement of thine; *leave not thy place*—In anger or discontent. Withdraw not thyself rashly and hastily from his presence and service: see on chap. viii. 3. Continue in a diligent and faithful discharge of thy duty, as becomes a subject, and modestly and humbly submit to him. *For yielding pacifieth, &c.*—Hebrew מְרַפֵּא נַפְשׁוֹ, *healing maketh to cease great sins*: that is, a submissive, meek deportment, which is of a healing nature, appeaseth wrath conceived for great offences.

Verses 5-7. *There is an evil, &c.*—I have observed another great vanity and misdemeanour among men; *as an error which proceedeth, &c.*—Or rather, as the Hebrew may be translated, *which is indeed an error proceeding from the ruler*: for the following erroneous conduct must needs come from those who have power of conferring honour and authority. *Folly is set in great dignity*—Foolish and unworthy persons are frequently advanced by the favour or humour of princes into places of

6 <sup>d</sup> Folly is set <sup>e</sup> in great dignity, and <sup>f</sup> the rich sit in low place. A. M. 3027.  
B. C. 977.

7 I have seen servants <sup>g</sup> upon horses, and princes walking as servants upon the earth.

8 <sup>f</sup> He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it; and whoso breaketh a hedge, a serpent shall bite him.

9 Whoso removeth stones shall be hurt therewith; and he that cleaveth wood shall be endangered thereby.

<sup>d</sup> Esth. iii. 1.—<sup>e</sup> Heb. in great heights.—<sup>f</sup> Prov. xix. 10; xxx. 22.—<sup>g</sup> Psa. vii. 15; Prov. xxvi. 27.

great trust and dignity, which is at once a great reproach to the prince, and a sore calamity to his people. *And the rich sit in a low place*—Wise and worthy men, rich in endowments of the mind, are neglected and despised, or removed from those places to which their merits had raised them. *I have seen servants on horses*—Men of a servile condition and disposition riding in pomp and state as princes; *and princes*—Men of noble birth and qualities, fit to rule a kingdom, *walking as servants*—In a state of poverty and degradation, despised and disregarded.

Verses 8, 9. *He that diggeth a pit, &c.*—The meaning of these verses, which may be considered as common proverbs, is, that those who are seeking and striving to injure others, often bring mischiefs thereby on their own heads; as he that digs a pit for another may, unawares, fall into it himself; and he who, in those hot countries, was pulling up a hedge, was in danger of being bit by a serpent lurking in it; and he that removes stones to undermine his neighbour's house, may possibly be hurt, if not killed, by the upper stones falling on himself. It may be observed here, however, that Melancthon, Bishop Patrick, and many other interpreters, consider these verses as containing warnings to princes and people to take heed they do not rashly, and with violence, attempt to make changes in the established order of things in churches or states. "Let neither prince nor people," says Henry, "violently attempt any changes, nor make a forcible entry upon a national settlement, for they will both find it of dangerous consequence. Let not princes invade the rights and liberties of their subjects; and let not subjects mutiny and rebel against their princes, but let both be content within their own bounds. God, by his ordinance, as by a hedge, hath enclosed the prerogatives and powers of princes, and their persons are under his special protection; those, therefore, that form any treasonable designs against their peace, their crown, and dignity, are but twisting halters for themselves. And those that go about to alter a well-modelled, well-settled government, under colour of redressing some grievances, and correcting some things amiss in it, will quickly perceive, not only that it is easier to find fault than to mend; to demolish that which is good, than to build up that which is better;" but that they pull a house down upon themselves, under the ruins of which they may per-

A. M. 3027. 10 If the iron be blunt, and he do  
B. C. 977. not whet the edge, then must he put  
to more strength: but wisdom *is* profitable to  
direct.

11 Surely the serpent will bite <sup>a</sup> without en-  
chantment; and a <sup>b</sup> babbler is no better.

12 <sup>h</sup> The words of a wise man's mouth *are*  
<sup>g</sup> gracious; but <sup>i</sup> the lips of a fool will swallow  
up himself.

13 The beginning of the words of his mouth  
*is* foolishness: and the end of <sup>7</sup> his talk *is* mis-  
chievous madness.

14 <sup>k</sup> A fool also <sup>s</sup> is full of words: a man

<sup>a</sup> Psa. lviii. 4, 5; Jer. viii. 17.—<sup>b</sup> Heb. *the master of the tongue*.—<sup>h</sup> Prov. x. 32; xii. 13.—<sup>g</sup> Heb. *grace*.—<sup>i</sup> Prov. x. 14; xviii. 7.

haps be crushed to death. But this latter verse is thus interpreted by some, *He that removeth stones*—That rashly attempts things too high and hard for him; *shall be hurt therewith*—Shall suffer injury from such attempts. *And he that cleaveth wood*—With an iron instrument; *shall be endangered thereby*—May peradventure cut himself: that is, he that deals with men of knotty, stubborn tempers, shall have much vexation and trouble thereby, and probably shall find his character as well as peace much wounded.

Verse 10. *If the iron be blunt*—The axe where- with a man cuts wood; *he must put to more strength*—To make it cut: that is, if a man do not use fit and proper means to accomplish any work, it will cost him so much the more labour and pains; *but wisdom is profitable to direct*—Both in the choice and in the use of means. In other words, As wisdom instructs a man in the smallest matters, so it is useful for a man's direction in all weighty affairs.

Verse 11. *Surely the serpent will bite without enchantment*—Unless it be seasonably prevented by the art and care of the charmer. This is an allusion to the general opinion, then and still prevailing in the eastern countries, that serpents might be charmed so as to be prevented from biting by certain incantations, or by singing and music. See note on Psalm lviii. 4, 5. *And a babbler is no better*—Hebrew, בעל הלשון, *the master of the tongue*; which may be understood either of a rash, loose talker, a mere bab- bler, or of a backbiter and slanderer. Each of these is in the habit of using his tongue as if he were lord of it, and often does much mischief thereby, espe- cially the latter, who, by his malicious words, bites secretly like a serpent, and gives deadly wounds to the characters of the absent.

Verses 12–15. *The words of a wise man are gra- cious*—Hebrew, חן, *grace*: as they are profitable, so they are acceptable to others, procuring him favour with those that hear him. *But the lips of a fool will swallow up himself*—His discourses are ungracious and offensive to others, and therefore pernicious to himself. *The beginning of his words is foolish-*

cannot tell what shall be; and <sup>1</sup> what A. M. 3027.  
shall be after him, who can tell him? B. C. 977.

15 The labour of the foolish wearieth every  
one of them, because he knoweth not how to  
go to the city.

16 ¶ <sup>m</sup> Wo to thee, O land, when thy king *is*  
a child, and thy princes eat in the morning!

17 Blessed *art* thou, O land, when thy king  
*is* the son of nobles, and <sup>n</sup> thy princes eat in due  
season, for strength, and not for drunkenness!

18 ¶ By much slothfulness the building de-  
cayeth; and through idleness of the hands the  
house droppeth through.

<sup>1</sup> Heb. *his mouth*.—<sup>k</sup> Prov. xv. 2.—<sup>a</sup> Heb. *multiplied words*.  
<sup>h</sup> Chap. iii. 22; vi. 12; viii. 7.—<sup>m</sup> Isaiah iii. 4, 5, 12; v. 11.  
<sup>n</sup> Prov. xxxi. 4.

*ness, &c.*—All his talk, from the beginning to the end, is foolish and sinful; the more he talks the more his folly and wickedness appear; *and the end is mis-chievous madness*—He proceeds from evil to worse, and adds wilfulness to his weakness, and never desists till he hath done mischief to himself or others. *A fool also is full of words*—Forward to promise and boast what he will do; which is the common practice of foolish men, and running on endlessly, and never knowing when to cease; for he will have the last word, though it be but the same with that which was the first. *A man cannot tell what shall be*—What he will say next; his talk is so incoherent. *And what shall be after him, who can tell?*—That is, what mischief his foolish talk may produce. *The labour of the foolish wearieth, &c.*—Fools discover their folly by their wearisome and fruitless endeavours after things which are too high for them. *Because he knoweth not, &c.*—He is ignorant of those things which are most easy, as of the way to the great city whither he is going.

Verses 16, 17. *Wo to thee, O land, when thy king is a child*—Either in age or childish qualities; *and thy princes eat in the morning*—Give themselves up to eating and drinking at that time of the day which is most fit for God's service, for the despatch of weighty affairs, and for sitting in judgment. *Blessed art thou when thy king is the son of the nobles*—Not so much by birth, as even the worst of kings commonly are, and have been, as by their noble and worthy dispositions and endowments, for such a one is opposed to the *child* in the former verse; *and thy princes eat in due season*—So as may further and not hinder their main business; *for strength, and not for drunkenness*—To refresh and strengthen their bodies, that they may be fit to perform the duties of their station, and not to please their palates, and indulge themselves in sensuality.

Verse 18. *By much slothfulness, &c., the house droppeth through*—That house which is neglected by its owner, and not repaired, must needs come to ruin. Whereby he intimates that the sloth and care- lessness of princes, in the management of public

A. M. 3027. 19 ¶ A feast is made for laughter,  
B. C. 977. and ° wine ° maketh merry: but money  
answereth all things.

20 ¶ ° Curse not the king, no, not in thy

• Psa. civ. 15.—° Heb. *maketh glad the life.*—→ Exod. xxii. 28;

affairs, which is a usual attendant on that luxury of which he now spoke, is most destructive to themselves and to their people.

Verse 19. *A feast is made for laughter, &c.*—Not merely for eating, but chiefly for pleasant conversation, and the society of friends; not the laughter of fools, which is madness, but that of wise men, namely, that cheerfulness by which they fit themselves for business and severe studies: *and wine maketh merry*—Hebrew, מִשְׂכַּח חַיִּים, *maketh glad the life*, exhilarates the mind; *but money answereth all things*—Procures not only meat and drink for feasting, but all other worldly advantages. Therefore be frugal, and spend not all in luxurious eating and drinking, remembering, that money is wanted for a great many other purposes. Some refer this verse to rulers, and consider this last clause as being added to aggravate the sin and folly of luxury, to which, when princes give up themselves, they not only neglect their business, but thereby waste that money and treasure which are so highly necessary for the support and preservation of themselves and their king-

<sup>10</sup> thought; and curse not the rich in  
thy bedchamber: for a bird of the air  
shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings  
shall tell the matter.

Acts xxiii. 5.—<sup>10</sup> Or, *conscience*, figure like Luke xix. 40.

doms: and, in consequence thereof, are obliged to squeeze money out of their people by oppressive taxes, and other dishonourable and dangerous practices.

Verse 20. *Curse not the king*—Having spoken of the miscarriages of kings, he now gives a caution to their subjects, that they should not thence take occasion to speak irreverently or contemptuously of them, or wish or design any evil against their persons or government. For though vices may be condemned wheresoever they are, yet both reverence and obedience are due to magistrates, as they are God's deputies and vicegerents, and that, notwithstanding their vices, as is manifest from Rom. xiii. 1, &c.; 1 Pet. ii. 13. *No, not in thy thought*—In the most secret manner, by giving way to such thoughts and affections, for these would very probably break forth into disloyal words and practices: *and curse not the rich*—The princes or governors under the king, who are commonly rich; *for a bird, &c., shall carry the voice*—The king will hear of it by unknown and unsuspected hands, as if a bird had heard and carried the report of it.

## CHAPTER XI.

An exhortation to works of charity, 1-6. An admonition to prepare betimes for death and judgment, 7-10.

A. M. 3027. CAST thy bread ° upon <sup>1</sup> the wa-  
B. C. 977. ters: ° for thou shalt find it after  
many days.

• See Isa. xxxii. 20.—<sup>1</sup> Heb. *upon the face of the waters.*  
• Deut. xv. 10; Prov. xix. 17; Matt. x. 42; 2 Cor. ix. 8; Gal.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER XI.

Verse 1. *Cast thy bread*—That is, thy seed, which is here called bread, as it is also Job xxviii. 5, and Isaiah xxviii. 28, because the produce of it makes bread, and the husbandman could ill spare it, wanting it, perhaps, for bread for himself and family; *upon the waters*—That is, either by the rivers' sides, or in moist and marshy ground, or even on the waters that cover it, where there might be little prospect of a crop. Solomon here probably alludes to the manner of planting rice in the eastern countries; for, as Sir John Chardin observes in his note on Isa. xxxii. 20, "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, which go mid-leg deep; and this is the way of preparing the ground for sowing. And, as they sow the rice in the water, they transplant it in the

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2 ° Give a portion <sup>d</sup> to seven, and also  
to eight; ° for thou knowest not what  
evil shall be upon the earth.

vi. 9, 10; Heb. vi. 10.—° Psa. cxii. 9; Luke vi. 30; 1 Tim. vi. 18, 19.—<sup>d</sup> Mic. v. 5.—° Eph. v. 16.

water." But, though Solomon alludes to this, it is evident he means in these words to inculcate liberality to the poor. As if he had said, *Cast*—That is, freely and liberally bestow; *thy bread*—That is, thy money, or provisions, or the necessities of life, of whatever kind; *upon the waters*—Upon the poor, on whom thy bounty may at first, and for a time, appear to be lost, (as the seed does, which a man casts upon the waters,) through their unthankfulness or inability to make thee any returns: yet, *thou shalt find it*—It shall be restored to thee, either by God or men, more certainly than the rice or other seed corn, cast upon the marshy or watery ground, produces fruit in due season: *after many days*—The return may be slow, but it is sure, and will be so much the more plentiful the longer it is delayed. This clause is added to prevent an objection, and quicken us to the duty enjoined.

Verse 2. *Give a portion to seven*—A part of thy

33

A. M. 3027. 3 If the clouds be full of rain, they  
B. C. 977. empty *themselves* upon the earth :  
and if the tree fall toward the south, or toward  
the north, in the place where the tree falleth,  
there it shall be.

4 He that observeth the wind shall not sow ;  
and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap.

5 As <sup>f</sup> thou knowest not what is the way  
of the spirit, <sup>g</sup> nor how the bones *do grow* in  
the womb of her that is with child : even  
so thou knowest not the works of God who  
maketh all.

<sup>f</sup> John iii. 8.—<sup>g</sup> Psa. cxxxix. 14, 15.

estate or provisions. He alludes to the ancient custom, whereby the master of the feast distributed several parts to each guest, and withal sent portions to the poor. *And also to eight*—To as many as thou art able. *For thou knowest not what evil shall be, &c.*—Great calamities may come, whereby thou mayest be brought to poverty, and so disabled from doing good. And moreover thou mayest possibly hereafter need the charity of others, which thou wilt have good reason to expect, through the powerful providence of God disposing men's hearts to pity and help thee, if thou hast been kind and merciful to others ; whereas, on the contrary, they can expect no mercy from God or men, who have showed no mercy to others.

Verse 3. *If the clouds be full of rain, they empty themselves, &c.*—Learn, O man, the practice of liberality from the very lifeless creatures, from the clouds ; which, when they are filled with water, do not hoard it up, but plentifully pour it forth, for the refreshment both of the fruitful field and the barren wilderness. *And if the tree fall, &c.*—As if he had said, Therefore, let us just now bring forth the fruits of righteousness, because death will shortly cut us down, and we shall then be determined to unchangeable happiness or misery, according as our works have been.

Verse 4. *He that observeth the wind, shall not sow, &c.*—He who neglects the necessary works of sowing and reaping, because the weather is not exactly suitable to his desires, will lose his harvest. Whereby he intimates, that men will never do good here, which is expressed by *sowing*, and consequently not receive good hereafter, which is called *reaping*, if they be discouraged from it by every doubt and difficulty.

Verse 5. *As thou knowest not the way of the spirit*—Of the soul of man, how it comes into the child in the womb ; or how it is united with the body ; or how, and whether it goes out of the body. *Nor how the bones do grow*—That is, the whole body, which is elsewhere signified by the bones, because they are a principal part, and the very foundation and support of the body ; that is, thou knowest not how, from small and unpromising beginnings, the various parts of the body, as nerves, arteries, veins, sinews, en-

6 In the morning sow thy seed, and <sup>A. M. 3027.</sup>  
in the evening withhold not thy hand : <sup>B. C. 977.</sup>  
for thou knowest not whether <sup>2</sup> shall prosper,  
either this or that, or whether they both *shall*  
be alike good.

7 ¶ Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant  
*thing it is* for the eyes <sup>h</sup> to behold the  
sun :

8 But if a man live many years, *and* rejoice  
in them all ; yet let him remember the days  
of darkness ; for they shall be many. All that  
cometh is vanity.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. *shall be right.*—<sup>b</sup> Chap. vii. 11.

trails, bones, flesh, and skin, are gradually formed, nourished, increased, and brought to perfection : *even so thou knowest not the works of God*—What God is doing, and will do with thee or others ; the counsels and methods of his providence in the future time of thy life, what evil God will send upon the earth, how he will chastise or punish mankind for their sins, or how long he will continue thy life, or preserve to thee the enjoyment of thy property ; or how soon he will call thee to an account. Therefore use the present opportunity, and commit thyself and all thy affairs to him in well doing.

Verse 6. *In the morning*—Early and late, in all seasons, and on all occasions ; do it speedily and continually : be not weary of it. *Sow thy seed*—Do all good works, especially that of alms-giving, as sowing means, 2 Cor. ix. 6 ; Gal. vi. 7. *In the evening withhold not thy hand*—From working, or giving. *For thou knowest not whether shall prosper*—Which shall prosper most ; which shall best answer thine end, or do most good to others ; or which shall tend most to the comfort of thy great and final account. For thy morning alms may possibly be given to an unworthy person, or to one who did not need them, and will abuse them ; and thy evening alms may fall upon a person of eminent worth, or upon one in extreme necessity, who might possibly have perished, both in soul and body, if thou hadst not relieved and comforted him. Besides, at one time thou mayest give with a more pure intention, and a more single eye to the glory of God, and with more tender compassion to thy distressed fellow-creature, than at another time, and so the one will be more right and acceptable to God than the other. *Or whether they shall be both alike good*—Equally successful to the receiver or to the giver.

Verses 7, 8. *Truly, the light is sweet*—It cannot be denied, that this present life is in itself a great blessing, and desirable ; but it is not perpetual nor satisfactory : for, *if a man live many years*—Which is a privilege granted but to few persons comparatively ; *and rejoice in them all*—Enjoy all the comforts, and escape all the bitterness of human life all his days ; *yet let him remember the days of darkness*—Of death, or the state of the

A. M. 3027. 9 Rejoice, O young man, in thy  
B. C. 977. youth; and let thy heart cheer thee  
in the days of thy youth,<sup>1</sup> and walk in the  
ways of thy heart, and in the sight of thine  
eyes: but know thou, that for all these *things*

<sup>1</sup> Num. xv. 39.—<sup>2</sup> Chap. xii. 14; Rom. ii. 6-11.

dead, often expressed by darkness, as Job x. 21; Psalm lxxxviii. 12; and here opposed to the foregoing light: *for they shall be many*—Far more than the days of this short life, especially if, to the days of the body's lying in the dark grave, be added that greater and utter darkness reserved for impenitent sinners, which is everlasting. And this is added, for the caution of mankind, that they may not rejoice excessively in, nor content themselves with, the happiness of the present life, but may seek a life more durable and satisfactory. *All that cometh is vanity*—All things which befall any man belonging only to this life, whether they be comfortable or vexatious, are but vain and inconsiderable, because they are short and transitory.

Verse 9. *Rejoice, &c.*—This is an ironical concession, like many which occur in the Scriptures, (see 1 Kings xviii. 27, and xxii. 15; Ezek. xxviii. 3, 4; Matt. xxvi. 45,) and in other authors: *O young man, in thy youth*—He speaks to young men particularly, because they have both the greatest ability and the strongest inclination to pursue sensual pleasure, and are most impatient, either of restraint or admonition, *Let thy heart cheer thee, &c.*—Indulge thy humour, and take thy fill of delights. *And walk in the way*

<sup>1</sup> God will bring thee into judgment. A. M. 3027. B. C. 977.

10 Therefore remove<sup>3</sup> sorrow from thy heart, and<sup>1</sup> put away evil from thy flesh: <sup>m</sup> for childhood and youth *are* vanity.

<sup>3</sup> Or, *anger*.—<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. vii. 1; 2 Tim. ii. 22.—<sup>m</sup> Psa. xxxix. 5.

*of thy heart, &c.*—Whatsoever thine eye or heart lusteth after, deny it not to them. *But know thou*—But in the midst of thy feasting, jollity, and mirth, consider thy reckoning, and whether thou dost not purchase thy delights at too high a price: *that for all these things*—For all thy sinful lusts and follies; *God will bring thee to judgment*—Will force thee to appear before his judgment-seat, to account for all thy forgetfulness of him, and neglect of his service, thy misemployment of thy time and talents, and of all the gifts of his providence and grace, and for all thy carnal mirth, sensual pleasures, and the extravagances and exorbitances of thy youthful days, as well as of thy riper years.

Verse 10. *Therefore remove sorrow*—Sensual and disorderly lusts, which he elegantly calls *sorrow*, to intimate, that although such practices at present gratify men's senses, yet they will shortly bring them to intolerable sorrows. *And put away evil from thy flesh*—All evil desires, though now they seem good to thee. *For childhood and youth are vanity*—Most vain. The time of youth is vanishing and transitory, and old age and death will speedily come, against which every wise man will take care to lay in solid provisions and comforts.

## CHAPTER XII.

An exhortation to remember God in youth, enforced from the calamities of old age, and the change which death will make, 1-7. The conclusion, all is vanity, 8. The preacher's end in this book, 9-12. The sum of all, to fear God and keep his commandments, in consideration of the judgment to come, 13, 14.

A. M. 3027. REMEMBER<sup>a</sup> now thy Creator  
B. C. 977. in the days of thy youth, while  
the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh,

<sup>a</sup> Prov. xxii. 6; Lam. iii. 27.

### NOTES ON CHAPTER XII.

Verse 1. *Remember*—Namely, practically, so as to fear, love, and faithfully serve him, which, when men do not, they are said to forget him: *thy Creator*—The first author and continual preserver of thy life and being, and of all the endowments and enjoyments which accompany it; to whom thou art under the highest and strongest obligations; and upon whom thou art constantly and necessarily dependant, and therefore to forget him is most unnatural and disingenuous. *Now in the days of thy youth*—For now thou art most able to do it; and it will be most acceptable to God, and most comfortable to thyself, as being the best evidence of thy sincerity, and the best provision for old age and death. *While the evil*

<sup>b</sup> when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them; A. M. 3027. B. C. 977.

2 While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or

<sup>b</sup> See 2 Sam. xix. 35.

*days come not*—The time of old age, which is *evil*; that is, burdensome and calamitous in itself, and far more grievous when it is loaded with the sad remembrance of youthful follies, and with the dreadful prospect of approaching death and judgment. *When thou shalt say, I have no pleasure*—My life is now bitter and burdensome to me: which is frequently the condition of old age.

Verse 2. *While the sun, or the light, &c.*—Heb. *While the sun, and the light, and the moon, &c.* That clause, *and the light*, seems to be added to signify, that he speaks of the darkening of the sun, and moon, and stars, not in themselves, but only in respect of that light which they afford to men. And therefore the same clause which is expressed after the sun,

A. M. 3027. the stars, be not darkened, nor the  
B. C. 977. clouds return after the rain ;

3 In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and <sup>1</sup> the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened,

4 And the doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low, and he

<sup>1</sup> Or, the grinders fail, because they grind little.

is to be understood after the moon and stars. And those expressions may be understood of the outward parts of the body, and especially of the face, the beauty of the countenance, the pleasant complexion of the cheeks, the liveliness of the eyes, which are compared to the sun, and moon, and stars, and which are obscured in old age, as the Chaldee paraphrast understands it. Or of the inward faculties of the mind, the understanding, fancy, memory, which may not improperly be resembled to the sun, moon, and stars, and all which are sensibly decayed in most old men. Or of external things, of the change of their joy, which they had in their youth, into sorrow, and manifold calamities, which are usually the companions of old age. This interpretation agrees both with the foregoing verse, in which he describes the miseries of old age, and with the following clause, which is added to explain those otherwise ambiguous expressions; and with the Scripture use of this phrase; for a state of comfort and happiness is often described by the light of the sun, and a state of trouble is set forth, by the darkening of the light of the sun. *Nor the clouds return after the rain*—This phrase denotes a perpetual succession of rain, and clouds bringing rain, and then rain and clouds again. Whereby he expresses either the rheums or defluents which incessantly flow in old men; or the continual vicissitude of infirmities, diseases, and griefs; one deep calling upon another.

Verse 3. *When the keepers of the house*—The body, which is often and fitly compared to a house; whose keepers are the hands and arms, which are man's best instruments to defend his body from the assaults of men or beasts, and which, in a special manner, are subject to this trembling. *And the strong men shall bow themselves*—Either the back, or the thighs and legs, in which the main strength of the body consists, and which, in old men, are very feeble. *And the grinders*—The teeth, those especially which are commonly so called, because they grind the meat which we eat; *cease*—To perform their office; *because they are few*—Hebrew, כִּי רַבִּי, because they are diminished, either in strength, or in number, being only here one, and there another, and neither united together, nor one directly opposite to another, and consequently unfit for their work. *And those that look out of the windows be darkened*—The eyes. By *windows* he understands, either the eye-lids, which, like windows, are either opened or shut: or, those humours and

shall rise up at the voice of the bird, A. M. 3027  
and all <sup>c</sup> the daughters of music shall B. C. 977.  
be brought low ;

5 Also *when* they shall be afraid of *that which is high*, and fears *shall be* in the way, and the almond-tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail: because man goeth to <sup>d</sup> his long home, and <sup>e</sup> the mourners go about the streets :

<sup>c</sup> 2 Sam. xix. 35.—<sup>d</sup> Job xvii. 13.—<sup>e</sup> Jer. ix. 17.

coats of the eyes, which are the chief instruments by which we see.

Verse 4. *And the doors be shut in the streets*—Or *toward the streets*: which lead into the street. This may be understood, either of the outward senses, which, as doors, let in outward objects to the soul; or, rather, of the mouth, or the two lips, here expressed by a word of the dual number, which, like a door, open or shut the way that leads into the streets or common passages of the body, as the gullet, stomach, and all the bowels; as also the wind-pipe and lungs, which also are principal instruments both of speaking and eating. And these are said to be *shut*, not absolutely, as if men did never eat, or drink, or speak, but comparatively, because men, in old age, grow dull and listless, having little appetite to eat, and are very frequently indisposed for discourse. *When the sound of the grinding is low*—When the teeth are loose and few, whereby both his speech is low, and the noise which he makes in eating is but small. *And he shall rise*—From his bed, being weary with lying, and unable to get sleep. *At the voice of the bird*—As soon as the birds begin to chirp, which is early in the morning, whereas young men can lie and sleep long. *And all the daughters of music*—All those senses or parts of the body, which are employed in music, *shall be brought low*—Shall be cast down from their former excellence, and become incapable either of making music, or of delighting in it.

Verse 5. *When they shall be afraid, &c.*—The passion of fear is observed to be most incident to old men, of which divers reasons may be given. *Of that which is high*—Of high things, lest they should fall upon them; or of high places, as of going up hills or stairs, which is very irksome to them, because of their weakness, weariness, giddiness, and danger, or dread of falling. *And fears shall be in the way*—Lest, as they are walking, they should stumble, or fall, or be thrust down, or some infirmity or evil should befall them. *And the almond-tree shall flourish*—Their heads shall be as full of gray hairs as the almond-tree is of white flowers. *And the grasshopper shall be a burden*—If it accidentally light upon them. They cannot endure the least burden, being indeed a burden to themselves. *And desire shall fail*—Of meats, and drinks, and music, and other delights, which are vehemently desired by men in their youth. *Because man goeth*—Is travelling toward it, and every day nearer to it. To

A. M. 3027. 6 Or ever the silver cord be loosed,  
B. C. 977. or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern.

7 <sup>f</sup> Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: <sup>s</sup> and the spirit shall return unto God <sup>b</sup> who gave it.

8 ¶ <sup>i</sup> Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher; all *is* vanity.

<sup>f</sup> Gen. iii. 19; Job xxxiv. 15; Psa. xc. 3.—<sup>s</sup> Chap. iii. 21.  
<sup>b</sup> Num. xvi. 22; xxvii. 16; Job xxxiv. 14; Isa. lvii. 16; Zech.

*his long home*—From this place of his pilgrimage into the grave, from whence he must never return into this world, and into the state of the future life, which is unchangeable and everlasting. *And mourners go about the streets*—Accompany the corpse through the streets to the grave.

Verse 6. *Or ever the silver cord be loosed*—By the silver cord he seems to understand the spinal marrow, which comes from the brain, and goes down to the lowest end of the back-bone. And this is aptly compared to a cord, both for its figure, which is long and round, and for its use, which is to draw and move the parts of the body; and to silver, both for its excellence and colour, which is white and bright, in a dead, much more in a living body. This may properly be said to be loosed, or dissolved, because it is relaxed, or otherwise disabled for its proper service. And answerably hereto, by the golden bowl we may understand the membranes of the brain, and especially that inmost membrane which insinuates itself into all the parts of it, following it in its various windings, keeping each parcel of it in its proper place, and dividing one from another, to prevent disorder. This is not unfitly called a bowl, because it is round, and contains in it all the substance of the brain; and a golden bowl, partly for its great preciousness and usefulness; partly for its ductility, being drawn out into a great thinness or fineness; and partly for its colour, which is somewhat yellow, and comes nearer to that of gold than any other part of the body does. And this, upon the approach of death, is commonly shrivelled up, and many times broken. And as these clauses concern the brain, and the animal powers, so the two following respect the spring of the vital powers, and of the blood, the great instrument whereof is the heart. And so Solomon here describes the chief organs appointed for the production, distribution, and circulation of the blood. For though the circulation of the blood has been hid for many generations, yet it was well known to Solomon. According to this notion, the fountain is the right ventricle of the heart, which is now acknowledged to be the spring of life; and the pitcher is the arteries which convey the blood from it to other parts, and especially that arterious vein, by which it is transmitted to the lungs, and thence to the left ventricle, where it is better elaborated, and then thrust out into the great artery, called *aorta*, and by

9 And <sup>2</sup> moreover, because the preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge: yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, and <sup>k</sup> set in order many proverbs.

10 The preacher sought to find out <sup>3</sup> acceptable words: and *that which was written, was upright, even words of truth.*

11 The words of the wise *are* as goads, and as nails fastened *by* the masters of assemblies,

xii. 1.—<sup>1</sup> Psa. lxii. 9; Chap. i. 2.—<sup>2</sup> Or, the more wise the preacher was.—<sup>k</sup> 1 Kings iv. 32.—<sup>3</sup> Heb. words of delight.

its branches dispersed into all the parts of the body. And the *cistern* is the left ventricle of the heart, and the *wheel* seems to be the great artery, which is fitly so called, because it is the great instrument of this circulation. The *pitcher* may be said to be broken at the fountain, when the veins do not return the blood to the heart, but suffer it to stand still and cool, whence comes that coldness of the outward parts, which is a near forerunner of death. And the *wheel* may be said to be broken at the cistern, when the great arteries do not perform their office of conveying the blood into the left ventricle of the heart, and of thrusting it out thence into the lesser arteries, whence comes that ceasing of the pulse, which is a certain sign of approaching death.

Verse 7. *Then shall the dust*—The body, called *dust*, both on account of its original, which was from the dust, and to signify its vile and corruptible nature. *As it was*—Whence it was first taken. He alludes to Gen. iii. 19. *And the spirit*—The soul of man, so called, because of its spiritual or immaterial nature; *shall return unto God*—Into his presence, and before his tribunal, that it may there be sentenced to its everlasting habitation, either to abide with God forever, if approved by him, or otherwise, to be eternally shut out from his presence and favour. *Who gave it*—Namely, in a peculiar manner; by his creating power: whence he is called, *the Father of spirits*, Heb. xii. 9.

Verse 8. *Vanity of vanities*—This sentence, wherewith he began this book, he here repents in the end of it, as that which he had proved in all the foregoing discourse, and that which naturally followed from both the branches of the assertion laid down, verse 7.

Verses 9–12. *He still taught the people knowledge*—As God gave him this wisdom, that he might be a teacher of others, so he used it to that end. *Gave heed*—He did not utter whatever came into his mind, but seriously pondered both his matter and his words. Therefore despise not his counsel. *The preacher sought to find out acceptable words*—Hebrew, רב רכץ, words of desire, or, of delight: worthy of all acceptation, such as would minister comfort or profit to the hearers or readers. *And that which was written*—By the preacher, in this and his other books; *was upright*—Hebrew, שר, right, or, straight, agreeable to the mind or will of God, which is the rule of right, not crooked or per-

A. M. 3027. *which* are given from one shepherd.  
B. C. 977.

12 And further, by these, my son, be admonished: of making many books *there is no end*; and <sup>1</sup> much <sup>4</sup> study *is a weariness of the flesh*.

13 ¶ <sup>5</sup> Let us hear the conclusion of the whole

<sup>1</sup> Chap. i. 18.—<sup>4</sup> Or, *reading*.—<sup>5</sup> Or, *The end of the matter, even all that hath been heard is*.—<sup>m</sup> Deut. vi. 2; x. 12.

verse; *even words of truth*—Not fables, cunningly devised to deceive the simple; but true and certain doctrines, which commend themselves to men's reason and consciences; wholesome and edifying counsels. *The words of the wise*—Of spiritually wise and holy men of God; *are as goads and as nails*—Piercing into men's dull minds, and quickening and exciting them to the practice of all duties; *fastened by the masters of assemblies*—Fixed in men's memories and hearts, in which they make powerful and abiding impressions, by the ministry of the teachers of God's church and people, whether prophets or others, appointed by God for that work; *which are given from one shepherd*—From God, or from Christ, the great Shepherd and Teacher of the church in all ages, by whose Spirit the ancient prophets, as well as other succeeding teachers, were inspired and taught, Jer. iii. 15; 1 Pet. i. 11; and 2 Pet. i. 21. *And further, by these*—By these wise men, and their words or writings; *be admonished*—Take your instructions from them; for their words are right and true, as he said, verse 10; whereas the words of other men are often false, or at best, doubtful. *Of making many books there is no end*—As if he had said, I could easily write many and large books upon these matters; but that would be an endless and needless work; seeing things necessary to be known and done lie in a little compass, as he informs us, verse 13. *And much study*—The reading and considering of many books, as well as the

matter: <sup>m</sup> Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this *is the whole duty of man*. A. M. 3027. B. C. 977.

14 For <sup>2</sup> God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether *it be good, or whether it be evil*.

<sup>a</sup> Chap. xi. 9; Matt. xii. 36; Acts xvii. 30, 31; Rom. ii. 16; xiv. 10, 12; 1 Cor. iv. 5; 2 Cor. v. 10.

writing of them; *is a weariness to the flesh*—Wasteth a man's strength and spirits, and yet does not give satisfaction to his mind, nor sufficiently recompense the trouble and inconvenience to which man is exposed by it.

Verses 13, 14. *Let us hear the conclusion, &c.*—The sum of all that hath been said or written by wise men. *Fear God*—Which is put here for all the inward worship of God, reverence, and love, and trust, and a devotedness of heart to serve and please him; *and keep his commandments*—This is properly added, as a necessary effect, and certain evidence of the true and genuine fear of God. Make conscience of practising whatever God enjoins, how costly, or troublesome, or dangerous soever it may be. *For this is the whole duty of man*—Hebrew, *The whole of man, or all the man*: it is his whole work and business: his whole wisdom, honour, perfection, and happiness: it is the sum of what he need either know, or do, or enjoy. This makes him a man indeed, worthy of the name, and by this, and by this alone, he answers the end of his creation, and of all the divine dispensations toward him. *For God shall bring every work into judgment*—All men must give an account to God of all their works, and this alone will enable them to do that with joy. *With every secret thing*—Not only outward and visible actions, but even inward and secret thoughts. Reader, think of this, and prepare to meet thy God!

# THE SONG OF SOLOMON.

## ARGUMENT.

THE form of this book is dramatical, wherein several parts are uttered in the name of several persons, who are chiefly, the bridegroom and the bride, and the friends or companions of the one and of the other. Nor is it declared what or when each of them speak, but that is left to the observation of the prudent reader. The design of the book in general is to describe the love and happy marriage of two persons, but it is not to be understood concerning Solomon and Pharaoh's daughter, (although the occasion might be taken from that, or rather he makes an allusion to that,) but concerning God or Christ, and his church and people. This is sufficiently evident from the descriptions of this bridegroom and bride, which are such as could not, with any decency, be used or meant concerning Solomon and Pharaoh's daughter. There are many expressions and descriptions, which being applied to them are absurd and monstrous. Hence it follows, that this book is to be understood allegorically concerning that spiritual love and marriage which is between Christ and his church. And this will be more than probable to any man who shall consider the following particulars: 1, That the Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testament, are full of allegorical passages; which being known and confessed, it is needless to prove: 2, That the doctrine of Christ being the head and husband of God's church or people, was well known, at least, to the prophets, and the wise and pious Israelites in the time of the Old Testament: 3, That God compares himself to a bridegroom, and his church to a bride, Isa. lxii. 5, and calls, and owns himself the husband of his people, Isa. liv. 5; Hos. ii. 16, 19, 20. In which places, by comparing these with many other texts of Scripture, by God, or the Lord, is meant Christ, the second person in the Godhead, who then was to come down, and since did come from heaven to earth, for the consummation of that eternal design of marriage between God and his people: 4, That the forty-fifth Psalm, which is a kind of abridgment of this book, although it alludes to the marriage between Solomon and Pharaoh's daughter, was written concerning the Messiah, as all interpreters, both Christian and Jewish, agree. From these considerations, and many others which might be suggested, it is sufficiently manifest, that the scope of this book is to describe the mutual love, union, and communion which is between Christ and his church, in the various conditions to which it is liable in this world.

## CHAPTER I.

*After the title, the church, the bride, speaks to Christ, the bridegroom, 1-4. To the daughters of Jerusalem, and to Christ again, 5-7. Christ answers her complaints and requests, 8-11. The church expresses her value for Christ, and her delight in him, 12-14. Christ commends the church, 15. And the church Christ, 16, 17.*

A. M. 2990. **THE** \*song of songs, which is  
B. C. 1014. Solomon's.

2 Let him kiss me with the kisses of his A. M. 2990.  
mouth: <sup>b</sup>for <sup>1</sup>thy love is better than wine. B. C. 1014.

<sup>a</sup> 1 Kings iv. 32.

<sup>b</sup> Chap. iv. 10.—<sup>1</sup> Heb. *thy loves*.

### NOTES ON CHAPTER I.

**Verse 1.** *The song of songs*—The most excellent of all songs. And so this might well be called, whether we consider the author of it, who was a great prince, and the wisest of all mortal men; or the subject of it, which is not Solomon, but a greater than Solomon, even Christ, and his marriage with the church; or the matter of it, which is most lofty, containing

in it the noblest of all the mysteries contained either in the Old or the New Testament; most pious and pathetic, breathing forth the hottest flames of love between Christ and his people, most sweet and comfortable, and useful to all that read it with serious and Christian eyes.

**Verse 2.** *Let him kiss me*—The beginning is abrupt; but is suitable to, and usual in, writings of this

A. M. 2990. 3 Because of the savour of thy good  
B. C. 1014.

ointments thy name *is as* ointment  
poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee.

4 ° Draw me, ° we will run after thee: the  
King ° hath brought me into his chambers:  
we will be glad and rejoice in thee, we will  
remember thy love more than wine; ° the up-  
right love thee.

5 ¶ I *am* black, but comely, O ye daughters  
of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the cur-  
tains of Solomon.

° Hos. xi. 4; John vi. 44; xii. 32.—° Philippians iii. 12, 13, 14.  
• Psalm xlv. 14, 15; John xiv. 2; Eph. ii. 6.

nature, wherein things are not related in a historical and exquisite order, but that which was first done is brought in, as it were, accidentally, after many other passages; as we see in Homer, and Virgil, and others. These are the words of the spouse, wherein she breathes forth her passionate love to the bridegroom, whom she does not name; because it was needless, as being so well known to the persons to whom she speaks, and being the only person who was continually in her thoughts. By *kisses*, the usual tokens of love and good-will, she means the communications of his love and favour, his graces and comforts breathed into her from the Spirit of Christ. *Thy love*—This sudden change of the person is frequent in pathetic discourses. First she speaks of him as absent, but speedily grows into more acquaintance with him, and by ardent desire and faith, embraces him as present. *Is better than wine*—Than the most delicious meat or drink, or than all sensual delights, one kind being put for all.

Verse 3. *Because of the savour of thy good ointments*—Because of those excellent gifts and graces of God's Spirit wherewith thou art replenished; *thy name*—Thy fame or report, the very mention of thee, and all those things by which thou makest thyself known to men; thy word, particularly thine offers of pardon and salvation to sinners; and all thy works, especially that great work of redemption; *is as ointment poured forth*—Is most acceptable and refreshing. *Therefore do the virgins love thee*—Called the companions of the bride, Psa. xlv. 14; particular believers, who are called *virgins*, 2 Cor. xi. 2; Rev. xiv. 4; who have their senses exercised, to perceive this sweetness and fulness of Christ.

Verse 4. *Draw me*—By thy grace and Holy Spirit. *We will*—Both I, thy spouse, and the virgins, my companions. And this change of numbers teaches us, that the spouse is one great body, consisting of many members; *run after thee*—Will follow thee readily, cheerfully, and swiftly. *The king hath brought me, &c.*—Christ, the king of his church, hath answered my prayer; *into his chambers*—Where I may freely converse with him, and enjoy him. He hath taken me into intimate communion with himself. *We will remember thy love, &c.*—This shall be the matter of our thoughts and discourses.

6 Look not upon me, because I *am* A. M. 2990.  
black, because the sun hath looked B. C. 1014.  
upon me: my mother's children were angry  
with me; they made me the keeper of the  
vineyards; *but* mine own vineyard have I not  
kept.

7 ¶ Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth,  
where thou feedest, where thou makest *thy*  
*flock* to rest at noon: for why should I be ° as  
one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy  
companions?

° Or, *they love thee uprightly.*—° Or, *as one that is veiled.*

Verse 5. *I am black*—I confess, as to myself, I am contemptible and deformed. She alludes to the complexion of Pharaoh's daughter; *but comely*—Yet I am *glorious within*, Psa. xlv. 13; and comely, through the beauty which my husband hath put upon me, by his graces conferred upon me, in justification and sanctification. *O ye daughters*—By which she understands particular believers, whose mother Jerusalem is called, Gal. iv. 26. *As the tents of Kedar*—Of the wild Arabians, the posterity of Kedar, (Gen. xxv. 13,) who dwelt in tents, which were black and uncomely. *As the curtains of Solomon*—As the hangings wherewith Solomon's house was furnished, which none can doubt were most beautiful and glorious. So these two last clauses answer to the two first, and that in the same order in which they lie.

Verse 6. *Look not upon me*—With wonder and disdain; *because the sun hath looked upon me*—My blackness is not essential and inseparable, but chiefly caused by the scorching beams of the sun; that is, sore persecutions and tribulations, which, by God's permission, have befallen me, represented by the sun, Matt. xiii. 6-21. *My mother's children were angry with me*—False brethren, who pretend that the church is their mother, when their actions demonstrate, that God, the husband of the church, is not their father; hypocritical professors, who are, and ever were, the keenest enemies to the true church and people of God; false teachers, and their followers, who, by their corrupt doctrines, and divisions, and contentions, bring great mischief to the church. *Made me keeper of the vineyards*—Having prevailed against me, they used me like a slave, putting me upon the most troublesome services, such as the keeping of the vineyards was esteemed, 2 Kings xxv. 12; Isa. lxi. 5; Matt. xx. 17. *Mine own vineyard have I not kept*—They gave me such a full employment in the drudging work about their vineyards, that they left me no time to mind my own; they hindered me from doing my own duty, and from minding my own concerns. And therefore it is no wonder if I be uncomely, and scorched by the sun.

Verse 7. *Tell me, &c.*—Notwithstanding all these discouragements and afflictions, which I suffer for thy sake, and for my love to thee. Being reproached

A. M. 2990. B. C. 1014. 8 ¶ If thou know not, 'O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents.

9 ¶ I have compared thee, 'O my love, to a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariots.

10 Thy cheeks are comely with rows of jewels, thy neck with chains of gold.

11 ¶ We will make thee borders of gold with studs of silver.

12 ¶ While the King sitteth at his table, my

spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof. A. M. 2990. B. C. 1014.

13 A bundle of myrrh is my well-beloved unto me; he shall lie all night betwixt my breasts.

14 My beloved is unto me as a cluster of camphire in the vineyards of En-gedi.

15 Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair; thou hast doves' eyes.

16 Behold, thou art fair, my beloved, yea, pleasant: also our bed is green.

17 The beams of our house are cedar, and our rafters of fir.

<sup>1</sup> Chap. v. 9; vi. 1.—<sup>2</sup> Chap. ii. 2, 10, 13; iv. 1, 7; v. 2; vi. 4; John xv. 14. 15.—<sup>3</sup> 2 Chron. i. 16, 17.—<sup>4</sup> Ezek. xvi. 11,

12, 13.—<sup>5</sup> Or, cypress, Chap. iv. 13.—<sup>6</sup> Chap. iv. 1; v. 12. <sup>7</sup> Or, my companion.—<sup>8</sup> Or, galleries.

and persecuted by others, I flee to thee, O my only refuge and joy, and beg direction and help from thee; where thou feedest thy flock—Discover to me which is thy true church, and which are those assemblies and people where thou art present. This is the request of particular believers. Where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon—In the heat of the day, when the shepherds, in those hot countries, used to lead their flocks into shady places. Whereby he means the time of persecution, when it is hard to discover the true church, because she is deformed by it, and because she is obscured and driven into the wilderness. Why should I be as one that turneth aside?—Or a wanderer, or vagabond; like a neglected and forlorn creature, exposed both to censure and danger. By the flocks of thy companions—The assemblies of corrupt teachers and worshippers. These she calls Christ's companions, because they profess the name of Christ, and their conjunction with him in God's worship.

Verse 8. If thou know not—This is Christ's answer; go thy way, &c.—Observe and follow the paths which my sheep have trodden before thee, my faithful servants, Abraham and others. For the church in all ages is one and the same, and there is but one way, for the substance, in which all the saints, from the beginning to the end of the world walk, Christ being the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever. Feed thy kids—Take care for the feeding of all, and especially young and weak Christians. Beside the shepherds' tents—Under the conduct, and according to the instruction of my faithful shepherds, chiefly those who have gone before thee, the prophets and apostles, and in subordination to them, and to their writings, others, whom I shall raise, from time to time, to feed my people.

Verses 9–11. I have compared thee—For strength and courage, to overcome all thine enemies; to a company of horses—For horses are famous for that property, and the strength of the battle was then thought to consist much in horses and chariots, especially in a company or multitude of them. And the church in this book is represented not only as fair and beautiful, but also as terrible to her enemies.

Thy cheeks, &c., with rows of jewels—Which being fastened to the heads of brides, used to hang down upon their cheeks in those times. He mentions the cheeks, as the chief seat of beauty. Thy neck with chains of gold—Whereby, as well as by the rows of jewels, he may seem to design all those persons and things wherewith the church is made beautiful in the eyes of God and of men, such as excellent ministers and saints, righteous laws, holy ordinances, and the gifts and graces of God's Spirit. We—I and my father; will make thee borders of gold—Beautiful and honourable ornaments.

Verse 12. While the king—My royal husband; sitteth at the table—With me in his ordinances. My spikenard—The graces of his Spirit conferred upon me, here compared to those sweet ointments, which the master of the feast caused to be poured out upon the heads of the guests, (Luke vii. 38,) in which ointments spikenard was a chief ingredient; sendeth forth the smell thereof—This denotes the exercise and manifestation of her graces, which are a sweet-smelling savour in the nostrils of her husband, and of her companions.

Verses 13, 14. A bundle of myrrh—Myrrh was ever reckoned among the best perfumes; shall lie, &c.—This phrase may denote the church's intimate union with, and hearty affection to Christ. My beloved is as a cluster of camphire—We are not concerned to know exactly what this was; it being confessed that it was some grateful plant, and that it set forth that great delight which the church hath in the enjoyment of Christ; in the vineyards of En-gedi—A pleasant and well-watered place in the tribe of Judah, where there were many pleasant plants.

Verse 15. Behold, thou art fair—This is the speech of Christ. The words are doubled to manifest his fervent affection for her. Thou hast doves' eyes—Which are mild and harmless, chaste and faithful. And by the eyes he seems to design both her outward behaviour and the inward disposition of her mind.

Verses 16, 17. Behold, thou art fair—The church here again speaks, and retorts Christ's words; thou, and thou only, art fair indeed; yea, pleasant—As thou art beautiful in thyself, so thou art amiable and

pleasant in thy condescension to me. *Also, our bed*—This seems to denote the place where the church enjoys sweet fellowship with Christ, by his Spirit accompanying his ordinances; *is green*—Is pleasant, as that colour to the eye. *The beams of our house*

*are cedar*—Not only strong, but also fragrant and delightful; and *our rafters of fir*—Or, rather, as the ancients and others render כִּיֹּרִית, of *cypress*; which also was strong and fragrant, and therefore suits well with cedar.

## CHAPTER II.

Christ speaks of himself and his church, 1, 2. The church declares the delightful fellowship she had with Christ, 3, 4. Rejoices in his favour, and takes care that nothing may displease him, 5-7. Triumphs in his love and gracious call, 8-13. Christ's care of the church, 14, 15. Her faith and hope in him, 16, 17.

A. M. 2990. B. C. 1014. I AM the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys.

2 As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters.

3 As the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.

4 He brought me to the banqueting-house, and his banner over me was love.

5 Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples: for I am sick of love.

<sup>1</sup> Hebrew, *I delighted and sat down, &c.*—<sup>2</sup> Rev. xxii. 1, 2. <sup>3</sup> Heb. *palate.*—<sup>4</sup> Heb. *house of wine.*—<sup>5</sup> Heb. *straw me with*

6 <sup>b</sup> His left hand is under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me. A. M. 2990. B. C. 1014.

7 <sup>5</sup> I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love, till he please.

8 ¶ The voice of my beloved! behold, he cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills.

9 <sup>d</sup> My beloved is like a roe, or a young hart: behold, he standeth behind our wall, he looketh forth at the windows, showing himself through the lattice.

*apples.*—<sup>b</sup> Chap. viii. 3.—<sup>5</sup> Heb. *I adjure you.*—<sup>c</sup> Chap. iii. 5; viii. 4.—<sup>d</sup> Verse 17.—<sup>e</sup> Heb. *flourishing.*

## NOTES ON CHAPTER II.

Verses 1, 2. *I am the rose of Sharon*—These are the words of the bridegroom. He compares himself to the rose and lily, for fragrant and beauty. Sharon was a very fruitful place, and famous for roses. *As the lily among thorns*—Compared with thorns, which it unspeakably exceeds in glory and beauty; *so is my love*—So far doth my church, or people, excel all other assemblies. The title of *daughter* is often given to whole nations. These are Christ's words, to which the spouse makes the following reply.

Verse 3. *As the apple-tree*—Whose fruit is very pleasant and wholesome; *among the trees of the wood*—Which are barren. *I sat down under his shadow*—I confidently reposed myself under his protection. *His fruit was sweet to my taste*—The benefits which I received by him, namely, remission of sins, faith, grace, and assurance of glory.

Verses 4-6. *He brought me to the banqueting-house*—The places in which believers received the graces and blessings of Christ. *His banner over me*—By the lifting up whereof I was invited to come to him, and to list myself under him; *was love*—The love of Christ crucified, which, like a banner, is displayed in the gospel. *Stay me*—Or, *support me*, keep me from fainting. The spouse speaks this to her bride-maids, *the daughters of Jerusalem*: or to the bridegroom himself: *with flagons*—With wine, which is a good cordial: *with apples*—With odoriferous apples, the smell whereof was grateful

to persons ready to faint. By these metaphors understand the application of the promises, and the quickening influences of the Spirit. *His left hand*—No sooner did I cry out for help, but he was at hand to succour me.

Verse 7. *I charge you*—This is spoken by the bride. *By the roes*—By the example of those creatures, which are pleasant and loving in their carriage toward one another; *that ye stir not up, nor awake*—That you do not disturb nor offend him; *till he please*—Never, as this word *until*, in such phrases, is commonly used. For neither can sin ever please him, nor can the church bear it, that Christ should ever be offended, or that her sweet fellowship with him should be interrupted.

Verse 8. *The voice of my beloved*—Christ's voice, the word of grace revealed outwardly in the gospel, and inwardly by the Spirit of God. *Behold, he cometh leaping*—She saith, *leaping and skipping*, to denote that Christ came readily and swiftly, with great desire and pleasure; and adds, *upon the mountains and hills*, to signify Christ's resolution to come in spite of all difficulties.

Verse 9. *My beloved is like a roe*—In swiftness. He is coming to me with all speed, and will not tarry a moment beyond the proper season. *He standeth behind our wall*—And while he doth, for wise reasons, forbear to come, he is not far from us. Both this and the following phrases may denote the obscure manner of Christ's manifesting himself to his people, under the law, in comparison of his dis-

A. M. 2990. 10 ¶ My beloved spake, and said  
B. C. 1014. unto me, ° Rise up, my love, my fair  
one, and come away.

11 For lo, the winter is past, the rain is over  
and gone;

12 The flowers appear on the earth; the time  
of the singing of *birds* is come, and the voice  
of the turtle is heard in our land;

13 The fig-tree putteth forth her green figs,  
and the vines with the tender grape give a good  
smell. † Arise, my love, my fair one, and come  
away.

14 ¶ O my dove, *that art* in the clefts of the

\* Verse 13.—† Verse 10.—‡ Chap. viii. 13.—§ Psa. lxxx.  
13; Ezek. xiii. 4; Luke xiii. 32.

coveries in the gospel. *He looketh forth at the win-  
dow*—This phrase, and that, *through the lattice*,  
intimate that the church does indeed see Christ, but  
as *through a glass, darkly*, as it is said even of gospel  
revelations, (1 Cor. xiii. 12,) which was much  
more true of legal administrations.

Verses 10-13. *My beloved spake*—Invited me out-  
wardly by his word, and inwardly by his Spirit.  
*Rise up, my love*—Shake off sloth, and disentangle  
thyself more fully from all the snares of this world.  
*And come away*—Unto me, and with me; follow  
me fully, serve me perfectly, labour for a nearer  
union, and more satisfying communion with me.  
*The winter is past*—Spiritual troubles, arising from  
a deep sense of the guilt of sin, the wrath of God,  
the curse of the law; all which made them afraid  
to come unto God. But, saith Christ, I have re-  
moved these impediments, God is reconciled; there-  
fore cast off all discouragements and excuses, and  
come to me. *The flowers appear on the earth*—  
The communications of God's grace, the gifts, and  
graces, and comforts of the Holy Spirit, are vouch-  
safed unto, and appear in, believers, as buds and  
blossoms do in the spring. *The time of singing is  
come*—When birds sing most freely and sweetly, as  
they do in spring. *And the voice of the turtle  
is heard*—This seems particularly to be mentioned,  
because it not only gives notice of the spring, but  
aptly represents the Spirit of God, which even the  
Chaldee paraphrast understands by this turtle, which  
appeared in the shape of a dove, and which worketh  
a dove-like meekness, and chastity, and faithfulness,  
in believers. *The fig-tree putteth forth her figs*—  
Which it shoots forth in the spring; *and the vines,  
&c., give a good smell*—Which, though not strong, is  
pleasant and grateful.

Verse 14. *O my dove*—So the church is called,  
for her dove-like temper, and for her dove-like con-  
dition, because she is weak, and exposed to persecu-  
tion, and therefore forced to hide herself in rocks;  
*in the secret places of the stairs*—In the holes of  
craggy and broken rocks, which resemble stairs.

rock, in the secret *places* of the stairs, A. M. 2990.  
let me see thy countenance, † let me B. C. 1014.  
hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy  
countenance is comely.

15 Take us † the foxes, the little foxes, that  
spoil the vines: for our vines *have* tender  
grapes.

16 ¶ † My beloved is mine, and I am his; he  
feedeth among the lilies.

17 † Until the day break, and the shadows  
flee away, turn, my beloved, and be thou † like  
a roe or a young hart upon the mountains † of  
Bether.

† Chap. vi. 3; vii. 10.—‡ Chap. iv. 6.—§ Verse 9; Chap. viii.  
14.—¶ Or, of division.

*Let me see thy countenance*—Be not afraid to appear  
before me; *let me hear thy voice*—Thy prayers and  
praises. *For sweet is thy voice, &c.*—Thy person  
and services are amiable in my sight.

Verse 15. *Take us*—The bridegroom gives this  
charge to his bridemen or friends. By whom he  
understands those magistrates and ministers to whom,  
under Christ, the custody of the vineyards, of the  
churches, principally belongs. These he commands  
to take the foxes, to restrain them from doing this  
mischief; *the foxes*—The disturbers of the vine-  
yard, or the church, namely, seducers or false  
teachers; *the little foxes*—This he adds for more  
abundant caution, to teach the church to prevent  
errors and heresies in the beginnings; *that spoil the  
vines*—Which foxes do many ways, by gnawing  
and breaking the little branches and leaves, by dig-  
ging holes in the vineyards, and so spoiling the  
roots; *for our vines have tender grapes*—Which  
are easily spoiled, if great care be not used to pre-  
vent it.

Verse 16. *My beloved is mine*—These are the  
words of the bride, who, having come to him upon  
his gracious invitation, now maketh her boast of him.  
*He feedeth among the lilies*—Abideth and refresh-  
eth himself among his faithful people, who are com-  
pared to lilies, verse 2.

Verse 17. *Until the day-break*—Until the morn-  
ing of that blessed day of the general resurrection,  
when all the shadows, not only of ignorance, and sin,  
and calamity, but even of all ordinances, and out-  
ward administrations, shall cease. *Turn, my be-  
loved*—Return to me. For although Christ had  
come to her, and she had gladly received him, yet  
he was gone again, as is here implied, and evidently  
appears from the following verse. Which sudden  
change is very agreeable to the state of God's people  
in this world, where they are subject to frequent  
changes; *be thou like a roe*—In swiftness; make  
haste to help me; *upon the mountains of Bether*—  
A place in the land of promise, where it seems those  
creatures were in great abundance.

## CHAPTER III.

The church seeks Christ, finds him, and resolves not to displease him again, 1-5. Christ's coming out of the wilderness; his bed, guard, and chariot, 6-10. An invitation of the church to the kingdom of glory, 11.

A. M. 3027.  
B. C. 977.

**BY** <sup>a</sup> night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not.

2 I will rise now, and go about the city in the streets, and in the broad ways I will seek him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not.

3 <sup>b</sup> The watchmen that go about the city found me: *to whom I said*, Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?

4 *It was* but a little that I passed from them, but I found him whom my soul loveth; I held him, and would not let him go, until I had brought him into my mother's house, and into

<sup>a</sup> Isa. xxvi. 9.—<sup>b</sup> Chap. v. 7.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER III.

Verse 1. *By night on my bed*—When others compose themselves to sleep, my affections were working toward him. *I sought him*—I sought for Christ's gracious and powerful presence. *I sought him*—This repetition denotes her perseverance and unweariedness in seeking him; *but found him not*—For he had withdrawn the manifestations of his love from me, either because I had not sought him diligently, or because I had abused his favour.

Verse 2. *I will rise now*—I will immediately apply myself to seek him, without whom my bed can give me no rest, nor comfort; *and go about the city*—The city of God, the church in which Christ resides. *And in the broad ways*—Not finding him in private prayer and meditation, I sought him in the places of public assemblies and ordinances; *but I found him not*—He saw fit still to delay the discoveries of his grace.

Verse 3. *The watchmen*—The ministers of Christ, and rulers of the church; *that go about the city*—To prevent disorders and dangers; *found me*—While they walked round about the city according to their duty: *to whom I said*, Saw ye him—She does not name him, because she thought it needless, as supposing a person of such transcendent excellence could not be unknown to men in that capacity. Their answer is not mentioned, either because they gave her no satisfactory answer, or, because by their silence she gathered that they were unable or unwilling to inform her; and being eager in the pursuit, she would not lose time in impertinent discourses with them.

Verse 4. *It was but a little, &c., but I found him*—Christ met me, and manifested his love to me. *I brought him into my mother's house*—As the spouse here signifies particular believers, so her mother is the universal church, or the true Jerusalem, which hath its rise from above, which is the mother of us all, (Gal. iv. 26,) in which Christ and believers are

the chamber of her that conceived A. M. 3027.  
B. C. 977.

5 <sup>c</sup> I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake *my* love, till he please.

6 ¶ <sup>d</sup> Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all powders of the merchant?

7 Behold his bed, which is Solomon's: threescore valiant men are about it, of the valiant of Israel.

8 They all hold swords, being expert in war: every man hath his sword upon his thigh because of fear in the night.

<sup>c</sup> Chap. ii. 7; viii. 4.—<sup>d</sup> Chap. viii. 5.

united, and have sweet communion together in holy ordinances, into which believers are said to bring Christ, by faith and prayer. *Into the chamber of her that conceived me*—Christ is, as it were, the father that begets, and the church, the mother that conceives and brings forth believers.

Verse 6. *Who is this, &c.*—The persons speaking seem to be the daughters of Jerusalem, who, upon occasion of the bride's speech to them, make this reply. The person spoken of is the spouse: *that cometh out of the wilderness*—Believers were to be called, not only out of the holy land, which was as the garden of God, but also out of the Gentile world, which, in prophetic writings, is frequently described under the notion of a wilderness: *like pillars of smoke*—Being conducted out of the wilderness as by a pillar of smoke going before them, as the Israelites were led through the wilderness to Canaan, by a pillar of cloud and fire: *perfumed with myrrh*—The spouse is said to be thus perfumed, for her excellent virtues and religious services, which are pleasant and acceptable to God, and for the merits and graces of Christ, which are a *sweet savour* to God, wherewith she is enriched and beautified: *with all the powders of the merchants*—Which are fetched by the merchants from Arabia, or other remote parts.

Verses 7, 8. *Behold*—The bride-men continue their speech, and from the admiration of the bride, proceed to the admiration of the bridegroom: *his bed*—The bed seems to denote the church, which is comely through Christ's beauty, and safe by his protection, in which Christ is glorified, and believers enjoy sweet fellowship with him. *Solomon's*—Which is the bed, not of an ordinary man, but of a great king, whom Solomon typifies, and who is greater than Solomon. *Threescore valiant men are about it*—Very many, a certain number being put for an uncertain. He alludes to Solomon's guard, whereby he designs all those creatures, whether

A. M. 2990. 9 King Solomon made himself <sup>1</sup> a  
B. C. 1014. chariot of the wood of Lebanon.

10 He made the pillars thereof of silver, the bottom thereof of gold, the covering of it of purple, the midst thereof being paved with

<sup>1</sup> Or, a

angels, princes, ministers, or others, whose ministry God uses for the protection of his church. *Every man hath his sword*—Is prepared and ready to fight, to prevent those dangers which are frequent in the night season. The night may denote the whole time of this life, which may well be called night, in respect of that ignorance and error wherewith it is attended, (as the future life is compared to day,) this life being the only time wherein such a guard is necessary.

Verses 9, 10. *King Solomon made a chariot*—In which the royal bridegroom and bride might ride together in state. By this *chariot* he seems to understand the word of Christ dispensed by his ministers, wherein Christ rides triumphantly in the world, conquering his enemies and subduing the world to the obedience of the gospel. *Of the wood of Lebanon*—Of cedars, which wood being incorruptible, doth fitly signify the word of the gospel, which endureth for ever, 1 Pet. i. 25. *He made the pillars thereof*—There is no necessity that either this or the following particulars should be distinctly applied to several things in the gospel; this in the general may suffice, that as all the particulars are added to show the perfection and beauty of the chariot, so they imply that Christ's word is every way amiable and perfect. *The bottom thereof of gold*—The under and lower part. Whereby he may seem to intend

love, for the daughters of Jerusalem. A. M. 2990.  
B. C. 1014. 11 Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold King Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart.

bed.

the foundation of the word and promises, which is either God's covenant, or Christ's mediation, in whom all the promises are yea and amen. *The covering of it*—The uppermost part of it. *The midst*—The inward parts: *being paved*—Covered and adorned; *with love*—The love of Christ to the sons of men. *For the daughters of Jerusalem*—For their delight and comfort, who all bear a part in this marriage.

Verse 11. *Go forth*—The church bids particular believers go forth to see this sight. *Behold, King Solomon*—The Messiah, of whom Solomon was an illustrious type. *With the crown*—Which being applied to Solomon, may design that garland or crown which was usually worn in nuptial solemnities: but being applied to Christ, it denotes the honour that was given him, which, though principally done by his Father, yet is here ascribed to his mother, namely, the universal church, which, in respect to his humanity, may be called his mother, because he was born in and of her, and one of her members. *In the day of his espousals*—When the church is married to him, which is done when the covenant is confirmed between them, or when persons are converted to Christ, and more completely when they are received by Christ into his immediate fellowship in the kingdom of glory. *And in the day of the gladness of his heart*—When he rejoiceth over his bride.

CHAPTER IV.

Christ commends his church for her beauty, 1-7. He calls her to go with him, 8. Manifests his love and affection for her, 9. A further commendation of her, 10-15. She prays for the effectual operation of his Holy Spirit on her to make her fruitful, 16.

A. M. 2990. BEHOLD, <sup>a</sup>thou art fair, my love;  
B. C. 1014. behold, thou art fair; thou hast doves' eyes within thy locks; thy hair is as

a <sup>b</sup> flock of goats, <sup>1</sup> that appear from mount Gilead. A. M. 2990.  
B. C. 1014.

2 <sup>c</sup> Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep that

<sup>a</sup> Chap. i. 15; v. 12.—<sup>b</sup> Chap. vi. 5.

<sup>1</sup> Or, that eat of, &c.—<sup>c</sup> Chap. vi. 6.

NOTES ON CHAPTER IV.

Verse 1. *Behold*—These words are evidently spoken by the bridegroom; *thou art fair*—Being clothed with my righteousness, and adorned with all the graces of my Spirit. *Behold, thou art fair*—He repeats it both to confirm his assertion, and to show the fervency of his affection. *Thou hast dove's eyes*—Whereas the beauty of the spouse is here described in her several parts, we need not labour much about the application of each particular to some distinct grace of the church, it being the chief design of the description to show that completeness and absolute perfection which the church

hath in part received, and shall more fully receive in the future life. *Thy hair is as a flock of goats*—That is, as the hair of a flock of goats, which in these parts was of extraordinary length, softness, and comeliness; *that appear from mount Gilead*—A very fruitful place, fit for breeding all sorts of cattle, and especially of goats, because it was a hilly and woody country.

Verses 2, 3. *Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep*—Numerous, and placed in due order: *that are even and shorn*—Smooth and even, as also clean and white. *Whereof every one bears twins*—Which seems to denote the two rows of teeth: *and none is*

A. M. 2990. *are even* shorn, which came up from  
B. C. 1014. the washing; whereof every one bear  
twins, and none is barren among them.

3 Thy lips *are* like a thread of scarlet, and  
thy speech is comely: <sup>d</sup>thy temples *are* like a  
piece of a pomegranate within thy locks.

4 ° Thy neck *is* like the tower of David,  
buildd <sup>f</sup> for an armoury, whereon there hang a  
thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men.

5 <sup>g</sup> Thy two breasts *are* like two young roes  
that are twins, which feed among the lilies.

6 <sup>h</sup> Until the day <sup>2</sup> break, and the shadows flee  
away, I will get me to the mountain of myrrh,  
and to the hill of frankincense.

7 <sup>i</sup> Thou *art* all fair, my love; *there is* no  
spot in thee.

8 ¶ Come with me from Lebanon, *my* spouse,

<sup>d</sup> Chap. vi. 7.—<sup>e</sup> Chap. vii. 4.—<sup>f</sup> Neh. iii. 19.—<sup>g</sup> See  
Prov. v. 19; Chap. vii. 3.—<sup>h</sup> Chap. ii. 17.—<sup>i</sup> Heb. *breathe*.  
<sup>j</sup> Eph. v. 27.

*barren among them*—Not one tooth is lacking. *Thy  
speech is comely*—Which is added as another ingre-  
dient of an amiable person; and to explain the fore-  
going metaphor. The discourse of believers is edi-  
fying and comfortable, and acceptable to God, and to  
serious men. *Thy temples*—Under which he com-  
prehends the cheeks; *are like a piece of pomegra-  
nate*—In which there is a lovely mixture of red and  
white.

Verses 4, 5. *Thy neck*—This may represent the  
grace of faith, by which we are united to Christ, (as  
the body is to the head by the neck,) by which Chris-  
tians receive their spiritual food, and consequently  
their strength and ability for action; *is like the  
tower*—Upright, firm, and strong; and moreover,  
adorned with chains of gold, or pearl, or the like orna-  
ments; *of David*—Some tower built by David,  
when he repaired and enlarged his royal city, and  
used by him as an armoury. *Whereon there hang  
a thousand bucklers*—Such as are reserved for the  
use of mighty men. *A thousand* is put indefinitely  
for a great number. *Which feed among the lilies*—  
In the fields where lilies grow.

Verse 6. *Until the day break, &c.*—These words  
are uttered by the bride, (chap. ii. 17,) and here return-  
ed by the bridegroom as an answer to that request.  
And this place may be understood of the day of  
glory, when all shadows and ordinances shall cease;  
*I will get me to the mountain of myrrh, &c.*—To  
my church upon earth, which was typified by the  
mountain of Moriah and the temple upon it. This,  
in prophetic writings, is called a *mountain*, and may  
well be called a *mountain of myrrh and frank-  
incense*, both for the acceptable services which were  
there offered to God, and for the precious gifts and  
graces of the Holy Spirit, which are of a sweet-  
smelling savour to God and men. Thus Christ di-  
rects believers where they may find him, namely,  
in his church and ordinances.

with me from Lebanon: look from the <sup>A. M. 2990.</sup>  
top of Amana, from the top of Shenir <sup>B. C. 1014.</sup>

<sup>k</sup> and Hermon, from the lions' dens, from the  
mountains of the leopards.

9 Thou hast <sup>3</sup> ravished my heart, my sister,  
*my* spouse; thou hast ravished my heart with  
one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck.

10 How fair is thy love, my sister, *my* spouse!  
<sup>1</sup> how much better is thy love than wine!  
and the smell of thine ointments than all  
spices!

11 Thy lips, O *my* spouse, drop as the honey-  
comb: <sup>m</sup> honey and milk *are* under thy tongue;  
and the smell of thy garments *is* <sup>n</sup> like the smell  
of Lebanon.

12 A garden <sup>4</sup> enclosed *is* my sister, *my* spouse;  
a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.

<sup>k</sup> Deut. iii. 9.—<sup>3</sup> Or, *taken away my heart*.—<sup>l</sup> Chap. i. 2.  
<sup>m</sup> Prov. xxiv. 13, 14; Chap. v. 1.—<sup>n</sup> Gen. xxvii. 27; Hos. xiv.  
6, 7.—<sup>4</sup> Heb. *barred*.

Verse 8. *Come with me*—Unto the mountain of  
myrrh, mentioned verse 6. *From Lebanon, my  
spouse*—This is the first time that Christ gives her  
this name, which he does both to oblige and encou-  
rage her to go with him. *Look from the top of  
Amana*—To the place to which I invite thee to go,  
which from those high mountains thou mayest easily  
behold. *From the mountains of the leopards*—From  
these or other mountains, which are inhabited by  
lions and leopards. This seems to be added as an  
argument to move the spouse to go with him, be-  
cause the places where now she was were not only  
barren, but also dangerous.

Verses 9, 10. *My sister, my spouse*—So he calls  
her to show the greatness of his love, which could  
not sufficiently be expressed by any one relation.  
*With one of thine eyes*—With one glance. *One  
chain of thy neck*—With one of those other graces  
and perfections wherewith thou art adorned. *How  
fair is thy love*—How amiable and acceptable to  
me. *The smell of thine ointments*—Of the gifts  
and graces of God's Spirit, wherewith thou art  
anointed.

Verse 11. *Thy lips drop as the honey-comb*—Thy  
speeches both to me in prayer and praises, and to  
men for their edification, are highly acceptable to  
me. *Honey and milk are under thy tongue*—  
Words more sweet and comfortable than honey or  
milk. *The smell of thy garments*—Of that right-  
eousness wherewith I have adorned thee; *is like the  
smell of Lebanon*—Which was very sweet and  
grateful in regard of the great number of sweet-  
smelling spices and trees which grew on that  
mountain.

Verse 12. *A garden*—For order and beauty, for  
pleasant walks, and flowers, and fruits; *enclosed*—  
Defended by the care of my providence: and re-  
served for my proper use. *A spring shut up*—To  
preserve it from all pollution, and to reserve it for

A. M. 2990. 13 Thy plants are an orchard of  
B. C. 1014. pomegranates, with pleasant fruits ;  
<sup>5</sup> camphire, with spikenard.

14 Spikenard and saffron ; calamus and cin-  
namon, with all trees of frankincense ; myrrh  
and aloes, with all the chief spices :

<sup>5</sup> Or, cypress, Chap. i. 14.

the use of its owner, for which reason springs were  
shut up in those countries where water was scarce  
and precious.

Verses 13, 14. *Thy plants are an orchard*—Be-  
lievers, which are planted in thee, are like the plants  
or fruits of an orchard, which are pleasant to the  
eye, and delicious to the taste or smell, whereby he  
signifies the variety and excellence of the gifts and  
graces in the several members of the church. *Spike-  
nard*—Which he mentions here with *camphire*, and  
in the next verse with *saffron*, because it is mixed  
with both these, and, being so mixed, yields the more  
grateful smell. *All trees of frankincense*—Such  
trees as produce frankincense.

Verse 15. *A well of living waters*—Though my  
spouse be in some sort a fountain shut up, yet that  
is not so to be understood as if she kept her waters  
to herself, for she is like a fountain of living or run-

15 A fountain of gardens, a well of <sup>o</sup>liv- A. M. 2990.  
ing waters, and streams from Lebanon. B. C. 1014.

16 ¶ Awake, O north wind ; and come, thou  
south ; blow upon my garden, *that* the spices  
thereof may flow out. <sup>p</sup> Let my beloved come  
into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits.

<sup>o</sup> John iv. 10 ; vii. 38.—<sup>p</sup> Chap. v. 1.

ning water, which flows into gardens, and makes its  
flowers and plants to flourish. The church conveys  
those waters of life, which she receives from Christ,  
to particular believers. *And streams from Lebanon*  
—Like those sweet and refreshing rivers which flow  
down from mount Lebanon, of which Jordan is one.

Verse 16. *Awake, O north wind, &c.*—These  
winds may signify the several dispensations of God's  
Spirit. *Blow upon my garden*—This verse is spoken  
by the spouse. And she calls the garden both *hers*  
and *his*, because of that oneness which is between  
them, chap. ii. 16. *That the spices may flow out*—  
That my graces may be exercised. *Let my beloved  
come into his garden*—Let Christ afford his gracious  
presence to his church ; and *eat his pleasant fruits*  
—And let him delight himself in that service which  
is given him, both by the religious worship, and by  
the holy conversation of his people.

## CHAPTER V.

Christ answers the church's invitation, and shows her the delight he took in her fruit, 1. She acknowledges her negligence  
to Christ in not opening the door, 2-6. Of the harsh usage she met with, 7. She tells the daughters of Jerusalem she  
is sick of love to Christ, 8. Their question concerning him, 9. A description of Christ by his graces, 10-15. In whom  
she boasteth, 16.

A. M. 2990. I <sup>a</sup> AM come into my garden, my  
B. C. 1014. sister, *my* spouse : I have gathered  
my myrrh with my spice ; <sup>b</sup> I have eaten my  
honey-comb with my honey ; I have drunk my  
wine with my milk : eat, O <sup>c</sup> friends ; drink,  
<sup>1</sup> yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.

2 ¶ I sleep, but my heart waketh : *it is* the

<sup>a</sup> Chap. iv. 16.—<sup>b</sup> Chap. iv. 11.—<sup>c</sup> Luke xv. 7, 10 ; John iii.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER V.

Verse 1. *I am come into my garden*—This is the  
bridegroom's answer. *I have gathered my myrrh,*  
&c.—I have eaten of my pleasant fruits ; I have  
taken notice of, and delight in, the service and obedi-  
ence of my people. *Eat, O friends*—Believers are  
here encouraged with freedom and cheerfulness to  
eat and drink their spiritual food.

Verse 2. *I sleep*—I was dull and sluggish ; but  
*my heart waketh*—Yet in my very sleep my thoughts  
run upon my beloved. *It is the voice of my beloved*  
—Between sleeping and waking, I heard his voice ;

voice of my beloved <sup>d</sup> that knocketh, A. M. 2990.  
*saying*, Open to me, my sister, my B. C. 1014.  
love, my dove, my undefiled : for my head is  
filled with dew, *and* my locks with the drops  
of the night.

3 I have put off my coat ; how shall I put it on ?  
I have washed my feet ; how shall I defile them ?

29 ; xv. 14.—<sup>1</sup> Or, and be drunken with loves.—<sup>d</sup> Rev. iii. 20.

*that knocketh*—By his word, and providence, and  
Spirit, at the door of my heart ; *saying, Open to  
me*—Inviting me to let him into my soul ; *my sister,*  
*my love, &c.*—This heap of kind compellations sig-  
nifies Christ's fervent affection to his people. *My  
head is filled with dew*—While I wait without thy  
door, which signifies his sufferings for the church's  
good. *My locks with the drops of the night*—The  
dew which falls in the night.

Verse 3. *I have put off my coat*—My day clothes,  
as persons use to do when they go to rest. *How  
shall I put it on?*—It is inconvenient and trouble-

A. M. 2990. 4 My beloved put in his hand by  
B. C. 1014. the hole of the door, and my bowels  
were moved <sup>2</sup> for him.

5 I rose up to open to my beloved; and my  
hands dropped *with* myrrh, and my fingers *with*  
<sup>3</sup> sweet-smelling myrrh, upon the handles of the  
lock.

6 I opened to my beloved; but my beloved  
had withdrawn himself, *and* was gone: my  
soul failed when he spake: ° I sought him, but  
I could not find him; I called him, but he gave  
me no answer.

7 <sup>†</sup> The watchmen that went about the city  
found me, they smote me, they wounded me:  
the keepers of the walls took away my veil  
from me.

8 I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if

<sup>2</sup> Or, as some read, *in me*.—<sup>3</sup> Heb. *passing, or, running about*.  
• Chap. iii. 1.—<sup>†</sup> Chap. iii. 3.—<sup>4</sup> Heb. *what*.—<sup>5</sup> Chap. i. 8.  
<sup>6</sup> Heb. *a standard-bearer*.—<sup>7</sup> Or, *curled*.

some to do it at this time. *I have washed my feet*  
—Which the eastern people commonly did when  
they went to bed.

Verses 4, 5. *By the hole*—He assayed to open the  
door. When his word would not prevail, his Spirit,  
which is called *the finger of God*, (Luke xi. 20,) wrought inwardly upon my conscience. *My bowels were moved*—With compassion for him and his sufferings, and with affection to him. *I rose*—I went forth to receive him. *My hands dropped with myrrh*—With oil or ointment made of myrrh, which dropped from the bridegroom's hand upon the door in great abundance, when he *put it into the hole of the door*—And consequently upon her hands and fingers when she touched the door to open it. By which she signifies, that Christ, though he withdrew himself from her, yet left a sweet savour behind him. *Upon the handles of the lock*—Hebrew, *with myrrh passing, or flowing, upon the handles of the lock*, which place the bridegroom had touched when he attempted to open it.

Verse 6. *My beloved had withdrawn*—Denied me his comfortable presence, as a just punishment for my former neglect. *My soul failed*—Hebrew, *went out of me*. I fainted, and was ready to die away; *when he spake*—Or, *for what he spake*; for those endearing expressions related verse 2, which then I did not heed. *I sought him*—By diligent inquiry and importunate prayer.

Verse 7. *The watchman that went about the city*—The governors of the church, who, though by their place they are obliged to comfort the faithful, do frequently discourage them. *Found me, and smote me*—With bitter calumnies and persecutions. *The keepers of the walls*—The same with the watchmen, whose office it is to keep the gates and walls of the city. *Took away my veil from me*—Which was an ornament of her sex, and an ensign

ye find my beloved, <sup>4</sup> that ye tell him, A. M. 2990.  
that I *am* sick of love. B. C. 1014.

9 ¶ What *is* thy beloved more than *another*  
beloved, ° O thou fairest among women? what  
*is* thy beloved more than *another* beloved, that  
thou dost so charge us?

10 My beloved *is* white and ruddy, <sup>5</sup> the  
chiefest among ten thousand.

11 His head *is* as the most fine gold, his locks  
*are* <sup>6</sup> bushy, *and* black as a raven.

12 <sup>h</sup> His eyes *are* as *the eyes* of doves by the  
rivers of waters, washed with milk, *and* <sup>7</sup> fitly  
set.

13 His cheeks *are* as a bed of spices, as  
<sup>8</sup> sweet flowers: his lips *like* lilies, dropping  
sweet-smelling myrrh.

14 His hands *are* as gold rings set with the

<sup>h</sup> Chap. i. 15; iv. 1.—<sup>7</sup> Heb. *sitting in fulness, that is, fitly placed, and set as a precious stone in the foil of a ring*.—<sup>8</sup> Or, *towers of perfumes*.

of her relation to Christ. And so the taking of this  
veil away signifies their contemptuous usage of her,  
and endeavours to represent her as one that had  
no relation to Christ.

Verses 8, 9. *I charge you, O daughters, &c.*—The  
church having passed the watchmen, proceeds in  
the pursuit of her beloved, and inquires of every  
particular believer, whom she meets, concerning  
him. *Tell him, that I am sick, &c.*—That I am  
ready to faint for want of his presence. *What is  
thy beloved, &c., more than another*—Wherein doth  
he excel them? Believers might ask this, that they  
might be more fully informed of it.

Verses 10–13. *My beloved is white and ruddy*—  
The *white* may denote his pure and spotless inno-  
cence, and the *ruddy* colour, his bloody passion.  
*His head is as the most fine gold*—It shines like  
gold, by reason of the crown of pure gold upon his  
head. We need not aim at a distinct application of  
this and the following particulars unto some special  
excellences of Christ, because such things are mere  
conjectures, and the only design of this description  
is to set forth the beauty of Christ under the notion  
of a most amiable person, in whom there is no de-  
fect or blemish, from the crown of his head to the  
sole of his feet. *His eyes, the eyes of doves*—Lovely  
and pleasant, chaste and innocent. *By rivers of  
waters*—Where they delight to abide. *Washed  
with milk*—The doves, not their eyes, were of a  
white colour. *His cheeks*—His face or countenance,  
an eminent part whereof is the cheeks; *are as a  
bed of spices*—Of aromatic flowers, which delight  
both the eye with a pleasant prospect, and the smell  
with their fragrantcy. *His lips are like lilies*—  
Beautiful and pleasant; *dropping sweet-smelling  
myrrh*—Not only grateful to the eye, as lilies are,  
but also fragrant to the smell.

Verses 14–16. *His hands as gold rings set with*

A. M. 2990. beryl: his belly *is as* bright ivory  
B. C. 1014. overlaid *with* sapphires.

15 His legs *are as* pillars of marble, set upon  
sockets of fine gold: his countenance *is as*

<sup>o</sup>Heb. His

*beryl*—Beautiful and precious, and richly adorned, as it were, with gold rings set with precious stones; *his belly as bright ivory*—Which seems to be here used for the whole body, reaching from the neck to the bottom of the belly; *overlaid with sapphires*—Of a pure and bright white colour, intermixed with blue veins; for some sapphires are of a bright blue colour. *His legs as pillars of marble*—White, and straight, and well shaped, and strong; *set upon sockets of fine gold*—His feet are compared to gold,

Lebanon, excellent as the cedars. A. M. 2990.  
16 <sup>o</sup>His mouth *is* most sweet: yea, B. C. 1014.

he *is* altogether lovely. This *is* my beloved, and this *is* my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.

palate.

for their singular brightness, for which they are compared to *fine brass*, Rev. i. 15; *his countenance*—Hebrew, *his aspect* or *appearance*, his form or person; *is as Lebanon*, &c.—In respect of its cedars, tall, and upright, and stately. *He is altogether lovely*—Not to run out into more particulars. *This is my beloved, O ye daughters, &c.*—And therefore you have no cause to wonder if I am transported with love to so excellent a personage.

## CHAPTER VI.

An inquiry after Christ, 1. The church's answer, 2. The church confesses her faith in Christ, 3. Christ shows the graces of his church, 4; and the beauty of her several parts, 5–10. He acquaints her where he had been, and what he had been doing, 11. And discovers his affection to her, 12. With an invitation of her to return to him again, 13.

A. M. 2990. **W**HITHER is thy beloved gone,  
B. C. 1014. <sup>a</sup>O thou fairest among women?

whither is thy beloved turned aside? that we may seek him with thee.

2 My beloved is gone down into his garden, to the beds of spices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies.

3 <sup>b</sup>I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine: he feedeth among the lilies.

4 ¶ Thou art beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem, <sup>c</sup>terrible as an army with banners.

<sup>o</sup>Ch. i. 8.—<sup>b</sup>Ch. ii. 16; vii. 10.—<sup>c</sup>Verse 10.—<sup>1</sup>Or, they

## NOTES ON CHAPTER VI.

Verses 1, 2. *Whither is thy beloved gone*—Name-ly, from thee: see chap. v. 6, 8. These are the words of the daughters of Jerusalem, last mentioned, whom the preceding full and pathetic description of the bridegroom's excellence had inflamed with love to him. *My beloved is gone into his garden*—The spouse had hitherto been at a loss for her beloved, but, having diligently sought him, now at last she meets with a gracious answer from God, directing her where to find him. The *garden* may signify the church catholic, and *the gardens*, as it follows, as also *the beds*, the particular assemblies of the faithful, in which Christ affords his presence. *To the beds of spices*—In which the gifts and graces of God's Spirit, fitly compared to spices, or aromatical flowers, appear and grow. *To feed*—To refresh and delight himself. *To gather lilies*—Which may denote either particular believers, whom Christ gathers to himself in his church, or the

5 Turn away thine eyes from me, for A. M. 2990.  
<sup>1</sup>they have overcome me: thy hair is B. C. 1014.

<sup>d</sup>as a flock of goats that appear from Gilead.

6 <sup>e</sup>Thy teeth are as a flock of sheep which go up from the washing, whereof every one beareth twins, and there is not one barren among them.

7 <sup>f</sup>As a piece of a pomegranate are thy temples within thy locks.

8 There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number.

9 My dove, my undefiled is but one; she is

have puffed me up.—<sup>d</sup>Ch. iv. 1.—<sup>e</sup>Ch. iv. 2.—<sup>f</sup>Ch. iv. 3.

prayers and praises of his people in the public congregations.

Verse 4. *Thou art beautiful*—These are the words of Christ, who had now again manifested himself to his church; *as Tirzah*—A very pleasant city, the royal seat of the kings of Israel; *comely as Jerusalem*—Which was beautiful, both for its situation and for its goodly buildings; *terrible as an army, &c.*—To her enemies, whom God will certainly destroy.

Verse 5. *Turn away thine eyes from me*—It is a poetical expression, signifying how beautiful the church was in Christ's eyes. *Thy hair, &c.*—This clause and the whole following verse are repeated from chap. iv. 1, 2. And this repetition is not vain, but confirms what was said before, that the church's miscarriage had not alienated Christ's affection from her.

Verses 8, 9. *There are threescore queens*—A certain number for an uncertain. The sense seems

A. M. 2990. the *only* one of her mother, she is  
B. C. 1014. the choice *one* of her that bare her.  
The daughters saw her, and blessed her; *yea*,  
the queens and the concubines, and they praised  
her.

10 ¶ Who is she *that* looketh forth as the  
morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun,  
and terrible as an *army* with banners?

11 I went down into the garden of nuts to

¶ Verse 4.—<sup>b</sup> Chap. vii. 12.—<sup>c</sup> Heb. *I knew not.*—<sup>d</sup> Or, *set me on the chariots of my willing people.*

to be this: there are many beautiful queens and concubines in the world, in the courts of princes, but none of them is to be compared with my spouse. *My undefiled is but one*—The only beloved of my soul, my only spouse. *The only one of her mother*—She is as dear and as precious to me as only children use to be to their parents, and especially to their mothers. *The daughters saw her*—Called *virgins*, verse 8. *They praised her*—As more beautiful and worthy than themselves.

Verse 10. *Who is she, &c.*—These are the words of the queens and concubines. *Who*—What manner of person is this, how excellent and glorious! *that looketh forth as the morning*—As the morning light, which, coming after the darkness, is very pleasant and amiable. *Fair as the moon*—Namely, when it is full, and *walketh in brightness*, Job xxxi. 26. *Clear as the sun*—Without any such spots or dark specks as are in the moon. Thus the church is said to be *without spot, or wrinkle, or blemish*, (Eph. v. 27,) which she is by God's gracious acceptance of her, as such, in Christ, and through his merits and Spirit; and *terrible, &c.*—See above, verse 4.

Verse 11. *I went down*—When I went away from thee. These are the words of the bridegroom; *to see the fruits of the valley*—Which, being low, and well watered, is very fruitful. *To see, &c.*—What beginnings or appearances there were of good fruits or works among believers.

Verse 12. *Or ever I was aware*—I was surprised

see the fruits of the valley, and <sup>b</sup> to see whether the vine flourished, and the pomegranates budded.

12 <sup>2</sup> Or ever I was aware, my soul <sup>3</sup> made me like the chariots of Amminadib.

13 Return, return, O Shulamite; return, return, that we may look upon thee. What will ye see in the Shulamite? As it were the company <sup>4</sup> of two armies.

<sup>4</sup> Or, of *Mahanaim*, Gen. xxxii. 2.

with a vehement desire of my spouse, which is to be understood figuratively, and so as to agree with the majesty and omniscience of Christ. *My soul made me, &c.*—Eager in my desire, and swift in my motion toward the church. *Amminadib* is supposed to be some eminent charioteer then well known, and famous for his speed in driving chariots.

Verse 13. *Return*—Christ recalls his spouse, who, as when Christ was gone, she pursued after him, so now, when Christ was coming to her, she was ready to wander from him. *Return*—This word is repeated four times, to signify both Christ's passionate love to her, and her backwardness. *O Shulamite*—This title signifies the wife of Solomon, thus called after her husband's name; see Isa. iv. 1; and as Christ is called by the name of Solomon, (chap. iii. 7,) so the church is fitly described by the title of Solomon's wife. *That we may look upon thee*—That I and my companions may contemplate thy beauty. *What will you see*—But what do you, my friends, expect to discover in her? Christ proposes the question, that they might take special notice of this as a very remarkable thing in her. *The company*—Whereby he intimates, that this one spouse was made up of the whole multitude of believers; *of two armies*—Confederate together, and so this may signify the union of Jews and Gentiles, and the safety and strength of the church, which is compared to a numerous host, distributed into *two armies*.

## CHAPTER VII.

A further description of the church's graces, 1-7. His design to visit the church, with the blessed effect thereof, 8, 9. She professes her faith and desire, 10. She invites him to communion with her, 11. The end thereof, 12, 13.

A. M. 2990. HOW beautiful are thy feet with shoes,  
B. C. 1014. O prince's daughter! the joints of

\* Psa.

thy thighs are like jewels, the work of the hands of a cunning workman.

xlv. 13.

### NOTES ON CHAPTER VII.

Verse 1. *How beautiful are thy feet, &c.*—The bridegroom, who spake the last words, here continues his speech, and breaks forth into a particular description and commendation of the spouse, partly

from the parts of her body, and partly from her ornaments. With respect to which the same thing is to be observed which was remarked concerning her description of the bridegroom, namely, that there is no necessity of a distinct application of every parti-

A. M. 2990. 2 Thy navel *is like* a round goblet,  
B. C. 1014. *which* wanteth not <sup>1</sup> liquor; thy belly  
*is like* a heap of wheat set about with lilies.

3 <sup>b</sup> Thy two breasts *are* like two young roes  
*that are* twins.

4 <sup>c</sup> Thy neck *is* as a tower of ivory; thine  
eyes *like* the fish-pools in Heshbon, by the gate  
of Bath-rabbim: thy nose *is* as the tower of  
Lebanon which looketh toward Damascus.

5 Thy head upon thee *is* like <sup>2</sup> Carmel, and  
the hair of thy head like purple; the King *is*  
<sup>3</sup> held in the galleries.

6 How fair and how pleasant art thou, O love,  
for delights!

7 This thy stature is like to a palm-tree, and  
thy breasts to clusters of grapes.

8 I said, I will go up to the palm-tree, I will  
take hold of the boughs thereof: now also thy

breasts shall be as clusters of the vine, A. M. 2990.  
and the smell of thy nose like apples; B. C. 1014.

9 And the roof of thy mouth like the best  
wine for my beloved, that goeth *down* <sup>4</sup> sweetly,  
causing the lips <sup>5</sup> of those that are asleep to  
speak.

10 ¶ <sup>d</sup> I *am* my beloved's, and <sup>e</sup> his desire *is*  
toward me.

11 Come, my beloved, let us go forth into  
the field; let us lodge in the villages.

12 Let us get up early to the vineyards; let  
us <sup>f</sup> see if the vine flourish, *whether* the tender  
grape <sup>g</sup> appear, *and* the pomegranates bud forth:  
there will I give thee my loves.

13 The <sup>h</sup> mandrakes give a smell, and at our  
gates <sup>i</sup> are all manner of pleasant fruits, new  
and old, *which* I have laid up for thee, O my  
beloved.

<sup>1</sup> Heb. mixture.—<sup>b</sup> Ch. iv. 5.—<sup>c</sup> Ch. iv. 4.—<sup>3</sup> Or, crimson.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. bound.—<sup>4</sup> Heb. straightly.—<sup>5</sup> Or, of the ancient.

<sup>d</sup> Chap. ii. 16; vi. 3.—<sup>e</sup> Psalm xlv. 11.—<sup>f</sup> Chapter vi. 11.

<sup>g</sup> Heb. open.—<sup>h</sup> Gen. xxx. 14.—<sup>i</sup> Matt. xiii. 52.

cular article of it, the design being only this, to de-  
scribe the beauty and glory of the church, under the  
representation of a beautiful and noble woman. This  
also is observable, that in the description of Christ,  
she begins at the head, and so goeth downward,  
(chap. v. 11, &c.) but Christ, in the description of the  
spouse, proceeds from the feet upward. *With shoes*  
—Shoes were anciently evidences of a free and com-  
fortable state, whereas slaves and mourners used to  
go barefoot.

Verse 4. *Thine eyes like the fish-pools*—Full, and  
clear, and quiet, and pleasant; *in Heshbon*—A plea-  
sant and well-watered city beyond Jordan; *as the*  
*tower of Lebanon*—Which was, in all probability,  
built by Solomon in the mountain of Lebanon, the  
northern border of the land of Israel; and therefore  
a very fit place for a watch-tower; *which looketh to-  
ward Damascus*—There was another tower or  
building, in or near Jerusalem, which was called *the*  
*house of the forest of Lebanon*, 1 Kings vii. 2.

Verses 5, 6. *Thy head is like Carmel*—Emin-  
ent and pleasant to the eye, and fruitful as mount  
Carmel was: which may denote that her mind was  
replenished with knowledge, and other excellent  
gifts of the Holy Ghost. *The hair of thy head*  
*like purple*—Which colour was anciently much es-  
teemed. *The king is held in the galleries*—In  
which he walks, and, having once espied thee, is un-  
able to take off his eyes from thee. *How fair, &c.,*  
*for delights*—For those various and lovely features  
which are in thee.

Verses 7, 8. *Thy stature is like to a palm-tree*—  
Tall and straight, or upright. And he seems to  
mention the palm-tree rather than any other, be-  
cause it is constantly green and flourishing, and  
grows upward in spite of all pressures. *I said*—  
Within myself, I resolved; *I will go up to the palm-*

*tree*—Climb up, that so I may *take hold of the*  
*boughs*, which do not grow out of the sides, as in  
other trees, but only at the top of it. *I will take*  
*hold, &c.*—Partly to prune and dress them, and  
partly to gather the fruit. *The smell, &c.*—Of thy  
breath; which is often called the breath of a man's  
nostrils.

Verse 9. *The roof of thy mouth*—Thy speech, the  
palate being one of the principal instruments of  
speech; *like the best wine*—Grateful and refresh-  
ing; *for my beloved*—Who reapeth the comfort and  
benefit of that pleasure which I take in thee. *Causing*  
*the lips, &c., to speak*—The most dull, and stup-  
id, and sleepy persons to speak.

Verses 10, 11. *I am my beloved's*—This and the  
following verses contain the words of the bride, in  
answer to the bridegroom's endearing expressions  
delivered in the foregoing verses. *Let us go forth*  
*into the field*—That, being retired from the crowd,  
we may more freely and sweetly converse together.

Verse 12. *Let us get up early*—The church hav-  
ing lost her beloved, by her former laziness, now  
doubles her diligence; *to the vineyards*—To parti-  
cular congregations. *Let us see if the vines, &c.*—  
Let us inquire into the success of our labours, what  
souls are brought in and built up, and how they  
prosper and grow in grace. *There will I give thee*  
*my loves*—There I will discover the fervency of my  
affections to thee, and maintain communion with thee  
in thy holy ordinances.

Verse 13. *The mandrakes*—This Hebrew word  
is used Gen. xxx. 14, 15, and the signification of it  
is very much doubted and disputed by interpreters.  
The word here signifies sweet and pleasant flowers,  
and therefore if it be understood of mandrakes, they  
were of another sort than ours, as flowers of the same  
kind, in several climates, have very different natures

and qualities. *At our gates*—Brought thither by divers persons to congratulate our nuptials. *New and old fruits*—Fruits of this year and of the former; which seems to be meant of the various fruits and operations of the Spirit, and degrees of grace in several believers.

## CHAPTER VIII.

*The church expresses her desire of familiarity with Christ, 1, by the entertainment she would make him, 2, 3. She charges the daughters of Jerusalem not to disturb her beloved, 4. A commendation of the church for her faith in Christ, 5. She prays for full assurance of his love, through her invincible desire, 6. Which is insatiable, 7. The calling of the Gentiles, with their intent, and her condition, 8–13. Christ's coming prayed for, 14.*

A. M. 2990.  
B. C. 1014. **O** THAT thou wert as my brother, that sucked the breasts of my mother! when I should find thee without, I would kiss thee; yea, <sup>1</sup>I should not be despised.

<sup>2</sup> I would lead thee, and bring thee into my mother's house, who would instruct me: I would cause thee to drink of <sup>a</sup>spiced wine of the juice of my pomegranate.

<sup>3</sup> <sup>b</sup>His left hand should be under my head, and his right hand should embrace me.

<sup>4</sup> <sup>c</sup>I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, <sup>d</sup>that ye stir not up, nor awake my love, until he please.

<sup>1</sup> Heb. they should not despise me.—<sup>a</sup> Prov. ix. 2.—<sup>b</sup> Chap. ii. 6.—<sup>c</sup> Chap. ii. 7; iii. 5.—<sup>d</sup> Heb. why should ye stir up,

<sup>5</sup> <sup>d</sup>Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved? I raised thee up under the apple-tree: there thy mother brought thee forth: there she brought thee forth that bare thee.

<sup>6</sup> ¶ <sup>e</sup>Set me as a seal upon thy heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love is strong as death; jealousy is <sup>3</sup>cruel as the grave: the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame.

<sup>7</sup> Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned.

or, why, &c.—<sup>d</sup> Chap. iii. 6.—<sup>e</sup> Isa. xlix. 16; Jer. xxii. 24; Hag. xxii. 23.—<sup>3</sup> Heb. hard.—<sup>f</sup> Prov. vi. 35.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER VIII.

Verse 1. *O that thou wert as my brother*—Most intimate, and free, and familiar with me, as brethren and sisters commonly are; *that sucked the breasts of my mother*—That came out of the same womb and sucked the same breasts, and were brother and sister by father and mother too: for such are generally most dear to one another. The intent of these expressions, and of those in the three following verses, is to signify the church's earnest desire of a stricter union, and more intimate fellowship with Christ. *When I should find thee without, &c.*—In the open streets; *I would kiss thee, &c.*—And thus express my affection to thee openly, without fearing any scandal or contempt; such expressions being usual among persons so nearly and dearly related.

Verses 2, 3. *I would lead and bring thee*—With joy and triumph, as the bridegroom was usually brought to the bride's house; *into my mother's house, who would instruct me*—How I should behave myself toward thee: or, as the clause may be rendered, *where she did instruct, or educate me. I would cause thee to drink of spiced wine, &c.*—I would give thee the best entertainment the house affords. My gifts and graces should all be employed to serve and glorify thee. *His left hand, &c.*—The same expressions are used chap. ii. 6. The sense is,

He would not despise me for my forwardness in my affection to him, but would kindly accept of my love, and return it.

Verse 5. *Who is this, &c.*—These seem to be the words of the daughters of Jerusalem, or of the friends of the bride and bridegroom, admiring and congratulating this happy union: *leaning upon her beloved*—Which implies both great freedom and familiarity, and fervent affection and dependance upon him. *I raised thee up*—These are Christ's words: when thou wast fallen, and laid low, and dead in trespasses and sins, and in the depth of misery, I revived thee: *Under the apple-tree*—Under my own shadow: for she had compared him to an apple-tree, and declared, that under the shadow of the tree she had both delight and fruit, (chap. ii. 3,) which is the same thing with this *raising up. There*—Under that tree, either the universal or the primitive church did conceive and bring thee forth.

Verses 6, 7. *Set me as a seal upon thy heart*—These are undoubtedly the words of the bride. The sense is, Let thy mind and heart be constantly set upon me. Solomon seems to allude to the engraven tablets which were frequently worn upon the breast, and to the signet on a man's arm or hand, which they prized at a more than ordinary rate, and which were continually in their sight. *For love—My love to*

A. M. 2990. 8 ¶ We have a little sister, and she  
B. C. 1014. hath no breasts: what shall we do for  
our sister in the day when she shall be spoken  
for?

9 If she be a wall, we will build upon her a  
palace of silver: and if she be a door, we will  
enclose her with boards of cedar.

ε Ezek. xxiii. 33.—<sup>4</sup> Heb. peace.

thee, whence this desire proceeds, *is strong as death*—Which conquers every living thing, and cannot be resisted or vanquished. *Jealousy*—Or, *zeal*: my ardent love to thee, *is cruel as the grave*—Hebrew, קטרה, *is hard*, grievous, and terrible, and sometimes ready to overwhelm me, and swallow me up; therefore have pity upon me, and do not leave me. *The coals thereof are coals of fire*—It burns and melts my heart like fire. *Many waters cannot quench love*—My love to thee cannot be taken off, either by terrors and afflictions, which are commonly signified in Scripture by *waters and floods*, or by temptations and allurements. Therefore, give me thyself, without whom, and in comparison of whom, I despise all other persons and things.

Verse 8. *We have a little sister*—These are still the words of the bride. The present church, which was that of the Jews, speaks of another future church, which was to consist of the Gentiles, which she calls *little*, because she was the younger sister, and then, as a church, scarce had a being. And she calls her her *sister*, partly because she was such in the foreknowledge and purpose of God, their common Father, though, at present, in a great measure, a stranger to him; and partly to intimate that this Gentile church should be admitted to the participation of the same privileges with that of the Jews. *And she hath no breasts*—No grown and full breasts, as virgins have when they are ripe for marriage. This signifies the present deplorable state of religion among the Gentiles, and their want of the word and ordinances of God, the means of instruction and consolation, the milk and food of life for themselves and their posterity. They were neither married to the heavenly bridegroom, nor in a state to be married to him. *What shall we do for our sister?*—Namely, to fit her for this spiritual marriage? How shall we supply this defect? How shall we promote the conversion of the Gentiles, and their union with the promised Messiah? *In the day when she shall be spoken for*—When proposals of marriage shall be made from the King of heaven, and her consent shall be required?

Verse 9. *If she be a wall, &c.*—This and the following verse are certainly very obscure, and it is, perhaps, impossible to ascertain the precise signification of each of the terms or clauses used in them. The general meaning, however, of this verse is thought to be, that Christ engages himself to provide for her, in a way which should best suit with her condition. If the Gentiles, when they are converted, shall be like a *wall*, strong and firm in faith; *we*—

10 I *am* a wall, and my breasts like towers: then was I in his eyes as one that found <sup>4</sup> favour.

11 Solomon had a vineyard at Baal-hamon; <sup>b</sup> he let out the vineyard unto keepers; every one for the fruit thereof was to bring a thousand pieces of silver.

<sup>b</sup> Matt. xxi. 33.

my Father and I, as the principal builders, and my ministers, as workers with and under us, *will build upon her a palace of silver*—Will add more strength and beauty to her, will enlarge and adorn her; and *if she be as a door*—Which is weaker than a wall; if she be weak in faith, yet we will not therefore reject her, but *we will enclose*, or (as many others render the word) *strengthen*, or *fortify her with boards of cedar*—Which are not only beautiful, but also strong and durable. In other words, “We will take care of her, in proportion as she is capable of receiving or profiting by our bounty, like as men are wont to build on good foundations.” The eastern people delight thus to express themselves by parables, or comparisons. The bride’s answer in the next verse is thought to show that the bridegroom alludes to the sister’s degree of growth.

Verse 10. *I am a wall, &c.*—“The ancient church,” says Mr. Scott, “seems here thankfully to reflect on her privileges; she was, before the coming of the Messiah, as a wall built on the precious foundation, a part of the glorious temple that was to be erected; and the lively oracles and ordinances which she enjoyed were her security, as well as the sustenance and comfort of her children: and she was thus distinguished, because *then* (even when this difference originated,) *she was in his eyes as one that found favour*, and peace with him.” Bishop Patrick, however, considers these as the words of the little sister, in answer to those of Christ, “I am such a wall. I am no longer of a low and despicable stature, nor unfit for his love: but from this time forth I shall be acceptable unto him, and find such favour with him, as to enjoy all the happiness which he imparts to those that are most dear unto him.”

Verse 11. *Solomon had a vineyard at Baal-hamon*—A place, according to Aben-ezra, not far from Jerusalem, where many persons had vineyards. *He let out the vineyard unto keepers*—To farmers or tenants: to how many is not said; but the text supposes to several. *Every one for the fruit was to bring a thousand of silver*—That is, shekels, supposed to be in value about two shillings and four pence halfpenny each: as much as to say, it brought him a vast revenue yearly. The words imply the great extent of the vineyard, which required so many keepers, and its singular fertility, which afforded so great a rent. Thus Christ, typified by Solomon, had a church in a very fruitful place, (Isa. v. 1,) under the means of grace. He appointed ministers to watch over, defend, and cultivate it; to dispense the word and administer the ordinances of God for the edifi-

A. M. 2990. 12 My vineyard, which is mine, is  
B. C. 1014. before me: thou, O Solomon, *must*  
*have* a thousand, and those that keep the fruit  
thereof two hundred.

13 Thou that dwellest in the gardens, the

<sup>1</sup> Chap. ii. 14.—<sup>2</sup> Rev. xxii. 17, 20.

cation of its members. And each minister was to endeavour to the utmost of his power to promote the fruits of righteousness in every individual, to the honour and glory of the great proprietor of the whole. See notes on Isa. v. 1-7; and Matt. xxi. 33, 43.

Verse 12. *My vineyard, which is mine*—My soul, may every true member of the church say, my heart and life, my time and talents; or, my privileges and advantages, may the church in general say, which are committed to my trust, and for which I must be accountable; *are before me*—Under my continual care. *Thou, O Solomon, must have a thousand*—Thou, O Christ, must have the honour and glory: thou must receive returns of gratitude, love, and duty for the blessings thou hast bestowed; thou must be served with the produce of the vineyard, and of every plant therein. *And those that keep the fruit thereof, two hundred*—Those ministers that take pains with thy people to make them fruitful, must have that reward and encouragement that is due to them, 1 Cor. ix. 7. They that give Christ his due, will also give ministers theirs; yet without encroaching on Christ's. It may be observed here, that the Hebrew of this verse will admit of a different translation, thus; *My vineyard, which before brought me a thousand pieces, is now thine, O Solomon, and there are two hundred pieces for those who look after the fruit thereof.* They who adopt this translation suppose that the occasion of writing this book was taken from Solomon's marriage of a beautiful person called Shulamith, (chap. vi. 13,) and generally supposed to be Pharaoh's daughter: and that in her single state she possessed a vineyard, which upon her marriage became Solomon's; because, though among the Jews it was usual for the husband to endow his spouse with a sum of money at their marriage, yet the bride also often brought a portion to her husband, as appears from Tobit x. 10. Now, supposing it to be a fact, that Solomon's marriage gave occasion to this book, and that what has now

companions hearken to thy voice: A. M. 2990.  
B. C. 1014. <sup>1</sup> cause me to hear it.

14 ¶ <sup>2</sup> Make<sup>5</sup> haste, my beloved, and <sup>1</sup> be thou like to a roe or to a young hart upon the mountains of spices.

<sup>5</sup> Heb. *Flee away.*—<sup>1</sup> Chap. ii. 17.

been stated is the literal meaning of this verse; in the application of it to Christ and his church, we must say, as Solomon's spouse gave her vineyard, or her whole property, to him on her marriage, so the church, the spouse of Christ, upon her marriage to him, gives him, not only herself, but her all, and retains a propriety or exclusive right in nothing She lays herself and her all at his feet. With her heavenly husband's permission, however, she takes care to provide for those who are employed in cultivating and keeping the vineyard. For while Solomon has the vineyard, *two hundred pieces*, arising from the produce of it, are reserved for those who look after the fruit thereof. For the labourer, said Jesus, *is worthy of his hire*: and he that is taught in the word must communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.

Verse 13. *Thou that dwellest*—The word *דיושבת* thus rendered, is in the feminine gender, which plainly shows that Christ speaks here to his spouse, being about to depart from her for a season, as the next verse shows; *in the gardens*—Not in the wilderness of the world, for believers are called out of the world, (John xv. 19,) but in the church, the garden of God, which God hath fenced and appropriated to himself. He saith, *gardens*, because of the many particular congregations into which the church is divided. *The companions*—The friends of the bride and bridegroom; *hearken to thy voice*—Diligently observe all thy words, and thy whole conduct toward me, and all the transactions between thee and me. *Cause me to hear thy voice*—When I am gone from thee, let me hear thy prayers and praises, and the preaching of my gospel in the world.

Verse 14. *Make haste, my beloved*—Seeing we must part for a time, make haste, O my beloved bridegroom, and speedily finish the work which thou hast to do in the world, that so thou mayest take me to thyself, that I may live in thine everlasting embraces.

# THE BOOK

## OF THE

# PROPHET ISAIAH.

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### ARGUMENT.

WE are now come to a part of the Scriptures entirely different from those we have gone through ; to a revelation of God's word and will, delivered chiefly in prophetic visions : in which a multitude of symbolical representations, signifying things to come, and making known the will of God, and, in part, his counsels, were divinely impressed on the prophets' minds ; and this not only respecting things near at hand, but those also that were to come to pass in distant ages. " Prophecy," says a learned and ingenious writer, " may be styled an influx of the divine mind upon the human, to inform it of those things, or truths, with which before it was unacquainted, to the knowledge of which it could not attain by its own natural powers ; and likewise to awaken within it, and clear up to it, those truths which are engraven on our very nature, how much soever they may be obscured." Or, in the words of Joseph Albo, a famous Jewish rabbi, it is " An influence from God upon the rational faculty, either by the mediation of the fancy or otherwise ; and this influence, whether communicated by the ministry of an angel or otherwise, makes a man to know such things, as, by his natural abilities, he could not attain to the knowledge of." This rabbi hath distinguished prophecy into these four degrees : The first and lowest is, when the imaginative power is most predominant, so that the impressions made upon it are too rapid and turbulent for the rational faculty to discern the true mystical and spiritual sense of them clearly ; and, in this case, the prophets expressed themselves chiefly in parables, similitudes, and allegories, in a dark and obscure manner, as is very manifest in Zechariah, and in many of Ezekiel's prophecies. This declining state of prophecy the Jews suppose to have principally taken place when they were carried captive into Babylon. The second degree of prophecy is, when the strength of the imaginative and rational powers, equally balance one another. The third is, when the rational power is most predominant ; in which case, the mind of the prophet is able to strip those things that are represented to it in the glass of fancy, of all their materiality and sensible nature, and apprehend them more distinctly in their own naked essence. The last, and highest, is the Mosaic degree ; in which all imagination ceases, and the representation of truth descends not so low as the imaginative part, but is made in the highest stage of reason and understanding.

In the former times of the Israelitish commonwealth, after Moses, the prophets, to whom God made known his will, and whom he raised up to reprove, warn, exhort, or instruct his people, delivered their messages only or chiefly by word of mouth : we read but of one that was communicated in writing, and that was a message from Elijah to Jehoram, king of Israel, recorded 2 Chron. xxi. 12. The histories of those times, however, which are left us, were compiled by prophets, under a divine direction, and when the Old Testament is divided into *the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms* ; the historical books are, for that reason, reckoned among the prophets ; Solomon's writings, and some others, being classed with the Psalms. But, in the latter times of the kingdoms of Judah and Israel, some of the prophets were divinely inspired to write their prophecies, or abstracts of them, and to leave them upon record for the benefit of after ages, that " the children which should be born might praise the Lord" for them, and, by comparing the event with the prediction, might have their faith confirmed. And, as we have reason to think, these later prophets spoke more fully and clearly of the Messiah and his kingdom than their predecessors had done ; probably, on that account, God inclined them to record their prophecies, in order that they might both afford encouragement to the pious Jews, that looked for the consolation of Israel, and might minister edification to us Christians, upon whom the ends of the world are come ; as David's Psalms had been written for

the same reason; and that thus the Old and New Testaments might mutually give light and lustre to each other. It must be observed, however, that there were many other faithful prophets, at the same time, who spoke in God's name, and did not commit their prophecies, or any part of them, to writing, but who were, nevertheless, of those whom God raised up and sent, partly to assist the pious and faithful priests and Levites in teaching the people, and partly to supply the lack of service of such as were unfaithful and negligent. And the contempt of them, and the other prophets, and of their messages, in the end, brought ruin, without remedy, upon that senseless and infatuated people, who knew not the day of their visitation.

The holy prophets, who wrote their prophecies, and whose writings are contained in the sacred Scriptures, are sixteen. Of these Isaiah is first in place, and, as seems probable, in time also. Or, if Hosea began to prophesy and write before him, Isaiah certainly began soon after, as is evident by comparing Isa. i. 1, with Hosea i. 1; and he appears to have prophesied above sixty years, computing from the year in which Uzziah died, when he seems to have been first solemnly called to the prophetic office, (see chap. vi. 1,) to the end of Hezekiah's reign, whom he is said to have outlived. St. Jerome, in his preface to this book, tells us he was of noble birth; and the Jews say he was of the blood royal of Judah. That, however, is uncertain. But undoubtedly he was the prince of all the prophets, whether we consider the great extent and variety of his prophecies, the excellence and sublimity of those mysteries which were revealed to him and by him, the majesty and elegance of his style, the noble metaphors and striking imagery wherewith he illustrates and adorns his writings, or the incomparable liveliness and power of his sermons. He is universally and justly esteemed the most eloquent of all the prophets. Grotius compares his eloquence to that of Demosthenes. "In the prophet we meet with all the purity of the Hebrew tongue, as in the orator all the delicacy of the Attic taste. Both are sublime and magnificent in their style, vehement in their emotions, copious in their figures, and very impetuous when they set off things of an enormous nature, or which are grievous and odious. Whatever of its ancient sweetness and sublimity the Hebrew poetry preserves, it is all to be found in this exquisite book." See Bishop Lowth's admirable translation of it, with the Preliminary Dissertation and notes annexed. It is the constant tradition, both of Jews and Christians, that Isaiah was put to death with a saw at the beginning of the reign of Manasseh; to which the apostle is generally thought to refer, Heb. xi. 37.

The great and principal objects of Isaiah's prophecies are, the captivity of Babylon, the return of the Jews from this captivity, and the reign of the Messiah, whose person, offices, sufferings, and kingdom he so evidently and fully describes, that some of the ancients called him *the fifth evangelist*. And, accordingly, it is observable, that there are more quotations in the New Testament taken out of this book than out of the books of all the other prophets. "I divide the book of Isaiah," says Vitringa, "into the title prefixed to it, and the matter contained in it. The matter is two-fold, prophetic and historical, which are interwoven together. The *prophetic* is divided into five parts; the first of which, from the first chapter to the thirteenth, contains five prophetic sermons, immediately directed to the Jews, and also to the Ephraimites, whom the prophet variously reproves, exhorts, consoles. The second part, from the thirteenth to the twenty-fourth chapter, contains eight sermons, in which the fate of other nations is declared. The third part, from the twenty-fourth chapter to the thirty-sixth, explains the penal judgments denounced by God upon the disobedient Jews, and the enemies of the church, with the most ample promises given to the true church; and is comprehended in three sermons. The fourth part, from the fortieth chapter to the forty-ninth, sets forth, in four sermons, of a consolatory kind, the manifestation of the Messiah in the flesh, with its circumstances and effects, and the signs preceding it; particularly the deliverance of the Jewish Church from their exile in Babylon. The fifth part exhibits, in five sermons, from the forty-ninth chapter, the fate and events of Jesus Christ, his person and kingdom; with which this most noble prophecy closes. The *historical* part relates some notable events of those times, in which God was pleased to make use of the ministry of Isaiah, and, beginning with the thirty-sixth, ends with the thirty-ninth chapter." Or, according to another, perhaps still more accurate division of the sections of this book, in the first five chapters the prophet describes the corruptions of Judah, admonishes them what would be the fatal consequences of their sins, and most pathetically exhorts them to amendment of life, showing that, without it, all sacrifices, and the most exact observance of the outward ceremonies of religion, were vain. But, amidst the terrible evils that he denounces against those that continued in sin, he promises God's peculiar protection and happiness to the righteous; and, to comfort them, intersperses promises of a return of far better times, taking into this view the glorious times of the gospel which were to perfect the divine dispensations. In the six following chapters he promises, in the name of the Lord, the deliverance of Jerusalem, then besieged by the Syrians in confederacy with Israel, and denounces the speedy destruction of both those kingdoms; but, at the same time, he foretels the future destruction of Judah by the Assyrians, though it was to be delivered from its present calamities. From the thirteenth to the twenty-ninth chapter are prophecies against several kingdoms; namely, Babylon, the Philistines, Moab, Damascus, Egypt, Kedar, Arabia, Tyre, Samaria, and the ten tribes; against all which he denounces

God's severe judgments, but interspersed with indications of future mercy to them in bringing them to the knowledge of himself. From the twenty-ninth to the end of the thirty-fifth chapter are prophecies of the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, by the Babylonians, but mixed with consolatory promises of future happiness. The thirty-sixth, thirty-seventh, and thirty-eighth chapters contain an account of Sennacherib's invasion of Judea, and the sickness of Hezekiah, which happened at the same time; that history being a key to explain several passages in the foregoing prophecies; for he had foretold this siege of Jerusalem, and when it came to pass, though things seemed reduced to the last extremity, declared, that the city would be delivered from it, without receiving the least damage; and that the author of it, Sennacherib, would be followed with exemplary punishment from God. The fortieth and four following chapters contain a discourse in demonstration of the existence and perfections of Jehovah, the only living and true God, of the truth of the Jewish religion, and of the folly and vanity of idolatry, with some promises of the coming of the Messiah. In the four following chapters he foretels the reign of Cyrus, and the deliverance and return of the Jewish people from their captivity at Babylon. From the forty-ninth chapter to the end are more express prophecies of Christ, of the kingdom he would establish among men, of his sufferings and future glory, of the preaching of the gospel, and the calling of the Gentiles to the knowledge of the true God.

St. Jerome says of Isaiah, that his writings are, as it were, an abridgment of the Holy Scriptures; and that the instructions they give in morality and divinity are highly excellent. Certainly this prophet corrects with so much power, admonishes and exhorts so pathetically, describes the *true nature of religion and virtue*, and exposes all false notions of them, in so strong and clear a manner, that this book of his will be eminently useful to pious minds in all ages, for conviction of sin, and direction in duty; and we cannot read it, with due attention, without being greatly profited thereby. It may be proper to add here, that Bishop Lowth considers Isaiah as delivering all his visions, prophecies, or messages from God in Hebrew poetry, like the song of Israel at the Red sea, that of Deborah, recorded Judges v., or the Song of Moses, Deut. xxxii., on which see the notes.

CHAPTER I.

*In this chapter we have Judah's sins, 1-4. Her judgments, 5-9. The rejection of her worship, 10-16. Exhortations to repentance, promises of mercy and grace, threatenings of sore judgments, and complaints by reason of their backsliding, 16-31. Dr. Taylor, in his Scripture Divinity, observes, that this chapter, "by reason of its grand exordium, might be judged proper to stand at the front of the book; but that it gives such an account of the distressed, desolate state of the land, as agrees much better with the wicked and afflicted reign of Ahaz, than with the flourishing circumstances of the country in the reigns of Uzziah, and of his son and successor Jotham; who were both, in the main, good princes." Compare chap. i. 7-9, with 2 Chron. xxvi. 1-16, and xxvii. 1-6.*

A. M. 3244. THE vision of Isaiah the son  
B. C. 760. of Amoz, which he saw con-

cerning Judah and Jerusalem in A. M. 3244.  
B. C. 760. the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz,

\* Num.

xii. 6.

NOTES ON CHAPTER I.

Verse 1. *The vision of Isaiah*—"It seems doubtful," says Bishop Lowth, "whether this title belong 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 appropriate 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 labours on this prophet, has, I think, very judiciously resolved this doubt. He supposes, that the former part of this 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. And such it is plainly taken to be, 2 Chron.

xxxii. 32; where the book of Isaiah is cited by this title." Thus understood, the word *vision* is used collectively for visions, and the sense is, "This is the book of the visions, or prophecies, of Isaiah." The reader must observe, the two usual ways, whereby God communicated his will to the prophets, were *visions* and *dreams*: see Num. xii. 6. In visions, the inspired persons were awake, but their external senses were bound up, and, as it were, laid asleep in a trance. Thus Balaam describes them as to himself, Num. xxiv. 16. They are called *visions*, not from any use made of corporal sight, but because of the clearness and evidence of the things revealed, and the conformity of this kind of inspiration to the information which the mind receives by the sight of the bodily eyes. Hence, also, prophets were called seers, 1 Sam. ix. 9. Sometimes, however, visions were accompanied with external representations. See chap. vi. 1; Ezek. xl. 2; Rev. xxi. 10. See notes

A. M. 3244. *and* Hezekiah, kings of Judah.  
B. C. 760.

2 <sup>b</sup> Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the LORD hath spoken: ° I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me.

3 <sup>d</sup> The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: *but* Israel ° doth not know, my people <sup>f</sup> doth not consider.

4 Ah sinful nation, a people <sup>1</sup> laden with iniquity, ° a seed of evil-doers, children that are corrupters! they have forsaken the LORD, they

<sup>b</sup> Deut. xxxii. 1; Jer. ii. 12; vi. 19; xxii. 29; Ezek. xxxvi. 4; Micah i. 2; vi. 1, 2.—<sup>c</sup> Chapter v. 1, 2.—<sup>d</sup> Jer. xviii. 7. ° Jer. ix. 3, 6.—<sup>e</sup> Chap. v. 12.—<sup>f</sup> Heb. of heaviness.

on Isaiah, by Wm. Lowth, B. D. *Which he saw—Foresaw and foretold.* For he speaks, after the manner of the prophets, of things to come, as if they were either past or present. *Concerning Judah—*Principally, but not exclusively. For he prophesies also concerning Egypt and Babylon, and divers other countries; yet with respect to Judah. *In the days of Uzziah, &c.*—In the time of their reign. This, probably, was not the first vision which Isaiah had, but is placed at the beginning of his book, because, together with the four following chapters, it contains a general description of the state of the Jews, under the several judgments which God had brought upon them, and is a fit preface or introduction to the rest of his prophecy.

Verse 2. *Hear, O heavens, &c.*—“God is introduced as entering upon a solemn and 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.”—Bishop Lowth. See the same scene more fully displayed, Psa. l. 3, 4. With the like invocation Moses begins his sublime song, Deut. xxxii. 1; see also Mich. vi. 1, 2. *For the Lord hath spoken—Or, It is Jehovah that speaketh,* as Bishop Lowth renders it, there seeming to be an impropriety in demanding attention to a speech already delivered. *I have nourished, &c.*—I first made them a people, and, until this time, I have sustained and blessed them above all other nations: God's care over them is compared to that of parents in nursing and training up their children. *And they have rebelled against me—Or,* as פשעו may be rendered, *have revolted from me—*Even they, peculiarly favoured as they have been, have proved deserters, nay, traitors, against my crown and dignity. This is the Lord's plea against them, of the equity of which he is willing that all the creatures should be judges.

Verse 3. *The ox knoweth his owner, &c.*—In these words the prophet amplifies “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

have provoked the Holy One of Israel A. M. 3244.  
unto anger, they are <sup>2</sup> gone away back- B. C. 760.  
ward.

5 ¶ <sup>h</sup> Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will <sup>3</sup> revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint.

6 From the sole of the foot even unto the head *there is* no soundness in it; *but* wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: <sup>1</sup> they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with <sup>4</sup> ointment,

<sup>g</sup> Chap. lvii. 3, 4; Matt. iii. 7.—<sup>h</sup> Heb. alienated, or, separated, Psa. lviii. 3.—<sup>i</sup> Chap. ix. 13; Jer. ii. 30; v. 3.—<sup>j</sup> Heb. increase revolt.—<sup>k</sup> Jer. viii. 22.—<sup>l</sup> Or, oil.

sets them lower than the beasts, and even than the stupidest of all beasts; for there is scarce 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 his good; neither are they looked upon as children, but as beasts of burden; neither are they advanced to honours, but oppressed with great and daily labours. While the Israelites, chosen by the mere favour 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.” See a comparison of Jeremiah, chap. viii. 7, to the same purpose, equally elegant, but not so forcible and severe as this of Isaiah.

Verse 4. *Ah, sinful nation—*The prophet bemoans those who would not bemoan themselves; and he speaks with a holy indignation at their degeneracy, and with a dread of the consequences of it. *A people laden with iniquity—*Laden, not with the sense of sin, as those described Matt. xi. 28, but with the guilt and bondage of sin. *A seed of evil-doers—*The children of wicked parents, whose guilt they inherit, and whose evil example they follow; *children that are corrupted—*Hebrew, כשחתים, *that corrupt,* namely, themselves, or their ways, or others, by their counsel and example: or, *that destroy themselves and their land* by their wickedness. *They have forsaken the Lord—*Not indeed in profession, but in practice, and therefore in reality, neglecting or corrupting his worship, and refusing to be subject and obedient to him. *They have provoked the Holy One, &c.*—They have lived as if it were their great design and business to provoke him. *They are gone away backward—*Instead of proceeding forward, and growing in grace, which was their duty, they are fallen from their former professions, and have become more wicked than ever.

Verses 5, 6. *Why should ye be stricken any more—*It is to no purpose to seek to reclaim you by one chastisement after another; *ye will revolt more and more—*I see you are incorrigible, and turn even your afflictions into sin. *The whole head is sick, &c.*—The disease is mortal, as being in the most noble and vital parts, the very head and heart of the body politic, from whence the plague is derived to all the

A. M. 3244. 7 <sup>h</sup> Your country is desolate, your  
B. C. 760. cities are burned with fire: your land,  
strangers devour it in your presence, and it is  
desolate, <sup>5</sup> as overthrown by strangers.

8 And the daughter of Zion is left <sup>1</sup> as a cot-  
tage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of  
cucumbers, <sup>m</sup> as a besieged city.

9 <sup>a</sup> Except the LORD of hosts had left unto us  
a very small remnant, we should have been  
as <sup>o</sup> Sodom, and we should have been like unto  
Gomorrah.

<sup>h</sup> Deut. xxviii. 51, 52.—<sup>b</sup> Heb. as the overthrow of strangers.  
<sup>1</sup> Job xxvii. 18.—<sup>m</sup> Jer. iv. 17.—<sup>n</sup> Lam. iii. 22; Rom. ix. 29.  
<sup>o</sup> Gen. xix. 24.—<sup>p</sup> Deut. xxxii. 32; Ezek. xvi. 46.—<sup>q</sup> 1 Sam.

other members. "The end of God's judgments, in  
this world, is men's reformation; and when peo-  
ple appear to be incorrigible, there is no reason to  
expect that he should try any further methods of  
discipline with them, but consume them all at once."  
*From the sole of the foot, &c.*—"The whole frame  
of the Jewish Church and state is corrupted, and their  
misery is as universal as their sin which caused it."  
—Lowth.

Verses 7, 8. *Your country is desolate*—"The de-  
scription of the ruined and desolate state of the coun-  
try, in these verses," says Bishop Lowth, "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." *Strangers devour it in your presence*—  
Which your eyes see to torment you, when there is  
no power in your hands to deliver you. *As over-  
thrown, &c.*—ככהפכת, as the overthrow; of stran-  
gers—That is, such as strangers bring upon a land  
which is not likely to continue in their hands, and  
therefore they spare no persons, and spoil and de-  
stroy all things, which is not usually done in wars be-  
tween persons of the same or of a neighbouring na-  
tion. *And the daughter of Zion is left*—Is left  
solitary, all the neighbouring villages and country  
round about it being laid waste. *As a cottage*—Or,  
as a shed in a vineyard, as Bishop Lowth trans-  
lates it, namely, "a little temporary hut, covered with  
boughs, straw, turf, or the like materials, for a shel-  
ter 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 while the fruit was  
ripening; see Job xxvii. 18; and presently removed  
when it had served that purpose."—See Harmer,  
Observ. i. 454.

Verse 9. *Except the Lord had left us a rem-  
nant*—If God, by his infinite power and goodness,  
had not restrained our enemies, and reserved some  
of us, we should have been as Sodom—The whole  
nation of us had been utterly cut off, as the people of  
Sodom and Gomorrah were. So great was the rage  
and power of our enemies, and so utterly unable

10 ¶ Hear the word of the LORD, A. M. 3244.  
ye rulers <sup>p</sup> of Sodom: give ear unto B. C. 760.  
the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah.

11 To what purpose is the multitude of your  
<sup>a</sup> sacrifices unto me? saith the LORD; I am full  
of the burnt-offerings of rams, and the fat of fed  
beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bul-  
locks, or of lambs, or of <sup>6</sup> he-goats.

12 When ye come <sup>7</sup> to<sup>r</sup> appear before me,  
who hath required this at your hand, to tread  
my courts?

xv. 22; Psa. i. 8, 9; ii. 16; Prov. xv. 8; xxi. 27; Chap. lxvi. 3;  
Jer. vi. 20; vii. 21; Amos v. 21, 22; Mic. vi. 7.—<sup>6</sup> Heb. great  
he-goats.—<sup>7</sup> Heb. to be seen.—<sup>r</sup> Exod. xxiii. 17; xxxiv. 23.

were we to deliver ourselves. This remnant was  
"a type of those few converts among the Jews, who,  
embracing the gospel, escaped both the temporal and  
eternal judgments which came upon the rest of the  
nation for rejecting Christ and his messengers,"  
Rom. ix. 2, and xi. 5.—Lowth.

Verse 10. *Hear the word of the Lord*—I bring  
a message from your Lord and governor, to whom  
you owe all reverence and obedience; *ye rulers of  
Sodom*—So called for their resemblance of them in  
wickedness. Compare Deut. xxxii. 32; Ezek. xvi.  
46, 48. "The incidental mention of Sodom and  
Gomorrah in the preceding verse, suggested to the  
prophet this spirited address to the rulers and inhabi-  
tants of Jerusalem, under the character of princes  
of Sodom and people of Gomorrah. Two examples,  
of an elegant turn, of the like kind, may be observ-  
ed in St. Paul's epistle to the Romans, chap. xv.  
4, 5, and 12, 13."—Bishop Lowth. *Give ear unto  
the law of our God*—The message which I am  
now to deliver to you from God, your great law-  
giver.

Verses 11, 12. *To what purpose, &c., your sa-  
crifices unto me?*—Who am a Spirit, and therefore  
cannot be satisfied with such carnal oblations, but ex-  
pect to be worshipped in spirit and in truth, and to  
have your hearts and lives, as well as your bodies  
and sacrifices, presented unto me. *I delight not in  
the blood, &c.*—He mentions the fat and blood, be-  
cause these were, in a peculiar manner, reserved for  
God, to intimate that even the best of their sacrifices  
were rejected by him. The prophets often speak of  
the ceremonies of Moses's law as of no value, with-  
out that inward purity, and true spiritual worship,  
and devotedness to God, which were signified by  
them. This was a very proper method to prepare  
the minds of the Jews for the reception of the gos-  
pel, by which those ceremonies were to be abolished.  
*When ye come to appear before me*—Upon the  
three solemn feasts, or upon other occasions. *Who  
hath required this at your hand?*—The thing I  
commanded was not only, nor chiefly, that you  
should offer external sacrifices, but that you should  
do it with true repentance, with faith in my pro-  
mises, and sincere resolutions of devoting yourselves  
to my service.

A. M. 3244. 13 Bring no more \*vain oblations:  
B. C. 760.

incense is an abomination unto me; the new-moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is <sup>8</sup> iniquity, even the solemn meeting.

14 Your <sup>a</sup> new-moons and your <sup>a</sup> appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me: <sup>7</sup> I am weary to bear them.

15 And <sup>a</sup> when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; <sup>a</sup> yea, when ye <sup>9</sup> make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of <sup>b</sup> blood.<sup>10</sup>

16 ¶ <sup>o</sup> Wash ye, make you clean: put away the evil of your doings from be-

<sup>a</sup> Matt. i. 5, 9.—<sup>7</sup> Joel i. 14.—<sup>8</sup> Or, grief.—<sup>9</sup> Numbers xxviii. 11.—<sup>10</sup> Lev. xxiii. 2; Lam. ii. 6.—<sup>11</sup> Chap. xliii. 24. <sup>a</sup> Job xxvii. 29; Psa. cxxxiv. 2; Prov. i. 28; Chap. lix. 2; Jer. xiv. 12.—<sup>b</sup> Ps. lxxv. 18; 1 Tim. ii. 8.—<sup>c</sup> Heb. multiply prayer. <sup>d</sup> Chap. lix. 3.—<sup>e</sup> Heb. bloods.

Verse 13. *Bring no more vain oblations*—I neither desire, nor will accept of any on these terms. *Incense is an abomination to me*—So far is it from being a sweet savour to me, as you foolishly imagine. *The new moons*—Which were holy to God, and observed with great solemnity; *the calling of assemblies*—At all other solemn times, wherein the people were obliged to meet together. *I cannot away with*—Hebrew, לא אוכל, *I cannot endure*; it is grievous to me. *It is iniquity*—It is so far from pleasing me, that it is an offence to me: and, instead of reconciling me to you, which is your design, it provokes me more against you; *even the solemn meeting*—The most solemn day of each of the three feasts, which was the last day, which was called by this very name, עצה, Lev. xxiii. 36; Num. xxix. 35, and elsewhere; although the word be used sometimes more generally of any other solemn festival day. Perhaps the great day of atonement was especially intended. Bishop Lowth renders it, *the day of restraint*, certain holy days, ordained by the law, being distinguished by a particular charge, that “no servile work should be done therein.” This circumstance clearly explains the reason of the name, *the restraint*, given to those days.

Verse 15. *When ye spread forth your hands*—When ye pray with your hands spread abroad, as the manner was; *I will hide mine eyes from you*—I will take no notice of your persons or requests. *Your hands are full of blood*—You are guilty of murder and oppression, and of other crying sins, which I abhor, and have forbidden under pain of my highest displeasure.

Verses 16, 17. *Wash ye, make you clean*—Repent, and do works meet for repentance: cleanse your hearts and hands from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, and do not content yourselves with your ceremonial washings. He refers to the charge preferred in the preceding clause, and alludes to the legal purifications commanded on several occasions: see Lev. xiv. 8, 9, 47. *Put away the evil, &c., from before*

fore mine eyes; <sup>d</sup> cease to do evil; A. M. 3244.

17 Learn to do well; <sup>e</sup> seek judgment, <sup>11</sup> relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.

18 Come now, and <sup>f</sup> let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, <sup>8</sup> they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

19 If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land:

20 But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: <sup>h</sup> for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.

21 ¶ <sup>i</sup> How is the faithful city become a har-

<sup>c</sup> Jer. iv. 14.—<sup>d</sup> Psa. xxxiv. 14; xxxvii. 27; Amos v. 15; Rom. xii. 9; 1 Pet. iii. 11.—<sup>e</sup> Jer. xxii. 3, 16; Mic. vi. 8; Zech. vii. 9; viii. 16.—<sup>f</sup> Or, righten.—<sup>g</sup> Chap. xliii. 26; Mic. vi. 2. <sup>h</sup> Ps. li. 7; Rev. vii. 14.—<sup>i</sup> Num. xxiii. 19; Tit. i. 2.—<sup>j</sup> Jer. ii. 20, 21.

*mine eyes*—Reform yourselves thoroughly, that you may not only approve yourselves to men, but to me, who search your hearts and try all your actions. *Learn to do well*—Begin, and inure yourselves, to live soberly, righteously, and godly. *Seek judgment, &c.*—Show your religion to God, by practising justice and mercy to men. *Judge the fatherless, &c.*—Deliver and defend those that are poor and helpless, and liable to be oppressed by unjust and potent adversaries.

Verses 18–20. *Come now, let us reason together*—The word נוכח is properly understood of two contending parties *arguing a case*; or, as Bishop Lowth translates it, *pleading together*; but here it seems to import also the effect, or issue of such a debate, namely, the accommodating their differences. *Though your sins be as scarlet*—Red and bloody as theirs were, mentioned verse 15; great and heinous; *they shall be white as snow*—God, upon your repentance and reformation, will pardon all that is past, and look upon you with the same grace and favour as if you had never offended, your sins being expiated by the blood of the Messiah, typified by your legal sacrifices. It is a metonymical expression, by which sins are said to be *purged*, as Heb. i. 3, when men are *purged from their sins*, Heb. ix. 14. *If ye be willing and obedient*—If you be heartily willing and fully resolved to obey all my commands; *ye shall eat the good of the land*—Together with the pardon of your sins, you shall receive temporal and worldly blessings. *But if ye refuse and rebel*—If you obstinately persist in your disobedience to me, as hitherto you have done; *ye shall be devoured with the sword*—With the sword of your enemies, which shall be commissioned to destroy you, and with the sword of God’s justice, his wrath and vengeance, which shall be drawn against you; *for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it*—And he will surely make it good for the maintaining of his own honour.

Verse 21. *How is the faithful city*—Jerusalem, which in the reign of former kings was faithful to

A. M. 3244. lot! it was full of judgment; right-  
B. C. 760. eousness lodged in it; but now murderers.

22 <sup>1</sup> Thy silver is become dross, thy wine mixed with water:

23 <sup>1</sup> Thy princes *are* rebellious, and <sup>2</sup> companions of thieves: <sup>3</sup> every one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards: they <sup>4</sup> judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them.

24 Therefore saith the Lord, the LORD of hosts, the mighty One of Israel, Ah, <sup>5</sup> I will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies:

25 And I will turn my hand upon thee, and

<sup>1</sup> Jer. vi. 28, 30; Ezek. xxii. 18, 19.—<sup>2</sup> Hos. ix. 15.—<sup>3</sup> Prov. xxix. 24.—<sup>4</sup> Jer. xxii. 17; Ezek. xxii. 12; Hos. iv. 18.—<sup>5</sup> Jer. v. 28; Zechariah vii. 10.—<sup>6</sup> Deut. xxviii. 63; Ezekiel v. 13.  
<sup>7</sup> Heb. according to pureness.

God; *become a harlot*—Filled with idolatry, called whoredom in the Scriptures. *It was full of judgment, &c.*—Judgment was truly and duly executed in all its courts, and *righteousness*, or justice, lodged, or had its seat in it; but now *murderers*—Under that one gross kind, he comprehends all sorts of unrighteous men and practices.

Verses 22, 23. *Thy silver is become dross*—Thou art wofully degenerated from thy former purity. *Thy wine mixed with water*—If there be any remains of religion and virtue in thee, they are mixed with many and great corruptions. *Thy princes are rebellious*—Against me, their sovereign Lord; and *companions of thieves*—Partly by giving them connivance and countenance, and partly by practising the same violence, and cruelty, and injustice that thieves used to do. *Every one loveth gifts*—That is, bribes given to pervert justice.

Verse 24. *Ah, I will ease me, &c.*—This is an expression borrowed from men's passions, who find some sort of ease and rest in their minds upon venting their anger on just occasions, or in bringing offenders to condign punishment. Thus God, speaking after the manner of men, represents himself as feeling satisfaction in executing justice upon obstinate and incorrigible offenders. Compare Ezek. v. 13, and xvi. 42, and xxi. 17. But let it be observed, God is never said to take pleasure in the punishment of any, but those who have filled up the measure of their iniquities.

Verses 25, 26. *And I will turn my hand upon thee*—I will chastise thee again, and thereby reform thee: or, I will do that for the reviving of religion, which I did at first for the planting of it. *And purge away thy dross*—I will purge out of thee those wicked men that are incorrigible, and, as for those of you that are curable, I will by my word, and by the furnace of affliction, purge out all that corruption that yet remains in you. *And I will restore thy judges, &c.*—I will give thee such princes and magistrates

<sup>8</sup> purely <sup>9</sup> purge away thy dross, and A. M. 3244.  
take away all thy tin: B. C. 760.

26 And I will restore thy judges <sup>10</sup> as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterward <sup>11</sup> thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city.

27 Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and <sup>12</sup> her converts with righteousness.

28 ¶ And the <sup>13</sup> destruction <sup>14</sup> of the transgressors and of the sinners *shall be together*, and they that forsake the LORD shall be consumed.

29 For they shall be ashamed of <sup>15</sup> the oaks which ye have desired, <sup>16</sup> and ye shall be con-

<sup>8</sup> Jer. vi. 29; ix. 7; Mal. iii. 3.—<sup>9</sup> Jer. xxxiii. 7.—<sup>10</sup> Zech. viii. 3.—<sup>11</sup> Or, they that return of her.—<sup>12</sup> Job xxxi. 3; Psa. i. 6; v. 6; lxxiii. 27; xcii. 9; civ. 35.—<sup>13</sup> Heb. breaking.—<sup>14</sup> Ch. lviii. 5.—<sup>15</sup> Chap. lxx. 3; lxxvi. 17.

as thou hadst in the beginning, either, 1st, Of thy commonwealth, such as Moses and Joshua: or, 2d, Of thy kingdom, such as David. *And thy counsellors*—Thy princes shall have, and shall hearken to, wise and faithful counsellors. *Afterward thou shalt be called*—Namely, justly and truly, *the city of righteousness, &c.*—Thou shalt be such. "The reforming of the magistracy," says Henry, "is a good step toward the reforming of the city and country too."

Verses 27, 28. *Zion shall be redeemed*—Shall be delivered from all their enemies and calamities; *with judgment*—By the exercise of God's strict justice in destroying the obdurate; by purging out those wicked and incorrigible Jews, who, by their sins, hindered the deliverance of the people; and by punishing and destroying their unmerciful enemies who kept them in cruel bondage; and *her converts*—Hebrew, וְשׁוֹבֵי, *her returners*, those of them who shall come out of captivity into their own land; *with righteousness*—Or, *by righteousness*; either by God's faithfulness, in keeping his promise of delivering them after seventy years, or by his goodness; for both these qualities come under the name of *righteousness* in the Scriptures. *And, or rather, but, the destruction of the transgressors, &c., shall be together*—Though I will deliver my people from the Babylonish captivity, yet those of them who shall still go on in their wickedness, shall not have the benefit of that mercy, but shall be reserved for a more dreadful and total destruction.

Verse 29. *For they shall be ashamed*—He does not speak of an ingenuous and penitential shame for sin, but of an involuntary and penal shame for the disappointment of the hopes which they had placed in their idols; *of the oaks which ye have desired*—Which, after the manner of the heathen, you have consecrated to idolatrous uses. Of what particular kind the trees here mentioned were, cannot be determined with certainty. The Hebrew word אֵילִם, here used, is rendered *ilæx* by Bishop Lowth, which

A. M. 3244. founded for the gardens that ye have  
B. C. 760. chosen.

30 For ye shall be as an oak whose leaf fadeth,  
and as a garden that hath no water.

7 Ezek. xxxii. 21.—8 Chap. xliii. 17.

properly means *the scarlet oak*. Others think the terebinth-tree was intended. *And ye shall be confounded for the gardens, &c.*—In which, as well as in the groves, they practised idolatry: see Isa. lxx. 3; and lxxi. 17. "Sacred groves," the reader will observe, "were a very ancient and favourite 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, however, became afterward very much addicted to this species of idolatry:" see Ezek. xx. 28; Hos. iv. 13. Bishop Lowth.

Verse 30. *For ye shall be as an oak, &c.*—As you have sinned under the oaks and in the gardens, so you shall be like unto oaks and gardens, not when they are green and flourishing, but when they wither and decay. This verse is remarkably elegant, in which, what was the pleasure and confidence of those idolaters, is made to denote their punishment. "All the gardens in the East," says a late writer, "have water in them, which is so absolutely necessary, that without it every thing, in summer,

31 7 And the strong shall be <sup>a</sup> as tow, A. M. 3244.  
15 and the maker of it as a spark, and B. C. 760.  
they shall both burn together, and none shall  
quench *them*.

<sup>15</sup> Or, *and his work*.

would be parched up. This is a circumstance which we should attend to, if we would enter into the energy of the latter clause."

Verse 31. *And the strong*—The wisest, strongest, or richest persons among you, who think to secure themselves against the threatened danger by their wisdom, wealth, or power, and much more they that are weak and helpless; *shall be as tow*—Shall be as suddenly and easily consumed by God's judgments as tow is by the fire. *And the maker of it*—The maker of the idol, who can neither save himself nor his workmanship; *as a spark*—To set it on fire: by his sin he shall bring himself to ruin. Or, as פּעֲלֵי לִינִיּוֹן, may be rendered, *his work shall become a spark*, shall be the cause of his destruction. "The words are elegant, and the meaning of them is, that the rich, the powerful, the great, (meant by the word הוֹסֵן, which we render *strong*,) who seemed like a lofty and well-rooted oak, shall perish with their *works*: for their works, their great and wicked undertakings, by which they had sought safety, like sparks, shall set them on fire and consume them like tow. They shall perish, like fools, by their own devices. The very works themselves, which they had raised for the glory and preservation of themselves and their republic, shall be turned into the very cause of their destruction. Vitringa thinks the prophet alludes to the destruction of their state and temple by the Romans."—Dodd.

## CHAPTER II.

A prophecy of Christ's kingdom, and the calling of the Gentiles, 1-5; and rejection of the Jews for their idolatry and pride, 6-9. The great majesty and power of God, and his terrors on the wicked; with an exhortation to fear God, and not to trust in man, 10-22.

A. M. 3244. **T**HE word that Isaiah the son of  
B. C. 760. Amoz saw concerning Judah and  
Jerusalem.

<sup>a</sup> Mic. iv. 1, &c.—<sup>b</sup> Gen. xl. 1; Jer. xxxiii. 20.

### NOTES ON CHAPTER II.

Verse 1. *The word that Isaiah saw*—*The matter, or thing*, as the Hebrew word, הִרְבֵּר, commonly signifies; the prophecy or vision. He speaks of the prophecy contained in this and the two following chapters, which makes one continued discourse. "The first five verses of this chapter foretel the kingdom of the Messiah, the conversion of the Gentiles, and their admission into it. From the 6th verse to the end of this second chapter is foretold the pun-

2 And <sup>a</sup> it shall come to pass <sup>b</sup> in the A. M. 3244.  
last days, <sup>c</sup> that the mountain of the B. C. 760.  
LORD's house shall <sup>1</sup> be established in the top of

<sup>a</sup> Psa. lxxviii. 15, 16.—<sup>1</sup> Or, *prepared*.

ishment 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 the Messiah's kingdom. The whole third chapter, with verse 1, 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. iv. 2-6, promises to the remnant,

A. M. 3244. the mountains, and shall be exalted  
B. C. 760. above the hills; <sup>d</sup> and all nations shall  
flow unto it.

3 And many people shall go and say, <sup>e</sup> Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and

<sup>d</sup> Psa. lxxiii. 8; Chap. xxvii. 13.—<sup>e</sup> Jer. xxxi. 6; 1. 5; Zech. viii. 21, 23.

which shall have escaped this severe purgation, a future restoration to the favour and protection of God. This prophecy was probably delivered in the time of Jotham, or, perhaps, in that of Uzziah, to which time not any of his prophecies (and he prophesied in their days) is so applicable as that of these chapters."—Bishop Lowth.

Verse 2. *And—Or rather, now, it shall come to pass in the last days*—The times of the Messiah, which are always spoken of by the prophets as the *last days*, because they are the last times and state of the church, Christ's institutions being to continue to the end of the world. See Joel ii. 28, compared with Acts ii. 17; Mic. iv. 1, compared with Heb. i. 1; 1 Pet. i. 20. The Jews, it must be observed, divided the times or succession of the world into three ages or periods: the first, before the law; the second, under the law; the third, under the Messiah: which they justly considered as the last dispensation, designed of God to remain till the consummation of all things. "Accordingly St. Paul tells us, that Christ appeared *ἐπι συντελεία των αιωνων*, at the consummation of the ages, or several periods of the world, Heb. ix. 26; and, speaking of his own times, saith, *τελη των αιωνων*, the ends of the world, or conclusion of the ages, are come, 1 Cor. x. 11. *The mountain of the Lord's house*—Mount Moriah, on which the Lord's house stood, or rather, the Lord's house upon that mount, shall be established upon the top of the mountains—Shall be raised above, be rendered more conspicuous than, and shall be preferred before, all other mountains on which houses are built, and altars erected and dedicated to any god or gods. The prophet speaks figuratively. He means, that the worship of the true God should be established on the ruins of idolatry, that the true religion should swallow up all false religions, and the church of God, typified by the temple at Jerusalem, become most eminent and conspicuous, as a city on a high mountain: *and shall be exalted above the hills*—Above all churches, states, and kingdoms in the world, and all that is excellent and glorious therein. *The stone cut out of the mountain, without hands, shall become itself a mountain, and shall fill the whole earth*, Dan. ii. 34, 35. *And all nations*—Even the Gentile nations; *shall flow unto it*—Shall come in great abundance and with great eagerness to embrace the true religion, and become members of the true church, like broad streams, or mighty rivers, flowing swiftly and impetuously toward the ocean, as the word נהר, here used, signifies. Now, it is well known, this was not the case with respect to the Jewish Church at Jerusalem, or the worship

he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: <sup>f</sup> for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

4 And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and <sup>g</sup> they shall

<sup>f</sup> Luke xxiv. 47.—<sup>g</sup> Psalm xli. 9; Hos. ii. 18; Zechariah ix. 10.

there established. It never happened, during the ages that intervened between the time of Isaiah and the destruction of their city and temple, and the dispersion of their nation by the Romans, that their religion was so exalted, or made such great account of, by any nations remote or near, as is here expressed: much less did whole nations flow unto them, or unite themselves with them in the service of God, and in church fellowship. But this prophecy has been in a great measure fulfilled with regard to the Christian Church, which has so drawn to it the greater part of the civilized nations, that it has far, very far, surpassed all other religious institutions, whether Jewish, heathen, or Mohammedan: and when the last of the four kingdoms, spoken of Dan. ii. 35, 40–45, and vii. 19–27, shall be destroyed, and thereby all obstructions removed, it shall be fully and perfectly accomplished, and the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the Most High. For the Messiah shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth: yea, all kings shall fall down before him, and all nations shall serve him, Psalm lxxii. 8, 11.

Verse 3. *And many people shall go*—Shall not only have some weak desires of going, but shall take pains, and actually go; *and say, Come, &c.*—Yea, such shall be their zeal, that they shall not only go themselves, but shall persuade and press others to go with them. *And we will walk in his paths*—Thus they show the truth of their conversion, by their hearty desire to be instructed in the way of worshipping and serving God acceptably, and by their firm purpose of practising the instructions given. *For out of Zion shall go forth the law*—The new law, the doctrine of the gospel, which is frequently called a law, because it hath the nature and power of a law, obliging us no less to the belief and practice of it than the old law did; *and the word of the Lord*—For the accomplishment of this promise, see Luke xxiv. 47; Acts i. 8; Rom. x. 18. This last clause shows the reason why the people should be so forward to go, and to invite others to go with them.

Verse 4. *He shall judge among the nations*—He shall set up and exercise his authority, in and over all nations, not only giving laws to them, as other rulers do, but doing that which no others can do, convincing their consciences, changing their hearts, and ordering their lives; *and shall rebuke many people*—By the power of his word, compared to a two-edged sword in Scripture, and by the grace of his Spirit, convincing the world of sin: as also by the remarkable judgments which he will execute on those that are incorrigible, and especially on those

A. M. 3244. beat their swords into plough-shares,  
B. C. 760. and their spears into <sup>2</sup> pruning-hooks :  
nation shall not lift up sword against nation,  
<sup>h</sup> neither shall they learn war any more.

5 O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us <sup>i</sup> walk  
in the light of the LORD.

6 ¶ Therefore thou hast forsaken thy people

<sup>1</sup> Or, *scythes*.—<sup>h</sup> Psa. lxxii. 3, 7.—<sup>i</sup> Eph. v. 8.—<sup>3</sup> Or, *more than the east*.

of his implacable enemies who set themselves to oppose the propagation of his gospel. *They shall beat their swords into plough-shares*—This description of a well-established peace is very poetical. The Prophet Joel hath reversed it, and applied it to war prevailing over peace; *beat your plough-shares into swords, and your pruning-hooks into spears*, Joel iii. 10. And so likewise the Roman poet:

“ Non ullus aratro  
Dignus honos, squalent abductis arva colonis,  
Et curvæ rigidum falces conflantur in ensem.”

Virg. *Georg.* i. 506.

“ The peaceful peasant to the wars is press'd ;  
The fields lie fallow in inglorious rest.  
The plain no pasture to the flock affords,  
The crooked scythes are straightened into swords.”  
Dryden.

*Nation shall not lift up sword against nation*—Peace is frequently mentioned in Scripture as the distinguishing character of Christ's kingdom, and he himself is called the *prince of peace*. The design and tendency of his gospel are to produce a peaceable disposition in mankind, by subduing their pride, and various passions and lusts, which are the causes of wars and contentions, and by working in them humility, meekness, self-denial, and true and fervent love to all men, from whence peace necessarily follows. And the gospel actually does produce this effect in those that rightly receive it. It disposes them, *as much as in them lieth, to live peaceably with all men*. And as to that dissension and war which the preaching of the gospel has sometimes occasioned, as it was foretold it would do, Matt. x. 21, 22, it was wholly accidental, arising from men's corrupt lusts and interests, which the gospel opposes; and it was not among those who received the truth in the love of it, but between them and those who were either open enemies, or false friends to them and to the gospel. But this passage foretels that even an external and general peace will be established in the world under the reign of the Messiah, which undoubtedly, in due time, will take place, namely, when the fulness of the Gentiles shall be brought in, and all Israel shall be saved, and both Jews and Gentiles shall be united together in one fold, under Christ their great Shepherd.

Verse 5. *O house of Jacob, come ye*—Since the Gentiles will be thus ready and resolved to seek and serve the Lord, and to excite one another so to do, let this oblige and provoke you, O ye Israelites, to

the house of Jacob, because they be re- A. M. 3244.  
plenished <sup>3</sup> from <sup>k</sup> the east, and <sup>l</sup> are B. C. 760.  
soothsayers like the Philistines, <sup>m</sup> and they  
<sup>4</sup> please themselves in the children of strangers.

7 <sup>a</sup> Their land also is full of silver and gold,  
neither *is there any* end of their trea-  
sures; their land is also full of horses, nei-

<sup>k</sup> Num. xxiii. 7.—<sup>l</sup> Deut. xviii. 14.—<sup>m</sup> Psa. cvi. 35; Jer. x. 2.  
<sup>a</sup> Or, *abound with the children*, &c.—<sup>2</sup> Deut. xvii. 16, 17.

join with, or rather to go before them in this good work. “The prophet,” says Lowth, “addresses himself to those Jews of later times, that should live when the glad tidings of the gospel should be published; and exhorts them to make use of those means of grace which God would so plentifully afford them, and not continue stubborn and refractory, like their forefathers, which disobedience of theirs had provoked him to forsake them, as it follows, verse 6. *And let us walk in the light of the Lord*—Take heed that you do not reject that light, which will be so clear, that even the blind Gentiles will discern it.”

Verse 6. *Therefore*—For the following causes; *thou hast forsaken thy people*—Or, wilt certainly forsake and reject them. *The house of Jacob*—The body of that nation. The prophet here begins his complaint of the state of the Jewish nation, and “assigns the reason of God's withdrawing his kindness from those of the present age, (as there would be a more remarkable rejection of them under the gospel,) because of their following the corrupt manners of the idolatrous nations round about them, in seeking to soothsayers and wizards, which God had so lemnly and expressly forbidden, Deut. xviii. 14.”—Lowth. *Because they are replenished from the east*—Or, as the margin reads it, *more than the east*, which Dr. Waterland interprets, *They are fuller of sorceries than the east*; and Bishop Lowth, *They are filled with divination from the east*. The general meaning seems to be, that their land was full of the impious, superstitious, and idolatrous manners of the eastern nations, the Syrians and Chaldeans, and perhaps also they had encouraged these heathen to settle among them, that they might learn their customs. *And are soothsayers*—Undertaking to discover secret things, and to foretel future, contingent events, by observing the stars, or the clouds, or the flight of birds, and in other ways of divination; *like the Philistines*—Who were infamous for those practices; of which see one instance, 1 Sam. vi. 2. *They please themselves in the children of strangers*—They delight in their company and conversation, making leagues, and friendships, and marriages with them. Dr. Waterland renders the clause, *They please themselves in the conceptions, or productions, of strangers*.

Verse 7. *Their land also is full of silver, &c.*—They have heaped up riches immoderately, and still are greedily pursuing after more. Lowth thinks the prophet is especially reproofing those who, in the midst of the public calamities, made no conscience of

A. M. 3244. *ther is there any end of their chari-*  
B. C. 760. *ots :*

8 ° Their land also is full of idols ; they worship the work of their own hands, that which their own fingers have made :

9 And the mean man boweth down, and the great man humbleth himself : therefore forgive them not.

10 ¶ Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty.

11 The <sup>o</sup>lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed

° Jer. ii. 28. — ¶ Verses 19, 21 ; Rev. vi. 15. — † Verse 17 ; Chap. v. 15, 16 ; xiii. 11. — † Chap. iv. 1 ; xi. 10, 11 ; xii. 1, 4 ; xxiv. 21 ; xxv. 9 ; xxvi. 1 ; xxvii. 1, 2, 12, 13 ; xxviii. 5 ; xxix. 18 ; xxx. 23 ; lii. 6 ; Jeremiah xxx. 7, 8 ; Ezek. xxxviii. 14, 19 ;

enriching themselves by oppression and injustice. *Their land also is full of horses*—Which even their kings were forbidden to multiply, (as they were also forbidden to multiply gold and silver,) and much more the people. In the original this verse consists of a stanza of four lines, in which the construction of the two members is alternate, the first line answering to the third, and the second to the fourth.

Verses 8, 9. *Their land also is full of idols*—Every city had its god, (Jer. xi. 13,) and, according to the goodness and fertility of their lands, they made goodly images, Hos. x. 1. *They worship the work of their own hands*—They gave that worship to their own creatures, to the images which their own fancies had devised, and their own fingers had made, which they denied to JEHOVAH their Creator, than which nothing could be more impious or more absurd. *And the mean man boweth down, &c.*—Men of all ranks, both high and low, rich and poor, learned and ignorant, fall down and worship idols. The corruption is universal, and the whole land is given to idolatry. *Therefore forgive them not*—Thou wilt not forgive them, the imperative being put for the future, as we have seen it frequently is in the Psalms. Vitringa, however, Dr. Waterland, and Bishop Lowth, with many others, consider this verse, not as describing their idolatry, but as a predicting the punishment which God was about to bring upon them for it ; and therefore translate it, in perfect consistency with the Hebrew, in the future tense, thus : *Therefore the mean man shall be bowed down, and the mighty man shall be humbled ; and thou wilt not forgive them.* “ They bowed themselves down to their idols, therefore shall they be bowed down, and brought low, under the avenging hand of God.” —Bishop Lowth. According to this interpretation, “ the prophet begins here to describe the imminent severe judgments of God, wherewith he would punish the pride of these men, and their alienation from the true worship of God and their disobedience to his law.”

Verses 10, 11. *Enter into the rock, &c.*—Such calamities are coming upon you, that you will be ready to hide yourselves in rocks and caves of the

down, and the LORD alone shall be A. M. 3244.  
exalted <sup>o</sup>in that day. B. C. 760.

12 For the day of the LORD of hosts *shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up ; and he shall be brought low :*

13 And upon all <sup>o</sup>the cedars of Lebanon, *that are high and lifted up, and upon all the oaks of Bashan,*

14 And <sup>o</sup>upon all the high mountains, and upon all the hills *that are lifted up,*

15 And upon every high tower, and upon every fenced wall,

xxxix. 11, 22 ; Hos. ii. 16, 18, 21 ; Joel iii. 18 ; Amos ix. 11 ; Obad. 8 ; Mic. iv. 6 ; v. 10 ; vii. 11, 12 ; Zeph. iii. 11, 16 ; Zech. ix. 16. — † Chap. xiv. 8 ; xxvii. 24 ; Ezek. xxxi. 3 ; Zech. xi. 1, 2. — † Chap. xxx. 25.

earth, for fear of the glorious and terrible judgments of God. *The lofty looks of man shall be humbled*—The eyes that looked high ; the countenance, in which the pride of the heart had showed itself, shall be cast down in shame and despair. *The haughtiness of men shall be bowed down*—Judicially, as they prostrated themselves before their idols voluntarily, the punishment being suited to their sin. *And the Lord alone shall be exalted*—The justice and power of Jehovah shall be magnified, and the impotence and vanity of all other gods shall be detected, at the same time that the self-confidence, self-sufficiency, and vain glory of man are abased and vilified.

Verses 12–16. *For the day of the Lord*—The time of God's taking vengeance on sinners ; *shall be upon every one that is proud*—To mortify and bring him down to the dust ; and *upon all the cedars of Lebanon, &c.*—In these and the following words, to verse 17, the prophet is considered, by most commentators, as speaking metaphorically, according to the symbolical language of the Egyptian hieroglyphics. *The cedars of Lebanon, and oaks of Bashan,* are supposed to mean princes and nobles, who carried themselves high, and behaved themselves insolently ; *high mountains and hills,* to signify states and cities ; *high towers and fenced walls,* those who excelled in ingenuity, wisdom, and strength ; and the *ships of Tarshish, &c.,* (verse 16,) the merchants who confided in their wealth and splendour. Thus Bishop Lowth : “ 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 their 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. Thus, you will find in many other places, besides this before us, that cedars of Libanus 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

A. M. 3244. 16 <sup>u</sup> And upon all the ships of Tarshish, and upon all <sup>s</sup> pleasant pictures.

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17 <sup>z</sup> And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low: and the LORD alone shall be exalted <sup>v</sup> in that day.

18 And <sup>6</sup> the idols he shall utterly abolish.

19 And they shall go into the <sup>z</sup> holes of the rocks, and into the caves of <sup>7</sup> the earth, <sup>a</sup> for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majes-

<sup>u</sup> 1 Kings x. 22.—<sup>s</sup> Heb. *pictures of desire*.—<sup>x</sup> Verse 11. <sup>v</sup> Verse 11.—<sup>6</sup> Or, *the idols shall utterly pass away*.—<sup>z</sup> Verse 10; Hos. x. 8; Luke xxiii. 30; Rev. vi. 16; ix. 6.—<sup>7</sup> Heb. *the dust*.

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 elegancies 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 ships are to be taken metaphorically, as well as the high trees and lofty mountains." Some, however, it may be observed, incline to understand this whole passage literally, remarking, that the judgment was to be so universal and terrible, as not only to reach to men, but to things also, whether natural or artificial, in all which there would be manifest tokens of God's displeasure against the land. "Ships of Tarshish," adds Bishop Lowth, "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 Phenicians, and the principal source of wealth to Judea and the neighbouring countries. The learned seem now to be perfectly agreed that Tarshish is Tartessus, a city of Spain, (near Cadiz, now called Tariffa,) at the mouth of the river Bætis, (now named Guadalquivir, running through Andalusia,) whence the Phenicians, who first opened this trade, brought silver and gold, (Jer. x. 9; Ezek. xxvii. 12,) in which that country then abounded; and, pursuing their voyage still further to the Cassiterides, the islands of Sicily and Cornwall, they brought from thence lead and tin."

Verses 17, 18. *And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down*—Here the prophet expresses literally what he had delivered metaphorically in the preceding verses. The same things were asserted verse 11, but they are here repeated, partly to assure the people of the certainty of them, and partly to fix them more deeply in their minds, because men are very backward to believe and consider things of this nature. *And the idols he shall utterly abolish*—He will discover the impotency of idols to succour their worshippers, and thereby destroy the worship of them in the world.

Verse 19. *And they*—The idolatrous Israelites;

ty, when he ariseth <sup>b</sup> to shake terribly the earth.

20 <sup>c</sup> In that day a man shall cast <sup>8</sup> his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, <sup>9</sup> which they made *each one* for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats;

21 <sup>d</sup> To go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, <sup>e</sup> for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.

<sup>a</sup> 2 Thess. i. 9.—<sup>b</sup> Chap. xxx. 32; Hag. ii. 6, 21; Heb. xii. 26.—<sup>c</sup> Chap. xxx. 22; xxxi. 27.—<sup>8</sup> Heb. *the idols of his silver*.—<sup>9</sup> Or, *which they made for him*.—<sup>d</sup> Verse 19.—<sup>e</sup> Ver. 10, 19.

*shall go into the holes of the rocks, &c.*—Their usual places of retreat in cases of danger; see Josh. x. 16; Judg. vi. 2; 1 Sam. xiii. 6. The idea is taken from the nature of the land of Canaan; which was full of caves and dens; *for fear of the Lord, and the glory of his majesty, &c.*—"The meaning is, that there should be, at this time, a great and most bright display of the divine majesty and justice, which the impious and hypocritical could not bear; and that, struck with the terror of the divine judgment, they should consult for their safety, with the utmost terror and consternation, in caves, dens, and holes of the earth." "The Prophet Hosea hath carried the same image further, and added great strength and spirit to it, chap. x. 8. *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. vi. 15, 16." See Dodd and Bishop Lowth.

Verse 20. *In that day a man shall cast his idols, &c., to the moles and to the bats*—Shall cast them into the meanest and darkest places, in which moles and bats have their abode; whereas before they set them up in high and honourable places, where they might be seen and worshipped. Or, as Bishop Lowth thinks the meaning may be, "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." The wasting of Judah by the Syrians and Israelites in the time of Ahaz, might be here first in the prophet's view, when, besides a great multitude that were partly slain, and partly carried captive to Damascus by the Syrians, the king of Israel slew in Judah one hundred and twenty thousand in one day, and carried away captive, of men, women, and children, two hundred thousand, taking away also much spoil, 2 Chron. xxviii. 5, 6, 8. The prophecy may refer, secondly, to the invasion of the country by Sennacherib; but, undoubtedly, the destruction of Judah and Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, and the Babylonish captivity, are chiefly intended, for then idolatry was entirely abolished among the Jews, and never practised by them afterward.

A. M. 3244. 22 <sup>f</sup> Cease ye from man, whose  
B. C. 760. <sup>e</sup> breath is in his nostrils: for

<sup>f</sup> Psa. cxlvi. 3; Jer. xvii. 5.

Verse 22. *Cease ye from man*—"The prophet here subjoins an admonitory exhortation to the men of his own and of all times, to dissuade them from placing any confidence in man, however excellent in dignity, or great in power; as his life depends upon the air which he breathes through his nostrils, and which, if it be stopped, he is no more; and therefore, if you abstract from him the providence and grace of God, and consider him as left to himself, he is worthy of very little confidence and regard: see Psa. cxlvi. 3, 4. Vitringa is of opinion, that the prophet here alludes immediately to the kings of Egypt: see chap. xxxi. 3. And he adds, that the mystical interpretation of the period from

wherein is he to be accounted  
of? A. M. 3244.  
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<sup>f</sup> Job xxvii. 3.

the twelfth to this verse, may refer also to other days of the divine judgment, of which there are four peculiarly noted in Scripture, as referring to the new economy. 1st, The day of the subversion of the Jewish republic; 2d, The day of vengeance on the governors of the Roman empire, the persecutors of the church, in the time of Constantine; 3d, The future day of judgment hereafter to take place upon Antichrist and his crew; of which the prophets, and St. John in the Revelation particularly, have spoken; and, 4th, The day of general judgment. It is to this *third* day that he thinks the present period more immediately refers: see 2 Thess. ii. 2; Rev. xvi. 14."—Dodd.

## CHAPTER III.

Great confusion on both people and rulers for their sin, and impudence in it, 1-9. Peace to the righteous, and misery to the wicked, 10, 11. The oppression and covetousness of the rulers, 12-15. The pride of women, and their judgments, 16-26.

A. M. 3244. **F**OR behold, the Lord, the LORD of  
B. C. 760. hosts, <sup>a</sup> doth take away from Jerusalem and from Judah <sup>b</sup> the stay and the staff, the whole stay of bread, and the whole stay of water,

<sup>a</sup> Jer. xxxvii. 21; xxxviii. 9.—<sup>b</sup> Lev. xxvi. 26.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER III.

Verse 1. *For, &c.*—The prophet, having in the preceding chapter declared, in general terms, the terror of the day of the Lord, now descends to a more particular explication, and special confirmation of what he had advanced concerning it. *Behold*—Look upon what follows to be as certain as if it were already accomplished; *the Lord doth take away, &c., the stay and the staff*—All their supports, of what kind soever; all the things they trust to, and look for help and relief from; *the whole stay of bread, and the whole stay of water*—Bread is commonly called the staff of life: see Lev. xxvi. 26; Ezek. xiv. 13. But by bread and water here are meant all kinds of aliment, whereby the body is supported. This judgment seems to relate especially to the siege of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, when bread and water were both very scarce: see Jer. xiv. 1-6, and xxxvii. 21, and xxxviii. 9.

Verses 2, 3. *The mighty man, &c.*—Strong and valiant men. *The judge*—The civil magistrates; *and the prophet*—Either strictly so called, the want of whom is matter of grief, (Psa. lxxiv. 9,) or more largely taken, so as to include all skilful and faithful teachers; *and the prudent*—Whose wisdom and conduct were necessary to preserve them from ruin; *and the ancient*—Whose wisdom was increased

2 <sup>c</sup> The mighty man, and the man  
of war, the judge, and the prophet,  
and the prudent, and the ancient, A. M. 3244.  
B. C. 760.

3 The captain of fifty, and the <sup>1</sup> honourable man, and the counsellor, and the coun-

<sup>c</sup> See 2 Kings xxiv. 14.—<sup>1</sup> Heb. a man eminent in countenance.

by long experience. This likewise relates to the same times, particularly to Jehoiachin's captivity, when all the men of note were carried away captive with him, 2 Kings xxiv. 14. *The captain of fifty*—There shall not be a man left able to command fifty soldiers, much less such as could command hundreds or thousands, who yet were necessary; *and the honourable man*—Men of high birth, place, power, and reputation; *and the counsellor*—Wise and learned statesmen; *and the cunning artificer*—Who could make either ornaments for times of peace, or instruments for war, whom therefore conquerors were wont to take away from those nations whom they subdued, 1 Sam. xiii. 19, 20; 2 Kings xxiv. 14; *and the eloquent orator*—Hebrew, נכון לחם, literally, the skilful of charm, or the skilful charmer, or enchanter; whereby he understands either, 1st, *Charmers*, whom he threatens God would take away, not as if such persons were blessings to a people, or the removing of them a curse, but only because they made great use of them, and trusted to them. And so he signifies that God would remove all the grounds of their confidence, both right and wrong, and make their case desperate. Thus, for the same reason, God threatens the Israelites, (Hos. iii. 4,) that they should be, as without a sacrifice, so without an image and teraphim. Or,

A. M. 3244. ning artificer, and the <sup>2</sup> eloquent orator.  
B. C. 760.

4 And I will give <sup>d</sup> children to be their princes, and babes shall rule over them.

5 And the people shall be oppressed, every one by another, and every one by his neighbour: the child shall behave himself proudly against the ancient, and the base against the honourable.

6 When a man shall take hold of his brother of the house of his father, saying, Thou hast clothing, be thou our ruler, and let this ruin be under thy hand:

7 In that day shall he <sup>3</sup> swear, saying, I will

<sup>a</sup> Or, skilful of speech.—<sup>d</sup> Eccles. x. 16.—<sup>3</sup> Heb. lift up the hand, Gen. xiv. 22.—<sup>4</sup> Heb. binder up.

he may mean, 2d, Such as could persuade powerfully, and, as it were, charm people, by their eloquence, and induce them to do those things which were necessary for their safety; for the expression may be taken in a good sense, as דַּבְּרֵי, divination, is Prov. xvi. 10. Accordingly, Bishop Lowth translates it, the powerful in persuasion.

Verses 4, 5. And I will give children to be their princes—Either, 1st, Children in age, whose minority corrupt ministers of state commonly abuse, to the producing of much evil: or, 2d, In understanding and experience. When all the eminent persons, mentioned verses 2, 3, were removed, the necessary consequence must be, that persons of no qualifications for government must succeed in their places. 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 people shall be oppressed—By the command or permission of such childish rulers. The child shall behave himself proudly, &c.—The child in understanding, or the young and inexperienced; and the base against the honourable—"The usual effects," says Lowth, "of a weak and unsettled government, where faction grows too hard for justice, and seditious men become so bold as openly to insult those that are in authority."

Verses 6-8. A man shall take hold of his brother—Of his relation, friend, or neighbour. To take hold of another implies entreating his assistance; see chap. iv. 1; Zech. viii. 23; saying, Thou hast clothing—We are utterly undone, and have neither food nor raiment; but thou hast something left to support the dignity, which we offer to thee; be thou our ruler—And we will be subject to thee. It is taken for granted that there would be no way of redressing all these grievances, and bringing things into order again, but by good magistrates, who should be invested with power by common consent, and exert that power for the good of the community; and let this ruin be under thy hand—Namely, to heal it. In that day he shall swear—To show that he was resolved. Hebrew, he shall lift up, namely,

not be a 'healer; for in my house is neither bread nor clothing: make me not a ruler of the people.

8 For <sup>o</sup> Jerusalem is ruined, and Judah is fallen: because their tongue and their doings are against the LORD, to provoke the eyes of his glory.

9 The show of their countenance doth witness against them; and they declare their sin as <sup>f</sup> Sodom, they hide it not. Wo unto their soul! for they have rewarded evil unto themselves.

10 ¶ Say ye to the righteous, <sup>g</sup> that it shall be well with him: <sup>b</sup> for they shall eat the fruit of their doings.

• Mic. iii. 12.—<sup>f</sup> Gen. xiii. 13; xviii. 20, 21; xix. 5.—<sup>g</sup> Ec. viii. 12.—<sup>b</sup> Psa. cxviii. 2.

his hand, which was the usual gesture in swearing; I will not be a healer—A repairer of the ruins of the state; for in my house is neither bread nor clothing—I have not sufficient provisions, either of food or raiment, for my own family; much less, as you falsely suppose, for the discharge of so high a trust. For Jerusalem is ruined—The case is desperate, and past relief: it will be to no purpose to attempt affording any; because their tongue and their doings are against the Lord—They have broken the law of God in word and deed, and that in contempt of his authority and defiance of his justice. Their tongue was against the Lord, for they contradicted his prophets, and their doings were against him, for they acted as they spoke; to provoke the eyes of his glory—Of his glorious majesty, whom they ought to reverence and adore; the all-seeing eyes of Him who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, unless with abhorrence.

Verse 9. The show of their countenance—Their pride, wantonness, and impiety, manifestly show themselves in their very looks and whole behaviour, and will be swift witnesses against them, both before God and men. They declare their sin as Sodom—They commit it publicly, casting off all fear of God, and reverence to men; and they glory in it. They hide it not—As men do, who have any remains of modesty or ingenuity. They have rewarded evil to themselves—That is, procured a fit recompense for their wickedness, even utter ruin; or, they have done evil, &c. They cannot blame God, but themselves: their destruction is wholly from themselves. The word הִכָּרָה, rendered show, in the first clause of the verse, not occurring elsewhere in the Bible, is of rather uncertain signification. Bishop Lowth renders it, steadfastness; and Dr. Waterland, impudence. The former translates the whole verse thus: "The steadfastness of their countenance witnesseth against them: for their sin, like Sodom, they publish, they hide it not: wo to their souls! for upon themselves have they brought down evil."

Verses 10, 11. Say ye to the righteous—O ye priests and Levites, in your sermons and exhortations

A. M. 3244. 11 Wo unto the wicked! <sup>i</sup> it shall  
B. C. 760. be ill with him: for the reward of his  
hands shall be <sup>5</sup> given him.

12 ¶ As for my people, <sup>k</sup> children are their  
oppressors, and women rule over them. O my  
people, <sup>l</sup> they <sup>6</sup> which lead thee cause thee to err,  
and <sup>7</sup> destroy the way of thy paths.

13 The LORD standeth up <sup>m</sup> to plead, and  
standeth to judge the people.

<sup>i</sup> Psa. xi. 6; Eccles. viii. 13.—<sup>8</sup> Heb. done to him.—<sup>k</sup> Verse  
4.—<sup>l</sup> Chap. ix. 16.—<sup>6</sup> Or, they which call thee blessed.

to the people; that it shall be well with him—Even when it is ill with the wicked, and with the nation in general; for they shall eat the fruit of their doings—God will be their safeguard and portion in the common calamity; therefore let them not fear, but let them commit themselves, and their all, to his protection, and resign themselves up to his disposal. They shall either be hid in the day of the Lord's anger, or shall have divine supports and comforts, which shall abound in proportion as trials and troubles abound. "This is an admirable sentence to support the souls of the pious, amidst all the calamities of this life. God will not forsake those who truly love and serve him. This, reason teaches us; this, the experience of all times confirms; and it is the constant and comfortable doctrine of the word of God. The event must and will be happy to the good man." *Wo unto the wicked, &c.*—These heavy judgments are designed against them, and shall certainly find them out, though here they be mixed with the righteous. As happiness, either in this world or the next, is, by the divine determination, the certain consequence of righteousness, so the contrary is the certain consequence of wickedness.

Verse 12. *As for my people*—In this and the following verses, says Dr. Dodd, "the prophet describes the incapacity and weakness, the ignorance and corruption, the oppression and cruelty of the priests and rulers of the people; such as we learn from history they were before the Babylonish captivity." *Children are their oppressors*—Persons young in years, of little experience, and who have not due consideration, but, following the impulse of their passions, without regard to any thing else, have the power in their hands, which they use at their pleasure, of exacting tribute of the people; and women rule over them—Weak and effeminate rulers. Or, perhaps he speaks of the wives and concubines of their kings and great men, who, by their arts, gaining an ascendancy over their husbands, induced them to act as they desired, though frequently to the people's prejudice, and in a manner contrary to all the laws. Thus it was in the reign of Jehoram, king of Judah, whose wife Athaliah, a cruel and weak woman, occasioned great disorders in the state; see 2 Chron. chap. xxi. and xxii.; and thus undoubtedly it frequently happened after the time Isaiah uttered this prophecy. *They who lead thee*—Thy rulers, civil

14 The LORD will enter into judgment with the ancients of his people, <sup>A. M. 3244.</sup>  
<sup>B. C. 760.</sup> and the princes thereof: for ye have <sup>8</sup> eaten up  
<sup>n</sup> the vineyard; the spoil of the poor is in your  
houses.

15 What mean ye that ye <sup>o</sup> beat my people  
to pieces, and grind the faces of the poor? saith  
the Lord God of hosts.

16 ¶ Moreover the LORD saith, Because the

<sup>7</sup> Heb. swallow up.—<sup>m</sup> Mic. vi. 2.—<sup>8</sup> Or, burnt.—<sup>n</sup> Chap. v.  
7; Matt. xxi. 33.—<sup>o</sup> Chap. lviii. 4; Mic. iii. 2, 3.

and ecclesiastical, whose duty it is to show thee the right way; or, as כִּסְפוֹתָי, may be properly rendered, they that bless thee; that is, thy false prophets, who flatter thee, and speak peace to thee; cause thee to err—From the way of truth and duty, from the way of safety and prosperity. Instead of leading thee to repentance and reformation, they encourage thee to go on in sin and rebellion against him, on whom thou art dependant for all things. Those teachers are indeed impostors, that pronounce a people safe and happy who continue in sin; for it is contrary to the very nature of things, that any people can be happy who are contemners of the divine laws. Their punishment may be delayed, but it is not therefore remitted; and every step they take in such a way is a step toward misery and ruin. *And destroy the way of thy paths*—Keep thee from the knowledge or practice of those paths which lead to safety and happiness, and mislead thee into evil courses, by their wicked counsels or examples.

Verses 13–15. *The Lord standeth up to plead*—He will shortly and certainly stand up as a judge to inquire into the cause, and to give sentence; and standeth to judge the people—To call the wicked into judgment, and to denounce upon them as they deserve; or to defend and deliver his own people, judging for them, as this phrase often means. *Will enter into judgment with the ancients*—The princes or rulers, as it is explained in the next clause, often called elders, because they were commonly chosen from those that were advanced in years. *For ye have eaten up the vineyard*—Destroyed, instead of preserving and dressing it, as you should have done. The church and commonwealth of Israel is often called God's vineyard, and here the vineyard, by way of eminence, intrusted to the care of these rulers. *The spoil of the poor is in your houses*—The goods which you have violently taken away from them. *What mean ye that ye beat my people?*—What warrant have ye for it? How durst you presume to do it? and grind the faces of the poor—A strong metaphor to denote grievous oppression; but it is exceeded by the Prophet Micah, chap. iii. 1–3.

Verse 16. *Moreover, the Lord saith*—After God had reproved the rulers of the Jews for their iniquity, injustice, and rapacity in spoiling the people, "he draws an argument of the same kind from the pride and luxury of the noble matrons and virgins,

A. M. 3244. daughters of Zion are haughty, and  
B. C. 760. walk with stretched-forth necks and  
wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they  
go, and making a tinkling with their feet :

17 Therefore the LORD will smite with a  
scab the crown of the head of the daughters of  
Zion, and the LORD will discover their  
secret parts.

18 In that day the LORD will take away the

<sup>9</sup>Heb. *deceiving with their eyes.*—<sup>10</sup>Or, *tripping nicely.*—<sup>r</sup>Deut. xxviii. 27.—<sup>11</sup>Heb. *make naked.*—<sup>q</sup>Chap. xlvii. 2, 3; Jer. xiii.

whose ornaments, collected from the spoils of the people, were borne proudly and insolently by them; upon whom therefore he denounces judgments; for of these two parts consists this last period of his reproving discourse: urging, 1st, In this verse the crimes of luxury and wanton haughtiness; denouncing, 2d, The punishment with which God would pursue these crimes, verse 17 to chap. iv. 1:" see Vitringa and Dodd. *Because the daughters of Zion are haughty*—Proud and disdainful; *and walk with stretched-forth necks*—Affecting stateliness, (Psa. lxxv. 5,) and endeavouring to appear tall; *and wanton eyes*—Hebrew, טשקרו, *falsifying their eyes*; that is, falsely setting off their eyes with paint, as Bishop Lowth translates it, observing that he takes it to be the true meaning and literal rendering of the word; *walking and mincing as they go*—Taking petty tripping steps in their walking, that they may appear the younger; *making a tinkling with their feet*—Dr. Waterland renders this clause, *and with chains, or shackles, upon their feet.* The prophet is thought, by some learned men, to "allude to a custom among the eastern ladies of wearing on their legs large hollow rings, or circles, with little rings hanging round them; the cavities of these rings being filled with small flints, which caused them to sound like bells on the least motion." Bishop Lowth translates the last two clauses, "Mincing their steps as they go, and with their feet lightly tripping along."

Verse 17. *Therefore the Lord will smite, &c.*—*Will humble the head of the daughters of Zion; and Jehovah will expose their nakedness.* Thus Bishop Lowth renders the verse, observing, that "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, which was 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, denouncing the fate of Nineveh, paints it in very strong colours," chap. iii. 5, 6.

Verse 18. *In that day the Lord, &c.*—"Punishment, which, though slow, always follows vice, is

bravery of their tinkling ornaments A. M. 3244.  
*about their feet, and their* <sup>12</sup>cauls, B. C. 760.  
and their <sup>r</sup>round tires like the moon,

19 The <sup>13</sup>chains, and the bracelets, and the  
<sup>14</sup>mufflers,

20 The bonnets, and the ornaments of the  
legs, and the head-bands, and the <sup>15</sup>tablets, and  
the ear-rings,

21 The rings, and nose-jewels,

22; Nah. iii. 5.—<sup>12</sup>Or, *net-works.*—<sup>r</sup>Judges viii. 21.—<sup>13</sup>Or, *sweet balls.*—<sup>14</sup>Or, *spangled ornaments.*—<sup>15</sup>He. *houses of the soul.*

here denounced upon the luxurious and proud women: first, *taking away*, not only the ornaments, wherewith they set off their beauty, but also their garments, which were of necessary use, to verse 24; secondly, deprivation of their husbands and children, verses 25, 26; thirdly, the consequence hereof, by which this loss might be repaired, chap. iv. 1:" see Vitringa. *Will take away the bravery of their tinkling ornaments, &c.*—It is justly observed by a learned commentator here, that the words which describe the women's ornaments in this and the following verses are of very doubtful signification; the modes of every age and country varying so often, that the succeeding fashion makes the former to be quickly forgotten, and the words that express it to become obscure, or even unintelligible. Probably a hundred years hence the names of some of the ornaments that are now in use in our own land will be as little understood as some of those here named. It is judged unnecessary and improper, therefore, to trouble the reader here with the different interpretations which learned men have given of them. It is agreed by all, that they were ornaments used by the women in Judea at that time, and that they were made the means of increasing their pride and other vices, and therefore were displeasing to God. And it is of no concern exactly to understand the differences of them. Instead therefore of spending time on this barren subject, we shall content ourselves with laying before the reader Bishop Lowth's translation of the Hebrew terms used to express them, with some occasional observations which he has made on some of the articles. *In that day will the Lord take away from them the ornaments of the feet-rings, and the net-works, and the crescents,* verse 18. *The pendants, and the bracelets, and the thin veils,* verse 19. *The tires, and the fetters, and the zones, and the perfume-boxes, and the amulets,* verse 20. *The rings, and the jewels of the nostril,* verse 21. Many commentators explain this of jewels, or strings of pearl, hanging from the forehead, and reaching to the upper part of the nose. 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

A. M. 3244. 22 The changeable suits of apparel,  
B. C. 760. and the mantles, and the wimples, and the cringing-pins,

23 The glasses, and the fine linen, and the hoods, and the veils.

24 And it shall come to pass, *that* instead of sweet smell there shall be stink; and instead of a girdle, a rent; and instead of well-set hair,

<sup>a</sup> Chap. xxii. 12; Mic. i. 16.—<sup>16</sup> Heb. *nigh*.—<sup>1</sup> Jer. xiv. 2;

in the same manner, chap. xvi. 11, 12; see also Gen. xiv. 47, and Prov. xi. 22.

Verses 22–24. *The embroidered robes, and the tunics, and the cloaks, and the little purses, verse 22. The transparent garments*—A kind of silken dress, transparent like gauze; worn only by the most delicate women, and such as dressed themselves, as Sallust observes, “*elegantius quam necesse esset probis, more elegantly than was necessary for modest women.*” This sort of garments was afterward in use among the Greeks. *And the fine linen vests; and the turbans, and the mantles, verse 23. And there shall be, instead of perfume, a putrid ulcer*—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 (as we have seen) is made of the rich ointments of the spouse in the Song of Solomon; and 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 ii. 12.* 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 Zion. *And, instead of well-girl raiment, rags; and, instead of high-dressed hair, baldness; and, instead of a zone, a girdle of sackcloth: a sun-burnt skin, instead of beauty, verse 24.*

Verses 25, 26. *Thy men shall fall, &c.*—We have

<sup>a</sup> baldness; and instead of a stomacher, A. M. 3244. a girding of sackcloth: *and burning* B. C. 760. instead of beauty.

25 ¶ Thy men shall fall by the sword, and thy <sup>16</sup> mighty in the war.

26 <sup>4</sup> And her gates shall lament and mourn; and she, *being* <sup>17</sup> desolate, <sup>18</sup> <sup>v</sup> shall sit upon the ground.

Lam. i. 4.—<sup>17</sup> Heb. *cleansed*.—<sup>18</sup> Or, *emptied*.—<sup>3</sup> Lam. ii. 10.

in these verses the second evil; the desolation and widowhood of the matrons and virgins: see Lam. ii. 21, 22. But we must observe, that the prophet here does not address the women themselves, but Zion, which frequently is spoken of and represented in the character of a woman. *Her gates shall lament*—The gates of Zion, which, by a figure, are said to lament, to imply the great desolation of the place, that there would be no people to go out and come in by them, or to meet together there as they used to do. *And she, being desolate*—Bereaved of her children; Hebrew, נקת, *emptied*, or *cleansed*, that is, deprived of all that she had held dear, and delighted in; *shall sit upon the ground*—In the posture of a mourner, bewailing her sad calamity. Sitting on the ground, the reader will observe, was a posture denoting deep distress: see on Job ii. 13. The Prophet Jeremiah has noticed it, in the first place, among many indications of sorrow, in an elegant description of this same state of distress of his country, Lam. ii. 8–10. Thus also the psalmist, *By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept when we remembered Zion.* For, undoubtedly, Isaiah in this prophecy had in his view, at least first and immediately, the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, and the dissolution of the Jewish state under the captivity of Babylon. His prediction, however, received a second, and still more awful accomplishment, in the destruction of that city and nation by the Romans. And, what is remarkable, in a medal coined by Vespasian’s order, Jerusalem is represented, according to the picture drawn of her here by the prophet, as lamenting that calamity, under the emblem of a woman sitting on the ground in a melancholy and mournful posture.

## CHAPTER IV.

*In the extremity of evils, Christ’s glorious kingdom should appear to those who are left alive, 1, 2. They shall be holy, 3. Purged, 4. A glory and a defence upon them, 5. A sanctuary from evils, 6.*

A. M. 3244. AND <sup>a</sup> in that day seven women  
B. C. 760. shall take hold of one man, saying, We will <sup>b</sup> eat our own bread, and wear our

own apparel: only <sup>1</sup> let us be called A. M. 3244.  
by thy name, <sup>2</sup> to take away <sup>c</sup> our re- B. C. 760.  
proach.

<sup>a</sup> Chap. ii. 11, 17.—<sup>b</sup> 2 Thess. iii. 12.—<sup>1</sup> Heb. *let thy name*

*be called upon us.*—<sup>3</sup> Or, *take thou away.*—<sup>c</sup> Luke i. 25.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER IV.

Verse 1. *In that day*—Of which he has hitherto been speaking, chap. ii. and iii., and still continues to

speak; in that calamitous time; *seven women shall take hold on one man*—“The war and captivity shall make such a prodigious scarcity in the male sex,

A. M. 3244. 2 ¶ In that day shall <sup>d</sup> the branch  
B. C. 760. of the LORD be <sup>3</sup> beautiful and glorious,  
and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent  
and comely <sup>4</sup> for them that are escaped of Is-  
rael.

<sup>d</sup> Jer. xxiii. 5; Zech. iii. 8; vi. 12.—<sup>3</sup> Heb. *beauty and glory*.  
<sup>4</sup> Heb. *for the escaping of Israel*.

that seven women shall be glad to apply to a single man for protection, preservation, and marriage: and shall importune him, though contrary to the natural modesty of their sex, to consent to *take away their reproach*—For not barrenness only, but a single state also was reckoned opprobrious among the Jews." "And in spite of the natural suggestions of jealousy, they will each be content with a share only of the rights of marriage in common with several others; and that on hard conditions, renouncing the legal demands of the wife on the husband, (see Exod. xxi. 10,) and begging only the name and credit of wedlock, to be freed from the reproach of celibacy." See Vitrina and Bishop Lowth.

Verse 2. *In that day*—About and after that time, when the Lord shall have washed away (as this time is particularly expressed, verse 4,) the filth of Zion, by those dreadful judgments now described. The third part of this discourse, the reader will observe, begins here, in which is set forth the flourishing state of the remnant of the Jews after the times of the former calamity. *Shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious*—The church and people of Israel may be here intended by the *branch of the Lord*, being often called God's *vine*, or *vineyard*, as we have seen before, and the *branch of his planting*, chap. lx. 21. It is a metaphorical expression, taken from a tree cut down, which, notwithstanding, sprouts forth anew from the root, by young suckers, and brings forth many trees. And thus the prophet foretels, that, notwithstanding the grievous calamities and great destructions which he had predicted, and which would certainly come to pass, yet, nevertheless, the small remainder of them which should return out of captivity, with those that should be left in the land, when it was laid desolate by the Chaldeans, should increase into a great people. And to them *the fruit of the earth* should be *excellent and comely*—That is, through the abundant produce of the land they should be made rich, and should be rendered respectable to the neighbouring nations. This seems to be the primary and most obvious meaning of the passage, considered in connection with what precedes and follows. The Chaldee Paraphrast, however, says, the *branch* here means the *Messiah of Jehovah*, and of him many Jewish doctors, as well as Christian commentators, understand the expression. Certainly he is frequently signified, in Scripture, by this title, the *branch*: see chap. xi. 1; Jer. xxiii. 5, and xxxiii. 15; Zech. iii. 1; and, in one place, namely, Zech. vi. 12, his name is expressly said to be the *branch*. Understood of him, the meaning of the passage must be, that after the foregoing miseries had been

3 And it shall come to pass, *that he* A. M. 3244.  
*that is left in Zion*, and *he that re-* B. C. 760.  
maineth in Jerusalem, <sup>o</sup> shall be called holy,  
*even every one that is* <sup>l</sup> written <sup>5</sup> among the  
living in Jerusalem:

<sup>o</sup> Chapter lx. 21.—<sup>l</sup> Phil. iv. 3; Revelation iii. 5.—<sup>5</sup> Or,  
*to life*.

brought upon the Jews, and they had been restored to their own land; and after they had been chastised and purified still more, by the calamities brought upon them by Antiochus Epiphanes and other princes of the Grecian empire, and by the Romans under Pompey, the Messiah should be born; and that, after the utter destruction which should be brought upon the Jewish city, temple, and nation, by Titus, the Roman general, the kingdom of the Messiah should become beautiful and glorious, as is here expressed. According to this interpretation, the expression, *in that day*, in the beginning of the verse, must be considered as used with great latitude, as it often is by this prophet, signifying, as Lowth observes, "not the same time with that which was last mentioned, but an extraordinary season, remarkable for some signal events of providence, called elsewhere, by way of excellence, *the day of the Lord*, just as *that day* denotes the day of judgment in the New Testament, as being a time of all others the most remarkable; see 2 Thess. i. 10; 2 Tim. i. 12, 18, and iv. 8. "It is usual," says Grotius, "for the prophets to pass from the threatenings that relate to their own times, to the promises which belong to the times of the gospel." It may be further observed here, that the Scriptures often speak of great tribulations, as preceding, and preparing the way for, the enlargement and prosperity of Christ's kingdom. In consistency with this application of the passage, by *the fruit of the earth*, here said to be *excellent and comely*, must be meant the spiritual blessings of the gospel, frequently described under the emblems of the fruitfulness of the earth and plenty. And by *them that are escaped of Israel*, we must understand those Jews who, the prophet foresaw, would be converted by the preaching of Christ and his apostles, and should thereby escape that vengeance which would involve the rest of their nation. This accords well with the following verses of the chapter.

Verse 3. *And he that is left in Zion*—Those that escape the common destruction brought on their countrymen; see verse 2; *shall be called holy*—Shall be really such. The Jews that survived the Babylonish captivity, and returned into their own land, were greatly reformed, especially in one point, they relapsed no more into idolatry: and in other respects also a spirit of religion was revived among them. But the prophecy was much more eminently fulfilled in the first converts from Judaism to Christianity, to whose purity and holiness the apostles often bear witness, and of which they glory in their writings. *Even every one that is written among the living, &c.*—Whose names are recorded in the book

A. M. 3244. 4 When <sup>a</sup> the LORD shall have  
B. C. 760.

washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning.

5 And the LORD will create upon every dwelling-place of mount Zion, and upon her assem-

<sup>a</sup> Mal. iii. 2, 3.—<sup>b</sup> Exod. xiii. 21.—<sup>c</sup> Zech. ii. 5.—<sup>d</sup> Or,

of life, or the book of the divine knowledge and remembrance, as persons who, by repentance toward God and faith in the Messiah, expected, or already revealed, have passed from death unto life. The phrase is used in allusion to the registers which were kept of the Jewish tribes and families: see notes on Exod. xxxii. 32; Psa. lxxix. 28.

Verse 4. *When the Lord shall have washed away the filth, &c.*—This shall be accomplished when God shall have thoroughly cleansed the Jewish nation from their sins; and shall have purged away the blood of Jerusalem—The sins of cruelty and oppression, (ch. v. 7,) or of bloodshed and murder, particularly in killing the prophets, and persecuting God's servants. *By the spirit of judgment and burning*—By the effects of his justice and wrath in punishing them severely; by making them pass through the furnace of affliction, as it is expressed ch. xlviii. 10: or the Holy Spirit's influences may be chiefly intended, especially as this mode of purification is opposed to the legal way, which was by water. The Holy Spirit may well be called a *spirit of judgment*, because he executes judgment in the church, and in the consciences of men, convincing sinners of sin, leading them to judge and condemn themselves, and humbling them before God. And the same Spirit may be properly called a *spirit of burning*, because he burns up and consumes the dross which is in the church, and in the hearts of sinners, operates like refiners' fire, purges believers as gold and silver are purged, (Mal. iii. 3,) inflames their souls with love to God and zeal for his glory, and transforms them into his holy nature and image. This was effectually done with respect to those Jews that embraced the gospel in the early days of Christianity.

Verse 5. *And the Lord will create*—Will, in a marvellous manner, produce, as it were, by a new work of creation; *upon every dwelling-place of mount Zion*—Upon all the private habitations of his people; *and upon her assemblies*—Upon the places of their public worship, and the persons assembled therein; *a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining, &c.*—He alludes to the pillar of a cloud and fire, which conducted and protected the Israelites in the wilderness, and afterward rested upon the tabernacle; and his words imply, that God would be the protector and glory of Zion. Such he was to Jerusalem after the return from Babylon; directing the Jews in their various difficulties, and defending them in their weak state against all the contrivances and

blies, <sup>b</sup> a cloud and smoke by day, and <sup>c</sup> the shining of a flaming fire by night: <sup>d</sup> a defence.

for <sup>e</sup> upon all the glory shall be <sup>f</sup> a defence.

6 And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the day-time from the heat, and <sup>g</sup> for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain.

above.—<sup>7</sup> Heb. a covering, Chap. viii. 14.—<sup>8</sup> Chap. xxv. 4.

attempts of their enemies, as we learn from the book of Nehemiah: and thus especially he was present with, and guided, protected, and preserved the first Christian Church, when he destroyed their unbelieving and disobedient countrymen. *Upon all the glory shall be a defence*—Upon all that church and people, which God will make glorious: upon the literal, but especially upon the mystical Jerusalem, upon all holy societies, or assemblies of sincere Christians. A learned commentator, who says the *dwelling-places* and *assemblies* of Sion “refer to the meetings of the apostles and other Christians at Jerusalem;” and that the next clause, *upon all the glory, &c.*, means that the divine protection shall be afforded wherever God manifests himself by the extraordinary signs of his gracious presence, adds as follows: “Every symbol of the divine grace and glory, such as was the cloud, brings with it the protection and defence of that place or assembly, which is blessed with this prerogative. The event proves the truth of this interpretation. So long as God was in the temple, that place rejoiced in the benefit of the divine protection. When the voice was heard, ‘Let us depart hence,’ it was left to the desolation of its enemies.” Now the same, as he says, holds good in the Christian Church. While she cleaves to God, adheres to his truth, possesses his grace, obeys his laws, and worships him in the beauty of holiness, she has his presence with her, and is safe and happy. But, when the reverse of all this takes place, when his truth is disbelieved, his grace neglected, his laws broken, and his ordinances slighted, or attended in a mere formal way, his presence is withdrawn, and her glory and defence depart together.

Verse 6. *And there shall be, &c.*—Or, *He*, that is, the Lord, *shall be, a tabernacle, or a tent, for a shadow from the heat, &c.*—He alludes to the circumstance of tents being necessary, in those eastern countries, to defend people from the intolerable heat of the sun, and the violent tempests which frequently happen; in consequence of which a portable tent becomes an important part of a traveller's baggage, for defence and shelter. Thus, he signifies, the Christian Church, in its early ages, exposed as it was to the heat and violent storms of repeated persecutions, stood in peculiar need of the divine protection, and was favoured therewith, and that frequently, in a very extraordinary and even miraculous way.

## CHAPTER V.

This chapter, containing the prophet's third discourse, appears to stand single and alone, unconnected with the preceding and following. Its subject is nearly the same with that of the first chapter, namely, a general reproof of the Jews for their wickedness; "but it exceeds that chapter," says Bishop Lowth, "in force, in severity, in variety, and elegance; and it adds a more express declaration of vengeance, by the Babylonian invasion. It naturally divides itself into two principal parts, being partly parabolical and partly proper. The first contains the parable, setting forth, under the allegory of a vineyard, God's mercies to Israel, and Israel's unfruitfulness, 1-6. The other, the explanation and application of the parable, manifesting some of the more notorious sins of the Jewish people, and foretelling the judgments which God was about to bring upon them, as the punishment of those sins, 7-30.

A. M. 3244.  
B. C. 760.

**N**OW will I sing to my well-beloved  
a song of my beloved touching  
his vineyard. My well-beloved hath a vine-  
yard in <sup>1</sup> a very fruitful hill :

<sup>1</sup> Psa. lxxx. 8; Cant. viii. 12; Chap. xxvii. 2; Jer. ii. 21; Matt. xxi. 33; Mark xii. 1; Luke xx. 9.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER V.

Verse 1. *Now will I sing, &c.*—Bishop Lowth translates this clause, "Let me sing now a song to my beloved; a song of loves concerning his vineyard." This is the exordium, a kind of title placed before the song; which song he records, as Moses did his, that it might be a witness for God, and against Israel. The *beloved*, to whom the prophet addresses the song, is the Lord of the vineyard, as appears by the latter clause of the verse, namely, God, or his Messiah, whom the prophet loved and served, and for whose glory, eclipsed by the barrenness of the vineyard, he was greatly concerned: *a song of my beloved*—Not devised by me, but inspired by God, which, therefore, it behooveth you to lay deeply to heart: *touching his vineyard*—The house of Israel, (verse 7,) or his church among the Israelites, often, and very properly, called a vineyard, because of God's singular regard to it, and care and cultivation of it; his delight in it, and expectation of good fruit from it. *My beloved hath, &c.*—Hebrew, לִי יִירֵה הַיֵּינֶה, *my beloved hath had a vineyard*, namely, for many ages, with which he hath long taken great pains, and on which he hath bestowed much culture; *in a very fruitful hill*—Hebrew, *on a horn, the son of oil*, "an expression," says Bishop Lowth, "highly descriptive and poetical." According to Kimchi the prophet gives the land of Israel this appellation because of its height and fertility. Accordingly, the bishop renders the phrase, *on a high and fruitful hill*, observing, that "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*; a ridge of rocks, *a back*, ('*dorsum immane mari summo*, a huge back in the deep sea; Virg.) Thus *a horn* is a proper and obvious image for a mountain, or mountainous country." Hills are places most commodious for vines, and the hills of Canaan being very fertile, the phrase, *son of oil*, is added to express that circumstance, both because oil includes the idea of fatness, and because *oil-olive* was one of the most valued productions of that land. Indeed the word *horn* also is frequently used in Scripture as an emblem of plenty, their wealth consisting very much in their *herds*, as well as flocks.

**2** And he <sup>2</sup> fenced it, and gathered <sup>3</sup> out the stones thereof, and planted it  
with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the  
midst of it, and also <sup>3</sup> made a wine-press therein :

A. M. 3244.  
B. C. 760.

<sup>1</sup> Heb. *the horn of the son of oil.*—<sup>2</sup> Or, *made a wall about it.*  
<sup>3</sup> Heb. *hewed.*

Verse 2. *And he fenced it*—In this verse the prophet, carrying on the allegory, proceeds to express, in parabolical language, the singular favours which God had bestowed on the Jewish nation, and the peculiar care which he had taken of them. He separated them from other nations, took them into covenant with himself, gave them a variety of laws and ordinances respecting his worship and service, and became, in an especial manner, their protector and governor. Thus *he fenced his vineyard*; Hebrew, עָקַרְהוּ, *circumsepsit eam, hedged it round on all sides*. In removing the heathen nations, and destroying all the forms of their idolatrous worship, forbidding all idolatry, and all intimate friendship and intermarriages with idolaters, and by giving them plain and ample directions for their whole conduct, lest they should fall by error or mistake, *he gathered out the stones thereof*—Which otherwise might have marred the land, (2 Kings iii. 19,) and injured the vines. In other words, he removed all the hinderances of fruitfulness. In that he formed his church of the posterity of those wise, holy, and faithful men, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and purged and reformed the nation in the wilderness before he established them in Canaan, he might truly be said to *plant his vineyard with the choicest vine*—Or, as the Hebrew is, *the vine of Sorek*, alluding to a valley between Ascalon and Gaza, running up eastward into the tribe of Judah, and famous for the best vines, and the richest vineyards. *And he built a tower in the midst of it*—As edifices, termed towers by the Jews, were erected in vineyards, containing, as Bishop Lowth supposes, "all the offices and implements, and the whole apparatus necessary for the culture of them, and the making of wine;" and, doubtless, also serving for the accommodation and defence of the labourers; and as places of pleasure for the owners of the vineyards; so God provided his church with a most commodious and magnificent temple, furnished with all conveniences for every part of that worship and service which he required his people to perform to him, and affording every requisite accommodation for the residence, support, and comfort of the priests and Levites, while ministering in holy things, and employed in cultivating God's mystical vineyard; and where he, the Lord

A. M. 3244. <sup>b</sup> and he looked that it should bring  
B. C. 760. forth grapes, and it brought forth wild  
grapes.

3 And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, <sup>c</sup> judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard.

4 What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?

5 And now go to; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: <sup>d</sup> I will take away the

<sup>b</sup> Deut. xxxii. 6; Chap. i. 2, 3.—<sup>c</sup> Rom. iii. 4.—<sup>d</sup> Psa. lxxx. 12.

of the vineyard, might be peculiarly present, as the protector and consolation of his people, their refuge and strength, and very present help in times of trouble or danger. Thus the Chaldee paraphrast: "I have constituted them the plant of a choice vine, and built my sanctuary in the midst of them." So also Jerome interprets the clause. He also made a *wine-press therein*—Hebrew, <sup>וַיִּבְנֶה</sup> <sup>כַּסְפָּא</sup> <sup>בְּתוֹכָהּ</sup>, which Bishop Lowth properly translates, "And he hewed out also a lake therein;" observing that the word <sup>כַּסְפָּא</sup> means, not the wine-press itself, or *calcatorium*, (the vessel or place where the grapes were stamped, or trod for the wine, which is expressed by another word,) but "what the Romans called *lacus*, the *lake*; the large open place or vessel, which, by a conduit, or spout, received the *must* (or new wine) from the wine-press." This place, he thinks, in very hot countries, it was necessary, or very convenient, to have under ground, or in a cave hewed out of the side of a rock, "for coolness; that the heat might not cause too great a fermentation, and sour the must." Now this lake, made to contain the new wine, may here signify the great altar, made to receive the sacrifices and oblations, as the fruits of the spiritual vineyard. And he looked that it should bring forth grapes—Real, genuine fruit, true, substantial piety and virtue, or godliness and righteousness; and it brought forth wild grapes—Or, rather, *poisonous berries*, as Bishop Lowth translates <sup>בְּרִיחַ</sup>, the word here used, which does not signify "merely useless, unprofitable grapes, such as wild grapes; but grapes offensive to the smell, noxious, poisonous;" such as those mentioned 2 Kings iv. 39-41. For, according to 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." See an elegant paraphrase of this part of the parable, Jer. ii. 21.

Verses 3, 4. And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, &c.—God is here introduced as calling upon the guilty themselves to pass sentence, or judgment, in the case, and leaving it to them; because, without downright madness, they could do no other than condemn themselves; who, when they had received so many benefits from God, had been so ungrateful

hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten <sup>A. M. 3244.</sup>  
up; and break down the wall thereof, <sup>B. C. 760.</sup>  
and it shall be <sup>4</sup> trodden down:

6 And I will lay it waste: it shall not be pruned, nor digged; but there shall come be briers and thorns: I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.

7 For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah <sup>5</sup> his pleasant plant; and he looked for judgment, but behold <sup>6</sup> oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry.

<sup>4</sup> Heb. for a treading.—<sup>5</sup> Heb. plant of his pleasures.  
<sup>6</sup> Heb. a scab.

to him. *What could have been done, &c.*—What work is there belonging to the office of an owner or keeper of a vineyard, which I have neglected? *Wherefore—brought it forth wild grapes*—How unworthy a conduct and inexcusable a crime is it, that you not only have been unfruitful in good works, but have brought forth, in abundance, the fruits of wickedness! Who can read these words without being moved at the justness as well as the tenderness of the reproach; which is equally applicable now to professing Christians in general, as it was to the Jews at that time? What is it that God has not done for us? What good thing has he withheld from us? How many invaluable blessings has he bestowed upon us in our creation and preservation! And how many still more inestimable in our redemption! What more could have been done for us than he has done? Wherefore then, when he looketh for grapes, does he only find wild grapes, or rather poisonous berries? When he looketh for a tribute of grateful praise, does he find ingratitude, forgetfulness of his mercies, and disobedience to his commands?

Verses 5, 6. And now I will tell you, &c.—He graciously warns them beforehand, that they may have space and encouragement to repent, and so to prevent the threatened miseries. *I will take away the hedge thereof, &c.*—I will withdraw my presence and protection from you, and give you up into the hands of your enemies. *I will lay it waste*—It shall be overrun by heathen and infidels, and shall no longer bear the form of a vineyard. *It shall not be pruned nor digged*—Vine-dressers used to dig up and open the earth about the roots of the vines. The meaning is, I will remove my ministers, who have used great care and diligence to make you fruitful: but there shall come up briers and thorns—I will give you up to your own wicked lusts. *I will also command the clouds*—I will deprive you of all my blessings.

Verse 7. For the vineyard, &c.—Or rather, *Now the vineyard*, as Dr. Waterland renders it: here we have the interpretation of the preceding parable in general. In the subsequent verses the prophet enters into particulars. This general interpretation is fully verified by the history of the Jewish people,

A. M. 3244. 8 ¶ Wo unto them that join <sup>o</sup> house  
B. C. 760.

to house, *that* lay field to field, till  
*there be* no place, that <sup>7</sup>they may be placed  
alone in the midst of the earth !

9 <sup>1</sup>In <sup>8</sup>mine ears, *said* the LORD of hosts,  
<sup>9</sup>Of a truth many houses shall be desolate,  
*even* great and fair, without inhabitant.

10 Yea, ten acres of vineyard shall yield one  
<sup>8</sup>bath, and the seed of a homer shall yield an  
ephah.

11 ¶ <sup>h</sup>Wo unto them that rise up early in  
the morning, *that* they may follow strong drink ;

<sup>o</sup> Mic. ii. 2.—<sup>7</sup> Heb. *ye*.—<sup>1</sup> Chap. xxii. 14.—<sup>9</sup> Or, *This is*  
*in mine ears*, saith the LORD, &c.—<sup>8</sup> Heb. *If not*, &c.—<sup>8</sup> See  
Ezek. xlv. 11.—<sup>h</sup> Prov. xxiii. 29, 30 ; Eccles. x. 16 ; Verse 22.

especially in the time of our Lord and his apostles ;  
*and the men of Judah his pleasant plant*—In whom  
God formerly delighted ; *and he looked for judgment*—Both the administration of justice by magistrates,  
and justice in the dealings of the people with one another : *but behold oppression*—From the powerful  
upon their inferiors ; and *for righteousness*—For equity,  
mercy, and benevolence ; *but behold a cry*—From the  
oppressed, crying to men for help, and to God for  
vengeance. “ The paronomasia, or play on the words,  
in the Hebrew, in this place, is very remarkable ;  
*mispat, mispach ; zedakah, zekah*. There are many  
examples of it in the other prophets ; but Isaiah  
seems peculiarly fond of it. The rabbins esteem it  
a great beauty : their term for it is, *elegance of language*.”—Bishop Lowth.

Verses 8–10. *Wo unto them, &c.*—The unfolding  
of the parable, after the general key in the preceding  
verse, comprehends two things, according to the  
argument of the parable ; the crimes of this ungrateful  
people, and the punishment decreed to their crimes.  
*That join house to house*—That add new purchases  
of houses and lands to their former possessions.  
Not that this was in itself absolutely unlawful, but  
because they did it from an inordinate desire of  
riches, and with the injury of their brethren. *That  
they may be placed alone*—That they alone may be  
the lords and owners, and all others only their tenants  
and servants. Thus, “ the first crime condemned is  
avarice and rapacity ; which is strongly described in  
this verse, and which prevailed remarkably among  
the Jews. Its punishment, even the desolation of  
those houses which they coveted, and the devastation  
of those fields which they obtained so rapaciously,  
is set forth in the two following verses.” See  
Vitringa. *In mine ears, said the Lord*—That is, *It  
was revealed in mine ears* : or, I heard God speak  
what I am now about to utter. *Of a truth many  
houses shall be desolate*—“ 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 gal-  
lons) of wine, and the husbandman shall reap but a  
tenth part of the seed which he has sown.”—Bishop

that continue until night, *till* wine A. M. 3244  
<sup>10</sup> inflame them ! B. C. 760.

12 And <sup>i</sup>the harp, and the viol, the tabret,  
and pipe, and wine, are in their feasts : but  
<sup>k</sup>they regard not the work of the LORD, neither  
consider the operation of his hands.

13 <sup>1</sup>Therefore my people are gone into capti-  
vity, <sup>m</sup>because *they have* no knowledge : and  
<sup>11</sup>their honourable men *are* famished, and their  
multitude dried up with thirst.

14 Therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and  
opened her mouth without measure : and their

<sup>10</sup> Or, *pursue them*.—<sup>i</sup> Amos vi. 5, 6.—<sup>k</sup> Job xxxiv. 27 ; Psa.  
xxviii. 5.—<sup>1</sup> Hos. iv. 6.—<sup>m</sup> Chap. i. 3 ; Luke xix. 44.—<sup>11</sup> He.  
*their glory are men of famine*.

Lowth. Thus it is predicted that a fruitful land  
should be made barren for their wickedness, accord-  
ing to God's threatening, (Psa. cvii. 34,) and they  
would have as little comfort in their lands as in their  
houses.

Verses 11, 12. *Wo unto them that rise up early,  
&c.*—Here we find another vice reprov'd, namely,  
that of luxury, or intemperance ; whose companion  
and daughter is Inattention to the works of God,  
whose child, also, is Ignorance ; see verse 13 ; *that  
rise up early to follow strong drink*—As husband-  
men and tradesmen rise early to follow their em-  
ployments ; as if they were afraid of losing time  
from that which is the greatest mispending of time  
and the most sinful abuse of it. *That continue until  
night*—Spending the whole day at their cups ; *till  
wine inflame them*—Inflame their lusts and pas-  
sions : for *chambering* and *wantonness*, on the one  
hand, and *contentions* and *wounds without cause*, on  
the other, generally follow upon *rioting* and *drunk-  
eness*, Rom. xiii. 13 ; Prov. xxiii. 29. *And the harp,  
and the viol, &c., are in their feasts*—Musical in-  
struments of all sorts must accompany their wine,  
that every sense may be gratified to the utmost, and  
their pleasures rendered more exquisite. *But they  
regard not the work of the Lord*—What God hath  
lately done, and is yet doing, and about to do, among  
them ; his grievous judgments, partly inflicted, and  
partly threatened, which require another course of  
life, even to give themselves to fasting and prayer,  
and to reform their manners, that so they might re-  
move the calamities which now afflicted them, and  
prevent those which were approaching.

Verses 13, 14. *Therefore the people are gone into  
captivity*—The prophet may refer to those carried  
captive in the time of Ahaz : see on chap. ii. 20. Or  
his words may be rendered, *the people go into, &c.* ;  
that is, shall certainly and shortly go, speaking of  
the approaching judgments as if they were already  
come. *Because they have no knowledge*—No seri-  
ous consideration of God's works, and of their own  
duty and danger. *And their honourable men are  
famished*—Who thought themselves quite out of  
the reach of famine. *Therefore hell hath enlarged  
herself*—*The grave*, or the place of torment, to

A. M. 3244. glory, and their multitude, and their  
B. C. 760. pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it.

15 And <sup>a</sup> the mean man shall be brought down, and the mighty man shall be humbled, and the eyes of the lofty shall be humbled;

16 But the LORD of hosts shall be exalted in judgment, and <sup>12</sup> God <sup>13</sup> that is holy shall be sanctified in righteousness.

17 Then shall the lambs feed after their man-

<sup>1</sup> Chap. ii. 9, 11, 17.—<sup>12</sup> Or, the holy God.—<sup>13</sup> Heb. the God, the holy.

which certainly the souls of such persons must descend; and opened her mouth without measure—To receive those vast numbers which die by this famine, or otherwise, as is here implied. The prophet is thought to allude “to the form of the ancient sepulchres, which were subterraneous caverns hollowed out of a rock, the mouth of which was generally closed by a great stone. The *prosopopœia* is extremely fine and expressive, and the image is fraught with the most tremendous horror.” And their glory, &c.—Their nobles, or honourable men, as they are called, verse 13, being distinguished, both here and there, from the multitude; and their pomp—Which shall die with them; and he that rejoiceth—That spendeth all his days in mirth and jollity, and casteth away all cares and fears; shall descend into it—Not only into the grave, but into hell. Bishop Lowth’s translation of this verse is peculiarly striking:

“Therefore Hades hath enlarged his appetite;  
And hath stretched open his mouth without measure:  
And down go her nobility, and her populace,  
And her busy throng, and all that exult in her.”

“These verses,” (13 and 14,) he justly observes, “have a reference to the two preceding. They that indulged in feasting and drinking, shall perish with hunger and thirst: and Hades” (the invisible world, hell prepared to receive these sinners that live and die in sin) “shall indulge his appetite as much as they had done, and devour them all. The image is strong and expressive in the highest degree. Habakuk uses the same image with great force, chap. ii. 5. But in Isaiah, Hades is introduced, to much greater advantage, in person; and placed before our eyes as a ravenous monster, opening wide his unmeasurable jaws, and swallowing them all together.”

Verses 15–17. And the mean man, &c.—All of them, both high and low, shall be brought to destruction. But the Lord shall be exalted in judgment—By the execution of his just judgment upon his incorrigible enemies. And God that is holy shall be sanctified—Shall appear to be a holy God; in righteousness—That is, by displaying his righteousness, or executing his righteous judgments. Then, &c.—When God shall have finished that work of judgment upon the ungodly, he will extend mercy to the remainder; the lambs—The poor and

ner, and the waste places of <sup>o</sup> the fat <sup>A. M. 3244.</sup>  
one shall strangers eat. <sup>B. C. 760.</sup>

18 ¶ Wo unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart-ropes:

19 <sup>p</sup> That say, Let him make speed, and hasten his work, that we may see it: and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come, that we may know it!

<sup>o</sup> Chap. x. 16.—<sup>p</sup> Chap. lxvi. 5; Jer. xvii. 15; Amos v. 18; 2 Pet. iii. 3, 4.

harmless people, who shall be left in the land, when the rich are carried into captivity, as it happened 2 Kings xxv. 12; shall feed after their manner—Or, without restraint, as Bishop Lowth renders it. And the waste places of the fat ones—The lands left by their owners, the rich and great men, who were either slain or carried into captivity; shall strangers eat—The poor Israelites who were left in the land to be vine-dressers and husbandmen, who are called strangers, because they were so in reference to that land, not being the proper owners of it, nor related to them. Vitringa is of opinion that this verse “refers to the first disciples of Jesus Christ, who, seeing and deploring the destruction of the Jews, should rest safely under the protection of God; while, according to the next clause, the Gentiles should be brought into the communion of the church, and rejoice in those benefits, prerogatives, and privileges, whereof the carnal, rich, and luxurious Jews were deprived.” See John x. 16.

Verses 18, 19. Wo unto them that draw iniquity—That are not only drawn to sin by the allurements of the world, or by the persuasions of wicked men, but are active and industrious in drawing sin to themselves, or themselves to sin: with cords of vanity—Or, of lying, as the word *κω* frequently signifies; that is, with vain and deceitful arguments and pretences, whereby sinners generally draw themselves to sin, such as, That God does not regard human affairs; that many of the greatest sinners often go unpunished; that we see no proofs of the divine interposition, &c. See 2 Pet. iii. 3, 4. And sin with a cart-ropes—With all their might, as beasts that draw carts with ropes. That say, Let him make speed—Namely, God, in whose name thou and other prophets are always reproving and threatening us; and hasten his work, that we may see it—He only thinks to affright us, as if we were fools or children, with bugbears, or pretended evils: he either cannot, or will not, do us any harm. This was the plain language of their actions; they lived as if they were of this opinion. And let the counsel of the Holy One draw nigh—What you have declared to be his counsel, with regard to our going into captivity, and which, you say, his holiness obliges him to execute: they scornfully repeat the title of Holy One, usually given by the prophets to God. And come, that we may know it—We cannot believe that it will ever

A. M. 3244. 20 ¶ Wo unto them <sup>14</sup> that call evil  
B. C. 760. good, and good evil; that put darkness  
for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter  
for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

21 Wo unto *them that are* <sup>1</sup> wise in their own  
eyes, and prudent <sup>16</sup> in their own sight!

22 <sup>r</sup> Wo unto *them that are* mighty to drink  
wine, and men of strength to mingle strong  
drink:

23 Which <sup>s</sup> justify the wicked for reward, and  
take away the righteousness of the righteous  
from him!

24 Therefore <sup>as</sup> <sup>16</sup> the fire devoureth the  
stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, so

<sup>14</sup> Heb. *that say concerning evil, It is good, &c.*—<sup>1</sup> Prov. iii. 7; Rom. i. 22; xii. 16.—<sup>16</sup> Heb. *before their face.*—<sup>r</sup> Verse 11. <sup>s</sup> Prov. xvii. 14; xxiv. 24.—<sup>1</sup> Exod. xv. 7.—<sup>16</sup> Heb. *the tongue*

happen unless we see it with our eyes. Thus, "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;" to which they cannot be persuaded to give any credit till they find them executed upon them.

Verse 20. *Wo unto them that call evil good, and good evil*—That endeavour to confound both the names and the natures of virtue and vice, of piety and impiety; commend and applaud what is evil, and disparage and discountenance what is good; *that put darkness for light, and light for darkness, &c.*—Ignorance and error, for knowledge and truth: in other words, who subvert, or pervert, all the great principles of truth, wisdom, and of righteousness. A most corrupt condition of a church and state is that indeed, "in which men, accustomed to vices, begin, with the things themselves, to lose also the names of them, and to draw a veil, as it were, over their impieties, by sanctifying their crimes with the names of virtues." This reproof of the prophet supposes, that the difference between good and evil, sin and holiness, is as self-evident as that between the most contrary qualities which we are informed of by the report of our senses: and that the advantage which light hath above darkness does not shine out with a brighter evidence than the pre-eminence which virtue hath above vice, righteousness above unrighteousness. See Lowth.

Verse 21. *Wo unto them that are wise in their own eyes*—Who, being puffed up with a high opinion of their own wisdom, despise the counsels and instructions of Jehovah by his prophets, and prefer their own vain imaginations before the decisions of infinite wisdom.

Verse 24. *Therefore as the fire, &c.*—"The latter part of the parabolic song, contained in verse 6, begins here to be more fully explained; and, to the end of the chapter, we have an account of that total destruction of the republic, which was to be brought upon it by a people most skilful in war, and coming from

<sup>a</sup> their root shall be as rottenness, and <sup>a</sup> M. 3244  
their blossom shall go up as dust: be- <sup>B. C. 760.</sup>  
cause they have cast away the law of the LORD  
of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One  
of Israel.

25 <sup>s</sup> Therefore is the anger of the LORD  
kindled against his people, and he hath stretched  
forth his hand against them, and hath smitten  
them: and <sup>r</sup> the hills did tremble, and their  
carcasses *were* <sup>17</sup> torn in the midst of the streets.  
<sup>s</sup> For all this his anger is not turned away, but  
his hand *is* stretched out still.

26 ¶ <sup>a</sup> And he will lift up an ensign to the  
nations from far, and will <sup>b</sup> hiss unto them from

*of fire.*—<sup>a</sup> Job xviii. 16; Hos. ix. 16; Amos ii. 9.—<sup>s</sup> 2 Kings xxii. 13, 17.—<sup>r</sup> Jer. iv. 24.—<sup>17</sup> Or, *as dung.*—<sup>s</sup> Lev. xxvi. 14; Chap. ix. 12, 17, 21; x. 4.—<sup>a</sup> Chap. xi. 12.—<sup>b</sup> Ch. vii. 18.

a very distant country." The greatness and impelling cause of this threatened destruction are explained in this and the following verse: the instruments of it, a fierce and warlike people, are described verses 26–29. And the consequence of it, the trouble and desperation of those that remained from this slaughter, verse 30. See Vitringa. *Their root shall be as rottenness*—They shall be like a tree, which not only withers in its branches, but dies and rots at the roots, and therefore is past all hopes of recovery. That is, they shall be destroyed, both root and branch, and that as certainly and irresistibly as fire devours the stubble on which it kindles, and the flame consumes the chaff which it touches. *Their blossom shall go up as dust*—Shall vanish as the dust, which is blown away with every wind, or shall be resolved into dust, and yield no fruit; *because they have cast away the law of the Lord, &c.*—Have cast off all obedience to it, and treated it with contempt.

Verse 25. *Therefore is the anger of the Lord kindled*—This implies that, before the time of that final vengeance, concerning which the prophecy principally treats, God had afflicted, or, rather, would afflict and chastise this rebellious people, with the most grievous calamities: that those calamities should consume many, who, being slain in the wars, should be trod upon by their enemies, like the dung in the streets; most certain indications these of the divine justice and wrath, while they, unawakened by these chastisements, would not so much as attempt to appease the divine displeasure, but would provoke it still more by repeated crimes; till, at length, it should come upon them to the uttermost.—Vitringa. *And the hills did tremble*—A metaphorical and hyperbolic description of a grievous calamity, familiar to the prophets: see the margin. *For all this, his anger is not turned away, &c.*—This is not the end, as you vainly imagine, but, if you repent not, only the beginning of your sorrows, and an earnest of further miseries.

Verse 26. *And he will lift up an ensign to the*

A. M. 3244. ° the end of the earth; and behold,  
B. C. 760. <sup>d</sup> they shall come with speed swiftly :

27 None shall be weary nor stumble among them; none shall slumber nor sleep; neither ° shall the girdle of their loins be loosed, nor the latchet of their shoes be broken :

28 <sup>f</sup> Whose arrows *are* sharp, and all their bows bent, their horses' hoofs shall be counted like flint, and their wheels like a whirlwind.

<sup>c</sup> Deut. xxviii. 49; Psa. lxxii. 8.—<sup>d</sup> Joel ii. 7.—<sup>e</sup> Dan. v. 6. <sup>f</sup> Jer. v. 16.—<sup>g</sup> Chap. viii. 22; Jer. iv. 23; Lam. iii. 2; Ezek.

nations—To call them together for his service. Here that decree of the divine severity, which had been spoken of in general terms in verse 24, is explained. God is shown to be the supreme general or leader of the people, which were to come from far to execute his vengeance; they were to assemble at his setting up his ensign as a signal; and at his *hissing*—A metaphor taken from the practice of persons keeping bees; who used to draw them out of their hives into the fields, and lead them back again, *σπιρρασι*, by *hissing*, *whistling*, or some sounds of that kind; as Cyril, Theodoret, and Bochart have shown. The meaning is, that God would collect the people, like bees, by the slightest indication of his will, and bring them into Judea to execute his vengeance.—Bishop Lowth and Dodd. It is not expressed particularly from whence they should be brought, but only said in general, 1st, That they should *come from far*—Which may be applied, either to the Assyrians, spoken of under this same character, (chap. x. 3.) and who, not long after, invaded Judea, and did much mischief in it; or to the Chaldeans, even Babylon being called a *far country*, chap. xxxix. 3. 2d, That they should come *from the ends of the earth*—An expression hardly applicable either to the Assyrians or Chaldeans, but which exactly agrees to the Romans, and which undoubtedly received its final and most perfect accomplishment in the destruction brought on the Jews by them. In saying, *they shall come with speed swiftly*, the prophet refers to verse 19. As the scoffers had challenged God to make speed, and to hasten his work of vengeance, so now they are assured, that *with speed, and swiftly*, it shall come.

Verses 27-29. *None, &c.*—In these verses the prophet describes the quality of the forces which should come against Jerusalem; their vigour, activity, and diligence, verse 27; their military expedition, readiness, skilfulness, and apparatus, verse 28; their fortitude and undaunted courage, verse 29; for all which particulars the Romans were remarkably eminent.—Dodd. *None shall be weary*—Though their march be long and tedious. As I have

29 Their roaring *shall be* like a lion, they shall roar like young lions : A. M. 3244. B. C. 760.

yea, they shall roar, and lay hold of the prey, and shall carry *it* away safe, and none shall deliver *it*.

30 And in that day they shall roar against them like the roaring of the sea : and if *one* <sup>g</sup> look unto the land, behold, darkness *and* <sup>h</sup> sorrow, <sup>i</sup> and the light is darkened in the heavens thereof.

xxxii. 7, 8.—<sup>h</sup> Or, *distress*.—<sup>i</sup> Or, *when it is light, it shall be dark in the destructions thereof*.

called them to this work, so I will assist them in it. *None shall slumber nor sleep*—They shall all be watchful and diligent to take all opportunities of executing my judgments. *Nor the latchet, &c., be broken*—I will take all impediments out of their way. *Whose arrows are sharp*—Who are every way furnished and ready for my work, waiting only for my command. *Their horses' hoofs like flint*—Because they shall not be broken or battered by the length or stoniness and ruggedness of the way. *And their wheels like a whirlwind*—For the swiftness of their march, and for the force and violence of their chariots in battle. *They shall roar like young lions*—Which signifies both their cruelty, and their eagerness to catch and devour the prey. *They shall lay hold on the prey, &c.*—These words do not agree to the Assyrians, for they were forced to retreat with great shame and loss, and the Jews were delivered from them: but they agree perfectly both to the Chaldeans and the Romans, both of whom *carried the prey away safe, and none delivered it*—That is, neither the Jews themselves, nor any of their confederates, to whose help they trusted.

Verse 30. *And in that day, &c.*—“Here Isaiah closes this prophecy, with a strong and eloquent description of the consequences of this calamity; setting forth, in the most emphatical terms, the utter confusion, blackness, and desperation of the miserable Jews.” See chap. viii. 22. *They shall roar against them like the roaring of the sea*—Which is violent and frightful; *and if one look, &c., behold, darkness and sorrow*—Darkness, that is, sorrow: the latter word explains the former. Every thing looks black and dismal. *And the light is darkened in the heavens thereof*—When they look up to the heavens, as men in distress usually do, they see no light there. Their comforts are wholly eclipsed, and their hopes like the giving up of the ghost. It must be observed, that the Scriptures frequently express great calamities and changes, in states and churches, by the heavens being darkened, and the sun, moon, and stars withdrawing their light, or falling from heaven.

## CHAPTER VI.

In this chapter we have the prophet's fourth discourse, containing an account of a glorious vision wherewith he was favoured; the design of which was, 1st, To exhibit a figure of the kingdom of the Son of God, hereafter to be manifested in the world; and, 2d, To foretell the future blindness and hardness of heart of the greatest part of the Jewish nation. We have (1.) A symbolical manifestation of the glory of the God of Israel, 1-4. (2.) The sanctification of Isaiah to the performance of an important prophetic office, 5-7. (3.) A peculiar command given to the prophet concerning the future and unhappy state of the Jews, 8-13.

A. M. 3246. **I**N the year that <sup>a</sup> King Uzziah died,  
B. C. 758.

<sup>b</sup> I saw also the LORD sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and <sup>1</sup> his train filled the temple.

<sup>2</sup> Above it stood the seraphims: each one had

<sup>a</sup> 2 Kings xv. 7.—<sup>b</sup> 1 Kings xxii. 19; John xii. 41; Rev. iv. 2.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER VI.

Verse 1. *In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord*—"As this vision," says Bishop Lowth, "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 Chron. xxvi. 22,) and the phrase, *in the year when Uzziah died*, probably means, *after the death of Uzziah*; as the same phrase, (chap. xiv. 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 chapter i.; they suit the time of Uzziah, or the former part of Jotham's reign: whereas, chapter i. can hardly be earlier than the last years of Jotham: see note on chap. i. 1, 7, and ii. 1. This might be a new designation 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."

*I saw the Lord*—In a vision or ecstasy. The place of this vision is supposed to be the temple, from which the particular scenery of it is taken. The Divine Majesty is represented as seated upon a throne, high and lifted up—Probably above the ark in the most holy place, where the glory appeared above the cherubim, surrounded by his attendant ministers. "The veil, separating the most holy place from the holy, or the outermost part of the temple, is 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 Ezek. xl. 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. xii. 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. It respects, indeed, primarily the prophet's own time, and the obduration of the Jews of that age, and their punishment

six wings; with twain he covered his face, and <sup>c</sup> with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly.

<sup>3</sup> And <sup>2</sup> one cried unto another, and said, <sup>d</sup> Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts:

<sup>1</sup> Or, the skirts thereof.—<sup>c</sup> Ezek. i. 11.—<sup>2</sup> Heb. this cried to this.—<sup>d</sup> Rev. iv. 8.

by the Babylonish captivity; but extends, in its full latitude, to the age of the Messiah, and the blindness of the Jews to the gospel; 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 sprout out and flourish again from the old stock.—Bishop Lowth.

Verse 2. *Above it*—Or, rather, *above him*, as מִמַּעַל לוֹ might be better rendered; *stood the seraphim*—As ministers attending upon their Lord, and waiting to receive and execute his commands. The word *seraphim*, which, like *cherubim*, is plural, signifies *burning*, or *flaming ones*, from the verb שָׂרַף, *seraph*, to burn or flame. The expression here means spiritual beings, *qui a claritate et aspectus splendore, quasi flammantes et ignei visi sunt*, "who, from their brightness, and the splendour of their aspect, appeared as if they were fiery and flaming." It is probable that both their name and their fiery, burning appearance were intended to signify, 1st, Their nature, which is bright and glorious, subtle and pure; and, 2d, Those qualities of fervent love to God, and zeal for his glory and service, which they possess. *Each one had six wings*—For the purpose immediately mentioned. *With twain he covered his face*—Out of profound reverence, as being sensible of the infinite distance between God and him, so that he durst not presume to look directly upon him, and judged himself neither able nor worthy to behold the brightness of his glory. *And with twain he covered his feet*—To signify the sense he had of his own natural, though not moral, infirmity; and his desire that God would not too severely examine all his ways and actions, commonly signified by the feet; because, though they did not swerve from God's commands, yet they were not worthy of the acceptance, nor suitable to the dignity of so glorious a majesty. *And with twain he did fly*—Which implies his great readiness and alacrity, his activity and celerity in executing God's commands. We may infer from this description of the seraphim, that they appeared in a human form: but whether that is the form they always bear, or whether it was only assumed on this occasion, cannot be determined.

Verse 3. *And one cried unto another*—Divided

A. M. 3246. <sup>3</sup> the <sup>o</sup> whole earth is full of his glory.  
B. C. 758.

4 And the posts of the <sup>4</sup> door moved at the voice of him that cried, and <sup>f</sup> the house was filled with smoke.

5 ¶ <sup>5</sup> Then said I, *Wo is me!* for I am <sup>5</sup> undone; because I *am* a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips:

<sup>3</sup> Hebrew, *his glory is the fulness of the whole earth.*—<sup>o</sup> Psalm lxxii. 19.—<sup>5</sup> Hebrew, *thresholds.*—<sup>f</sup> Exod. xl. 34; 1 Kings viii. 10.

into two choirs, they sung responsively one to the other; and said, *Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts*—"God's holiness," says Lowth, "or the superlative purity of his nature, implies in it all the rest of his attributes, especially his justice and mercy, which are dispensed by the most exact rules of rectitude. The Christian Church has always thought the doctrine of the Trinity to be implied in this threefold repetition of *holy*: as it is also intimated in several other passages of the Old Testament, particularly in that form commanded to be used in blessing the people, Num. vi. 24-26; and chap. xlvi. 16; of this book;" where see the notes. Thus Jerome observes the design of their hymn was "to show that there is a Trinity in the one Godhead; and to testify, that, not the Jewish temple, as formerly, (for that was to be forsaken of God,) but the whole earth was full of his glory:" namely, of the effects and demonstrations of his glorious holiness, as well as of his power, wisdom, and goodness.

Verse 4. *And the posts of the door moved*—Together with the door itself. Such violent motions were commonly tokens of God's anger. And here, it seems, this concussion of the temple was intended to signify God's displeasure against his people for their sins, and to be a token of its destruction, by the Babylonians first, and afterward by the Romans; and the house was filled with smoke—Which elsewhere is a token of God's presence and acceptance, but here, of his anger; and may be considered likewise as an emblem of the darkness and blindness of that generation of Jews, accustomed to worship in that temple, as also of that future generation of the same people, who should worship there in the days of the Messiah, before its second destruction by the Romans.

Verse 5. *Then said I, &c.*—The second part of this vision begins here, containing the sanctification of the prophet, in order to his undertaking of a great prophetic office, and showing, 1st, his state of mind upon the sight of the preceding illustrious vision: his consternation under a sense of his great unworthiness; and, 2d, describing the singular mode of his sanctification—*Wo is me, for I am undone, &c.*—That is, if God deal with me in strict justice. For I have made myself obnoxious to his displeasure; because I am a man of unclean lips—I am a great sinner, having offended him, as in many other ways, so particularly by my lips. *And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips*—I am an unclean

for mine eyes have seen the King, A. M. 3246  
the LORD of hosts. B. C. 758.

6 Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, <sup>6</sup> having a live coal in his hand, *which* he had taken with the tongs from off <sup>h</sup> the altar:

7 And he <sup>7</sup> laid <sup>i</sup> it upon my mouth, and said, *Lo,* this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.

<sup>6</sup> Exodus iv. 10; vi. 30; Judges vi. 22; xiii. 22; Jer. i. 6. <sup>h</sup> Hebrew, *cut off.*—<sup>i</sup> Heb. *and in his hand a live coal.*—<sup>h</sup> Rev. viii. 3.—<sup>7</sup> Heb. *caused it to touch.*—<sup>i</sup> Jer. i. 9; Dan. x. 16.

branch of an unclean tree; besides my own uncleanness, I have, both by want of zeal and of diligence, and faithfulness in the discharge of my duty, involved myself in the guilt of their sins, and therefore may justly fear to partake with them in their plagues. Add to this, his consternation probably also arose, in part, from a sense of his want of due qualifications for the important office in which he was to be employed, and of his unworthiness to be God's messenger to his people, or even to join with the seraphim in praising him. *For mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts*—The sight of this glorious and holy God gives me cause to fear that he is come to enter into judgment with me. Observe, reader, while sinners are presumptuous and secure, even in the acts of their worship, though merely formal and hypocritical, holy persons have always been filled with reverence and humiliation before God: and the more extraordinary the manifestations of God's presence have been to them, the more have they revered and stood in awe of him, and the more have they abhorred themselves. Thus Job xlii. 5, 6, *Now mine eye seeth thee, wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes!* And thus may not only every penitent sinner, but every justified believer, say,

My humbled soul, when thou art near,  
In dust and ashes lies;  
How shall a sinful worm appear,  
Or meet thy purer eyes!

Verses 6, 7. *Then flew one of the seraphim unto me*—By God's command; *having a live coal in his hand*—Both a token and an instrument of purification, as the next verse explains it; *which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar*—Of burnt-offering, which stood in the court of the priests, where the prophet appeared to himself to be during the vision. The seraph took it from the altar, to show that men are to expect the expiation of sin, and purification from it, only by such means as God hath appointed, and particularly by the mediation of Christ, whom that altar manifestly represented, and by that purifying and refining grace of the Holy Spirit, which was signified by this live coal, and is conferred on none except through the merit of Christ's sacrifice; see Heb. ix. 14, and xiii. 10. *And he laid it upon my mouth*—So as only to touch my lips, and not to burn them. This was done to signify, not only that all the gifts and graces that purify

A. M. 3246. 8 ¶ Also I heard the voice of the  
B. C. 785.

LORD, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for <sup>k</sup> us? Then said I, <sup>8</sup> Here am I; send me.

9 And he said, Go, and tell this people, <sup>1</sup> Hear ye <sup>9</sup> indeed, <sup>10</sup> but understand not; and see ye <sup>11</sup> indeed, but perceive not.

10 Make <sup>m</sup> the heart of this people fat, and

<sup>k</sup> Gen. i. 26; iii. 22; xi. 7.—<sup>8</sup> Heb. *behold me*.—<sup>1</sup> Chap. xliii. 8; Matt. xliii. 14; Mark iv. 12; Luke viii. 10; John xii. 40; Acts xxviii. 26; Rom. xi. 8.

the mind, and fit us for the discharge of any particular duty or function, come from God; but that there must be a real application and communication of them to our souls. It is not sufficient that we hear, think, and speak of them; or even that we desire them, and believe them to be attainable; but we must really receive and possess them. Observe this, reader. It is of infinite consequence to thy salvation. *Lo, this hath touched thy lips, and thy iniquity is taken away*—This is a sign that the guilt of thy sin is removed by pardoning mercy, and thy corrupt disposition and inclination to sin, by renewing grace; and, therefore, nothing can hinder thee from being accepted of God, as a worshipper, in concert with the holy angels; or from being employed for God, as a messenger to the children of men. Those only, who are thus purged from an evil conscience, are prepared to *serve the living God*, Heb. ix. 14. The taking away of sin is necessary, in order to our speaking with confidence and comfort, either to God in prayer, or from God in preaching. Nor are any so fit to display to others the riches and power of gospel grace, as those who have themselves tasted the sweetness, and felt the influence of that grace.

Verse 8. *Also I heard the voice of the Lord*—We have here the third part of this vision, comprehending, 1st, A trial of the disposition of the prophet, now sanctified, with his reply to the Lord, in this verse; 2d, The command delivered to him concerning the execution of the divine judgment upon the Jews, of blindness, &c., verses 9, 10; 3d, A more full and explicit declaration of a most grievous temporal judgment, which should be joined with the spiritual one, verses 11–13.—Vitringa. *Whom shall I send?*—God asks this question, not as if he were unresolved whom to send, but that Isaiah might have an opportunity of voluntarily offering his service. *And who will go for us?*—To deliver the following message. The change of the number, *I* and *us*, is very remarkable; and both being meant of one and the same Lord, do sufficiently intimate a plurality of persons in the Godhead. *Then said I, Here am I, &c.*—God's last and great favour to him both encouraged and obliged him to be thus forward in his service.

Verses 9, 10. *And he said, Go, and tell this people*—Not *my people*, for I disown them as they have rejected me. *Hear ye indeed, but understand not, &c.*—The Hebrew words are imperative; yet they are not to be taken as a command, enjoining what

make their ears heavy, and shut their <sup>A. M. 3246.</sup> eyes; <sup>B. C. 758.</sup> <sup>a</sup> lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.

11 Then said I, Lord, how long? And he answered, <sup>o</sup> Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be <sup>12</sup> utterly desolate;

<sup>9</sup> Or, *without ceasing, &c.*—<sup>10</sup> Hebrew, *hear ye in hearing*.—<sup>11</sup> Heb. *in seeing*.—<sup>m</sup> Psa. cxix. 70; Chap. lxiii. 17.—<sup>o</sup> Jer. v. 21.—<sup>12</sup> Heb. *desolate with desolation*.

the people ought to do, but only as a prediction, foretelling what they would do. The sense is, Because you have so long heard my words, and seen my works, to no purpose, and have hardened your hearts, and will not learn nor reform, I will punish you in your own way; your sin shall be your punishment. I will still continue my word and works to you, but will withdraw my Spirit, so that you shall be as unable, as now you are unwilling, to understand. *Make the heart of this people fat*—Stupid and senseless. This making of their hearts fat, is here ascribed to the prophet, as it is ascribed to God in the repetition of this prophecy, (John xii. 40,) because God inflicted this judgment upon them by the ministry of the prophet, partly by way of prediction, foretelling that this would be the effect of his preaching, and partly by withdrawing the light and help of his Spirit. *Make their ears heavy*—Make them dull of hearing. *Lest they see with their eyes*—That they may not be able, as before they were not willing to see. *And convert*—Turn from their sinful practices unto God; *and be healed*—Of sin, (which is the disease of the soul,) by remission and sanctification, and of all the deadly effects of sin. This prophecy might relate, in some measure, to the state of the Jews before the Babylonish captivity, but certainly it did not receive its full accomplishment till the days of our Lord; and in this sense it is understood and applied by the writers of the New Testament, and by Christ himself.

Verses 11, 12. *Then said I, Lord, how long?*—An abrupt speech, arising from the prophet's great passion and astonishment: how long shall this dreadful judgment last? *Until the cities be wasted, &c.*—Until this land be totally destroyed, first by the Babylonians, and afterward by the Romans. *And the Lord have removed men far away*—Hath caused this people to be carried away captive into far countries. *And there be a great forsaking*—Till houses and lands be generally forsaken of their owners. The reader will observe, "There is a remarkable gradation in denouncing these judgments; not only Jerusalem and the cities should be *wasted without inhabitant*, but even the single houses should be *without man*; and not only the houses of the cities, but even the country should be *utterly desolate*; and not only the people should be removed out of the land, but the Lord should remove them *far away*; and they should not be removed for a short period, but there should be a *great*, or rather,

A. M. 3246. 12 <sup>p</sup> And the LORD have removed  
B. C. 758. men far away, and *there be* a great  
forsaking in the midst of the land.

13 ¶ But yet in it *shall be* a tenth, <sup>13</sup> and it

¶ 2 Ki. xxv. 21.—<sup>12</sup>Or, when it is returned, and hath been browsed.

a long forsaking in the midst of the land. And hath not the world seen all these particulars exactly fulfilled? Have not the Jews laboured under a spiritual blindness and infatuation, in *hearing*, but not *understanding*, in *seeing*, but not *perceiving* the Messiah, after the accomplishment of so many prophecies, after the performance of so many miracles? And, in consequence of their refusal to *convert* and *be healed*, have not *their cities been wasted without inhabitants, and their houses without man*? Have they not been *removed far away into the most distant parts of the earth*? and hath not their removal, or banishment, been now of above 1700 years duration? And do they not still continue deaf and blind, obstinate and unbelieving? The Jews, at the time of the delivery of this prophecy, gloried in being the peculiar church and people of God; and would any Jew, of himself, have thought or have said, that his nation would, in process of time, become an infidel and reprobate nation; infidel and reprobate for many ages, oppressed by man, and forsaken of God? It was above 750 years before Christ that Isaiah predicted these things; and how could he have predicted them, unless he had been illuminated by the

shall return, and shall be eaten: as a A. M. 3246.  
teil-tree, and as an oak whose <sup>14</sup> sub- B. C. 758.  
stance is in them, when they cast *their leaves*:  
so <sup>a</sup> the holy seed *shall be* the substance thereof.

<sup>14</sup>Or, stock, or, stem.—<sup>a</sup>Ezra ix. 2; Mal. ii. 15; Rom. xi. 5.

divine vision; or could they have succeeded accordingly, unless the Spirit of prophecy had been the Spirit of God?" See Bishop Newton *on the Prophecies*, vol. i. p. 233.

Verse 13. *But yet in it shall be a tenth*—A small remnant reserved, that number being put indefinitely. *And it shall return*—Out of the Babylonish captivity, into their own land. *And shall be eaten*—Or, *shall be for a prey*, as Dr. Waterland translates it: that is, that remnant shall be devoured a second time by the kings of Syria, and afterward by the Romans. *Yet as a teil-tree, and as an oak, &c.*—Yet there shall be another remnant, not such a one as that which came out of Babylon, but a holy seed, who shall afterward look upon him whom they have pierced, and mourn over him. *Whose substance is in them when they cast their leaves, &c.*—Who, when their leaves are cast in winter, have a substance within themselves, a vital principle, which preserves life in the root of the tree, and in due time sends it forth into all the branches. *So the holy seed shall be the substance, or, rather, the support thereof*—Of the people, who, were it not for the sake of these, should be finally rooted out and destroyed.

## CHAPTER VII.

We have here, (1.) an historical account of the occasion of this prophecy, 1–3. (2.) A prediction of the ill success of the designs of the Israelites and Syrians against Judah, 4–16. (3.) A denunciation of the calamities to be brought upon the king and people of Judah by the Assyrians, 17–25.

A. M. 3246. AND it came to pass in the days of  
B. C. 758. Ahaz the son of Jotham, the  
son of Uzziah, king of Judah, that Rezin, the  
king of Syria, and Pekah, the son of Remaliah,  
king of Israel, went up toward Jerusalem to

<sup>a</sup> 2 Kings xvi. 5; 2 Chron. xxviii. 5, 6.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER VII.

Verse 1. *And it came to pass in the days of Ahaz*—Of whose idolatries and abominable wickedness the reader will find a particular account, 2 Chron. xviii. 1–4. *Rezin and Pekah went up toward Jerusalem*—“The confederacy of these two kings 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 xv. 37. 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 ad-

war against it, but could not prevail A. M. 3246.  
against it. B. C. 758.

2 And it was told the house of David, saying, Syria <sup>1</sup> is confederate with Ephraim. And his heart was moved, and the heart of his people,

<sup>1</sup> Heb. *resteth on Ephraim*.

vices 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 chapter, and the beginning of the ninth.” *But could not prevail against it*—That is, against Jerusalem. But yet they carried away a multitude of captives out of Judea, slew a vast number of the people, and Rezin restored Elah to his own dominions. See notes on 2 Kings xvi. 5, and on 2 Chron. xxviii. 5, 6.

Verse 2. *And it was told the house of David*—Ahaz and his royal relations and courtiers. He calls them *the house of David*, to intimate that the follow-

A. M. 3246. as the trees of the wood are moved  
B. C. 758. with the wind.

3 Then said the LORD unto Isaiah, Go forth now to meet Ahaz, thou, <sup>b</sup> and <sup>2</sup> Shear-jashub thy son, at the end of the <sup>c</sup> conduit of the upper pool in the <sup>3</sup> highway of the fuller's field ;

4 And say unto him, Take heed, and be quiet: fear not, <sup>4</sup> neither be faint-hearted for the two tails of these smoking fire-brands, for the fierce anger of Rezin with Syria, and of the son of Remaliah.

5 Because Syria, Ephraim, and the son of

<sup>b</sup> Chap. x. 21.—<sup>2</sup> That is, *The remnant shall return*, see Chap. vi. 13; x. 21.—<sup>c</sup> 2 Kings xviii. 17; Chap. xxxvi. 2.—<sup>3</sup> Or, *causeway*.

ing comfortable message was sent to Ahaz, not for his own sake, but only for the sake of his worthy progenitor David, to whom God had promised an everlasting kingdom. *Syria is confederate with Ephraim*—With the kingdom of the ten tribes, commonly called *Ephraim*, because that tribe was by far the most numerous and potent of them. *And his heart was moved*—Namely, the heart of Ahaz; *and the heart of his people*—With excessive fear, arising partly from a consciousness of their own guilt, whereby they had put themselves out of God's protection; and partly from the consideration of the great strength and power of their enemies.

Verse 3. *Then said the Lord unto Isaiah*—This fifth discourse, delivered as immediately from the Lord, which extends from hence to the end of chap. xii., is of a very mixed and various argument. It may be divided into five parts: the first contained in this chapter; the second from chap. viii. 1, to chap. ix. 7; the third from chap. ix. 7, to chap. x. 5; the fourth from chap. x. 5, to the end of that chapter; and the fifth is contained in the eleventh and twelfth chapters. The first part of this prophecy, which foretells the invasion of Judea by the Ephraimites, the Syrians, and Assyrians, contains a kind of introduction to the subsequent prophecies in this discourse. Its design is two-fold; first, to comfort the pious in Jerusalem, amidst this great calamity which threatened their nation, and to testify the singular providence of God toward the house of David, which he had hitherto preserved, and would continue to preserve till the completion of his great design: and, secondly, to upbraid the folly and ingratitude of Ahaz. See Vitringa. *Go forth now to meet Ahaz*—Here we have an eminent instance of God's preventing mercy toward one who neither inquired of him, nor sought his help. Thus God is often found of those who seek him not: much more will he be found of those who seek him diligently! *And Shear-jashub thy son*—Whose very name, signifying, *A remnant shall return*, carried in it a sign and pledge of the promised deliverance. *At the end of the conduit*—Whither he probably went to take care about the waters which thence were brought into the city, to secure them to himself, or keep them from

Remaliah, have taken evil counsel A. M. 3246  
against thee, saying, B. C. 758.

6 Let us go up against Judah, and <sup>5</sup> vex it, and let us make a breach therein for us, and set a king in the midst of it, *even* the son of Tabeal:

7 Thus saith the Lord God, <sup>4</sup> It shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass.

8 <sup>c</sup> For the head of Syria is Damascus, and the head of Damascus is Rezin: and within threescore and five years shall Ephraim be broken, <sup>6</sup> that it be not a people.

<sup>4</sup> Heb. *let not thy heart be tender*.—<sup>5</sup> Or, *waken*.—<sup>6</sup> Prov. xxi. 30; Chapter viii. 10.—<sup>c</sup> 2 Sam. viii. 6.—<sup>6</sup> Heb. *from a people*.

the enemy, as Hezekiah afterward did, 2 Chron. xxxii. 3, 4.

Verse 4. *Say unto him, Take heed, and be quiet*—Settle thy mind by the belief of that joyful message which I am now to deliver to thee from the Lord; *Fear not for the two tails, &c.*—These two kings and their forces, which, though they seem to threaten utter destruction, yet shall not be able to do much mischief, being not whole fire-brands, but only small pieces or ends of them, taken out of the fire, in which there is more smoke than fire: and the fire will be speedily extinguished. They have more of show and terror than of strength, their power being much wasted and almost consumed. He terms the king of Israel, *the son of Remaliah*, by way of contempt, intimating that he was unworthy of the name of *king*, his father being an obscure person, and he having got into the throne by usurpation, and the murder of his master Pekahiah, 2 Kings xv. 25.

Verses 5, 6. *Syria and Ephraim have taken evil, or mischievous counsel, saying, Let us go up against Judah, and vex it*—Hebrew, נִקְצָנוּ, *harass, weary, or distress it; and make a breach therein*—Violently break in upon the land, or break their power and kingdom, and subdue it to ourselves; *and set a king in the midst of it*—Or viceroy, that shall act by our authority; *even the son of Tabeal*—Some considerable captain, in whose fidelity both of them had great confidence; but whether he was an Israelite or Syrian is uncertain, and not material.

Verses 7-9. *It shall not stand*—Namely, their evil counsel. *For the head of Syria is Damascus*—As if he had said, *As Damascus is the head city of Syria, and Rezin is the head, or king, of Damascus, so shall they continue to be, and not advance themselves, and enlarge their territories, by possessing themselves of Jerusalem and the kingdom of Judah as they design. Rezin shall be kept within his own bounds, and be head of Damascus only. And, in a similar sense, (verse 9,) Samaria shall continue to be the chief city of the kingdom of Israel, and Pekah shall not conquer Jerusalem as he hopes to do. The Hebrew particle ׀, however, which introduces this passage, instead of being rendered for, may, with propriety, be translated though,*

A. M. 3246. 9 And the head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria is Remaliah's son. 'If' ye will not believe,

<sup>1</sup> 2 Chron. xx. 20.—<sup>7</sup> Or, *Do ye not believe? it is because*

as it frequently is, (see Josh. xvii. 18; 1 Sam. xiv. 39,) and then the meaning will be, *Though the head of Syria be Damascus, and the head of Damascus Rezin, and the head of Ephraim be Samaria, &c., yet within threescore and five years shall Ephraim be broken, &c.* In this sense Bishop Lowth understands the words, joining the first clause of the ninth verse to the first of the eighth, judging that, by some means, a transposition of it has taken place, which seems very probable. As to the chronological difficulty, which has embarrassed commentators in this place, the best solution seems to be that of Archbishop Usher, (see his *Annals of the Old Testament*, A. M. 3327,) who explains the latter clause of verse 8, not of the first captivity of the ten tribes by Shalmaneser, but of their final deportation by Esar-haddon, who totally dispeopled the land, and brought new inhabitants from Babylon, Cuthah, and other cities of the Assyrians, to inhabit the cities of Israel. See Ezra iv. 2, compared with 2 Kings xvii. 24. "Compute," says Bishop Newton, who adopts this explication, "sixty-five years in the reigns of Ahaz, Hezekiah, and Manasseh, and the end of them will fall about the twenty-second year of Manasseh; when Esar-haddon, king of Assyria, made the last deportation of the Israelites, and planted other nations in their stead, and in the same expedition probably took Manasseh captive, and carried him to Babylon, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 11. Ephraim was broken from being a kingdom before; but now he was broken from being a people, and from that time to this what account can be given of the people of Israel, as distinct from the people of Judah?" *On the Prophecies*, vol. i. p. 204. This interpretation of the passage is also approved by Bishop Lowth. It may seem strange, at first sight, that the prophet, who here foretells the entire destruction of Ephraim, should say nothing about the Syrians. But the Syrians were now in confederacy with Ephraim, and therefore what is here said of one may be well supposed to be spoken of both; and that the destruction of both, at or near the same time, is indicated. In fact, the Syrians and Israelites were such near neighbours, that the Israelites could scarcely be invaded by a foreign army, without Syria being subdued. *If ye will not believe, &c.*—If ye will not believe what I now speak to you in the name of God; if ye will not put confidence in him, but, distrusting his providence, will seek to the Assyrians for succour; *ye shall not be established*—Or, preserved in your possessions, any more than the Syrians or Israelites: your state, whether political or ecclesiastical, shall not be upheld and confirmed; but ye shall be distressed and consumed by those to whom you seek for help: the accomplishment of which threatening is recorded 2 Chron. xxviii. 20. The design of the prophet was to raise up their fainting minds to a reliance on God, rather than on

surely ye shall not be established. A. M. 3246. 10 ¶ <sup>8</sup> Moreover, the LORD spake again unto Ahaz, saying,

*ye are not stable.*—<sup>9</sup> Heb. *And the LORD added to speak.*

the king of Assyria. See a passage very like this, 2 Chron. xx. 20.

Verses 10–12. *The Lord spake again unto Ahaz*—Namely, by Isaiah. "From hence to verse 16, we have the confirmation of the promise, by a sign to Ahaz, in the name of God; in which we have, first, the prophet's address to Ahaz, exhorting him, by the divine command, to ask whatever sign he would, with the reply of Ahaz, verses 10–12: and, secondly, a declaration of God's good pleasure to give an illustrious sign, which he offers rather to the true believers than to a hypocritical and incredulous king, verses 13–16." Through the strong and forcible objections which some learned men have made against applying the prophecy contained in these verses to Christ, in its primary sense, Huetius, Grotius, and some other commentators, have been led to suppose that it immediately related to the birth of a child in a natural way, and that it only refers in a secondary sense to the birth of Christ. Thus Bishop Lowth observes, "The obvious, literal meaning of the prophecy, not excluding a higher secondary sense, 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. viii. 4,) the enemies of Judah should be destroyed.'" But, surely, as Dr. Doddridge observes, on Matt. i. 23, "A son's being born of one, then a virgin, when she was married, was no such miraculous event as to answer such a pompous introduction" as we have here. Of this the reader may easily judge by attending to the prophet's words, and a short and easy paraphrase upon them. *Ask thee a sign of the Lord thy God*—A sign is a miracle wrought for the confirmation of some message, promise, or doctrine delivered from God. "Some unusual or extraordinary effect, production, or phenomenon, which could not be explained from natural causes, but only from the omnipotence of the Ruler of the universe; which, moreover, signified that God was present, and ratified the word, or declaration, for which the sign was given." See Exod. iv. 8; Judg. vi. 17; Isa. xxxviii. 22. *Ask it either in the depth, or in the height above*—Demand some prodigy to be wrought, either in earth or heaven, at thy pleasure. By speaking thus, the prophet signified that "all nature was subject to the power and control of that God, whom he calls the God of Ahaz, as being the God of his fathers, and in order to admonish him wherein to place his confidence." *But Ahaz said, I will not ask*—This refusal did not proceed from faith in God and true humility, but rather from his contempt of God, and disregard of his word, as is sufficiently evident from the history of his life. He probably feared lest, if such a sign should be given as he did not choose, he should be compelled to desist from his purpose of

A. M. 3246. 11 <sup>a</sup> Ask thee a sign of the LORD  
B. C. 758. thy God ; <sup>9</sup> ask it either in the depth,  
or in the height above.

12 But Ahaz said, I will not ask, neither will  
I tempt the LORD.

13 And he said, Hear ye now, O house of David ;

<sup>a</sup> Judges vi. 36 ; Matt. xii. 38.—<sup>9</sup> Or, make thy petition deep.  
<sup>b</sup> Matt. i. 23 ; Luke xxxi. 34.—<sup>c</sup> Chap. ix. 6.

calling in the aid of Assyria, which he could not well have called in after Jehovah had given a sign to the contrary. Besides, he did not dare to commit himself to that divine favour and providence, which he had heretofore so proudly despised ; preferring to it the protection of other and false deities. See Vitringa. *Neither will I tempt the Lord*—By distrusting his providence, or asking a sign, as if I questioned the truth of his word. But this was deep hypocrisy, as appears by the prophet's answer.

Verses 13, 14. *And he said, Hear now, O house of David*—The prophet no longer addresses himself to Ahaz singly, who would not regard his words, but to the whole royal family, all of whom he reproves, as being the king's counsellors, and promoting the design of sending for the Assyrian succours. *Is it a small thing for you*—Is it not wickedness enough ; *to weary men?*—To vex God's prophets and people with your oppressions and horrid impieties? *But will ye weary my God also?*—By your ingratitude, unbelief, and disobedience to his commands? *Therefore*—Because you despise me, and the sign which I now offer you, God, of his own free grace, will send you a more honourable messenger, and give you a nobler sign. Or, *Nevertheless*, (as the particle לכן often signifies,) *the Lord will give you a sign*—Although you deserve no sign nor favour, yet for the comfort of those few believers who are among you, and to leave you without excuse, I shall remind you of another and greater sign, namely, of your deliverance and preservation ; which God hath promised, and will in his due time perform. *Behold, a virgin shall conceive, &c.*—One, in the strictest sense, a virgin, as the Hebrew word, עלמה, *almah*, here used, properly signifies, and is translated by all the ancient interpreters, being never once used in Scripture in any other sense, as several learned men have proved, against the pretensions of the modern Jews. See particularly Bishop Kidder's *Demonstration of the Messiah*, part ii. chap. v., and Dr. Whitby on Matt. i. 23. Indeed, independent of the term rendered virgin, the text implies it. For, as the last-mentioned writer observes, "this promise is made as a sign, or miracle, to confirm the house of David in God's promise made to him of the perpetuity of his kingdom. Now what sign or miracle could it be, that a woman should be with child, after the ordinary manner? Where is the sign or wonder in this? Had no more been intended, what need was there of these words, *The Lord himself shall give you a sign?* What need of that solemn notice, *Behold!* there being nothing new or strange in all this." Add to this, that the original expressions are very emphati-

*Is it a small thing for you to weary* A. M. 3246.  
men, but will ye weary my God also? B. C. 758.

14 Therefore the LORD himself shall give you a sign ; <sup>b</sup> Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear <sup>i</sup> a son, and <sup>10</sup> shall call his name <sup>k</sup> Immanuel.

<sup>10</sup> Or, thou, O virgin, shalt call, see Gen. iv. 1, 25 ; xvi. 11—xxix. 32 ; xxx. 6, 8 ; 1 Sam. iv. 21.—<sup>k</sup> Chap. viii. 8.

cal, and are literally rendered by Bishop Lowth, *Behold, the virgin conceiveth, and beareth a son*, namely, that only woman, who ever was, or should be a mother, while she was still a virgin : and whose offspring, being conceived and born without the concurrence of man, was, therefore, with peculiar propriety, denominated and characterized, *the seed of the woman*, being her seed exclusively.

But it is inquired, how this birth from a virgin, which was not to happen till many ages after, could be a sign to Ahaz and the Jews, of their deliverance from present danger ; and it is urged, that "this promise, being made to Ahaz as a sign, must have relation to a child born in his time, and therefore not to our Jesus, born above seven hundred years after his death." To this, Dr. Whitby answers, "This objection is founded on a mistake : this promise, or sign, being not given to Ahaz, who, we have just seen, refused to ask a sign ; but to the house of David, according to verse 13. Now the house of David being then in great danger of being cut off and extinguished, by the kings of Israel and Syria, the promise of a Messiah, who was to be of the seed of David, and to sit upon his throne, was a great security that that house should not be extinguished, and so was a proper remedy against those fears." To this may be added, that this promised birth of the Messiah supposed not only the preservation of the house of David, but also the preservation of that city, and nation, and tribe, in and of which he was to be born : therefore there was no cause to fear that ruin which their enemies now threatened. This argument is greatly strengthened by the following clause : *And shall call*—That is, his virgin mother shall call ; *his name Immanuel*—The mother usually giving the name to the child, and this mother having a peculiar right to do it, the child having no human father. To be called, in Scripture language, is the same thing as to be : the meaning is, He shall be Immanuel, that is, God with us ; God dwelling among us in our nature, the Word made flesh, John i. 14. God and man meeting in one person, and being a mediator between God and men. Now to whom but the Messiah was this applicable? Or, waiving the import of the name ; supposing the being called by this name did not imply that the child or person should be what his name signified, namely, God with us, what other person, save the Messiah, can be pointed out, that was called by this name? To what other event can this passage of the prophecy be made to accord? What woman, then a virgin, and afterward marrying, and bearing a son, called that son Immanuel? Surely they who con-

A. M. 3246. 15 Butter and honey shall he eat,  
B. C. 758. that he may know to refuse the evil,  
and choose the good.

<sup>1</sup> Chap.

tend for this sense of the prophet's words, should point out the person so called. None have done this, and none can do it. No such person ever existed. As to what some have suggested, that Hezekiah, the son of Ahaz, might be meant, and be said to be called by that name, because he was the future governor of the land, (see chap. viii. 8,) and God was with him, it must be observed, that he was born at least nine years before this prophecy was delivered, even before Ahaz came to the throne, and therefore his birth could not be intended by the prophet here. But not to pursue the argument further, which certainly is not necessary in so clear a case; we will only add, that even if it could be supposed that the prophet did first and immediately refer to some child to be then born, yet, as Bishop Lowth observes, (in words hardly consistent with what he had said, as quoted above, of the primary sense of the passage,) "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. 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."

Verse 15. *Butter and honey shall he eat*—The common food of children in that country, where these articles were in great abundance, and of the best sort. The principal meaning of the verse seems to be, that this child, called *Immanuel*, should be brought up in the usual manner, "the same republic still continuing, and the cultivated fields, unoccupied by the enemy, abundantly supplying all necessary food; and that thus he should grow up to maturity." The words, however, also signify, that though he should be miraculously conceived, and should be possessed of a nature truly divine, yet he should be also *human*, subject to all the infirmities of our nature, standing in need of food for

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16 <sup>1</sup> For before the child shall A. M. 3246.  
know to refuse the evil, and choose B. C. 758.  
the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall

viii. 4.

his support as other children do, and by the help thereof growing up from childhood to manhood. *That he may know*—Or rather, *till he know*, as לָרַעוּת may be properly rendered; *to refuse the evil and choose the good*—That is, till his faculties be fully unfolded, or, as Bishop Lowth renders it, *when he knows, &c.*; when they are unfolded, and he is arrived at mature age. Both in childhood and in manhood, he shall be sustained by the usual diet of the country, which, being neither invaded nor distressed by any foreign enemy, shall yield food sufficient for all its inhabitants.

Verse 16. *For before the child, &c.*—"The learned Vitringa," says Dr. Dodd, "seems to have proved beyond any doubt, that the child spoken of in this verse can be no other than he who is spoken of in the preceding verses. The connecting particle *for*, and the repetition of the words, *refusing the evil and choosing the good*, evidently demonstrate," he thinks, "that the *IMMANUEL* is here meant, and that, in order to enter into the immediate design of the prophet, we are to consider that, rapt, as it were, into future times, he proposes the *Immanuel*, as a sign of salvation to the people of God, as if present; *Behold a virgin conceives*; as if he understood him to be at this time conceived in the womb of the virgin, and shortly to be born: and he says, that more time shall not elapse from his birth to his capability of discerning between good and evil, than from hence to the desertion of the land of the two kings," or the time specified, chap. viii. 4. Archbishop Usher, however, Poole, Henry, Dr. Kennicott, and some other celebrated writers, conceive that we have a two-fold prophecy in this passage, the former part, contained in verses 14, 15, referring to the Messiah, and the latter, contained in this verse, to Shear-jashub, the son of Isaiah. "That the 16th verse," says Dr. Kennicott, "contains a distinct prophecy, appears from hence: 1st, The words preceding have been proved to be confined to the Messiah, whose birth was then distant above seven hundred years; whereas the words here are confined to some child who was not to arrive at years of discretion before the kings, then advancing against Jerusalem, should be themselves cut off. 2d, Some end was undoubtedly to be answered by the presence of Isaiah's son, whom God commanded him to take with him when he went to visit Ahaz; and yet no use at all appears to have been made of this son, unless he be referred to in this sentence; and, 3d, These prophecies are manifestly distinguished by being addressed to different persons. The first was addressed to the house of David, for the consolation of the pious in general; as it assured them, not only of the preservation of that house, but of God's fidelity to his great promise: whereas the second promise is addressed to the king in particular, as it foretold the speedy destruction of the two kings, his

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A. M. 3246. be forsaken of <sup>m</sup> both her kings.  
B. C. 758.

17 ¶ <sup>a</sup> The LORD shall bring upon thee, and upon thy people, and upon thy father's house, days that have not come, from the day that <sup>o</sup> Ephraim departed from Judah; *even* the king of Assyria.

18 And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* the LORD <sup>p</sup> shall hiss for the fly that *is* in the uttermost part of the rivers of Egypt, and for

<sup>m</sup> 2 Kings xv. 30; xvi. 9.—<sup>a</sup> 2 Chron. xxviii. 19.—<sup>o</sup> 1 Kings xii. 16.—<sup>p</sup> Chap. v. 26.—<sup>q</sup> Chap. ii. 19; Jer. xvi. 16.

enemies." Dr. Doddridge, who also thinks that this verse refers to Shear-jashub, judging with Dr. Kennicott, that Isaiah "was ordered to take him in his hand for no other imaginable reason, but that something remarkable was to be said of him," defines the general sense of these verses from the 13th to be this: "You have affronted God by refusing a sign now; yet his transcendent mercy will make your present forfeited deliverance, (by the death of these confederate kings, which shall happen before, <sup>וְנָתַתִּי</sup>, *this child* in my hand is grown up to the exercise of reason,) a sign of a much nobler deliverance by the Messiah; who shall be born of an immaculate virgin, and shall condescend to pass through the tender scenes of infancy, as other children do." In the latter part of the verse, *the land that thou abhorrest*, means the countries of Syria and Israel, which Ahaz abhorred for their cruel designs and practices against him. *Shall be forsaken of both her kings*—So far shall Rezin and Pekah be from conquering thy land, that they shall lose their own lands, and their lives too: which they did within two years after this time, being both slain by the king of Assyria, 2 Kings xv. 29, 30; and xvi. 9.

Verse 17. *The Lord shall bring upon thee*—But although God will deliver you at this time, for his own name's sake, yet he will remember and requite your wickedness, and hath a dreadful judgment in store for you. *And upon thy people, and thy father's house*—Upon thy subjects, and upon thy sons and successors, the kings of Judah: the accomplishment of which threatening is recorded in their history. Part of the Assyrian storm fell in Ahaz's reign, 2 Chron. xxviii. 20; and he began to reap the bitter fruit of his confiding in the king of Assyria, rather than in the Lord of hosts. *Days that have not come*—Namely, evil days, or calamities; *from the day that Ephraim departed, &c.*—When the ten tribes revolted from thy father's house, and set up another opposite kingdom. The king of Assyria might well be called their plague or calamity, as he is called the *rod of God's anger*, chap. x. 5.

Verses 18, 19. *In that day*—Known to God, and appointed by him for the execution of these judgments; *the Lord shall hiss for the fly*—The *flies*, rather. Thus he calls these enemies, to signify either their great number, or their speedy march: see on chap. v. 26. As the word *hiss* carries with it a low idea, and does not properly express the mean-

the bee that *is* in the land of Assyria. A. M. 3246. B. C. 758.

19 And they shall come, and shall rest all of them in the desolate valleys, and in <sup>q</sup> the holes of the rocks, and upon all thorns, and upon all <sup>11</sup> bushes.

20 In the same day shall the LORD shave with a <sup>r</sup> razor that is hired, *namely*, by them beyond the river, by the king of Assyria, the

<sup>11</sup> Or, *commendable trees*.—<sup>r</sup> 2 Kings xvi. 7, 8; 2 Chron. xxviii. 20, 21; Ezek. v. 1.

ing of the original word <sup>שֶׁרֶק</sup>, *sherek*, which properly signifies, *sibilando advocare*, to call by whistling, it seems desirable that it should not have been used here and chap. v. 26. Bishop Lowth renders it, *Jehorah shall hiss the fly*, shall call them softly, bring them by a slight intimation of his will. *In the uttermost part of the rivers, &c.*—In their extremity, where they go out into the sea. The river Nile is undoubtedly intended, which may be called rivers, either for its greatness, or because toward the end of it it is divided into seven streams. When the Chaldeans had, in good measure, subdued the Egyptians, it is probable great numbers of the Egyptian soldiers listed themselves in the Chaldean army, and with them invaded the land of Judah. *And for the bee, &c.*—The Assyrian army, compared to bees, as for their numerous forces and orderly march, so for their fierce attempts and mischievous effects. *In the land of Assyria*—In the empire of Assyria or Babylon; for these two were united into one empire, and therefore in Scripture are promiscuously called sometimes by one title, and sometimes by the other. *They shall come*—The flies, and especially the bees. *And shall rest all of them*—They shall have an easy victory; few or none of them shall be slain in the attempt. *In the desolate valleys*—Such as they found very fruitful, but made desolate. *And in the holes of the rocks*—To which possibly the Israelites fled for refuge. *Upon all bushes*—Which he mentions, because flies and bees use frequently to rest there; and to intimate, that no place should escape their fury.

Verse 20. *The Lord shall shave*—Shall utterly spoil, as shaving takes away the hair; *with a razor that is hired*—Hired by Ahaz; for he purchased the aid of the Assyrians with large sums of silver and gold, 2 Kings xvi. 7, 8. And so the prophet signifies the just judgment of God, in scourging them with a rod of their own making. *By them beyond the river*—Euphrates, called the river, by way of eminence, beyond which Assyria lay. *By the king of Assyria*—By the successive kings of the Assyrian empire, Sennacherib, Esar-haddon, and especially by Nebuchadnezzar, who, having subdued the Assyrian monarchy, from thenceforth was king of Assyria as well as of Chaldea. *The head and the hair of the feet, &c.*—This highly parabolical mode of expression is used to denote "the utter devastation of the country from one end to the other, and the plunder-

A. M. 3246 head, and the hair of the feet: and it  
B. C. 758. shall also consume the beard.

21 And it shall come to pass in that day, that a man shall nourish a young cow and two sheep;

22 And it shall come to pass, for the abundance of milk that they shall give that he shall eat butter: for butter and honey shall every one eat that is left <sup>12</sup> in the land.

23 And it shall come to pass in that day, that every place shall be, where there were a

<sup>12</sup> Heb. in the midst of the land.

ing of the people from the highest to the lowest. The hairs of the head are those of the highest order in the state; those of the feet, or lower parts, are the common people: the beard is the king, the high-priest, the very supreme in dignity and majesty: for the eastern people have always held the beard in the highest veneration, and have been extremely jealous of its honour."

Verses 21-25. These verses "contain an elegant and very expressive description of a country depopulated, and left to run wild, from its adjuncts and circumstances; the vineyards and corn-fields, before well cultivated, now overrun with briars and

thousand vines at a thousand silver- A. M. 3246.  
lings, \* it shall even be for briars and B. C. 758.  
thorns.

24 With arrows and with bows shall men come thither; because all the land shall become briars and thorns.

25 And on all hills that shall be digged with the mattock, there shall not come thither the fear of briars and thorns: but it shall be for the sending forth of oxen, and for the treading of lesser cattle.

\* Chap. v. 6.

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."—Bishop Lowth.

## CHAPTER VIII.

The prophet foretels that Syria and Israel should be subdued by Assyria, 1-4. That Judah also should be afflicted, 5-8. Declares God's judgments to be irresistible, and that they ought to be feared, 9-13. That the Lord is a sanctuary to the godly, and a stone of stumbling to the wicked, 14, 15. The prophecy is sure, 16. God must be waited on, even when he seems to disregard his people's prayers, and necromancers and wizards must not be consulted, 17-20. The perplexity and misery of idolaters, 21, 22.

A. M. 3246. **M**OREOVER, the LORD said unto  
B. C. 758. me, Take thee a great roll, and

\* Chap. xxx. 8; Hab. ii. 2.—<sup>1</sup> Heb. in making speed

### NOTES ON CHAPTER VIII.

Verse 1. *Moreover, the Lord said unto me*—Here begins "the second section of this discourse, which reaches to the seventh verse of the next chapter, and is nearly of the same argument with the preceding; being prophetic, and containing matter both of comfort and reproof. It may be divided into two parts. The first part, in the first four verses, contains a confirmation and sign of the prediction concerning the sudden subversion of the kingdoms of Syria and Israel. The second part more fully and distinctly explains the purpose of God with respect both to the Israelites and Jews, for the consolation of the pious, and the terror of the impious and carnal, among them." *Take thee a great roll*—Or, a great volume, because the prophecy to be written in it was large, and God would have it written in very

\* write in it with a man's pen con- A. M. 3246.  
cerning <sup>1</sup> Maher-shalal-hash-baz. B. C. 758.

to the spoil he hasteneth the prey, or, make speed, &c.

large and legible characters; and write in it with a man's pen—With such a pen as writers use, that so all may read and understand it. Bishop Lowth, deriving the word גלילין, here rendered roll, from גלה, to show, to reveal, rather than from גלל, to roll, translates it, a large mirror, or polished tablet of metal, like those which were anciently used for mirrors, and also for engraving on. Accordingly, he renders the word חרט, which we translate a pen, a graving tool. "In this manner," says he, "the prophet was to record the prophecy of the destruction of Damascus and Samaria by the Assyrians: the subject and sum of which prophecy are here expressed, with great brevity, in four words, maher, shalal, hash, baz; that is, to hasten the spoil, to take quickly the prey: which was afterward applied as the name of the prophet's son, who was made a sign

A. M. 3246. 2 And I took unto me faithful witnesses to record, <sup>b</sup> Uriah the priest, and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah.

3 And I <sup>2</sup> went unto the prophetess; and she conceived, and bare a son. Then said the LORD to me, Call his name Maher-shalal-hash-baz.

4 <sup>o</sup> For before the child shall have knowledge to cry, My father, and my mother, <sup>3</sup> the <sup>d</sup> riches

<sup>b</sup> 2 Kings xvi. 10.—<sup>3</sup> Heb. *approached unto*.—<sup>c</sup> See Chap. vii. 16.—<sup>o</sup> Or, he that is before the king of Assyria shall take

of the speedy completion of it; *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." *Concerning Maher-shalal-hash-baz*—Concerning that thing which is signified by the name of the child, which is here mentioned by way of anticipation, as not being given him till verse 3; that is, concerning that which God is making haste to do, the giving up Syria and Israel for a prey to the Assyrians.

Verses 2, 3. *And I took me faithful witnesses*—Persons of unquestionable reputation, who should bear witness that the following name and prophecy were written and published by me, according to God's command. It is likely these witnesses signed a copy of the prophecy with their own hands, and dated it according to the time it was declared by the prophet. *And I went unto the prophetess*—His own wife, so called, because she was the wife of a prophet, wives being frequently denominated from their husband's titles. Or possibly she herself might be endowed with the gift of prophecy. Some commentators suppose that Isaiah married another wife on this occasion, and that the witnesses above mentioned were called to attest the matrimonial contract, according to the custom of the Jews. But there are no indications of this, and, as it is certain from the preceding chapter that he already had a wife, the mother of Shear-jashub, it seems highly improbable that he should take another. Others again suppose, that these witnesses, who were persons of rank, "were called on to attend the circumcision of the prophet's son, and to attest the name by which he was called, as well as the prophecy, confirmed and illustrated by that name."

Verse 4. *Before the child shall have knowledge to cry, My father, &c.*—To speak and know his parents; which is within the space of two years. And this agrees with the other prophecy, chap. vii. 16. For it requires a longer time for a child to *know to refuse the evil, and choose the good*, than to distinguish his parents from strangers; and Shear-jashub, being born some years before this child, was capable of that higher degree of knowledge as soon as this was capable of the lower degree. *The riches of Damascus, &c., shall be taken away*—The kingdoms of Syria and Israel, here signified by their two capital cities, shall be stripped of their wealth and power,

of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria shall be taken away before the king of Assyria. A. M. 3246. B. C. 758.

5 ¶ The LORD spake also unto me again, saying, A. M. 3263. B. C. 741.

6 Forasmuch as this people refuseth the waters of <sup>o</sup> Shiloah that go softly, and rejoice <sup>f</sup> in Rezin and Remaliah's son;

*away the riches, &c.*—<sup>d</sup> 2 Kings xv. 29; xvi. 9; Chap. xvii. 3. <sup>o</sup> Neh. iii. 15; John ix. 7.—<sup>f</sup> Chap. vii. 1, 2, 6.

as they were by Tiglath-pileser, within the time here limited, 2 Kings xv. 29.

Verse 5. *The Lord spake also*—"After having given the promise concerning the deliverance of the people from the fear of the two adverse kingdoms, God, by a new, or a continued revelation, (for it was not very distant in time from the former,) more distinctly unfolds his purpose concerning the fate, not only of Israel, but of Judah, and confirms what he had advised in the former prophecy concerning them. See chap. vii. 17, &c. For this is of nearly the same argument, except that it is more extensive, and involves many more mysteries. The first part is entirely prophetic, from this to verse 11, and contains a declaration of the events of the subsequent period, immediately leading to the time of fulfilling the promise respecting Immanuel: of these events, the first is the subversion of Ephraim, verses 6, 7; the second, the affliction of Judah, by the Assyrians also, verse 8; the third, the destruction of the hostile counsels and attempts of future times, which seemed to threaten a total excision of the church of God, verses 9, 10."—Vitrina and Dodd.

Verse 6. *Forasmuch as this people*—The people of Israel, of whom he last spake, and who are the chief subject of this whole prophecy; and who did rejoice, not only in their own king Pekah, but also in the assistance of so powerful an ally as Rezin was; *refuseth*—Or, rather, *despiseth*, as the word דָּרַס more properly, and most frequently, signifies; *the waters of Shiloah that go softly*—That small and contemptible brook which ran gently (as little rivers generally do) by Jerusalem, and which is here opposed to the great rivers of Tigris and Euphrates, by which the Assyrian empire was fortified. By these *waters of Shiloah*, he intends the munitions and strength of the Jews, including the kingdom of David, and the divine protection and promise engaged to support it, all which their enemies despised. And, as the people of Judah, from a consideration of their own weakness, and a distrust of God's promises, applied for assistance to the Assyrians, they also might properly be said to despise or refuse these waters of Shiloah, although they could not be said to rejoice in Rezin and Remaliah's son. Here, therefore, the prophet assigns the reason which moved God to punish both the Ephraimites and the Jews by the Assyrians. They disbelieved his word, distrusted his protection, and confided in an arm of flesh, and therefore the Lord chastised them.

A. M. 3263. 7 Now, therefore, behold, the LORD  
B. C. 741. bringeth up upon them the waters of  
the river, strong and many, *even* <sup>8</sup> the king of  
Assyria, and all his glory: and he shall come  
up over all his channels, and go over all his  
banks:

8 And he shall pass through Judah; he shall  
overflow and go over, <sup>9</sup> he shall reach *even* to  
the neck; and <sup>4</sup> the stretching out of his wings  
shall fill the breadth of thy land, O <sup>1</sup> Imma-  
nuel.

9 ¶ <sup>2</sup> Associate yourselves, O ye people, <sup>5</sup> and

<sup>8</sup> Chap. x. 12.—<sup>9</sup> Chap. xxx. 28.—<sup>4</sup> Heb. *the fulness of the  
breadth of thy land shall be the stretchings out of his wings.*  
<sup>1</sup> Chap. vii. 14.—<sup>2</sup> Joel iii. 9, 11.

Verses 7, 8. *Now, therefore*—Because the Israelites and their army, combined with the Syrians, despise the weak state of the Jews, and the kingdom of David, now brought very low, and having no such defence as can be compared to a great river, but only one that resembles a small brook that glides gently along; *behold, the Lord bringeth upon them the waters of the river*—Of Euphrates, often called the river, for its eminent greatness; whereby he understands the Assyrian forces, as the next words explain the metaphor, which should overwhelm the whole kingdom of Israel under Tiglath-pileser and Shalmaneser; *the king of Assyria and all his glory*—His numerous and puissant army, in which he gloried, chap. x. 8. *He shall come up over all his channels*—This great river shall overflow its own proper channels: that is, this great monarch shall not keep within his own proper bounds, but invade and overrun the whole land of Syria and Israel, as an overflowing river does the neighbouring meadows. As multitudes of people are often spoken of in Scripture under the emblem of great waters, so an invading army is very fitly represented by the inundation of a rapid river, which carries all before it, and leaves the ground waste and desolate. *And he shall pass through Judah*—Having overrun the land of Israel he shall invade the land of Judah, as Sennacherib did a few years after the conquest of Samaria by Shalmaneser; see 2 Kings xviii. 9, 13. *And he shall reach even to the neck*—So that they shall be in great danger of being destroyed. He persists in the metaphor of a river swelling so high as to reach to a man's neck, and be ready to overwhelm him. Such was the danger of Judah's land when Sennacherib took all the fenced cities of Judah, (2 Kings xviii. 13,) and sent his army against the capital city of Jerusalem. *The stretching out of his wings*—Of his forces, or of the wings of his army, as they anciently were, and still are, called. *Shall fill the breadth of thy land*—Of the land of Judah, so called, because the Messiah, who is called Immanuel, (chap. vii. 14,) should certainly be born, and live, and die there. And this is added emphatically for the consolation of God's people, to assure them,

ye shall be broken in pieces; and give A. M. 3263.  
ear, all ye of far countries: gird your- B. C. 741.  
selves, and ye shall be broken in pieces; gird  
yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces.

10 <sup>1</sup> Take counsel together, and it shall come  
to naught; speak the word, <sup>2</sup> and it shall not  
stand: <sup>3</sup> for God is with us.

11 ¶ For the LORD spake thus to me <sup>6</sup> with  
a strong hand, and instructed me that I should  
not walk in the way of this people, saying,

12 Say ye not, A confederacy, to all *them* to  
whom <sup>9</sup> this people shall say, A confederacy;

<sup>1</sup> Or, *yet*.—<sup>2</sup> Job v. 12.—<sup>3</sup> Chap. vii. 7.—<sup>6</sup> Chap. vii. 14;  
Acts v. 38, 39; Rom. viii. 13.—<sup>9</sup> Heb. *in strength of hand.*  
<sup>9</sup> Chap. vii. 2.

that notwithstanding this dreadful scourge, yet God would make a difference between Israel and Judah; and whereas Israel should be so broken by the Assyrian, that *they should not be a people*, Judah should be restored, for the sake of the Messiah, to be the place of his birth and ministry, according to Gen. xlix. 10.

Verses 9, 10. *Associate yourselves, O ye people*—O ye Syrians and Israelites; *and ye shall be broken in pieces*—Your attempts against the house of David, and kingdom of Judah, will be fruitless, yea, will issue in your own ruin. *And give ear, all ye of far countries*—Immanuel's name inspires the prophet with new courage, and makes him send a challenge to all God's enemies, and foretel their certain downfall. He is, indeed, wrapt, as it were, into an ecstasy, upon considering the land as belonging to Immanuel, and foreseeing the future interposition of God for its protection. *Gird yourselves*—With armour: prepare for war; *and ye shall be broken in pieces*—He repeats it again for the greater assurance of the thing, and the comfort of God's people. *Take counsel together*—Against the Lord, and against his anointed, Psa. ii. 2; *and it shall come to naught*—All your counsels shall be defeated, and your designs rendered abortive. *Speak the word*—Not only fix, but declare your purpose, and make your boast of it; *and it shall not stand*—Still you shall fail of accomplishing what you so ardently desire; *for God is with us*—The Almighty and only true God fighteth for us and against you. This address of the prophet, to the confederate nations, is most elegant and spirited; and the foundation of his confidence is finely expressed in this last clause, in which he himself interprets the name Immanuel before given to the Messiah.

Verses 11, 12. *For the Lord spake thus unto me*—Here the prophet teaches the people by his own example, as one immediately taught by God, with what dispositions they should receive all the attempts of their enemies, to subvert the kingdom of God in their land, even to the time of the Messiah, of whose manifestation this instruction contains a repeated prophecy for the consolation of the pious, together

A. M. 3263. <sup>p</sup> neither fear ye their fear, nor be  
B. C. 741. afraid.

13 <sup>a</sup> Sanctify the LORD of hosts himself; and <sup>r</sup> let him be your fear, and let him be your dread.

14 And <sup>a</sup> he shall be for a sanctuary; but for <sup>a</sup> a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence

<sup>p</sup> 1 Pet. iii. 14, 15.—<sup>q</sup> Num. xx. 12.—<sup>r</sup> Psa. lxxvi. 7; Luke xii. 5.—<sup>s</sup> Ezek. xi. 16.

with a denunciation of the most grievous judgments, spiritual and temporal, upon the impious, incredulous, and profane. See Vitringa. *With a strong hand*—With a vehement and more than ordinary inspiration. The Chaldee renders it, *In the strength of prophecy*; perhaps it refers to those ecstasies into which the prophets were frequently wrapt. *That I should not walk in the way of this people*—Of the generality of the people of Judah; whose imminent danger and calamity he foretold, (verse 8,) giving them, however, full assurance that God would deliver them out of it, verses 9, 10. *Say ye not, A confederacy, &c.*—You, my people, be not associated with them in the confederacies which they are projecting: do not join with those that, for the securing of themselves, are for making a league with the Assyrians, through unbelief, and distrust of God and their cause: do not come into any such confederacy. *Neither fear ye their fear*—Be not afraid of the confederacy with which they frighten themselves and one another, namely, that between Syria and Ephraim; or that thing which they fear, that, if they do not call in the Assyrian succours, they shall be destroyed by those two potent kings. Thus, when sinful confederacies are formed against God's church and people by their enemies, they should guard against sinful fears of such confederacies.

Verses 13–15. *Sanctify the Lord of hosts*—Give him the glory of his power, and goodness, and faithfulness, by trusting in his promises for deliverance; and let him be your fear—Let God, and not the kings of Syria and Israel, be the chief object of your fear. *And he shall be for a sanctuary*—A sure refuge to all that truly fear him, and rely upon him; *but for a stone of stumbling*—An occasion of sin and ruin, at whom they will take offence, and stumble, so as to fall and be broken, as it is expressed verse 15; *to both the houses of Israel*—To the two kingdoms, that of the ten tribes, and that of the two tribes. *And for a gin, &c., to the inhabitants of Jerusalem*—This is distinctly mentioned as a wonderful thing, because Jerusalem was the seat of the temple, and of God's solemn worship; where all the means of knowledge and grace were in the greatest plenty; where the thrones of civil and ecclesiastical judicature were established; where the most wise and learned doctors had their constant abode. And that such a place and people should reject Immanuel, when he should appear, was so strange an occurrence, that the prediction of it was highly necessary, lest otherwise, when it came to pass, it should shake the faith of all who did believe on him; whereas, now the ac-

complishment hereof was a notable confirmation of their faith. *And many among them*—Not all; for there shall be a remnant, as was foretold, chap. iv. 2; vi. 13; *shall stumble*—At that stone or rock, mentioned verse 14. The writers of the New Testament, who have so frequently quoted this passage, prove, beyond all controversy, that the subject of it is, *God manifest in the flesh*; the Messiah, who performed for his people all those benefits of grace which this promise implies, being a sanctuary, or place of refuge to them; and who, at the same time, became to the hypocrites and unbelievers in Judea, *a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence*, to the destruction of the far greater part of that people. See the margin.

15 And many among them shall <sup>u</sup> stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken.

16 Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples.

<sup>v</sup> Chapter xxviii. 16; Luke ii. 34; Romans ix. 33; 1 Pet. ii. 8. <sup>w</sup> Matt. xxi. 44; Luke xx. 18; Rom. ix. 32; xi. 25.

Verse 16. *Bind up the testimony*—There seems no doubt that the person here introduced speaking, is God the Father. *By the testimony, and the law or doctrine*, the prophet understands one and the same thing, as he doth also verse 20, namely, the word of God, and especially that which is the main scope thereof, the doctrine of the Messiah, which, though now professed by all the Israelites, should be disowned by the generality of them, when the Messiah should come. *Bind up* and *seal* are to be understood prophetically, that is, declare and prophesy, that it shall be bound up and sealed; as Isaiah is said to *make fat*, and to *blind*, &c., Isa. vi. 10; and Jeremiah, to *root out*, and *pull down*, &c., Jer. i. 10, when they foretel these events. Moreover, the expressions, *bind up*, and *seal*, design the same thing; and that is, 1st, *Security*, as things are bound up and sealed, that they may not be lost. So he signifies, that although this doctrine should be lost among the body of the Israelites, yet it should be preserved among his disciples; and, 2d, *Secrecy*, as many things are bound up, or sealed, that they may be hid from the eyes of others. And so he informs them that this doctrine now was, and should be, *hid*, in a great measure, from all God's people, till the accomplishment of it; and that even when it was accomplished, it should still continue to be as a secret and mystery, known, indeed, to God's true disciples, but hid from the body of the nation, who *would not* see it, and therefore should be blinded by God's just judgment, that they should not see it, as was prophesied Isa. vi. 9, 10. By God's disciples, Hebrew, לְכַרִּי, he means those who were *taught of him*, as it is expressed Isa. liv. 13, where this very word is used; or, *every one that hath heard and learned of the Father, and therefore cometh unto Christ*, as it is explained, John vi. 45.

A. M. 3263. 17 And I will wait upon the LORD,  
B. C. 741. that <sup>a</sup>hideth his face from the house  
of Jacob, and I <sup>v</sup>will look for him.

18 <sup>a</sup>Behold, I and the children whom the  
LORD hath given me, <sup>a</sup>are for signs and for  
wonders in Israel from the LORD of hosts,  
which dwelleth in mount Zion.

19 And when they shall say unto you, <sup>b</sup>Seek  
unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto  
wizards <sup>c</sup>that peep, and that mutter: should  
not a people seek unto their God? for the living  
<sup>d</sup>to the dead?

<sup>a</sup> Chap. liv. 8.—<sup>v</sup> Hab. ii. 3; Luke ii. 25, 38.—<sup>b</sup> Heb. ii.  
13.—<sup>c</sup> Psa. lxxi. 7; Zech. iii. 8.—<sup>d</sup> 1 Sam. xxviii. 8; Chap.  
cix. 3.

Verses 17, 18. *And*—Or *yet*, as the same particle is translated, Jer. ii. 32, 35, and elsewhere; *I will wait on the Lord*—Notwithstanding this dreadful prophecy, concerning the unbelief and rejection of Israel, *I* will cast my care upon him, and expect the accomplishment of his promise, in sending the Messiah, and in conferring upon me, and all believing Israelites, all his mercies and blessings, to be procured for mankind by his merits; *that hideth his face from the house of Jacob*—That now doth, and threatens that he will hereafter, withdraw his favour and blessing from the family or people of Israel. *And I will look for him*—With an eye of faith and expectation, till his time come. *Behold, I, &c.*—These words were literally spoken by Isaiah concerning himself, but mystically concerning Christ, of whom the prophet was a type, and therefore they are fitly applied to Christ, Heb. ii. 13; *and the children whom the Lord hath given me*—His spiritual children, whom he had either begotten or instructed by his ministry; *are for signs, &c., in Israel*—Are a gazing-stock; are derided and ridiculed, for our folly in believing God's promises, and this even among the Israelites, who have been taught and who profess better things. *From the Lord of hosts*—Which comes to pass by the wise counsel and providence of God; *which dwelleth in Zion*—Where the temple was now, and where the Messiah was to set up his kingdom.

Verse 19. *And when, &c.*—The prophet, having foretold the coming of the Messiah, and spoken of the disciples he should have, takes this occasion of addressing the Jews, and reminding them of their duty, as he had done, chap. ii. 6, compared with verses 1, 2. He saw the nation much inclined to foreign superstitions, particularly to the divinations, soothsayings, and astrology of the Syrians, Egyptians, &c., but not regarding the pure doctrine of God's word as they ought: he therefore warns them against placing any dependance on such follies, and exhorts them to disregard all merely human teaching and assistance, and to apply solely to the divine law and testimony. *When they*—Those Israelites, to whom I and my children are for signs and wonders, and who are fallen from God into superstition and

20 <sup>a</sup>To the law and to the testimony: A. M. 3263  
B. C. 741. if they speak not according to this  
word, *it is* because <sup>t</sup>there is <sup>v</sup>no light in  
them.

21 And they shall pass through it hardly be-  
stead and hungry: and it shall come to pass,  
that when they shall be hungry, they shall fret  
themselves, and <sup>a</sup>curse their king and their  
God, and look upward.

22 And <sup>b</sup>they shall look unto the earth; and  
behold trouble and darkness; <sup>i</sup>dimness of an-  
guish; and *they shall be driven to darkness.*

<sup>a</sup> Chap. xxix. 4.—<sup>d</sup> Psa. cvi. 28.—<sup>e</sup> Luke xvi. 29.—<sup>f</sup> Mic.  
iii. 6.—<sup>v</sup> Heb. *no morning*.—<sup>g</sup> Rev. xvi. 11.—<sup>h</sup> Chap. v. 30.  
<sup>i</sup> Chap. ix. 1.

idolatry; *shall say unto you*—Who are the true people of God; *Seek unto them that have familiar spirits*—For advice and help; *and unto wizards*—Of whom, and of familiar spirits, see on Lev. xix. 31, and xx. 27; Deut. xviii. 11; *that peep and mutter*—That speak with a low voice, as the two words here used signify, which they affected to do, speaking rather inwardly in their bellies, than audibly with their mouths. *Should not a people seek unto their God?*—This answer the prophet puts into their mouths; doth not every nation, in cases of difficulty, seek to their gods? Much more should we do so, that have the only true God for our God. *For the living to the dead*—That is, for living men to inquire of the living God, is proper and reasonable; but it is highly absurd for them to forsake him, and to seek dead idols, either to the images, or to the spirits of dead men, which are supposed to speak in them.

Verse 20. *To the law and to the testimony*—Let this dispute between you and them be determined by God's word, which is here, and in many other places, called the *law*, to signify their obligation to believe and obey it; and the *testimony*, because it is a witness between God and man, of God's will, and of man's duty. *If they speak not, &c.*—Your antagonists, who seek to pervert you. *No light*—This proceeds from the darkness of their minds; they are blind, and cannot see. But these words are understood by divers learned interpreters, not as a declaration of their ignorance, but a prediction of their misery, light being most commonly used in Scripture for comfort and happiness, and darkness for sorrows and calamities. And this sense seems to be much favoured by the following passage: and then the words, אֵין לְשָׁחַר, mean, *no light*, or *no morning*, shall be to them; that is, a night of misery shall come upon them, and they shall never have a morning of deliverance from it; they shall be swallowed up in endless calamities, as is farther declared in the following verses.

Verses 21, 22. *And they*—The idolatrous and apostate Israelites; *shall pass through it*—Namely, their own land, into captivity; or, as עָבַר כְּהָ may be

rendered, *shall pass to and fro, or wander hither and thither, in it*, like distracted men, not knowing whither to go, or what to do; whereas, if they had not forsaken God, they might have had a quiet and settled abode in it. *Hardly bestead and hungry*—Hebrew, נִקְשָׁה וְרָעָב, *distressed and famished, as Bishop Lowth translates the words: they shall fret themselves, &c.*—Shall be impatient under their pressures, and, in the rage of their despair, *curse their king*—To whose ill conduct they impute a great part of their miseries; *and their God*—Their idol, to whom they trusted, and whom now, too late, they find to be unable to help them; *and look upward*—

To heaven for help, as men of all nations and religions, in great calamities, are wont to do. *And they shall look unto the earth*—Finding no help from heaven, they turn their eyes downward, looking hither and thither for comfort; *and behold trouble and darkness, &c.*—Many words, expressing the same thing, are put together, to signify the variety, and extremity, and continuance of their miseries. Bishop Lowth, who connects with this verse the last clause of the twenty-first, renders the passage thus: “He shall cast his eyes upward, and look down to the earth; and lo! distress and darkness! gloom, tribulation, and accumulated darkness!”

CHAPTER IX.

*Joy in the midst of affliction, 1-5. The birth, person, office, and kingdom of Christ, 6, 7. Judgments for their pride, 8-12. For their impenitency and hypocrisy, 13-21.*

A. M. 3264. B. C. 740. **N**EVERTHELESS <sup>a</sup> the dimness *shall not be such as was* in her vexation, when at the <sup>b</sup> first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali,

and <sup>c</sup> afterward did more grievously <sup>A. M. 3264. B. C. 740.</sup> afflict *her by* the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee <sup>1</sup> of the nations.

<sup>2</sup> <sup>d</sup> The people that walked in darkness have

<sup>a</sup> Chap. viii. 22.—<sup>b</sup> 2 Kings xv. 29; 2 Chron. xvi. 4.—<sup>c</sup> Lev. xxvi. 24; 2 Kings xvii. 5, 6.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *populous*.—<sup>d</sup> Matt. iv. 16; Eph. v. 8, 14.

NOTES ON CHAPTER IX.

Verse 1. *Nevertheless, &c.*—In the Hebrew, this verse is joined to the preceding chapter, as it is also in Bishop Lowth's translation; and if it be considered as connected therewith, and the connecting particle, כִּי, be translated *for*, (which is its usual meaning,) instead of *nevertheless*, the words may be understood to express an aggravation of the darkness, or misery, threatened in the two former verses, as the punishment of those who should reject the Messiah: thus, *For the dimness—Or darkness; shall not be such as was in her vexation, &c.*—That is, this shall not be so slight an affliction as that which befell these parts of the country by Pul, 2 Kings xv. 19; nor as that which succeeded it, by Tiglath-pileser, 2 Kings xv. 29; which was a heavier stroke than the former; but this shall be far heavier than either of them. Subsequent events, supposed to be here predicted, seem to confirm this interpretation, the calamities which, by the just judgment of God, befell the Jews for rejecting and crucifying the Messiah, being incomparably greater than those brought on the land by Zebulun and Naphtali by any, or all, of the Assyrian invasions. Our translation, however, and most commentators, consider this verse as containing a mitigation of the foregoing threatening, and that the sense of it is this: The calamity of this land and its inhabitants shall be great, yet not so great as that which was brought upon Zebulun and Naphtali by the king of Assyria, because then the Israelites were not only quite rooted out, and carried away into a dreadful captivity, out of which they were not to return; but their calamity was not

alleviated by the coming of the Messiah and the gospel light; whereas, before and amidst this darkness, of which I have now spoken, shall a glorious light arise to cheer all who open their eyes to behold it. Thus interpreted, this verse is rather connected with the following than the foregoing verses, and is introductory to them, in which light Bishop Lowth considers it; although, as has been observed, following the Hebrew, he joins it to the preceding chapter. His translation of it, nearly the same with that of Dr. Waterland, is worthy of the reader's attention, as it casts a new light on the words. It is as follows: “But there shall not hereafter be darkness in the land which was distressed: In the former time he debased the land of Zebulun, and the land of Naphtali; but in the latter time he hath made it glorious: Even the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the nation.” The reader must observe, that “Zebulun, Naphtali, and Manasseh, that is, the country of Galilee, all around the sea of Genesareth, were the parts that principally suffered in the Assyrian invasion under Tiglath-pileser; and they were the first that enjoyed the blessing of Christ's preaching the gospel, and exhibiting his miraculous works among them.”

Verse 2. *The people*—Israel and Judah; *that walked*—Or *sat*, as it is in Matt. iv. 16; *in darkness*—Both in the darkness of ignorance, and in the darkness of calamity; *have seen a great light*—The prophet speaks of what was future, and would not take place till after seven hundred years, as though it were already arrived. Though “there would be very many among the Jews, to whom the

A. M. 3264. seen a great light : they that dwell in  
B. C. 740. the land of the shadow of death, upon  
them hath the light shined.

3 Thou hast multiplied the nation, *and* <sup>2</sup> not  
increased the joy : they joy before thee accord-  
ing to the joy in harvest, *and* as men rejoice  
<sup>\*</sup> when they divide the spoil.

<sup>2</sup> Or, to him.—<sup>3</sup> Judges v. 30.—<sup>4</sup> Or, When thou brakest.  
<sup>5</sup> Chap. x. 5 ; xiv. 5.—<sup>6</sup> Judg. vii. 22 ; Psa. lxxxiii. 9 ; Chap.

Messiah, arising with his new light, would be an offence ; who would resist his salutary doctrine, and who would therefore fall into the most grievous calamities, and thick darkness ;” yet, “ there would be others to whom the Messiah would truly appear with the light of grace and consolation, and who should receive him with the greatest joy, as attaining the summit of their hope and desire.” Accordingly, after the prophet had described the misery of those who, he foresaw, should reject him, he turns his style to describe the felicity of those on whom this Sun of righteousness should arise, setting forth both their joy and the cause of it.

Verse 3. *Thou hast multiplied the nation*—Thou hast made good thy promise to Abraham, concerning the multiplication of his seed, by adding his spiritual seed unto the carnal, by gathering in the Gentiles to the Jews, and making them both one people in Christ, John x. 16 ; Eph. ii. 14. For, in the Scriptures, the believing Gentiles are accounted the seed of Abraham as well as the Jews, Gal. iii. 7-9. Or, as the Hebrew may be rendered, *Thou hast magnified the nation*, honoured it with peculiar privileges above all other nations, and especially with this transcendent privilege, that the Saviour of the world should be born in it, and live among its people ; of which he speaks more fully verses 6, 7. *And not increased*—Or rather, according to the marginal reading in the Hebrew, (which, instead of *not*, has *וְלֵאמֹר*, *it, him, or them*), confirmed by many of the ancient versions, *Thou hast increased their joy*, which reading, it is evident, the next words require. Dr. Waterland's version of these two clauses is, *Thou hast advanced the nation ; hast heightened upon her joy*. The meaning is, thou hast conferred upon it a very great benefit, and thereby prepared for it the highest joy : joy which shall be to all people ; true joy arising from the consolations of the gospel. See Zech. ii. 10, 11 ; Luke ii. 10. *They joy before thee*—In thy presence, and in the place of thy worship ; according to the joy in harvest, &c.—When men, with great joy, reap the long-expected fruit of their great labours and expectations, or as when, after a glorious victory, they come to take the spoil.

Verse 4. *For thou hast broken, &c.*—Bishop Lowth translates this verse, *For the yoke of his burden, the staff laid on his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor hast thou broken, as in the day of Midian*. The Jews had been under the yoke repeatedly, to one hostile people or another, and had been sorely

4 <sup>2</sup> For thou hast broken the yoke of A. M. 3264.  
his burden, and the <sup>1</sup> staff of his shoul- B. C. 740.  
der, the rod of his oppressor, as in the day of  
<sup>5</sup> Midian.

5 <sup>4</sup> For every battle of the warrior is with con-  
fused noise, and garments rolled in blood ; <sup>b</sup> but  
<sup>5</sup> *this* shall be with burning *and* <sup>6</sup> fuel of fire.

x. 26.—<sup>4</sup> Or, When the whole battle of the warrior was, &c.  
<sup>b</sup> Chap. lxvi. 15, 16.—<sup>5</sup> Or, and it was, &c.—<sup>6</sup> Heb. meat.

oppressed by them ; formerly by the Philistines, Moabites, Ammonites, and Midianites, and, in after times, by the Assyrians, Chaldeans, Persians, and Macedonians ; and many and successive deliverances from their oppressors had God granted them. Now, as the yokes which they had been under were emblematical of those of Satan, sin, and death, the spiritual enemies of God's people, so their deliverances were figures of the spiritual deliverance which believers, whether Jews or Gentiles, receive through Christ. And of this spiritual deliverance and salvation, as the context shows, this verse is to be understood. For the preceding verses foretel the diffusion of gospel light, and those that follow attest the birth of the Messiah, unfold his characters and offices, and set forth the blessings of his peaceful and righteous reign. See Jer. xxiii. 6 ; Luke i. 70-74, where Zacharias, full of the Holy Ghost, seems most admirably to expound this passage of the prophet. *As in the day of Midian*—When God destroyed the Midianites in so admirable a manner, and by such unlikely and contemptible means, which was an eminent type of Christ's conquering the powers of darkness, and all his enemies, by dying on the cross, and by the preaching of a few unlearned, and poor, despised men.

Verse 5. *For every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, &c.*—With the triumphant exclamations of the conqueror, and the bitter lamentations of the conquered, and the different cries of the same persons, sometimes conquering and sometimes conquered ; *and garments rolled in blood*—With great difficulty and slaughter. *But this shall be with burning, &c.*—But this victory, which God's people shall have over all their enemies, shall be more terrible to their adversaries, whom God shall utterly consume, as it were, by fire. The reader must observe, however, the words *וְלֵאמֹר* here rendered *battle of the warrior*, occurring only here, are of very doubtful signification, and of consequence are rendered differently by learned men. Dr. Waterland, from Vitringa, translates the verse, “ Every clashing of the noisy warrior, and the garment rolled in blood, shall be thrown to be burned ; fuel for the fire.” Bishop Lowth renders it, “ For the greaves of the armed warrior in the conflict, and the garment rolled in much blood, shall be for a burning, even fuel for the fire.” It is probable, as Vitringa observes, that the words are intended to signify, that, in consequence of Christ's appearing in the flesh, and destroying the enemies of his church, a time of peace and tran-

A. M. 3264. 6 <sup>1</sup> For unto us a child is born, unto  
B. C. 740. us a <sup>1</sup> son is given: and <sup>1</sup> the govern-  
ment shall be upon his shoulder: and his name

shall be called <sup>m</sup> Wonderful, Counsel- A. M. 3264.  
lor, <sup>n</sup> The mighty God, The everlast- B. C. 740.  
ing Father, <sup>o</sup> The Prince of peace.

<sup>i</sup> Ch. vii. 14; Luke ii. 11.—<sup>k</sup> John iii. 16.—<sup>l</sup> Matt. xxviii. 18;

1 Cor. xv. 25.—<sup>m</sup> Judg. xiii. 18.—<sup>n</sup> Tit. ii. 13.—<sup>o</sup> Eph. ii. 14.

quillity shall take place on earth, and the instruments of war and slaughter be of no further use.

Verse 6. *For, &c.*—Having spoken of the glorious light, and joy, and victory of God's people, the prophet now proceeds to show the foundation and cause thereof. And, "though he is everywhere most excellent, he is peculiarly so in this passage, which contains an emphatical description of the person and kingdom of the Son of God; the kingdom of peace; the eternal and universal kingdom, in which the church should have the highest cause for joy; which should bring with it an abolition of the whole yoke of sin, and the ceremonial law, and a destruction of all hostile and adverse powers with respect to the saints." Who then can wonder at the joy of the church in so great a light, in so excellent a Teacher, Mediator, Saviour, and Governor, King, and Lord? *Unto us a child is, or, shall be, born*—The prophet, as usual, speaks of a blessing which he foresaw with certainty would be bestowed, as if it were conferred already. That the Messiah is here intended, not only Christian but Jewish interpreters, in general, of any credit or reputation, agree. For so the ancient Hebrew doctors understood the place, and particularly the Chaldee paraphrast; although the later Jews have laboured, out of opposition to the Lord Jesus, to apply it to Hezekiah. Which extravagant notion, as it hath no foundation at all in this or any other text of Scripture, and therefore may be rejected without any further reason; so it is fully confuted by the following titles, which are such as cannot, without blasphemy and nonsense, be ascribed to Hezekiah, nor indeed to any mere man or mere creature, as we shall see. The human nature of the Messiah is here first set forth. He shall be the *child born, the Word made flesh*, and that *for us*; not only for us *Jews*, but for us *men*, for us *sinners*, and especially for us *believers*. *Unto us a son is given*—Or, *the son*, namely, of the virgin, spoken of chap. vii. 14; the *Immanuel*, the *Son of God*, so called, not only on account of his miraculous conception, but because of his eternal generation, the Word, *who was in the beginning with God*, had glory with the Father *before the world was*, was loved by him *before the foundation of the world*, and *by whom he made the worlds, and created all things*. See John i. 1–3, and xvii. 5, 24; Heb. i. 2; 1 Cor. viii. 6; Eph. iii. 9; Col. i. 16. This person, the Father's *own Son*, his *only-begotten Son*, *is given*, John iii. 16; *sent forth*, Gal. iv. 4; *sent in the likeness of sinful flesh*, Rom. viii. 3; though *rich*, and *in the form of God*, *made in the likeness of men, poor*, and *of no reputation*, Phil. ii. 7; 2 Cor. viii. 9; given to be our infallible Teacher, our prevalent Mediator, our almighty Saviour, our righteous Ruler, and our final Judge. Accordingly, *The government*—Of the church, of the world, *yea, of all things*, for the

church's benefit, Eph. i. 21, 22; *shall be upon his shoulder*—That is, upon him, or in his hands; *all power being given to him in heaven and on earth*. In mentioning *shoulder*, he speaks metaphorically; great burdens being commonly laid upon men's shoulders, and all government, if rightly managed, being a great burden, and this especially being, of all others, the most weighty and important trust. Possibly here may be also an allusion to the ancient custom of carrying the ensigns of government before the magistrates, upon the shoulders of their officers, or, as some think, to the regal robe worn by kings and governors. *And his name shall be called*—That is, he shall be: for the following particulars are not to be taken for a description of his proper name, but of his glorious nature and qualities; *Wonderful*—He is wonderful in his person, as God and man, *God manifest in the flesh*, which union of two such different natures in one individual, intelligent, and self-conscious being, is a great and incomprehensible mystery. Hence we are told, *No man knoweth the Son but the Father*, Matt. xi. 27; and he is said to *have had a name written, which no man knew but himself*; and hence, when appearing to Manoaah, he said, *Why askest thou after my name, seeing it is secret*: Hebrew, פלא, *wonderful*, the same word here used, Judg. xiii. 18. He is also wonderful with respect to his birth, life, doctrine, miracles; his love and sufferings; his death, resurrection, and ascension; his humiliation and exaltation; his cross and crown; his grace and glory. *Counsellor*—He is so called, because he knew the whole counsel of God, and, as far as was necessary, revealed it to us, and is the great counsellor of his church and people in all their doubts and difficulties, in all ages and nations, being *made of God* unto them *wisdom*. He also is the author and giver of all those excellent counsels, delivered not only to the apostles, but also by the prophets, (1 Pet. i. 10–12,) and hath gathered, enlarged, and preserved his church by admirable counsels, and the methods of his providence; and, in a word, hath in him *all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*. *The mighty God*—This title can agree to no man but Christ, who was God as well as man, to whom the title of *God* or *Jehovah* is given, both in the Old and New Testaments, as Jer. xxiii. 6; John i. 1; Rom. ix. 5; and in many other places. And it is a true observation, that this Hebrew word אלה, *eel*, is never used in the singular number of any creature, but only of the Almighty God, as is evident by perusing all the texts where this word occurs. *The everlasting Father*—Hebrew, אבי עולם, *The Father of eternity*: having called him a child and a son, lest this should be misinterpreted to his disparagement, he adds that he is a *Father* also, even *the Father of eternity*, and, of course, of time, and of all creatures made in time. Christ, in union with the Father and

A. M. 3264. 7 Of the increase of *his* govern-  
B. C. 740. ment and peace <sup>1</sup> *there shall be no*  
end, upon the throne of David, and upon his  
kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with  
judgment and with justice from henceforth  
even for ever. The <sup>2</sup> zeal of the LORD of hosts  
will perform this.

B. C. 740. 8 ¶ The LORD sent a word into  
Jacob, and it hath lighted upon Israel.

9 And all the people shall know, *even*  
Ephraim and the inhabitants of Samaria, that  
say in the pride and stoutness of heart,

<sup>1</sup> Daniel ii. 44; Luke i. 32, 33.—<sup>2</sup> 2 Kings xix. 31; Chapter  
xxxvii. 32.

the Holy Ghost, is the *God and Father of all things*,  
the maker and upholder of all creatures, John i. 3;  
Heb. i. 3; and especially the Father of all believers,  
who are called his children, (Heb. ii. 13,) and the  
author of eternal life and salvation to them, Heb. v.  
9. Or, this title may be given him because he is  
the father of the new and eternal age, that is, of  
the economy which is to endure for ever; for Christ  
is the father of a new generation, to continue  
through all eternity; the second Adam, father of a  
new race; the head of a new and everlasting family,  
in which all the children of God are reckoned.  
*The Prince of peace*—This is another title, which  
certainly does not agree to Hezekiah, whose reign  
was far from being free from wars, as we see 2  
Kings xviii., but it agrees exactly to Christ, who is  
called our peace, Mic. v. 5; Eph. ii. 14; and is the  
only purchaser and procurer of peace between God  
and men, Isa. liii. 5; and between men and men,  
between Jews and Gentiles, Eph. ii. 15; and of the  
peace of our own consciences; and who leaves  
peace as his legacy to his disciples, John xiv. 27, and  
xvi. 33.

Verse 7. *Of the increase of his government, &c.*  
—His peaceable and happy government shall be en-  
larged without end: either without end of duration,  
*for ever*, as is expressed in a following clause of this  
verse, or without limitation: his peaceable and hap-  
py government shall be extended to all the ends of  
the earth. *Upon the throne of David*—The throne  
which was promised to David, and to his seed *for*  
*ever*; *from henceforth, &c.*—From the beginning of  
it unto all eternity. *The zeal of the Lord of hosts,*  
*&c.*—This great work shall be brought to pass by  
Almighty God, out of that fervent affection which  
he hath to his own glory, to the honour of his Son,  
and to his people.

Verses 8–12. *The Lord sent a word, &c.*—A  
prophetical and threatening message by me: for now  
the prophet, having inserted some consolatory passa-  
ges for the support of God's faithful people, returns  
to his former work of commination against the re-  
bellious Israelites; *and it lighted*—Hebrew, <sup>ל</sup>נפל, *it*  
*fell*, that is, it shall fall in the prophetic style. It  
shall certainly be accomplished; *upon Israel*—The  
same with Jacob in the former clause. We have

10 The bricks are fallen down, but <sup>1</sup> *we will build with hewn stones: the*  
B. C. 740. sycamores are cut down, but we will change  
*them into cedars.*

11 Therefore the LORD shall set up the ad-  
versaries of Rezin against him, and <sup>2</sup> join his  
enemies together;

12 The Syrians before, and the Philistines  
behind; and they shall devour Israel <sup>3</sup> with  
open mouth. <sup>4</sup> For all this his anger is not  
turned away, but his hand *is* stretched out  
still.

<sup>1</sup> Heb. *mingle*.—<sup>2</sup> Heb. *with whole mouth*.—<sup>3</sup> Chap. v. 25; x.  
4; Jer. iv. 8.

here the third section of the fifth discourse, which  
reaches to the fifth verse of the next chapter, “and  
makes,” says Bishop Lowth, “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,  
which relate principally to the kingdom of Judah;  
whereas, this is addressed exclusively to the king-  
dom of Israel. The subject of it is a denunciation  
of vengeance awaiting their crimes. It is divided  
into four parts, each threatening the particular pun-  
ishment of some grievous offence; 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 further reserve of divine  
wrath, contained in a distich before used by the pro-  
phet on a like occasion, (chap. v. 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.” *And all the people shall know*—Namely,  
by experience. They shall know whether my word  
be true or false. *Even Ephraim, &c.*—The people  
of the ten tribes, and particularly Ephraim, the  
proudest of them all. *And Samaria*—The strongest  
place, and the seat of the king and court. Here we  
have the first fault of the Ephraimites, namely,  
the pride and contempt with which they had receiv-  
ed the threatenings of the true prophets of God,  
who had denounced to them the unhappy conse-  
quences of their undertakings. Elevated with vain  
hope, they had declared that they would never desist  
from their purpose of invading Judah for any denun-  
ciations of the prophets; on the contrary, they had  
boasted proudly, that, strengthened as they were by  
their present alliance with the king of Syria, though  
they had heretofore suffered great loss, they had no  
doubt of repairing their fortune. Though *the bricks*  
*were fallen down, they would build with hewn stones,*  
*&c.*—The expression is metaphorically elegant, and  
denotes the restoration of a fallen state for the better,  
and the change of a mean and low to a more honour-  
able and excellent situation. For their pride and  
arrogance, the God who laugheth vain men to scorn,  
denounces their punishment in the two following  
verses; and, according to his usual justice, assures  
them that the union with Rezin, wherein they boast-

A. M. 3264. 13 ¶ For <sup>a</sup>the people turneth not  
B. C. 740. unto him that smiteth them, neither  
do they seek the LORD of hosts.

14 Therefore the LORD will cut off from  
Israel head and tail, branch and rush, <sup>c</sup>in one  
day.

15 The ancient and honourable, he <sup>d</sup>is the  
head; and the prophet that teacheth lies, <sup>e</sup>he  
<sup>d</sup>is the tail.

16 For <sup>f</sup>the <sup>g</sup>leaders of this people cause  
<sup>f</sup>them to err; and <sup>h</sup>they that are led of them  
<sup>f</sup>are <sup>i</sup>destroyed.

17 Therefore the LORD <sup>j</sup>shall have no joy  
in their young men, neither shall have mercy

<sup>a</sup> Jer. v. 3; Hosea vii. 10.—<sup>b</sup> Chapter x. 17; Rev. xviii. 8.  
<sup>c</sup> Chap. iii. 12.—<sup>d</sup> Or, they that call them blessed.—<sup>e</sup> Or, they  
that are called blessed of them.—<sup>f</sup> Heb. swallowed up.

ed, should itself prove their destruction. This prophecy was fulfilled by Tiglath-pileser. See 2 Kings xvi. 17, Vitringa, and Dodd. Dr. Waterland renders the beginning of the twelfth verse, "The Syrians from the east, and the Philistines from the west." Though Rezin, king of Syria, was destroyed, yet the body of the nation survived, and submitted themselves to the king of Assyria, and upon his command invaded Israel afterward. *And they shall devour Israel, &c.*—Like wild beasts.

Verses 13–15. *For the people turneth not, &c.*—We have here the second crime of this refractory people, who, impenitent and stupid, regarded not the chastisement of the Lord, nor turned to him at his reproof. Therefore a total subversion of their state and polity is denounced as the severest punishment upon them. *The Lord will cut off, &c., head and tail*—High and low, honourable and contemptible, as the next verse explains it; *branch and rush*—The goodly branches of tall trees, the mighty and noble; and the bulrush, the weakest and meanest persons. *In one day*—All together, one as well as another, without any distinction. *The ancient, &c., he is the head*—That is, is signified by the word *head*, in the former verse; *and the prophet that teacheth lies, &c.*—Whose destruction he mentions, not as if it were a punishment to them to be deprived of such persons, but partly to show the extent of the calamity, that it should reach to all sorts of persons; and partly to beat down their vain presumptions of peace and prosperity, by showing that those false prophets, which had fed their vain hopes, should perish, and their false prophecies with them. *He is the tail*—The basest part of the whole people.

Verses 16, 17. *For, &c.*—"We have here a defence of the divine judgment, taken from the universal corruption of the people, wherein God sets forth the justice of his proceedings, and shows, that not from choice, but from the iniquities of the people, he is compelled to punish. *The leaders of this people*—Their governors, both civil and ecclesiastical, especially the latter, their teachers, or the false prophets,

on their fatherless and widows: <sup>y</sup> for <sup>z</sup>every one is a hypocrite and an evil-doer, and every mouth speaketh <sup>z</sup>folly. <sup>z</sup>For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand <sup>z</sup>is stretched out still.

18 ¶ For wickedness <sup>a</sup>burneth as the fire; it shall devour the briers and thorns, and shall kindle in the thickets of the forest, and they shall mount up <sup>b</sup>like the lifting up of smoke.

19 Through the wrath of the LORD of hosts is <sup>b</sup>the land darkened, and the people shall be as the <sup>c</sup>fuel of the fire: <sup>c</sup>no man shall spare his brother.

<sup>a</sup> Psalm cxlvii. 10, 11.—<sup>y</sup> Micah vii. 2.—<sup>z</sup> Or, villany.  
<sup>z</sup> Verses 12, 21; Chap. v. 25; x. 4.—<sup>z</sup> Chap. x. 17; Mal. iv. 1  
<sup>b</sup> Chap. viii. 22.—<sup>c</sup> Heb. meat.—<sup>c</sup> Mic. vii. 2, 6.

last-mentioned; *cause them to err*—Their governors compelling them by power, and their teachers deceiving them by false doctrines, and evil counsels and persuasions. *They that are led, &c., are destroyed*—Shall certainly perish; nor will it avail them to plead, in their excuse, that they followed the counsel and conduct of their leaders. *The Lord shall have no joy in their young men*—Shall not rejoice over them to do them good, as he doth over his faithful people, Isa. lxii. 5; Zeph. iii. 17. *Neither shall have mercy on their fatherless*—Who generally are the special objects of his care and pity, and much less upon others. *For every one*—Not precisely; for there were seven thousand pious persons among them, when they seemed to Elijah to be universally corrupt; but the body or generality of the people are intended; *is a hypocrite*—For though they professed to worship the true God, yet indeed they had forsaken him. *Every mouth speaketh folly*—That is, wickedness, which is commonly called folly. They are not ashamed to proclaim their own wickedness; and the corruption of their hearts breaks forth into ungodly speeches.

Verse 18. *For wickedness burneth as fire, &c.*—Rageth like a fire, destroying and laying waste the nation. We have here the third great evil, on account of which divine vengeance was about to come upon them; namely, the power of reigning and barefaced impiety; the punishment whereof, denounced in the subsequent verses, is, as usual, assimilated to the vice, namely, destructive factions, which should overthrow their republic. Having rendered themselves hateful to God by their crimes, they shall be destroyed by those crimes, by their dissensions, animosities, divisions, tumults, insurrections, and civil broils, arising from the wickedness of their own dispositions, and issuing in their mutual destruction. Inflamed by envy, avarice, and impurity, they shall perish in this very fire let loose among them by the wrath of God, and permitted to rage uncontrolled, like fire among briers and thorns, verse 19. The latter state of the Israelitish government abundantly

A. M. 3264. B. C. 740. 20 And he shall <sup>14</sup> snatch on the right hand, and be hungry; and he shall eat on the left hand, <sup>d</sup> and they shall not be satisfied: <sup>e</sup> they shall eat every man the flesh of his own arm:

<sup>14</sup> Heb. cut.—<sup>d</sup> Lev. xxvi. 26.—<sup>e</sup> Chap. xlix. 26; Jer. xix. 9.

proves the exactness of this prophet's prediction, 2 Kings xv. 10, 30, and xvii. 1, 18-24.

Verses 20, 21. *He shall snatch on the right hand*—They shall plunder and devour one another, without ever being satisfied, or ceasing. *They shall eat every man the flesh, &c.*—They shall destroy one another by their intestine wars: see chap. xlix. 26. But it was literally fulfilled when they were reduced to that extremity that they ate the flesh of their own children, 2 Kings vi. 28; Jer. xix. 8, 9; a judgment denounced for their sins by Moses, Deut. xxviii. 53, where see the note. *They together shall fall on Judah*—When those tribes have preyed upon and

21 Manasseh, Ephraim; and A. M. 3264. B. C. 740. Ephraim, Manasseh: and they together shall be against Judah. <sup>f</sup> For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.

<sup>f</sup> Verses 12, 17; Chap. v. 25; x. 4.

nearly destroyed one another, they shall turn their rage on Judah. The prophet in the above verses describes the infatuation of the Israelites and Jews, who, instead of uniting in a confederacy against their common enemies, the Syrians and Assyrians, with whom they were not singly able to contend, fell out among themselves, and so far destroyed each other, that they became, one after the other, an easy prey to those heathen nations, whom, humanly speaking, they would have been able to have repelled, had they united in a league, and aided each other. But God suffered them to be infatuated, as a punishment of their sins.

CHAPTER X.

The wo of the unjust oppressors of God's people, 1-4. The commission given to the king of Assyria to invade Judah, 5, 6. His pride and insolence in the execution of that commission, 7-11. A rebuke given to his haughtiness, and a threatening of his fall and ruin, 12-19. A remnant shall be saved, and a purer state of the church shall take place, after it has passed through these afflictions, 20-23. Great encouragement given to the people of God not to fear this storm, but to hope it would end in the Assyrians' destruction and their deliverance, 24-27. Sennacherib marching toward Jerusalem, 28-31. The downfall of this haughty and formidable enemy, 32-34.

A. M. 3264. B. C. 740. WO unto them that <sup>a</sup> decree unrighteous decrees, and <sup>1</sup> that write grievousness which they have prescribed;

2 To turn aside the needy from judgment, and to take away the right from the poor of my

<sup>a</sup> Psa. lviii. 2; xciv. 20.—<sup>1</sup> Or, to the writers that write grievousness.—<sup>b</sup> Job xxxi. 14.—<sup>c</sup> Hos. ix. 7; Luke xix. 14.

people, that widows may be their prey, A. M. 3264. B. C. 740. and that they may rob the fatherless!

3 And <sup>b</sup> what will ye do in <sup>c</sup> the day of visitation, and in the desolation which shall come from far? to whom will ye flee for help? and where will ye leave your glory?

<sup>a</sup> Psa. lviii. 2; xciv. 20.—<sup>1</sup> Or, to the writers that write grievousness.—<sup>b</sup> Job xxxi. 14.—<sup>c</sup> Hos. ix. 7; Luke xix. 14.

NOTES ON CHAPTER X.

Verses 1, 2. *Wo, &c.*—The first four verses of this chapter are closely connected with the foregoing, and ought to have been joined thereto, being a continuation of the subject treated of in it. We have here the fourth evil charged on the people, and the punishment of it. The sin complained of is the injustice of the magistrates and judges, who decreed unrighteous decrees—That is, made unjust laws, and gave forth unjust sentences, which is termed in the next clause, *writing grievousness*, or grievous things, edicts which caused grief and vexation to their subjects. *To turn aside the needy from judgment*—From obtaining a just sentence, because these rulers and judges either denied or delayed to hear their causes, or when they heard them decided unjustly; *to take away the right from the poor*—Whom I have, in a special manner, committed to

your care; of my people—Whom I had taken into covenant with myself; and therefore this is an injury, not only to them, but also to me. The punishment assigned to this iniquity is, that they should be absolutely deserted and deprived of all help and protection from God, whose laws they had so shamefully perverted; and should perish miserably before their enemies, who should come from far.

Verses 3, 4. *What will ye do*—To save yourselves? *in the day of visitation?*—When I shall come to visit you in wrath, as the next words limit the expression. *The desolation which shall come from far*—From the Assyrians. This he adds, because the Israelites, having weakened the Jews, and being in amity with the Syrians, their next neighbours, were secure. *To whom will ye flee for help*—To the Syrians, as now you do? But they shall be destroyed together with you, 2 Kings xvi. 9; and where

A. M. 3264. 4 Without me they shall bow down  
B. C. 740. under the prisoners, and they shall fall  
under the slain. <sup>d</sup> For all this his anger is not  
turned away, but his hand *is* stretched out  
still.

B. C. 733. 5 ¶ <sup>2</sup>O <sup>3</sup>Assyrian, <sup>•</sup> the rod of  
mine anger, <sup>4</sup> and the staff in their  
hand is mine indignation.

6 I will send him against <sup>f</sup> a hypocritical na-

<sup>a</sup> Chapter v. 25; ix. 12, 17, 21.—<sup>b</sup> Or, *Wo to the Assyrian.*  
<sup>c</sup> Heb. *Asshur.*—<sup>d</sup> Jer. li. 20.—<sup>e</sup> Or, *though.*—<sup>f</sup> Chap. xix.

*will you leave your glory*—To be kept safe for your use, and to be restored to you when you call for it? By their *glory*, he means, either, 1st, their power and authority, which now they so wickedly abused; or, 2d, their wealth, gotten by injustice, as *glory* sometimes means: see Gen. xxxi. 1; Psa. xlix. 16, 17. *Without me*—Without my favour and help, which you have forfeited, and do not seek to recover; *they shall bow down*—Notwithstanding all their succours; *under the prisoners*—Or among the prisoners; *and they shall fall under the slain*—Or among the slain. The meaning is, that it was in vain for the Israelites to trust in their own strength, or in the assistance of the Syrians, or any other allies, since it was from God alone they could obtain deliverance, without whose aid, or when he deserted them, they should all bow down under the yoke of the Assyrians. In the Septuagint, and vulgar Latin, these words are joined to the foregoing verse, to this sense: “Whither will this people flee for refuge to preserve themselves, that they may not bow down, or be subdued among the captives, or destroyed among the slain?”

Verse 5. *O Assyrian, &c.*—We have here the fourth section of the fifth sermon, which reaches to the end of this chapter, and which is two-fold; containing, 1st, A proposition in this verse; and, 2d, The unfolding of it in the following verses. It is a new and distinct prophecy, and, as the former part of it foretels the invasion of Sennacherib and the destruction of his army, it must have been delivered before the fourteenth year of Hezekiah's reign. “In the former chapters the prophet had foretold the fate of the Ephraimites and Syrians, who had determined to attack, and, if possible, subvert the Jewish Church and state. He therefore now turns his discourse to the Assyrians, the executors of this judgment, who also in their time should make the same attempt against Judea, and denounces their punishment, teaching, at the same time, in what light they were held by God, and consequently were to be considered by the careful observers of the ways of God. The proposition in this verse is elegant, but very difficult to be turned into another language, according to its original force. Its immediate meaning is, ‘Wo to the Assyrian, who is the rod of mine anger, and the staff, which is in his hands, is my severity;’ that is, ‘whatever strength or power they have, which they have used in afflicting my people, would have been

tion, and against the people of my A. M. 3266.  
wrath will I <sup>g</sup> give him a charge, to B. C. 738.  
take the spoil, and to take the prey, and <sup>h</sup> to tread  
them down like the mire of the streets.

7 <sup>b</sup> Howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth  
his heart think so; but *it is* in his heart to  
destroy and cut off nations not a few.

8 <sup>i</sup> For he saith, *Are not my princes altogether  
kings?*

17.—<sup>g</sup> Jer. xxxiv. 22.—<sup>h</sup> Heb. *to lay them a treading.*—<sup>i</sup> Gen.  
l. 20; Mic. iv. 12.—<sup>j</sup> 2 Kings xviii. 24, 33, &c.; xix. 10, &c.

none at all, if my people had not provoked my wrath and severity; so that, not the Assyrians themselves, but my wrath and severity, and the decrees of my justice, ought to be esteemed the rod and staff beating my people; since, without that severity, the Assyrians themselves could have done nothing.’ Vitringa remarks, that all the characters of this prophecy belong to Sennacherib; though possibly it may have a more extensive scope, and refer to the destruction of all the enemies of God, and the following great empires, which God made use of as rods and scourges, to chastise and amend his people, till the manifestation of the kingdom of his Son in the world: see Jer. li. 20.—Dodd. Be this as it will, the prophet here instructs us in a great and important truth: “That God often prospers wicked and tyrannical governments to be his scourge and the instruments of his vengeance upon others; and when they have done the work which God allots them, he then punishes them for those very oppressions which they have exercised toward their neighbours, and to which they were carried on purely by their own ambition and covetousness, although Providence made them serviceable to better ends and purposes.”—Lowth.

Verses 6, 7. *I will send him*—By my providence, giving him both opportunity and inclination to undertake this expedition; *against a hypocritical nation*—Or, *a profane nation*, as the word *רשע* rather signifies; *and against the people of my wrath*—The objects of my just wrath, devoted to destruction. *To tread them down like the mire of the streets*—Easily to conquer them, and utterly to destroy them, as he did after this time. *Howbeit, he meaneth not so*—He does not design the execution of my will, but only to extend his conquests, and thereby to enlarge his empire, and gratify his ambition. Which is seasonably added, to justify God in his judgments threatened to the Assyrian, notwithstanding this service. *But to destroy nations not a few*—To sacrifice multitudes of people to his own pride and covetousness, which was abominable impiety.

Verses 8–10. *For he saith, Are not my princes, &c.*—Are they not equal for power, and wealth, and glory, to the kings of other nations, though they be my subjects and servants? *Is not Calno as Carchemish?*—Have I not conquered one place as well as another, the stronger as well as the weaker? Have I not from time to time added new conquests to the

A. M. 3266. 9 *Is* not <sup>k</sup> Calno <sup>l</sup> as Carchemish?   
 B. C. 738. *is* not Hamath as Arpad? *is* not Samaria <sup>m</sup> as Damascus?

10 As my hand hath found the kingdoms of the idols, and whose graven images did excel them of Jerusalem and of Samaria;

11 Shall I not, as I have done unto Samaria and her idols, so do to Jerusalem and her idols?

12 Wherefore it shall come to pass, *that* when the LORD hath performed his whole work <sup>n</sup> upon mount Zion and on Jerusalem, <sup>o</sup> I will <sup>6</sup> punish the fruit <sup>7</sup> of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks.

13 <sup>p</sup> For he saith, By the strength of my hand

<sup>k</sup> Amos vi. 2.—<sup>l</sup> 2 Chronicles xxxv. 20.—<sup>m</sup> 2 Kings xvi. 9. <sup>n</sup> 2 Kings xix. 31.—<sup>o</sup> Jer. l. 18.—<sup>6</sup> Heb. *visit upon*.—<sup>7</sup> Heb. *of the greatness of the heart*.

old? None of those cities, against which he had turned his arms, had been able to resist him; but he had subjugated them all. Calno, Carchemish, Hamath, and Arpad, were cities of Syria and Israel, which this mighty monarch had subdued. *Is not Samaria*—Or, *Shall not Samaria be, as Damascus?*—Shall I not take that as I have done this city? For although Damascus, possibly, was not yet taken by the Assyrians, yet the prophet speaks of it as actually taken, because these words are prophetically delivered, and supposed to be uttered by the king of Assyria, at or about the time of the siege of Samaria, when Damascus was taken. *As my hand hath found*—Hath taken, as this word is often used, *the kingdoms of the idols*—Which worshipped their own idols, and vainly imagined that they could protect them from my power. He calls the gods of the nations, not excepting *Jerusalem, idols*, by way of contempt, because none of them could deliver their people out of his hands, and because he judged them to be but petty gods, far inferior to the sun, which was the god of the Assyrians. *Whose graven images did excel them of Jerusalem*—Namely, in reputation and power. Which blasphemy of his proceeded from his deep ignorance of the true God.

Verse 12. *Wherefore*—Because of this impudent blasphemy; *when the Lord hath performed his whole work*—Of chastising his people as long as he sees fit. *I will punish the fruit of the stout heart, &c.*—Here it is foretold, says Bishop Newton, that when the Assyrians “shall have served the purposes of Divine Providence, they shall be severely punished for their pride and ambition, their tyranny and cruelty to their neighbours. Now there was no prospect of such an event” when Isaiah uttered this prediction, namely, “while the Assyrians were in the midst of their successes and triumphs; but still the word of the prophet prevailed; and it was not long after these calamities brought upon the Jews, that the Assyrian empire, properly so called, was overthrown, and Nineveh destroyed.”

Verses 13, 14. *For he saith, &c.*—“From hence

I have done *it*, and by my wisdom; for A. M. 3266. I am prudent: and I have removed <sup>B. C. 738.</sup> the bounds of the people, and have robbed their treasures, and I have put down the inhabitants <sup>8</sup> like a valiant *man*:

14 And <sup>9</sup> my hand hath found as a nest the riches of the people: and as one gathereth eggs *that are* left, have I gathered all the earth; and there was none that moved the wing, or opened the mouth, or peeped.

15 Shall <sup>r</sup> the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith? *or* shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it? <sup>9</sup> as if the rod should shake *itself* against them that lift it

<sup>p</sup> Isa. xxxvii. 24; Ezek. xxviii. 4, &c.; Dan. iv. 30.—<sup>8</sup> Or, *like many people*.—<sup>9</sup> Job xxxi. 25.—<sup>r</sup> Jer. li. 20.—<sup>9</sup> Or, *as if a rod should shake them that lift it up*.

to the twentieth verse we have a more full exposition and confirmation of what had gone before, particularly the pride of the Assyrian and his vain boasting in these verses; a refutation thereof in verse 15; and the punishment ordained for him by God, in verses 16–19. *By the strength of my hand I have done it, &c.*—Here the prophet sets forth his insolent boasting of the greatness of his deeds, the prosperity of his empire, and the success of his warlike expeditions, all which are ascribed by him to the prudence of his own counsels, and the valour and strength of his forces; but without any the least acknowledgment of any superior and overruling power.” *I have removed the bounds of the people*—I have invaded their lands, and added them to my own dominions, Prov. xxii. 28. *And have robbed their treasures*—Hebrew, עֲתִירָהֶם, *their prepared things, their gold and silver, and other precious things, which they had been long preparing and laying up in store. And I have put down the inhabitants*—Deprived them of their former glory and power. *And my hand hath found as a nest*—As one finds young birds in a nest; and *as one gathereth eggs*—Which the dam hath left in her nest; *have I gathered all the earth*—All the riches of the earth: an hyperbole not unusual in the mouths of such boasters. “The comparison is elegant; and nothing could more strongly or significantly describe the insolent boasting of the Assyrian. It is remarkable, that birds, after they have laid their eggs in their nests, are most diligent in their care of them; and if, at any time, they are obliged, for fear of the spoiler, to forsake them, they hover about their nests, and flutter around, moving their wings, and *peeping, chirping, or lamenting*; thus imitating the affections of the human mind. The prophet elegantly implies by this simile the extreme dread of this proud and oppressing king which reigned in the minds of the conquered people, and we find that the mighty tyrants and conquerors of Asia did spread such terror.” See Lowth’s *Twelfth Prelection*, and Dodd.

Verse 15. *Shall the axe boast itself, &c.*—How

A. M. 3266. up, or as if the staff should lift up <sup>10</sup> it-  
B. C. 738. self, as if it were no wood.

16 Therefore shall the Lord, the Lord of hosts, send among his <sup>a</sup> fat ones leanness; and under his glory he shall kindle a burning like the burning of a fire.

17 And the light of Israel shall be for a fire, and his Holy One for a flame: <sup>t</sup> and <sup>d</sup> it shall burn and devour his thorns and his briers in one day;

18 And shall consume the glory of his forest,

<sup>10</sup> Or, that which is not wood.—<sup>a</sup> Chap. v. 17.—<sup>t</sup> Chap. ix. 18; xxvii. 4.—<sup>d</sup> 2 Kings xix. 23.

absurd is it for thee, who art but an instrument in God's hand, to blaspheme thy Lord and Master, who has as great power over thee as a man hath over the axe wherewith he heweth? *As if the rod, &c.*—See the margin; *or, as if the staff, &c.*—Should forget that it was wood, and should pretend, or attempt, to lift up itself—Either without, or against the man that moveth it. *As if it were no wood*—Literally translated, it is, *As if the staff should lift up no wood*; that is, should lift up man, who is very different from wood: as if the staff should lift the man instead of the man lifting the staff. In this way does the prophet refute the vain boasts of the Assyrian, and teach him, that, "in all his counsels, motions, and works, he was but the minister of the Divine Providence; incapable of doing any thing without the divine will and permission; and therefore his boasting was to be considered in no other light than as if the axe, or saw, or rod, should magnify themselves against him who handled them, and should ascribe to themselves that effect which was only caused by the mover."

Verses 16–19. *Therefore shall the Lord, the Lord of hosts*—The sovereign Lord and General of his and of all other armies; *send among his fat ones leanness*—Strip him, and all his great princes and commanders, of all their wealth, and might, and glory. *And under his glory he shall kindle, &c.*—He will destroy his numerous and victorious army, and that suddenly and irrecoverably, as the fire doth those combustible things which are cast into it; which was fulfilled 2 Kings xix. 25. *And the light of Israel*—That God, who is, and will be, a comfortable light to his people; *shall be a fire*—To the Assyrians; *and it shall devour his thorns and briers*—His vast army, which is no more able to resist God than dry thorns and briers are to oppose the fire which is kindled among them. *And shall consume the glory of his forest*—"The briers and thorns," says Bishop Lowth, "are the common people; and the glory of his forest are the nobles, and those of the highest rank and importance. The fire of God's wrath shall destroy them, great and small." *And of his fruitful field*—Of his soldiers, who stand as thick as ears of corn do in a fruitful field. Hebrew, *Of his Carmel*; an allusion possibly to the vain threat, which God foreknew the Assyrian would

and of <sup>a</sup> his fruitful field, <sup>11</sup> both soul A. M. 3266.  
and body: and they shall be as when B. C. 738.  
a standard-bearer fainteth.

19 And the rest of the trees of his forest shall be <sup>12</sup> few, that a child may write them.

20 ¶ And it shall come to pass in that day, that the remnant of Israel, and such as are escaped of the house of Jacob, <sup>s</sup> shall no more again stay upon him that smote them; but shall stay upon the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, in truth.

<sup>11</sup> Heb. from the soul, and even to the flesh.—<sup>12</sup> Heb. number.  
<sup>s</sup> See 2 Kings xvi. 7; 2 Chron. xxviii. 20.

hereafter utter, with regard to Israel, *I will enter into the height of his border, and the forest of his Carmel*, chap. xxxvii. 24. *Both soul and body*—Hebrew, כּוֹנֵן נֶפֶשׁ וְגוֹי, from the soul, even to the flesh, a proverbial expression. The fire of God's wrath shall consume them entirely and altogether. *And they shall be*—The state of the king, and of his vast and valiant army, shall be *as when a standard-bearer fainteth*—Like that of an army, when either the standard-bearer is slain, or rather flees away, which strikes a terror into the whole army, and puts them to flight. Bishop Lowth, in this clause, follows the reading of the LXX., *ὡς ὁ φευγων ἀπο φλογος καιομενης*, It shall be, as when one fleeth out of raging flames: that is, "The few that escape shall be looked upon as having escaped from the most imminent danger." *The rest of the trees of his forest*—The remainders of that mighty host; *a child may write them*—A child, or the meanest accountant, may number and register them. It is justly observed by Dr. Dodd, that "the emphasis of this passage consists in the elegance of the metaphors." The first, taken from *leanness*, destroying the fat, and marring the beauty of the human form, well describes that terrible plague which destroyed the flower of the Assyrian host. The second, taken from fire, which, with unconquerable fury, in a short time reduces combustible matter to ashes, gives us a striking picture of the quick and almost instantaneous ruin brought on that army, by the irresistible power of the destroying angel, especially as that fire is represented as kindled by the *light of Israel*. And the third metaphor of the *thorns and briers*, which are so far from having any power to withstand the fury of the flames, that they provoke and feed it, affords us a lively emblem of the utter inability of the Assyrian monarch, or his mighty host, to make the least resistance against that divine vengeance which their crimes had merited.

Verse 20. *And it shall come to pass, &c.*—The prophet having, 1st, Explained the cause for which God had decreed to permit the Assyrians to have such power over his people, namely, for the punishment of hypocrites, and the purification of his church; and having also shown the crimes which the kings of Assyria would commit in executing his judgments, and the punishment ordained for them,

A. M. 3266. 21 <sup>r</sup> The remnant shall return, *even*  
B. C. 739. the remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty  
God.

22 <sup>r</sup> For though thy people Israel be as the  
sand of the sea, <sup>a</sup> yet a remnant <sup>13</sup> of them shall  
return: <sup>b</sup> the consumption decreed shall over-  
flow <sup>14</sup> with righteousness.

<sup>r</sup> Chap. vii. 3.—<sup>r</sup> Rom. ix. 27.—<sup>r</sup> Chap. vi. 13.—<sup>13</sup> Heb.  
in. or, among.—<sup>b</sup> Chap. xxviii. 22.—<sup>14</sup> Or, in.—<sup>c</sup> Chapter

verses 6-12; and having, 2d, Confirmed these things, and given a new exhibition of the pride of the Assyrian, with a yet fuller declaration of the divine judgment upon him, verses 13-19; proceeds now, 3d, To predict, that a two-fold consequence, friendly to the state of the church, should arise from this memorable judgment; opposed to the two-fold vice of the people, before the execution of it. 1st, There were among them men fearing God, but who yet regarded the power of the Assyrian with greater fear than they ought. These, by this great deliverance granted to the church, would be henceforth confirmed, as to their faith and confidence in the power and goodness of God. 2d, There were, besides these, many others totally alienated from God, who, by means of this great miracle, would be brought to repentance, and a serious acknowledgment of the God of Israel. Nay, not only the pious of those, but of future times, would, by this means, be confirmed in their faith, and adherence to the true God. Thus the prophet: *Such as are escaped of the house of Jacob*—Such Jews as shall be preserved from that sweeping Assyrian scourge, by which great numbers, both of Israel and Judah, shall be destroyed, and from the succeeding calamities. For that this place looks beyond the deliverance from the Assyrian army, unto the times of the New Testament, seems probable, 1st, From the following verses, which belong to that time, as we shall see: 2d, From the state of the Jewish nation, which, after that deliverance, continued to be very corrupt, and averse from that reformation, which Hezekiah and Josiah prosecuted with all their might; and therefore the body of that people had not yet learned this lesson, of sincerely trusting in God alone. 3d, From St. Paul's explication and application of these words, Rom. ix. 27. *Shall no more stay upon him that smote them*—Shall learn by this judgment, not to trust to the Assyrians, or any other allies, for help, as Ahaz and his people now did; but shall stay upon the Lord in truth—Not by profession only, but sincerely.

Verses 21-23. *The remnant shall return*—Hebrew, שְׂאֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל, *shear-jashub*, the name given to one of the prophet's sons, (see chap. vii. 3.) in confirmation of the truth of God's promises. It may be rendered, as here, *the remnant*, or, *a remnant*, or, but *a remnant*, shall return; unto the mighty God—Hebrew, אֱלֹהֵינוּ, the very appellation given to Christ, chap. ix. 6. *For though thy people Israel*—Or, thy people, O Israel; to whom the prophet, by an apostrophe, directs his speech; *be as the sand, &c., yet a*

23 <sup>c</sup> For the Lord GOD of hosts shall  
make a consumption, even determin-  
ed, in the midst of all the land.

24 ¶ Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD of  
hosts, O my people that dwellest in Zion, <sup>d</sup> be  
not afraid of the Assyrian: he shall smite  
thee with a rod, <sup>15</sup> and shall lift up his staff

xxviii. 22; Daniel ix. 27; Rom. ix. 28.—<sup>d</sup> Chapter xxxvii. 6.  
<sup>15</sup> Or, but he shall lift up his staff for thee.

*remnant*—Or, *a remnant* only, as before; *shall return*—For that this is a threatening in respect of some, as well as a promise in respect of others, is evident from the rest of this, and from the following verse. *The consumption decreed shall overflow*—God's judgments are said to *overflow* when they spread generally, the metaphor being taken from an inundation that sweeps all before it. The destruction of the people of Israel was already decreed by the fixed counsel of God, and therefore must needs be executed, and like a deluge overflow them, *with*, or *in righteousness*, as the word is rendered Rom. ix. 28, that is, with *justice*, and yet with *clemency*, inasmuch as he spared a considerable remnant of them, when he might have destroyed them utterly. *In the midst of the land*—In all the parts of the land, not excepting Jerusalem, which was to be preserved in the Assyrian invasion. Bishop Lowth translates these verses, "Though thy people, O Israel, shall be as the sand of the sea, a remnant of them only shall return. The consummation decided overfloweth with strict justice: For a full and decisive decree shall Jehovah, the Lord of hosts, accomplish in the midst of the land." The prophet's affirming, that only a remnant of Judah and Ephraim should be preserved, and return in true repentance to God, might justly cause wonder and offence, both to Jews and Israelites, at the time when he spoke these things: for it implied that far the greater part of the people should perish, which they must have conceived highly improbable, especially as they were at that time very numerous and flourishing. The prophet, therefore, declares repeatedly, and more explicitly, that God had determined, by an absolute and precise decree, thus to exercise his justice and severity upon them. This, it is evident, is the sense of the present passage, though there is some difficulty in the expressions. This prophecy was, in part, fulfilled at the Babylonish captivity, but there can be no doubt that it has also a reference to the times of the Messiah: see note on Rom. ix. 27. Indeed, as Lowth observes, the remnant, so miraculously preserved in Jerusalem from Sennacherib's invasion, were a type or figure of that small number of converts under the gospel, styled σωζομενοι, (Acts ii. 47,) *such as should be saved*, namely, such as should escape the vengeance which fell upon the main body of the Jewish nation, for their sin in rejecting Christ. And there shall be another remnant of them that shall be saved in the latter days of the Christian Church.

Verse 24. *Therefore, &c.*—We have here the fourth part of the enarration, or unfolding of the

A. M. 3266. against thee, after the manner of  
B. C. 738. ° Egypt.

25 For yet a very little while, and the indignation shall cease, and mine anger in their destruction.

26 And the LORD of hosts shall stir up <sup>h</sup> a

° Exod. xiv. — Chap. liv. 7. — Dan. xi. 36. — 2 Kings xix. 35.

proposition, mentioned verse 5, namely, the application of it to the consolation of the people of God: to which, having digressed a little, the prophet returns, it being the true and proper scope of his discourse, to comfort the pious with respect to the evils that threatened their republic. The words are an inference, not from the verses immediately foregoing, but from the whole prophecy: as if he had said, Seeing the Assyrian shall be destroyed, and the remnant of my people preserved and restored, thus saith the Lord God of hosts—The Lord of all the armies of earth and heaven, the God superior to all human, yea, to all created power; *O my people that dwellest in Zion—Where I dwell; where are the ordinances of my worship and service, my temple, my priests; the thrones of justice which I have established, and the princes of the house of David mine anointed; where my people assemble to worship me, and where I am present to defend them: Be not afraid of the Assyrian—A man that shall die, the son of man that shall be as grass; forgetting the Lord thy maker, that stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth. With his staff indeed shall he smite thee, (as Bishop Lowth translates it,) and his rod shall he lift up against thee. He shall threaten and correct, yea, afflict thee, but not destroy thee; after the manner of Egypt—As the Egyptians formerly did, and with the same ill success to themselves, and comfortable issue to you.*

Verses 25, 26. *For yet a very little while, &c.*—Here the prophet proceeds to assign the reasons why the Lord would not have his people to fear the Assyrians, because, in a short time, he would take vengeance upon them, and that in a very singular and extraordinary manner, as he did upon the Midianites and Egyptians: the consequence of which would be the removal of the yoke now imposed, or to be imposed upon them. *The indignation*—My displeasure at my people, which is the rod and staff in their hand, verse 5; *shall cease*—And, when it ceaseth, they will be disarmed, and disabled from doing any farther mischief. *And mine anger in their destruction*—Hebrew, על תהליהם, upon, or, with their destruction, as Dr. Waterland properly renders the words, namely, the destruction of the Assyrians. The enemy that threatens and afflicts God's people, shall himself be reckoned with and punished. The rod wherewith God corrected them shall not only be laid aside, but put into the fire, and it shall appear by its destruction that his anger is turned away from them. The reader will recollect that, upon the destruction of the Assyrian army, the calamities wherewith God had chastised his people in a great measure ceased, at

scourge for him according to the A. M. 3266. slaughter of <sup>i</sup> Midian at the rock of <sup>B. C. 738.</sup> Oreb: and <sup>k</sup> as his rod was upon the sea, so shall he lift it up after the manner of Egypt.

27 And it shall come to pass in that day, that <sup>l</sup> his burden <sup>16</sup> shall be taken away from

<sup>i</sup> Judges vii. 25; Chap. ix. 4. — <sup>k</sup> Exod. xiv. 26, 27. — <sup>l</sup> Chap. xiv. 25. — <sup>16</sup> Heb. shall remove.

least for a time. *The Lord of hosts*—Who is well able; *shall stir up a scourge for him*—He lifted up his staff against Zion; and God will now lift up a scourge for him: he was a terror to God's people, and God will be a terror to him. The destroying angel shall be his scourge, which he can neither flee from nor contend with. *According to the slaughter of Midian*—Whom God slew suddenly and unexpectedly in the night. *At the rock of Oreb*—Upon which one of their chief princes was slain, and nigh unto which the Midianites were destroyed. *And as his rod was upon the sea*—To divide it, and make way for thy deliverance, and for the destruction of the Egyptians. *So shall he lift it up after the manner of Egypt*—As he did in Egypt, to bring his plagues upon that land and people. Thus the prophet, for the encouragement of God's people, quotes precedents, and puts them in mind of what God had done formerly against the enemies of his church, who were very strong and formidable, but were brought to ruin. Respecting the last clause of this verse, "I think," says Bishop Lowth, "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, as he did at that time over the sea, in the way, or, after the manner of Egypt: and as Sennacherib had 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."

Verse 27. *In that day his burden shall be taken away, &c.*—The burden imposed on the Jews by the Assyrian. They shall not only be eased of the Assyrian army, now quartered upon them, and which was a grievous yoke and burden on them; but they shall no more pay that tribute to the king of Assyria which, before this invasion, he had exacted from them, 2 Kings xviii. 14; shall no longer be at his service, nor lie at his mercy, as they had done; nor shall he ever again put the country under contribution. Perhaps, as some think, the promise may look to the deliverance of the Jews from the captivity of Babylon, if not also to the redemption of believers from the tyranny of sin and Satan. *Because of the anointing*—Hebrew, מפני שמן, literally, *Because of, from before, or, from the presence of, the oil, oint-*

A. M. 3266. off thy shoulder, and his yoke from  
B. C. 738. off thy neck, and the yoke shall be  
destroyed because of <sup>the</sup> anointing.

28 ¶ He is come to Aiath, he is passed to  
Migron; at Michmash he hath laid up his car-  
riages:

29 They are gone over the <sup>the</sup> passage: they  
have taken up their lodging at Geba; Ramah  
is afraid; <sup>the</sup> Gibeah of Saul is fled.

<sup>1</sup> Psa. cv. 15; Daniel ix. 24; 1 John ii. 20.—<sup>2</sup> 1 Samuel  
xiii. 23.—<sup>3</sup> 1 Samuel xi. 4.—<sup>4</sup> Hebrew, *Cry shrill with thy  
voice.*

ment, or fatness. Leigh says, "*Est nomen generale ad omnem pinguedinem sive naturalem, sive conditam: It is a general name for every kind of fatness, whether natural or artificial.*" Hence some translate the sentence, "The yoke shall be loosed because of the fatness;" supposing the meaning to be, that the affairs of the Jews would be in so good a condition, signified by *fatness*, after this destruction of the Assyrian army, that the Assyrians would not pretend any longer to lay any burden of tribute, or any impositions upon them, as they had done, ever since Ahaz put himself under their protection, and, as it were, made a surrender of himself and people to them, to become tributary to them. But the common interpretation given of the text seems preferable, namely, *The yoke shall be destroyed, because of the (oil, unction, or) anointing*—That is, out of regard to the holy unction, which God had established among his people. Or, for the preservation of the *priesthood* and *kingdom*, priests and kings being both initiated into their offices by the ceremony of anointing. The Jews, therefore, and some others, apply this to Hezekiah, who was the *anointed* of the Lord, an active reformer, and very dear to God, and in answer to whose prayers, as we read, (chap. xxxvii. 15.) God gave this deliverance. But possibly it might be better understood of David, who is often mentioned in Scripture by the name of God's *anointed*; and for whose sake God gave many deliverances to the succeeding kings and ages, as is expressly affirmed 1 Kings xi. 32, 34. And, which is more considerable, God declares that he would give this very deliverance from the *Assyrian* for *David's sake*, 2 Kings xix. 34; xx. 6. But the Messiah is principally intended, of whom David was but a type; and who was in a particular manner *anointed* above *his fellows*, as is said Psa. xlv. 7. For he is the foundation of all the promises, (2 Cor. i. 20.) and of all the deliverances and mercies granted to God's people in all ages. Vitringa is of opinion, that "the prophet, in this last passage, rises in his ideas; and, having expressed the temporal deliverance of the church in the preceding clauses, here seals up the period with a consolatory clause, admonishing the pious of their deliverance from a spiritual yoke, that is, from all the power of sin and Satan, and their vindication into the full and perfect liberty of the sons of God, through Jesus Christ, the

30 <sup>17</sup> Lift up thy voice, O daughter A. M. 3266.  
<sup>18</sup> of Gallim: cause it to be heard unto B. C. 738.

<sup>19</sup> Laish, <sup>20</sup> O poor Anathoth.

31 <sup>21</sup> Madmenah is removed; the inhabitants  
of Gebim gather themselves to flee.

32 As yet shall he remain <sup>22</sup> at Nob that day:  
he shall <sup>23</sup> shake his hand *against* the mount  
of <sup>24</sup> the daughter of Zion, the hill of Jerusalem.

33 Behold, the Lord, the LORD of hosts, shall

<sup>1</sup> 1 Samuel xxv. 44.—<sup>2</sup> Judges xviii. 7.—<sup>3</sup> Joshua xxi. 18.  
<sup>4</sup> Josh. xv. 31.—<sup>5</sup> 1 Samuel xxi. 1; xxii. 19; Nehemiah xi. 32.  
<sup>6</sup> Chap. xiii. 2.—<sup>7</sup> Chap. xxxvii. 22.

king of his church, who, for this purpose, would communicate an abundance of the anointing spirit of wisdom, knowledge, prayer, liberty, and adoption: see Zech. iv. 6." The reader may see an explication and defence of this interpretation in Vitringa on the place.

Verses 28–32. *He is come to Aiath*—Here the prophet returns to his former discourse concerning Sennacherib's invasion of Judah, of whose march toward Jerusalem, the route of his army, and their several stations, he gives so minute a detail, that though the description is a prophecy, he seems rather to speak like an historian, who is relating facts already past. This is the fifth part of the prophet's discourse, in which we have, 1st, the expedition of the Assyrian monarch, described in the most lively manner in these verses; and, 2d, the unhappy success of that expedition, with its consequences, verses 33, 34. The several places here mentioned, are those where Sennacherib may be supposed to have pitched his camp; and were most of them towns of Benjamin, though some were in Judah, as appears from other scriptures. *He is passed to Migron*—Namely, Sennacherib, in his way to Jerusalem. *At Michmash he hath laid up his carriages*—Leaving such things there as were less necessary, that so he might march with more expedition. *They are gone over the passage*—Some considerable passage, then well known. *Gibeah of Saul is fled*—The people fled to Jerusalem for fear of the Assyrians. *Lift up thy voice, O daughter of Gallim*—Jerusalem was the mother city, and lesser towns were commonly called her daughters. *O poor Anathoth*—Hebrew, ענייה ענתות, *Aniah Anathoth*, where the former word, rendered *poor*, relates to the signification of *Anathoth*; "a beauty frequently to be met with in the original of the sacred Scriptures, but which can seldom be preserved in any translation." *He shall shake his hand against the mount of Zion*—By way of commination. But, withal, the prophet intimates, that he should be able to do no more against it; and that there his proud waves should be stayed, as is declared in the following verses, and in the history.

Verses 33, 34. *The Lord of hosts shall lop the bough*—The top bough, Sennacherib; *with terror*—Hebrew, כעצרה בעצרה *bemagnaratza, with a dreadful crash*, as Bishop Lowth renders it, expressed

A. M. 3266. lop the bough with terror: and <sup>γ</sup> the  
B. C. 738. high ones of stature *shall be hewn down*, and the haughty shall be humbled.

<sup>γ</sup> Amos ii. 9.

by the very sound of the Hebrew word; by a most terrible and unexpected blow; and the high ones, &c.—The lofty boughs, Hebrew, *ורמי הקומה* *excelsi statura*, the high of stature: that is, his valiant soldiers, or the great commanders of his army, compared to the tall trees of a forest; *shall be hewn down*—By a sudden and irresistible stroke; and the haughty—The proud, self-confident boasters, *elati animo*, the high-minded, as *חנכיה* signifies; *shall be humbled*—Shall be laid motionless in

34 And he shall cut down the thick- A. M. 3266.  
ets of the forests with iron, and Leba- B. C. 738.  
non shall fall <sup>18</sup> by a mighty one.

<sup>18</sup> Or, mightily.

the dust, namely, by the invisible power of the destroying angel. *And he shall cut down the thickets, &c., with iron*—Or, *as with iron*, as the trees of the forest are cut down with instruments of iron; and *Lebanon*—Or, *his Lebanon*, the Assyrian army, which being before compared to a forest, and being called his *Carmel* in the Hebrew text, (verse 18,) may very fitly, upon the same ground, be called his *Lebanon* here. *Shall fall by a mighty one*—By a mighty angel, chap. xxxvii. 36.

## CHAPTER XI.

In this chapter we have a prophecy concerning Messiah, the prince, and his kingdom. His rise out of the house of David, and his qualifications for his important office, 1–3. The justice and equity of his government, 3–5. The peaceableness of his kingdom, 6–9. The accession of the Gentiles to it, 10; and with them the remnant of the Jews that should be united with them in the Messiah's kingdom, 11–16.

A. M. 3266. AND <sup>a</sup> there shall come forth a rod  
B. C. 738. out of the stem of <sup>b</sup> Jesse, and <sup>c</sup> a  
branch shall grow out of his roots:

2 <sup>d</sup> And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon

<sup>a</sup> Chap. liii. 2; Zech. vi. 12; Rev. v. 5.—<sup>b</sup> Acts xiii. 23; Verse 10.

### NOTES ON CHAPTER XI.

Verse 1. *And, &c.*—The fifth section of the fifth discourse begins here, and concludes with the next chapter. It is two-fold: in the first part the kingdom of Christ is described; in what manner, arising from the smallest beginnings, it should go on to increase, till, at length, it attained the highest perfection, verses 1–9. In the second part are set forth some remarkable events of that kingdom, illustrating its glory, with their consequences, verse 10 to chap. xii. 6: see Vitringa. *There shall come forth a rod*—The prophet, having despatched the Assyrian, and comforted God's people with the promise of their deliverance from that formidable enemy, now proceeds further, and declares that God would do greater things than that for them; that he would give them their long-expected and much-desired Messiah, and by him would work wonders of mercy for them. For this is the manner of the prophets, to take occasion, from particular deliverances, to fix the people's minds upon that great and everlasting deliverance from all their enemies by the Messiah. And having said that the Assyrian yoke *should be destroyed, because of the anointing*, he now more particularly explains who that anointed person was. Bishop Lowth mentions another particular, which he thinks plainly shows the connection between this

him, the spirit of wisdom and under- A. M. 3266.  
standing, the spirit of counsel and B. C. 738.  
might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear  
of the LORD;

<sup>c</sup> Chap. iv. 2; Jer. xxiii. 5.—<sup>d</sup> Chap. lxi. 1; Matt. iii. 16; John i. 32, 33; iii. 34.

and the preceding chapter. "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." *Out of the stem*—Or, rather, *stump*, as the word properly signifies: by which he clearly implies that the Messiah should be born of the royal house of David, at that time when it was in a most forlorn condition, like a tree cut down, and whereof nothing is left but a stump, or root under ground. *Of Jesse*—He doth not say of David, but of Jesse, who was a private and mean person, to intimate, that at the time of Christ's birth the royal family should be reduced to its primitive obscurity.

Verse 2. *And the Spirit of the Lord*—The Holy Ghost, by which he was anointed, (Acts x. 38,) and by whose power his human nature was formed in the womb of the virgin. (Luke i. 35.) *shall rest*

A. M. 3266. **3** And shall make him of <sup>1</sup> quick un-  
B. C. 738. derstanding in the fear of the LORD ;  
and he shall not judge after the sight of his  
eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his  
ears :

**4** But <sup>o</sup> with righteousness shall he judge the  
poor, and <sup>2</sup> reprove with equity for the meek of

<sup>1</sup> Heb. *scent*, or, *smell*.—<sup>o</sup> Psa. lxxii. 2, 4 ; Rev. xix. 11.  
<sup>2</sup> Or, *argue*.

upon him—Shall not only come upon him at certain times, as it came upon the prophets, but shall have its constant and settled abode in him ; *the spirit of wisdom and understanding*—It is not needful exactly to distinguish these two gifts ; it is sufficient that they are necessary qualifications for a governor and a teacher, and it is evident they signify perfect knowledge of all things necessary for his own and people's good, and a sound judgment to distinguish between things that differ ; *the spirit of counsel and might*—Of prudence, to give good counsel ; and of might and courage, to execute it ; *the spirit of knowledge*—Of the perfect knowledge of the whole will and counsel of God, as also of all secret things, yea, of the hearts of men ; *fear of the Lord*—A fear of reverence, a care to please him, and aversion to offend him.

Verse 3. *And shall make him of quick understanding*—Hebrew, וְהָרַחֵם, shall make him of quick scent, smell, or perception ; or, of quick discernment, as Bishop Lowth renders it ; *in the fear of the Lord*—In things which concern the worship and service of God, and every part of religion. Or the meaning may be, He shall not judge rashly and partially, but considerately and justly, as the fear of God obliges all judges to do. *And he shall not judge*—Of persons, things, or causes ; *after the sight of the eyes*—According to outward appearance, as men do, because they cannot search men's hearts ; *neither reprov*—Condemn, or pass sentence against any person ; *after the hearing of the ears*—By uncertain rumours or suggestions, but shall thoroughly examine all causes, and search out the truth of things, and the very hearts of men. It implies also, that, "in collecting the people who shall compose his kingdom, he shall principally regard in them this quality of fear, or reverence for the Lord ; and with the greatest sagacity and perspicuity of judgment, shall discern and separate those subjects in whom he finds this quality ; not suffering that judgment to be deluded by the external appearance of truth or honesty, but, penetrating into the interior recesses of the mind by his prophetic spirit, he shall discriminate truth from error, the good from the bad, the sincere and pious from the hypocritical and impious." *All the churches shall know*, says he, *that I am he who searcheth the reins and the hearts*.

Verse 4. *With righteousness*—With justice and impartiality ; *shall he judge the poor*—Whom human judges commonly neglect and oppress, but whom he shall defend and deliver ; *and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth*—Shall con-

demn their malicious enemies, and give sentence for them. He calls them *meek*, whom before he called *poor*, partly to show his justice in defending them when they are most exposed to the contempt and injuries of men ; and partly to signify that his subjects should be poor in *spirit*, as well as poor in the *world*, and not poor and proud, as many worldly persons are. *And he shall smite the earth*—That is, the men of the earth, intending chiefly the carnal and wicked, as it is in the next branch of the verse ; *with the rod of his mouth*—With his word, which is his sceptre, and *the rod of his power*, (Psa. cx. 2,) which is *sharper than a sword*, (Heb. iv. 12,) by the preaching whereof he subdues the world to himself, and will destroy his enemies, 2 Thess. ii. 8. This he adds farther, to declare the nature of Christ's kingdom, that it is not of this world, and that his sceptre and arms are not carnal, but spiritual, as it is said 2 Cor. x. 4. *And with the breath of his lips*—With his word, breathed out of his lips ; whereby he explains what was meant by the foregoing expression, *rod* ; *shall he slay the wicked*—The impenitent and unbelieving, the obstinate and irclaimable, who will not *obey the truth*, but persist to obey unrighteousness. These he will slay or destroy, by the terrible judgments which he will execute upon them. This latter part of the verse will be eminently fulfilled in the destruction of antichrist, to whom St. Paul applies it 2 Thess. ii. 3-8, (compare Rev. xix. 21,) who is, by way of eminence, called the *Wicked one*, the *man of sin*, and ο αντικειμενος, the *adversary to God's truth and people*.

**5** And <sup>5</sup> righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.

<sup>5</sup> Job iv. 9 ; Mal. iv. 6 ; 2 Thess. ii. 8 ; Rev. i. 16 ; ii. 16 ; xix. 15.—<sup>ε</sup> Eph. vi. 14.

demn their malicious enemies, and give sentence for them. He calls them *meek*, whom before he called *poor*, partly to show his justice in defending them when they are most exposed to the contempt and injuries of men ; and partly to signify that his subjects should be poor in *spirit*, as well as poor in the *world*, and not poor and proud, as many worldly persons are. *And he shall smite the earth*—That is, the men of the earth, intending chiefly the carnal and wicked, as it is in the next branch of the verse ; *with the rod of his mouth*—With his word, which is his sceptre, and *the rod of his power*, (Psa. cx. 2,) which is *sharper than a sword*, (Heb. iv. 12,) by the preaching whereof he subdues the world to himself, and will destroy his enemies, 2 Thess. ii. 8. This he adds farther, to declare the nature of Christ's kingdom, that it is not of this world, and that his sceptre and arms are not carnal, but spiritual, as it is said 2 Cor. x. 4. *And with the breath of his lips*—With his word, breathed out of his lips ; whereby he explains what was meant by the foregoing expression, *rod* ; *shall he slay the wicked*—The impenitent and unbelieving, the obstinate and irclaimable, who will not *obey the truth*, but persist to obey unrighteousness. These he will slay or destroy, by the terrible judgments which he will execute upon them. This latter part of the verse will be eminently fulfilled in the destruction of antichrist, to whom St. Paul applies it 2 Thess. ii. 3-8, (compare Rev. xix. 21,) who is, by way of eminence, called the *Wicked one*, the *man of sin*, and ο αντικειμενος, the *adversary to God's truth and people*.

Verse 5. *And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins*—It shall adorn him, and be the glory of his government, as a girdle was used for an ornament, Isa. iii. 24 ; and as an ensign of power, Job. xii. 18 ; and it shall constantly cleave to him in all his administrations, *as a girdle cleaveth to a man's loins*. *And faithfulness the girdle of his reins*—The same thing in other words. Here then we have the basis and foundation of this kingdom, namely, the justice and fidelity of the king. These virtues shall be conspicuous in the whole administration of his government, and, at once, be the ornament and the support of it. "The sum is, that the kingdom of Christ should be a kingdom of the highest equity, and the king of it perfect : who, though judging his true subjects by *the law of grace*, by faithfully performing all the promises of the gospel, and every condition of the covenant to them, will yet not omit to punish the enemies of his church according to their deserts.

A. M. 3266. B. C. 738. 6 <sup>h</sup> The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fawning together; and a little child shall lead them.

7 And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

8 And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall

<sup>b</sup> Chap. lxxv. 25; Ezek. xxxiv. 25; Hos. ii. 18.—<sup>c</sup> Or, *adder's*.  
<sup>d</sup> Job v. 23; Chap. ii. 4; xxxv. 9.

and thus to satisfy the law of justice: so that he shall not be less venerable and awful for his justice in judgment, than amiable and desirable for his truth, fidelity, and constancy in performing his promises; which being things naturally united, are not, by any means, to be separated."—Dodd.

Verses 6-8. *The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, &c.*—"We have here the illustrious consequence of the economy of this divine kingdom, this kingdom of righteousness, equity, faith, and grace." The expressions which describe it are metaphorical: they represent the subjects of it under the figure of a flock, lying down and feeding under the care of the Messiah, as the great and chief shepherd, in the utmost peace, harmony, and security. Men of fierce, cruel, and ungovernable dispositions shall be so transformed by the preaching of the gospel, and by the grace of Christ, that they shall become most humble, gentle, and tractable, and shall no more vex and persecute those meek and poor ones, mentioned verse 4; but shall become such as they. Yea, the most inveterate enemies of the kingdom of God, such as the persecuting Saul, shall be brought into its communion, having laid down their cruelty, barbarity, and ferocity, their inclination to hurt, their craft and subtlety; and not only so, but this kingdom also shall be purged from all offences, from all evils and instruments of malice. For the people, being enlightened with truth, and renewed by grace, shall put off their barbarous and depraved manners; shall willingly subject themselves to the rule of the Messiah, with meekness and humility, and shall fulfil the law of brotherly love in all the offices of good-will. This is the sum of the present passage, divested of metaphor. For, it is evident, as Michaelis has observed, that a mystical sense is not intended to be assigned to each of these images, or figurative expressions, and a particular and partial truth to be deduced therefrom; but a general doctrine is to be learned from the whole, namely, that the kingdom of the Messiah is a kingdom of *peace*, as well as of *righteousness*; of *happiness*, as well as of *holiness*; and that the natural tendency of his religion is to produce meekness, gentleness, long-suffering, and the exercise of mutual benevolence among men, as well as piety in all its branches toward God. This indeed is declared in plain words in the next verse.

Verse 9. *They shall not hurt nor destroy in all*

put his hand on the <sup>3</sup>cockatrice's den. A. M. 3266 B. C. 738.

9 <sup>i</sup> They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for <sup>k</sup> the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

10 ¶ <sup>l</sup> And in that day <sup>m</sup> there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the <sup>n</sup>Gentiles seek: and <sup>o</sup>his rest shall be <sup>4</sup>glorious.

<sup>k</sup> Hab. ii. 14.—<sup>l</sup> Chap. ii. 11.—<sup>m</sup> Verse 1; Rom. xv. 12.  
<sup>n</sup> Rom. xv. 10.—<sup>o</sup> Heb. iv. 1.—<sup>4</sup> Heb. *glory*.

*my holy mountain*—Here the prophet himself gives us a key wherewith to open his meaning in the three preceding verses. By the *holy mountain* he means, the Christian Church, frequently termed *Zion*, *Jerusalem*, and God's *holy mountain*, in the writings of the prophets. Wherever the gospel comes and prevails; wherever the true and genuine religion of Christ takes place and is established, these effects are produced. And in due time the gospel shall prevail, and the true religion of Jesus be established everywhere. *For the earth*—The world, with its inhabitants, shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord—By this he intimates, that all that savageness and malignity which are in carnal and wicked men toward the people of God, and all those unholy, unkind, and unhappy dispositions which are in any of the human race, proceed from their ignorance of God, or their want of a true and saving acquaintance with him, which, wherever it takes place, produces a marvellous and thorough change in men's hearts and lives. *As the waters cover the sea*—As the waters spread themselves over the bottom, and entirely fill all the channels of the sea. Although this prophecy begins to be fulfilled wherever the kingdom of grace is set up among men, and is more and more fulfilled in proportion as that kingdom is enlarged; yet the perfect accomplishment of it will not be witnessed till those latter days come, when, according to the Scriptures, the knowledge and practice of Christianity will be universally diffused, and all those divine virtues which it inculcates will be most eminently exerted and displayed.

Verse 10. *And in that day, &c.*—We have here the latter part of this prophecy, which sets forth some more illustrious events of this kingdom, with their consequences. The events are set forth verses 10-16, and are three. 1st, The remarkable conversion of the Gentiles, verse 10. 2d, The calling of the dispersed Jews to the communion of the kingdom of Christ, verses 11-14. 3d, A diminution of the powers of the adverse empires, Egypt and Assyria, verses 15, 16. The consequence of these events is represented to be a remarkable thanksgiving of the Jewish people, converted to the Messiah, for the redemption granted to them, chap. xii. 1-6. *There shall be a root of Jesse, &c.*—This verse is more literally rendered, *And it shall be in that day, —Namely, in that glorious gospel day, that the Gen-*

A. M. 3266. 11 And it shall come to pass <sup>p</sup> in  
B. C. 738. that day, *that* the LORD shall set his  
hand again the second time to recover the rem-  
nant of his people, which shall be left, <sup>a</sup> from As-  
syria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and  
from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar,  
and from Hamath, and from the islands of the  
sea.

12 And he shall set up an ensign for the

Chapter ii. 11.—Zech. x. 10.—John vii. 35; James i. 1.

*titles shall seek to the root of Jesse, which stands for an ensign of the people; and his rest shall be glorious.* By the *root of Jesse*, we may either understand a *branch* growing from that root, and so may interpret it of Christ's human nature, or, referring it to his divine nature, we may take it for a root properly so called, as the expression is to be understood Rev. xxii. 16; where Christ is represented as being as well the *root*, as the *offspring* of David. *Which shall stand, or which stands, for an ensign of the people*—Which shall grow up into a great and high tree, shall become a visible and eminent ensign, which not only the Jews, but all nations may discern, and to which they may and shall resort; *to it shall the Gentiles seek*—As the gospel shall be preached to the Gentiles, so they shall receive it, and believe in the Messiah; *and his rest*—That is, either, 1st, His resting-place, his temple, or church, the place of his presence and abode; *shall be glorious*—Filled with greater glory than the Jewish tabernacle and temple were; only this glory shall be spiritual, consisting in the plentiful effusion of the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit. Or, 2d, The rest enjoyed by those who are true worshippers in this temple, or true members of this church: their rest of grace, of faith, hope, and love: the rest consequent on the justification of their persons, and the renovation of their nature; the rest which they enter into by believing. (Heb. iv. 3,) which they receive in consequence of coming to Christ, weary and heavy laden, and learning of him, Matt. xi. 28; their peace with God, peace of conscience, and tranquillity of mind, is *glorious*, for it *passeth all understanding*, Phil. iv. 7. And it shall be much more glorious in a future world, when they enter the rest remaining for the people of God, Heb. iv. 9. Then their rest shall be not only *glorious*, but *glory*: and *glory shall be their rest*, as the words may be also rendered.

Verses 11, 12. *And it shall come to pass in that day*—As this chapter contains a general prophecy of the advancement which Christ's kingdom should make in the world, and as this advancement was to be made by different steps and degrees, so the several parts of this prophecy may be supposed to point at different ages or periods of time: see note on chap. ii. 2. "And, I take this part of the chapter," says Lowth, "from verse 10 onward, to foretel those glorious times of the church, which shall be ushered in by the restoration of the Jewish nation, when they shall embrace the gospel, and be restored to their

nations, and shall assemble the out- A. M. 3266  
casts of Israel, and gather together <sup>r</sup> the B. C. 738.  
dispersed of Judah from the four <sup>b</sup> corners of the  
earth.

13 <sup>\*</sup>The envy also of Ephraim shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off: Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim.

14 But they shall fly upon the shoulders of

<sup>\*</sup>Heb. wings.—Jer. iii. 18; Ezek. xxxvii. 16, 17, 22; Hos. i. 11.

own country, from the several dispersions where they are scattered. This remarkable scene of providence is plainly foretold by most of the prophets of the Old Testament, and by St. Paul in the New." See the margin. Bishop Lowth also observes, that "this part of the chapter contains a prophecy, which certainly remains yet to be accomplished." *The Lord shall set his hand again the second time*—The *first* time to which this word *second* relates, seems to be, either, 1st, The deliverance out of Egypt, and then this *second* must be that out of Babylon; or, rather, 2d, The deliverance out of Babylon; and then this *second* deliverance must be in the days of the Messiah. This latter interpretation seems more probable, 1st, Because that first deliverance, like the second, is supposed to be a deliverance of the remnant of this people from several countries into which they were dispersed: whereas that out of Egypt was a deliverance, not of a remnant, but of the whole nation, and out of Egypt only: 2d, Because this second deliverance was universal, extending to the generality of the outcasts and dispersed ones, both of Israel, or the ten tribes, and of Judah, or the two tribes, as is evident from these verses, whereas that out of Babylon reached only to the two tribes, and to some few of the ten tribes which were mixed with them: 3d, Because this second deliverance was to be given them in the days of the Messiah, and to accompany, or follow, the conversion of the Gentiles, as is evident from verses 9, 10, whereas that out of Babylon was long before the coming of the Messiah and the calling of the Gentiles. *And from the islands of the sea*—From all places, both far and near, into which either the ten tribes, or the two tribes, were carried captives Pathros was a province of Egypt. The other places here named are well known, and have been spoken of before in our notes on other texts. *And he shall set up an ensign for the nations*—All nations, Jews and Gentiles. *And shall assemble the outcasts of Israel*—Those of the ten tribes that had been driven out of their own land into foreign parts; *and gather together the dispersed of Judah*—Here distinguished from those of Israel. The reader must observe here, that the prophet's ideas respecting this future and spiritual deliverance of the Jews and Israelites, are wholly taken from their temporal deliverances out of Egypt and Assyria.

Verses 13, 14. *The envy also of Ephraim shall depart, &c.*—Ephraim here stands for the ten tribes,

A. M. 3266. the Philistines toward the west; they  
B. C. 738. shall spoil <sup>6</sup> them of the east together:  
<sup>4</sup> they <sup>7</sup> shall lay their hand upon Edom and  
Moab; <sup>8</sup> and the children of Ammon <sup>9</sup> shall  
obey them.

15 And the LORD <sup>2</sup> shall utterly destroy the  
tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with his  
mighty wind shall he shake his hand over the

<sup>6</sup> Heb. *the children of the east.*—<sup>7</sup> Dan. xi. 41.—<sup>8</sup> Heb. *Edom and Moab shall be the laying on of their hand.*—<sup>9</sup> Heb. *the children of Ammon their obedience.*

and the prophet alludes to the great emulations and contentions which had subsisted between them and Judah: but his intention is to set forth the spiritual state of the Jews after their conversion to the faith of the gospel, which he predicts, 1st, "That all envy shall be extinguished among them, and a true brotherly love shall fill their souls; and, 2d, That, joined to the Gentiles, they shall strenuously defend the cause of Christ and his kingdom against the enemies and opposers of it." *Ephraim shall not envy Judah, &c.*—Not only all outward hostilities shall cease, but also their inward animosities. *But they shall fly upon the shoulders, &c.*—This is a metaphor taken from birds and beasts of prey, which commonly fasten on the shoulders of cattle. *They shall spoil them of the east together*—They shall subdue them; which is to be understood of the spiritual victory which the Messiah should obtain by his apostles, ministers, and people, over all nations, in bringing them to the obedience of his gospel. For it is the manner of the prophets to speak of the spiritual things of the gospel under such figurative representations. Indeed, as a late writer observes, this fourteenth verse can be understood in no other than a spiritual and mystical sense, to signify that those who are called by the gospel, and converted to Christ, shall be full of zeal for his glory, and shall labour with all their might to reduce to the obedience of Christ all individuals and nations around them.

Verses 15, 16. *And the Lord shall utterly destroy*—Shall not only divide it, as of old, but shall quite dry it up, that it may be a highway; *the tongue of the Egyptian sea*—The Red sea, which may well be called the Egyptian sea, both because it borders upon Egypt, and because the Egyptians were drowned in it. It is called a *tongue*, both here and in the Hebrew text, (Josh. xv. 2, 5,) as having some resemblance to a tongue; and for a similar reason the name of *tongue* has been given by geographers to promontories of land which shoot forth into the sea, as this sea shoots out of the main ocean into the land. Bishop Lowth renders the clause, *Jehovah*

river, and shall smite it in the seven A. M. 3266.  
streams, <sup>7</sup> and make *men* go over B. C. 738.  
<sup>9</sup> dry-shod.

16 <sup>2</sup> And there shall be a highway for the  
remnant of his people, which shall be left,  
from Assyria; <sup>3</sup> like as it was to Israel in the  
day that he came up out of the land of  
Egypt.

<sup>2</sup> Chap. lx. 14.—<sup>3</sup> Zech. x. 11.—<sup>7</sup> Rev. xvi. 12.—<sup>8</sup> Heb. *in shoes.*—<sup>9</sup> Chap. xix. 23.—<sup>9</sup> Exod. xiv. 29; Chap. li. 10; lxiii. 12, 13.

*shall smite with a drought the tongue, &c.*, following the Chaldee, which, instead of החרים, *he destroyed*, reads החרים, *he dried up*. And the next clause, which he understands, not of the river Nile, but of the Euphrates, the bishop very properly translates, "And he shall shake his hand over the river with his vehement wind; and he shall strike it into seven streams, and make them pass over it dry-shod." Thus also Dr. Waterland, after Vitringa: "He shall shake his hand over the Euphrates, and shall smite it into seven outlets;" that is, he shall divide or separate it into seven small rivers, so as to render it easy to be passed over. What is thus expressed metaphorically in this clause, is declared in plain words in the next verse: *And there shall be a highway for the remnant of his people, &c.*—As there shall be a highway from Egypt, the Red sea being dried up, so shall there be from Assyria, the river Euphrates being rendered fordable. In other words, and without a figure, all impediments shall be removed, and a way shall be made for the return of God's Israel from all parts of the world. He mentions Egypt and Assyria particularly, because they were then two flourishing kingdoms which bordered upon Judea, and by turns were the great oppressors of God's people. And the ten tribes having been carried captive to Assyria, their case especially seemed desperate. But these two kingdoms stand here, in the prophetic style, for the adverse empires in general, especially those of idolatry and superstition, which shall be either destroyed or reduced to such a state of weakness as not to be able to hinder the progress of the conversion of the Jews and Gentiles. "My belief," says Vitringa, "upon the strength of this prophecy is, that all the impediments of the great empires of the world being removed, which yet delay the perfect completion of the great and excellent promises made to the church, and hinder the calling and collection of the Jews and Gentiles, the empire of the kingdom of Christ will extend itself over the whole world, according to the remarkable prediction of Daniel, chap. ii. 35, &c."

## CHAPTER XII.

*The salvation promised in the foregoing chapter being compared to that of Israel, in the day when they came out of the land of Egypt; and Moses and Israel having then sung a song of praise, to the glory of God; the prophet here puts a cu-*

charistic hymn into the mouths of the Lord's redeemed under the Christian dispensation, when the root of Jesse should stand for an ensign of the people, and become the desire and joy of all nations. (1.) Every particular believer shall sing a song of praise for his own interest in that salvation, 1-3. Thou shalt say, Lord, I will praise thee. (2.) Many in concert shall join in praising God for the common benefit arising from it, 4-6. Ye shall say, Praise the Lord.

A. M. 3266.  
B. C. 738. **AND** <sup>a</sup> in that day thou shalt say,  
**O LORD**, I will praise thee:  
though thou wast angry with me, thine anger  
is turned away, and thou comfortedst me.  
2 Behold, God *is* my salvation; I will trust,

<sup>a</sup> Chap. ii. 11.—<sup>b</sup> Psa. lxxxiii. 18.—<sup>c</sup> Exod. xv. 2;

## NOTES ON CHAPTER XII.

Verses 1, 2. *And, &c.*—Isaiah concludes this most noble prophecy with a doxology from the mouth of those who should share in the blessings of the great redemption before specified. This doxology is two-fold: in the first part, the redeemed, in their own names and persons, praise God for the benefits of salvation and consolation through Christ, conferred upon them. In the second part they mutually exhort and encourage themselves and others, to praise and celebrate their God and Redeemer." Dodd. *In that day*—When this great work of the reduction of Israel, and the conversion of the Gentiles, promised in the foregoing chapter, is fulfilled: when the kingdom of the Messiah is set up in the world, in despite of all opposition from earth and hell; *thou shalt say*—Thou church of God, composed of Jews and Gentiles, united in one body, shalt say, as one man, with one mind and one mouth; and every particular member of the community shall say; that is, shall have cause to say, and a heart to say, *O Lord, I will praise thee*—"I will give thanks unto thee, O Jehovah;" so Bishop Lowth. For *though thou hast been angry with me*—Namely, while I was in my unenlightened and unconverted state of heathenish ignorance, or of Jewish unbelief; my state of sin and guilt, of depravity and alienation from thee; *thine anger is turned away*—In consequence of my conversion to thee by true repentance, unfeigned faith, and new obedience; *and thou comfortedst me*—By evident tokens of thy presence, communications of thy grace, and prospects of thy glory. *Behold, God is my salvation*—The author, giver, and source of my salvation; which, in all its branches and degrees, hath been effected, not by the power of man, but by the mercy and grace of God. He, therefore, shall have the glory of the salvation that has already been wrought for me, and from him only will I expect the salvation which I further need. And for this, *I will trust*—In his power, love, and faithfulness; *and not be afraid*—Lest he should deceive my confidence or disappoint my expectations; lest he should be either unable or unwilling to save me in time to come, as he has saved me in time past. For, not a dead idol, or a mere creature, whether made by man or God, but *the Lord Jehovah*—Hebrew, *Jah Jehovah*, (the former word being a contraction of the latter, and both signifying his self-existence, his eternity, and unchangeableness,) *is my strength and my song*—He; who is the living and true God, and who has all possible perfections in and of him-

and not be afraid: for the LORD <sup>b</sup>JEHOVAH *is* my <sup>c</sup>strength and my <sup>d</sup>song; he also is become my salvation.

3 Therefore with joy shall ye draw <sup>d</sup>water out of the wells of salvation.

Psa. cxviii. 14.—<sup>d</sup> John iv. 10, 14; vii. 37, 38.

self; he, who is both infinite and everlasting, hath undertaken my cause, and gives me both support in weakness and comfort in trouble; he enables me both to withstand my enemies and to rejoice and glory in him, being, as I know by experience, already become my salvation.

Verses 3. *Therefore*—Because the Lord Jehovah is your strength and song, and is, and will be, your salvation; *with joy shall ye draw water, &c.*—The assurances God has given you of his love, and the experience you have had of the benefit and comfort of his grace, should greatly encourage your faith in him, and your expectations from him. *Out of the wells of salvation*—Your thirsty and fainting souls shall be filled with divine graces and comforts; which you shall plentifully draw from God, in the use of gospel ordinances, and which are often signified by water, both in the Old and in the New Testament. He seems to allude to the state of Israel in the wilderness, where, when they had been tormented with thirst, they were greatly refreshed and delighted with those waters which God so graciously and wonderfully afforded them in that dry and barren land, Num. xx. 11; xxi. 16-18. As this hymn evidently appears by its whole tenor, and by many expressions in it, to be much better calculated for the Christian Church than it could be for the Jewish, in any circumstances, or at any time that can be assigned; so "the Jews themselves seem to have applied it to the times of the Messiah. On the last day of the feast of tabernacles, they fetched water, in a golden pitcher, from the fountain of Siloah, 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 water with joy from the fountains of salvation*: expressions that can hardly be understood of any benefits afforded by the Mosaic dispensation. Our Saviour applied the ceremony, and the intention of it, to himself, and to the effusion of the Holy Spirit, promised and to be given by him." Thus Bishop Lowth, who quotes a passage from the Jerusalem Talmud to show that the Jews thought this song to be intended of the times of the Messiah, and considered the water, said to be drawn from the wells of salvation, as signifying the influences of the Holy Spirit to be given in his days.

A. M. 3266. 4 And in that day shall ye say,  
B. C. 738. ° Praise the LORD, ° call upon his  
name, † declare his doings among the people,  
make mention that his † name is exalted.  
5 † Sing unto the LORD; for he hath done

excellent things: this is known in all A. M. 3266.  
the earth. B. C. 738.

6 † Cry out and shout, thou † inhabitant of  
Zion; for great is † the Holy One of Israel in  
the midst of thee.

° 1 Chron. xvi. 8; Psalm cv. 1.—† Or, *proclaim his name*.  
† Psal. cxlv. 4, 5, 6.—‡ Psal. xxxiv. 3.—§ Exod. xv. 1, 21; Ps.

lxviii. 32; xxviii. 1.—† Chap. liv. 1; Zeph. iii. 14.—‡ Heb.  
*inhabitant*.—§ Psal. lxxi. 22; lxxxix. 18; Chap. xli. 14, 16.

Verses 4-6. *In that day ye shall say, &c.*—Here we have the second part of the evangelical song, the subject of which, as of the former, is the praise of God. In the former part, believers stir up themselves to praise God; here they invite and encourage one another to do it, and are represented as contriving to spread his praise, and to draw in others to join with them in it. *Praise the Lord, call upon his name*—As giving thanks for former mercies is a modest way of begging for further mercies, so requesting further and fresh mercies is graciously accepted as a thankful acknowledgment of the mercies we have received. *Declare, &c.*—By speaking and writing. We must not only speak to God, but speak to others concerning him; not only *call upon his name*, but (as the margin reads it) *proclaim his name*. Let others know something more from us than they did before concerning God, and those things whereby he hath made himself known. *His doings*—Or, *mighty deeds*; as Bishop Lowth renders *עליונות*. The works of redemption and salvation are especially intended; these and his other wonderful works we should declare; *among the people*—Among the heathen, that they may be brought into communion with Israel, and the God of Israel. When the apostles preached the gospel to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem, then this scripture was fulfilled. *Make*

*mention*—Hebrew, *הזכירו*, *Record*, or *cause it to be remembered, that his name is exalted*—Is become more illustrious and conspicuous than ever, in and by the incarnation and life, doctrine and miracles, death, and resurrection, and ascension of his Son, and the effusion of his Spirit, in gifts and graces, on the Messiah's disciples and servants. *Sing unto the Lord; for he hath done excellent things*—For his people, to whom he hath given a wonderful proof of his love, and whom he hath magnified and made honourable. Bishop Lowth renders the original expression, *שאי עשה, he hath wrought a stupendous work*. In making his Son a sacrifice for our sins. *This is known*—Or, shall be made known; *in all the earth*—The knowledge of this glorious work shall no longer be confined to the land of Israel and Judah, as hitherto it hath been, but shall be published to all nations. *Cry out and shout*—In a holy exultation and transport of joy; *thou inhabitant of Zion*—Hebrew, *שנת*, *inhabitant*, thou daughter of Jerusalem, thou church of the living God, represented under the emblem of a woman. Welcome the gospel to thyself, and publish it to others with loud acclamations; *for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee*—Manifesting himself to thee, appearing and doing wonders for thee, and enriching thee with his gifts and graces in great abundance.

CHAPTER XIII.

We now enter upon the second part of Isaiah's prophecies, containing a wonderful account of God's dealings with the enemies of his church and people. It begins at this chapter and extends to the twenty-fourth, comprising eight discourses. The first respects the fate of Babylon, and occupies this whole chapter and the next, to verse 28. We have here God's armies, 1-5. The destruction of Babylon by the Medes and Persians; their great distress, and anguish, and utter destruction, 6-22.

A. M. 3274. THE † burden of Babylon, which  
B. C. 730. Isaiah the son of Amoz did see.

2 † Lift ye up a banner † upon the A. M. 3274.  
high mountain, exalt the voice unto B. C. 730.

° Chap. xxi. 1; xvii. 1; Jer. l. 51.

† Chap. v. 26; xviii. 3; Jer. l. 2.—‡ Jer. li. 25.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XIII.

Verse 1. *The burden of Babylon*—Of the city and empire of Babylon. The original word, *משך*, here rendered *burden*, is, by Dr. Waterland, after Vitringa, translated, *The sentence upon, or, delivered concerning Babylon*. It is “derived from a verb, which signifies to *take, or lift up, or bring*; and the proper meaning of it is, any weighty, important matter or sentence, which ought not to be neglected, but is worthy of being carried in the memory,

and deserves to be lifted up, and uttered with emphasis.” See Rev. ii. 24, and Vitringa. Bishop Newton and others have observed, that “the prophecies uttered against any city or country, often carry the inscription of *the burden* of that city or country: and that by *burden* is commonly understood a threatening, burdensome prophecy, big with ruin and destruction: which, like a dead weight, is hung upon the city or country to sink it.” But it appears that the word is of more general import, and sometimes

A. M. 3274. them, <sup>d</sup> shake the hand, that they  
B. C. 730. may go into the gates of the nobles.

3 I have commanded my sanctified ones, I have also called <sup>e</sup> my mighty ones for mine anger, *even* them that <sup>f</sup> rejoice in my highness.

4 The noise of a multitude in the mountains, <sup>1</sup> like as of a great people; a tumultuous noise

<sup>d</sup> Chap. x. 32.—<sup>e</sup> Joel iii. 11.

signifies a prophecy at large, sometimes a prophecy of good as well as of evil, as in Zech. xii. 1; and sometimes, where the original word is used, it is translated *prophecy*, where there is no prophecy, but only a grave moral sentence.

This prophecy against Babylon, which consists of two parts, the former contained in this chapter, the latter in the next, was probably delivered, as Vitringa has shown, in the reign of Ahaz, about two hundred years before the completion of it, and a hundred and thirty before the Jews were even carried captive to Babylon; which captivity the prophet does not expressly foretel here, but supposes, in the spirit of prophecy, as what was actually to take place. "And the Medes, who are expressly mentioned, verse 17, as the principal agents in the overthrow of the Babylonian monarchy, by which the Jews were to be 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 till about the seventeenth of Hezekiah."—Bishop Lowth. The great design of God in inspiring his prophet with the knowledge of these future events, and exciting him to deliver these prophecies concerning them, seems to have been, 1st, To set forth the reasons of his justice, in punishing the enemies of his church, in order to console the minds and confirm the faith of the pious. 2d, With respect to this prophecy especially, concerning the destruction of Babylon, the design was to comfort the minds of true believers against that sad and sorrowful event, the Babylonish captivity. And, 3d, Under the figure of that destruction, to announce the destruction of the spiritual Babylon, the whole kingdom of sin and Satan. See Vitringa, and Rev. xiv. 8, and xvii. 5.

"The former part of this prophecy," says Bishop Lowth, "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 his service, verses 2, 3. Upon which the prophet hears the tumultuous noise of the different nations crowding together to his standard; he sees them advancing, prepared to execute divine wrath, verses 4, 5. He proceeds to describe the dreadful consequences of this visitation; the consternation which will seize those that are the objects of it; and transferring unawares the speech from himself to God, verse 11, sets

of the kingdoms of nations gathered together: the LORD of hosts mustereth  
A. M. 3274. B. C. 730. the host of the battle.

5 They come from a far country, from the end of heaven, *even* the LORD, and the weapons of his indignation, to destroy the whole land.

<sup>f</sup> Psa. cxlix. 2, 5, 6.—<sup>1</sup> Heb. *the likeness of*.

forth, under a variety of the most striking images, the dreadful destruction of the inhabitants of Babylon, which will follow, verses 11–16; and the everlasting desolation to which that great city is doomed, verses 17–22. The deliverance of Judah from captivity, the immediate consequence of this great revolution, is then set forth without being much enlarged upon, or greatly amplified, chap. xiv. 1, 2. This introduces, with the greatest ease, and the utmost propriety, the triumphant song on that subject, verses 4–28. The beauties of which, the various images, scenes, persons introduced, and the elegant transitions from one to another, I shall endeavour to point out in their order."

Verses 2, 3. *Lift up a banner*—To gather soldiers together for this expedition; *upon the high mountain*—Whence it may be discerned at a considerable distance. *Exalt the voice unto them*—To the Medes, named verse 17. *Shake the hand*—Beckon to them with your hand, that they may come to this service. *That they may go into the gates of the nobles*—That they may go and take Babylon, and so may enter into the palaces of the king, and of his princes, and spoil them at their pleasure. *I have commanded my sanctified ones*—Or, *my appointed ones*, as Dr. Waterland renders כִּקְרָשׁ, namely, the Medes and Persians, who were solemnly designed and set apart by God for his service, in this sacred work of executing his just vengeance upon the Babylonians. *I have called my mighty ones*—Those whom I have made mighty for this work; *even them that rejoice in my highness*—Or, *exult in my greatness*, as Bishop Lowth renders it, that is, in the doing that work which will tend to the advancement of my glory, in destroying the Babylonian empire. Not that the Medes and Persians had any regard to God or to his glory, in undertaking and prosecuting this war: they certainly had only the gratifying their own ambition, and lust of power and empire, in view.

Verses 4, 5. *The noise of a multitude in the mountains*—No sooner had the Almighty given the command, than the multitude assembles to his banners; *like as a great people*—Not rude and barbarous; but well-disciplined, regular, and veteran troops, such as are wont to be furnished by a great and powerful people; *of the kingdoms of nations*—Cyrus's army was made up of different nations besides the Medes and Persians. *The Lord of hosts*—The God of armies; *mustereth the host of the battle*—He raises the soldiers, brings them together, puts them in order, reviews them, keeps an exact account of them, sees that they be all in their respective posts, and gives them their necessary orders.

A. M. 3274. 6 ¶ Howl ye; <sup>g</sup> for the day of the  
B. C. 730. LORD is at hand; <sup>h</sup> it shall come as  
a destruction from the Almighty.

7 Therefore shall all hands <sup>2</sup> be faint, and  
every man's heart shall melt;

8 And they shall be afraid; <sup>i</sup> pangs and sor-  
rows shall take hold of them; they shall be in  
pain as a woman that travaileth: they shall

<sup>g</sup> Zeph. i. 7; Rev. vi. 17.—<sup>h</sup> Job xxxi. 23; Joel i. 15.  
<sup>i</sup> Or, fall down.—<sup>1</sup> Psa. xlvi. 6; Chap. xxi. 3.—<sup>2</sup> Hebrew

The expressions are noble, and contain a lively description of that terror which the appearance of a hostile army strikes into the beholders. *They come from a far country*—Many of Cyrus's auxiliary forces came from very distant countries: see Jer. l. 41, and li. 27, 28. The prophet adds this as an aggravation of the judgment. *From the end of heaven*—This is not to be understood strictly and properly, but popularly and hyperbolically, as such expressions are commonly used, both in sacred and profane authors. *Even the Lord, and the weapons of his indignation*—The Medes and Persians, who were but a rod in God's hand, and the instruments of his anger, as was said of the Assyrian, chap. x. 5. *To destroy the whole land*—Namely, of Babylon, of which he is now speaking.

Verses 6-8. *Howl ye*—We have here a very elegant and lively description of the terrible confusion and desolation which should be made in Babylon by the attack which the Medes and Persians should make upon it. They who were now at ease and secure are premonished to howl, and make sad lamentation, 1st, Because God was about to appear in wrath against them, and it is a fearful thing to fall into his hands. And, 2d, Because their hearts would fail them, and they would have neither courage nor comfort left them; would neither be able to resist the judgment coming, nor bear up under it; neither to oppose the enemy nor to support themselves. *For the day of the Lord is at hand*—A day of judgment and recompense, when God would act as a just avenger of his own and his people's injured cause, and severely chastise the Babylonians for their pride and luxury, their inhumanity and cruelty, their idolatry and superstition, and, above all, their sins against the people of God, his religion and sanctuary, and so against God himself: see Jer. l. 31. *It shall come as a destruction*—Or, rather, *A destruction shall it come, not merely as, or like a destruction, but such in reality, and that most awful, as being from the Almighty, whose power is irresistible, and wrath intolerable.* "The prophet begins here to describe the calamity coming upon them, but in figures, according to his manner, grand, and adapted to raise a terrible image of it." *All hands shall be faint*—Hebrew, הרפניה, shall fall down, and be unable to hold a weapon; and every man's heart shall melt—So that they shall be ready to die with fear. God often strikes a terror into those whom he designs for destruction. *Pangs, &c., shall take hold of them*—The pangs of their fear shall be like those of a woman in

<sup>3</sup> be amazed <sup>4</sup> one at another; their A. M. 3274.  
faces shall be as <sup>5</sup> flames. B. C. 730.

9 Behold, <sup>6</sup> the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy <sup>1</sup> the sinners thereof out of it.

10 For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun

wonder.—<sup>4</sup> Heb. every man at his neighbour.—<sup>5</sup> Heb. faces of the flames.—<sup>6</sup> Mal. iv. 1.—<sup>1</sup> Psa. civ. 35; Prov. ii. 22.

hard labour. *They shall be amazed one at another*—To see such a populous, and, apparently, impregnable city, so easily and unexpectedly taken. *Their faces shall be as flames*—Hebrew, shall be faces of flames; either pale with fear, or inflamed with rage and torment, as men in great misery often are. Bishop Lowth renders it, *Their countenances shall be like flames of fire.*

Verses 9, 10. *Behold the day—cruel both with wrath and fierce anger*—Dr. Waterland renders the clause, *fierceness, wrath, and hot anger*: divers words are heaped together, to signify the extremity of the divine indignation; *to lay the land desolate*—Hebrew, לשמה, to make it a desolation, an entire and perpetual desolation, verses 10-22. *And he shall destroy the sinners thereof*—The inhabitants of that city, who had persisted in their idolatries, oppressions, and all sorts of luxuries, notwithstanding the faithful testimony against their practices borne by Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, and other pious Jews, and the solemn warnings given by God himself to Nebuchadnezzar, in repeated dreams and visions, and the humiliating and distressing affliction wherewith that monarch was chastised: see Dan. iv. 13-33. *For the stars of heaven*—Here the calamity to be brought upon them is set forth "under the figure of a dreadful tempest, inducing such a face of things in the heavens as the prophet describes." It would be so grievous as to "deprive them of all light, that is, of all joy and consolation, as well as of the causes of them, and would fill them with sorrow and distress, and a fearful sense of the divine wrath poured forth from heaven upon them." Or, rather, the prophet foretels the utter subversion of their republic, and the entire overthrow of their religion and polity, under the emblem of the extinction or passing away of the sun, moon, and stars, and all the heavenly bodies. For, as Bishop Lowth observes, the Hebrew writers, "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 splendour, and never setting; the moon becomes like the meridian sun, and the sun's light is augmented seven-fold: see Isa. xxx. 26. New heavens and a new earth are created, and a brighter age commences. On the contrary, the overthrow and destruction of kingdoms are represented by opposite images; the stars are obscured, the moon withdraws

A. M. 3274. shall be <sup>m</sup> darkened in his going forth,  
B. C. 730. and the moon shall not cause her light  
to shine.

11 And I will punish the world for *their* evil,  
and the wicked for their iniquity; <sup>n</sup> and I will  
cause the arrogance of the proud to cease, and  
will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.

12 I will make a man more precious than  
fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge  
of Ophir.

13 <sup>o</sup> Therefore I will shake the heavens, and  
the earth shall remove out of her place, in the  
wrath of the LORD of hosts, and in <sup>p</sup> the day  
of his fierce anger.

14 And it shall be as the chased roe, and as a  
sheep that no man taketh up: <sup>q</sup> they shall every  
man turn to his own people, and flee every one  
into his own land.

<sup>m</sup> Chapter xxiv. 21, 23; Ezek. xxxii. 7; Joel ii. 31; iii. 15;  
Matt. xxiv. 29; Mark xiii. 24; Luke xxi. 25.—<sup>n</sup> Chap. ii. 17.  
<sup>o</sup> Hag. ii. 6.—<sup>p</sup> Psa. cx. 5; Lam. i. 12.—<sup>q</sup> Jeremiah i. 16;  
ii. 9.

her light, and the sun shines no more; the earth  
quakes, and the heavens tremble; and all things  
seem tending to their original chaos.”

Verses 11-16. *I will punish the world*—The Babylonish empire, which is called the world, as the Roman empire afterward was, (Luke ii. 1,) because it was extended to a great part of the world, and because it was very populous, and Babylon itself looked more like a world than one city. *I will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible*—Of them who formerly were very terrible for their great power and cruelty. *I will make a man more precious, &c.*—The city and nation shall be so depopulated, that few men shall be left in it. *I will shake the heavens, &c.*—A poetical and prophetic description of great confusions and terrors, as if heaven and earth were about to meet together. *And it shall be as the chased roe*—That Babylon, which used to be like a roaring lion and a raging bear to all about her, shall become like the timid, frightened roe, pursued by the hunter, and as *a sheep which no man taketh up*—In a most forlorn and neglected condition. And the army they shall bring into the field, consisting of troops from divers nations, as great armies usually do, shall be so dispirited by their own fears, and so dispersed by their enemies' sword, that *they shall turn every man to his own people*—Shall each shift for his own safety. Or the prophet may refer to those inhabitants of Babylon who were originally of different nations, but had settled there: as many of these, he signifies, as can, shall flee out of it, and endeavour to escape to their own countries. *Every one that is found*—In Babylon, at the taking of it; *shall fall by the sword*—The fear of which shall make them flee away with all speed. *Their children also shall be dashed, &c.*—As a just recom-

15 Every one that is found shall <sup>A. M. 3274.</sup>  
be thrust through; and every one <sup>B. C. 730.</sup>  
that is joined *unto them* shall fall by the  
sword.

16 Their children also shall be <sup>r</sup> dashed to  
pieces before their eyes; their houses shall be  
spoiled, and their wives ravished.

17 <sup>s</sup> Behold, I will stir up the Medes against  
them, which shall not regard silver; and *as for*  
gold, they shall not delight in it.

18 *Their bows* also shall dash the young men  
to pieces; and they shall have no pity on the  
fruit of the womb; their eyes shall not spare  
children.

19 <sup>t</sup> And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms,  
the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall  
be <sup>u</sup> as when God overthrew <sup>v</sup> Sodom and Gom-  
morrah.

<sup>r</sup> Psa. cxxxvii. 9; Nah. iii. 10; Zech. xiv. 2.—<sup>s</sup> Chap. xxi.  
2; Jer. li. 11, 28; Dan. v. 28, 31.—<sup>t</sup> Chap. xiv. 4, 22.—<sup>u</sup> Heb.  
*as the overthrowing*.—<sup>v</sup> Gen. xix. 24, 25; Deut. xxix. 23; Jer.  
xlix. 18; i. 40.

pense for the like cruelty acted by them upon the  
Jews, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 17, which was also foretold  
Psa. cxxxvii. 9.

Verses 17, 18. *Behold, &c.*—Here follows the second part of this prophecy, in which the calamity which the prophet had foretold, principally in figure, is plainly related and set forth in its causes and consequences. Its causes are stated to be the Medes, raised up by God himself against the Babylonians, and described as being extremely full of cruelty and avidity of revenge, verses 17, 18. The consequences are, the desolation of Babylon, and the calamity to be brought upon it, verses 19-22. *I will stir up the Medes*—Under whom he comprehends the Persians, who were their neighbours and confederates in this expedition. *Which shall not regard silver, &c.*—That is, comparatively speaking. They shall more eagerly pursue the destruction of the people than the getting of spoil. *Their bows also*—Under which are comprehended other weapons of war; *shall dash the young men to pieces*—Or, *shall pierce the young men through*, as the Chaldee renders it. But, as both Herodotus and Xenophon affirm that the Persians used *τοσα μεγάλα, large bows*, according to the latter, *bows three cubits long*, and undoubtedly proportionably strong; we may easily conceive, as Bishop Lowth observes, that, with such bows, especially if made of brass, as bows anciently often were, (see Psa. xviii. 35; Job xx. 24,) the soldiers might dash and slay the young men, the weaker and unresisting part of the inhabitants, (here joined with the fruit of the womb and the children,) in the general carnage in taking the city.

Verse 19. *Babylon, the glory of kingdoms*—Which once was the most noble and excellent of all the kingdoms then in being, and was more glorious

A. M. 3274. 20 \* It shall never be inhabited, nei-  
B. C. 730. ther shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there:

21 † But † wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of † doleful

\* Jer. l. 3, 39; li. 29, 62.—† Chap. xxxiv. 11-15; Rev. xviii. 2.  
‡ Heb. *Zim*.—§ Heb. *Ochim*.

than the succeeding empire, and therefore is represented by the *head of gold*, Dan. ii. 37. *The beauty of the Chaldees' excellency*—The famous and beautiful seat of the Chaldean monarchy; *shall be as when God overthrew Sodom, &c.*—Shall be totally and irrecoverably destroyed, as is more fully expressed in the following verses. Babylon, "according to the lowest account given of it by ancient historians, was a regular square, forty-five miles in compass, enclosed by a wall two hundred feet high and fifty broad; in which there were one hundred gates of brass. Its principal ornaments were the temple of Belus, in the middle of which was a tower of eight stories," (or towers placed one above another, diminishing always as they went up,) "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." What is very remarkable, "this great city was rising to its height of glory at this very time, while 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 splendour, are about one hundred and twenty years." See Bishop Lowth.

Verse 20. *It shall never be inhabited*—After the destruction threatened shall be fully effected. This was not done immediately upon the taking of the city by Darius the Mede and Cyrus the Persian, his nephew; but was fulfilled by degrees, as is recorded by historians, and as appears at this day. It will be satisfactory to the reader to note some of the steps by which this prophecy was accomplished. "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 Hystaspis, 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. The building of Seleucia on the Tigris exhausted Baby-

creatures; and † owls † shall dwell A. M. 3274.  
there, and satyrs shall dance there. B. C. 730.

22 And † the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their † desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces: † and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged.

† Or, *ostriches*.—‡ Heb. *daughters of the owl*.—§ Heb. *Iim*.  
‡ Or, *palaces*.—† Jer. li. 33.

lon by its neighbourhood, as well as by the immediate loss of inhabitants taken away by Seleucus to people his new city. (Strabo, lib. xvi.) 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. Strabo says, that in his time a 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 (on the place) says, that in his time it was quite in ruins, and that the walls served only for the enclosure of a park or forest, for the king's hunting. Modern travellers, who have endeavoured to find the remains of it, have given but a very unsatisfactory account of their success. 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.—Bishop Lowth.

Verses 21, 22. *The wild beasts of the desert shall lie there*—Which was literally fulfilled, as we have just seen, in Jerome's time, when it was a forest for breeding wild beasts, or a royal chase for hunting. *And their houses shall be full of doleful creatures*—This likewise has been exactly accomplished. Benjamin of Tudela, a Jew, in his Itinerary, written above seven hundred years ago, asserts, "Babylon is now laid waste, excepting the ruins of Nebuchadnezzar's palace, which men are afraid to enter, on account of the serpents and scorpions that have taken possession of it." This account is confirmed by Rauwolf, who informs us, "that the supposed ruins of the tower of Babylon are so full of venomous creatures, that no one dares approach nearer to them than half a league." It must be observed, however, that interpreters are not agreed as to the precise meaning of the word *דולפים*, here rendered, *doleful creatures*. Some connect this clause with the preceding, and read it, *And shall fill* (namely, the wild beasts *shall fill*) *their houses with their howlings*. It is more probable, however, that some living creatures are intended, but whether reptiles, quadrupeds, or fowls, is uncertain. It is also doubtful what creatures are meant by several of the other Hebrew words here used, particularly by the word *שעירים*, *seirim*, translated *satyrs*. The term indeed signifies *goats*. And many have supposed that evil spirits often appeared, of old time, in the shape of goats. "Upon which account," says Lowth, "the word is sometimes taken for *devils*, and is so translated, Lev. xvii. 7," (where see the note,) "and in 2 Chron. xi.

15. But here, and chap. xxxiv. 14, it is rendered *satyrs*. The expression may be taken from a vulgar opinion, that desolate and forlorn places are inhabited by evil spirits. See Baruch iv. 35; Rev. xviii. 2. Accordingly our Saviour, in his parable of an unclean spirit, says, that *he walks through dry, or uninhabited places*, Matt. xii. 43." *And dragons in their pleasant places*—The word דַּרְגָּוִי, rendered dragons, signifies any large creature of the creeping kind, whether upon land or in the sea. Here it seems to be taken for a great serpent, such as are usually found in deserts and desolate places. But instead of wasting time in a fruitless attempt to ascertain what kind of creatures are meant by the different Hebrew words here used, which would only perplex and not edify the reader, we shall present him with Bishop Lowth's translation of these two verses.

"But there shall the wild beasts of the deserts lodge;  
And howling monsters shall fill their houses:  
And there shall the daughters of the ostrich dwell;  
And there shall the satyrs hold their revels.

And wolves shall howl to one another in their palaces;  
And dragons in their voluptuous pavilions."

What makes the present desolate condition of Babylon the more wonderful is, that Alexander the Great intended to have made it the seat of his empire, and actually set men to work to rebuild the temple of Belus, to repair the banks of the river, and to reduce the waters again to their own channel; but he met with too many difficulties to proceed with the work. And now, how justly may we reflect with Bishop Newton, (Dissert. xth.,) "How is Babylon become a desolation! How wonderful are such predictions, compared with the events! And what a convincing argument of the truth and divinity of the Holy Scriptures! Well might God allege this as a memorable instance of his prescience, and challenge all the false gods, and their votaries, to produce the like, chap. xlv. 21, and xlvi. 10. And indeed where can be found a similar instance, but in Scripture, from the beginning of the world to this day?"

## CHAPTER XIV.

We have here, (1.) *The immediate consequence of the fall of Babylon, and the great revolution spoken of in the preceding chapter, namely, the deliverance of Judah from captivity, 1, 2. The triumphant song of the Jews on that subject, 3-28. God's purpose against Assyria, 24-27. Palestine is threatened, 28-32.*

A. M. 3274.  
B. C. 730. **F**OR the LORD <sup>a</sup> will have mercy on Jacob, and <sup>b</sup> will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land: <sup>c</sup> and the strangers shall be joined with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob.

2 And the people shall take them, <sup>d</sup> and bring

them to their place: and the house of Israel shall possess them in the land

of the LORD for servants and handmaids: and they shall take them captives, <sup>1</sup> whose captives they were; <sup>e</sup> and they shall rule over their oppressors.

<sup>a</sup> Psa. cii. 13.—<sup>b</sup> Zech. i. 17; ii. 12.—<sup>c</sup> Chap. lx. 4, 5, 10; Eph. ii. 12, 13, &c.

<sup>d</sup> Chap. xlix. 22; lx. 9; lxvi. 20.—<sup>1</sup> Heb. *that had taken them captives*.—<sup>e</sup> Chap. lx. 14.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER XIV.

Verse 1. *For the Lord will have mercy on Jacob*—Will pity and deliver his people; and therefore will destroy Babylon, which hinders their deliverance, and will raise up and exalt Cyrus, who shall promote it; and he will not prolong the time, but do these things speedily, as the prophet had just affirmed. For he is continuing his discourse concerning Babylon, and assigning the reason, not only of its fall, but of the speedy approach of that fall, as predicted in the last clause of the preceding chapter. It was not to be delayed, because the deliverance of the church of God depended upon it. *And will yet choose Israel*—Will renew his choice of them, for he had appeared to reject and cast them off: or he will still regard them as his chosen people, however he may seem to desert them by giving them up to their enemies, and scattering them among the nations. Israel is put for Judah, as it frequently is. Israel being the name which God gave to Jacob, as a mark of his favour, it is chiefly made use

of by the prophets when they deliver some gracious promise, or announce some blessing from the mouth of God, especially such a one as concerns the twelve tribes, all equally descended from Jacob, as this prophecy, in its ultimate sense, undoubtedly does. *And the strangers shall be joined to them*—It is probable that many strangers were made proselytes to the Jewish religion during their captivity, who were willing to go along with them into Judea, there to enjoy the free exercise of their religion. And others, who had not been proselytes before, might be induced to become such, and unite themselves to them, either through the favour shown to the Jews in the Persian court, or by consideration of their wonderful deliverance taking place exactly at the time foretold by the prophets. But what was then begun was more fully accomplished at the coming of the Messiah.

Verse 2. *And the people shall take them, &c.*—They shall provide them with all necessary accommodations for their journey: see Ezra iv. 1. *And Israel shall possess them for servants*—Those of

A. M. 3274. 3 ¶ And it shall come to pass in the  
B. C. 730.

day that the LORD shall give thee rest from thy sorrow, and from thy fear, and from the hard bondage wherein thou wast made to serve,

4 That thou shalt take up this <sup>2</sup> proverb against the king of Babylon, and say, How

<sup>1</sup> Chap. xiii. 19; Hab. ii. 6.—<sup>2</sup> Or, taunting speech.—<sup>3</sup> Or, exactness of gold.

the Chaldeans who left their own country for the sake of religion, and went along with the Jews into Judea, would probably be content to live among them in an inferior condition, and give them the benefit of their service. Or, the meaning may be, that many of the Jewish people should be in such circumstances as to be able to procure servants in the land where they were captives, and to take them with them into their own land as their servants. So that the people of the country where they had been captives, became captives or servants to the Jews, in their own land; who might therefore be said strictly to rule over those who had oppressed them. But, without question, these words have a further meaning in them, and point at those times under the gospel, when the apostles, and other ministers of Christ, who were of the Jewish nation, should conquer a great part of the Gentile world, and subject them to the worship of the true God, obedience to the Jewish Messiah, and the laws of Christianity.

Verses 3-5. *And in the day that the Lord shall give thee rest from thy sorrow*—From thy grief, fear, and the hard bondage of former times; *wherein thou wast made to serve*—According to the pleasure of thy cruel lords and masters; *thou shalt take up this proverb*—Into thy mouth, as it is expressed *Psa. l. 16; and say, How hath the oppressor ceased!*—This is spoken by way of astonishment and triumph, as if he had said, Who would have thought this possible? *The golden city ceased!*—So they used to call themselves; which he expresses here in a word of their own language. *The Lord hath broken the staff, &c.*—This is an answer to the foregoing question. It is God's own work, and not man's; and therefore it is not strange that it is accomplished. But before we proceed with our remarks on some particular passages of this song, we shall present our readers with the general view which Bishop Lowth has given of its unparalleled beauties, which he has pointed out, in a very striking manner, as follows: "A chorus of Jews is introduced, expressing their surprise and astonishment at the sudden downfall of Babylon, and the great reverse of fortune that had befallen the tyrant, who, like his predecessors, had oppressed his own, and harassed the neighbouring kingdoms. These oppressed kingdoms, or their rulers, are represented under the image of the fir-trees, and the cedars of Libanus, frequently used to express any thing in the political or religious world that is super-eminently great and majestic: the whole earth shouteth for joy: the cedars of Libanus utter a severe taunt over

hath the oppressor ceased, the <sup>3</sup> golden <sup>5</sup> A. M. 3274.  
city ceased! B. C. 730.

5 The LORD hath broken <sup>b</sup> the staff of the wicked, and the sceptre of the rulers.

6 He who smote the people in wrath with <sup>4</sup> a continual stroke, he that ruled the nations in anger, is persecuted, and none hindereth.

<sup>5</sup> Rev. xviii. 16.—<sup>b</sup> Psa. cxxv. 3.—<sup>4</sup> Heb. a stroke without removing.

the fallen tyrant; and boast their security now he is no more. The scene is immediately changed, and a new set of persons is introduced; the regions of the dead are laid open, and Hades is represented as rousing up the shades of the departed monarchs: they rise from their thrones to meet the king of Babylon at his coming; and insult him on his being reduced to the same low estate of impotence and dissolution with themselves. This is one of the boldest prosopopeias that ever was attempted in poetry; and is executed with astonishing brevity and perspicuity, and with that peculiar force which, in a great subject, naturally results from both. The Jews now resume the speech; they address the king of Babylon as the morning-star fallen from heaven, as the first in splendour 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, and 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 upon 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 so 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."

Verses 6-11. *He that ruled the nations in anger*

A. M. 3274. 7 The whole earth is at rest, and  
B. C. 730. is quiet: they break forth into singing.

8 <sup>1</sup> Yea, the fir-trees rejoice at thee, *and* the cedars of Lebanon, *saying*, Since thou art laid down, no feller is come up against us.

9 <sup>2</sup> Hell <sup>3</sup> from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming: it stirreth up the dead for thee, *even* all the <sup>4</sup> chief <sup>5</sup> ones of the earth: it hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations.

10 All they shall speak and say unto thee, Art thou also become weak as we? Art thou become like unto us?

11 Thy pomp is brought down to the grave,

<sup>1</sup> Chap. lv. 12; Ezek. xxxi. 16.—<sup>2</sup> Ezek. xxxii. 21.—<sup>3</sup> Or, The grave.—<sup>4</sup> Heb. leaders.—<sup>5</sup> Or, great goats.—<sup>6</sup> Chap.

—With rigour, and not with clemency; *is persecuted and none hindereth*—Neither the Babylonians themselves nor their confederates. *The whole earth is at rest*—The subjects of that vast empire who groaned under his cruel bondage. *Yea, the cedars of Lebanon*—Which were felled for the service of his pride and luxury, but are now suffered to stand and flourish. It is a figure usual in sacred and profane writers. *Hell*—The invisible world, or rather, *the grave*, as the same word is rendered verse 11, and in innumerable other places; to which he elegantly ascribes sense and speech, as poets and orators frequently do; *is moved to meet thee at thy coming*—And to compliment thee on thy arrival in their dark regions. “This image of the state of the dead, or the *Infernum Poeticum* of the Hebrews, is taken from their custom of burying, those at least of the higher rank, in large sepulchral vaults hewn in the rock. Of this kind of sepulchres there are remains at Jerusalem now extant; and some 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 subterraneous vault, a vast gloomy cavern, all round the sides of which 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 Ezek. xxxii. 27. 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.”—Bishop Lowth. *All they shall say, Art thou become weak as we?*—Thou, who wast king of kings, and far superior to us in power and authority? that didst neither fear God nor reverence man, but rather didst rank thyself among the immortals; thou, before whom all people, nations, and languages trembled and feared, art thou come to take thy fate with us poor mortal men? Where now is thy power and thy glory? *Thy pomp is brought down to the grave*—Is lost and buried with thee; *and the noise*

*and* the noise of thy viols: the worm <sup>7</sup> is spread under thee, and the worms <sup>8</sup> cover thee.

12 <sup>1</sup> How art thou fallen from heaven, <sup>2</sup> O Lucifer, son of the morning! *how* art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!

13 For thou hast said in thy heart, <sup>3</sup> I will ascend into heaven, <sup>4</sup> I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, <sup>5</sup> in the sides of the north:

14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; <sup>6</sup> I will be like the Most High.

xxxiv. 4.—<sup>7</sup> Or, O day-star.—<sup>8</sup> Matt. xi. 23.—<sup>9</sup> Dan. viii. 10.—<sup>10</sup> Psa. xlviii. 2.—<sup>11</sup> Chap. xlvii. 8; 2 Thess. ii. 4.

*of thy viols*—All thy musical instruments, which were much used in Babylon, and were doubtless used in Belshazzar's solemn feasts, (Dan. v. 1,) at which time the city was taken; to which possibly the prophet here alludes. *The worm is spread under thee*—Instead of those stately carpets upon which thou didst frequently tread.

Verses 12–14. *How art thou fallen from heaven*—From the height of thy glory; *O Lucifer*—Lucifer is properly a bright star, that ushers in the morning; but is here metaphorically taken for the mighty king of Babylon, who outshone all the kings of the earth by his great splendour. *Son of the morning*—The title of *son* is given in Scripture, not only to a person or thing begotten or produced by another, but also to any thing which is related to it, in which sense we read of *the son of a night*, Jonah iv. 10, *a son of perdition*, John xvii. 12, and, which is more agreeable to the present case, *the sons of Arcturus*, Job xxxviii. 32. *How art thou cut down to the ground*—Thou, whose power raised thee, in the estimation of men, even to heaven itself? Thou, who didst trample on, and destroy all the nations! *For thou hast said in thy heart*—Which lay open to God's inspection; *I will ascend into heaven*—I will advance myself above the state of weak and mortal men. *I will exalt my throne above the stars of God*—Above all other kings and potentates; or, above the most eminent persons of God's church. *I will sit upon the mount of the congregation*—I will establish my royal throne upon mount Zion, where the Jews meet together to worship God: *in the sides of the north*—This is added as a more exact description of the place of the temple; it stood upon mount Moriah, which was northward from the hill of Zion, strictly so called. *I will be like the Most High*—In the uncontrollable-ness of my power, and the universal extent of my dominion. By putting these and such like words into the mouths of the kings of Babylon, the prophet means to show their excessive pride, and the confidence which they entertained, that they should perpetually reign over the Jews.

A. M. 3274. 15 Yet thou shalt be brought down  
B. C. 730. to hell, to the sides of the pit.

16 They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms:

17 That made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof: that opened not the house of his prisoners?

18 All the kings of the nations, even all of them, lie in glory, every one in his own house.

19 But thou art cast out of thy grave like an abominable branch, and as the raiment of those that are slain, thrust through with a sword, that go down to the stones of the pit; as a carcass trodden under feet.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xi. 23.—<sup>2</sup> Or, did not let his prisoners loose homeward.  
<sup>3</sup> Job xviii. 19; Psa. xxi. 10; xxxvii. 28; cix. 13.—<sup>4</sup> Exod. xx.

Verses 15-17. *Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell*—To the grave, and the state of the dead; to the sides of the pit—And lodged there in the lowest state of misery and degradation. *They that see thee*—In this humbled and wretched state, shall narrowly look upon thee—As not knowing thee at first sight, and hardly believing their own eyes, because of this great alteration of thy condition, a change which, to them, seemed next to impossible. *Is this the man that made the earth to tremble*—All the nations of the earth? that did shake the kingdoms—At his pleasure? that made the world a wilderness—By slaying or carrying away captive its inhabitants, and destroying its produce: that opened not the house of his prisoners—That did not restore them to their own country, as Cyrus afterward did the Jews; but kept them in perpetual slavery, Jer. l. 33. By this the prophet signifies both his irresistible power, and his continued cruelty.

Verses 18-20. *All the kings of the nations*—That is, other kings generally; lie in glory, &c.—Are buried in their own sepulchres, having stately monuments erected to their memory. The persons who are represented as uttering these words are supposed to have before their eyes the carcass of the king of Babylon, lying on the bare ground among the common slain, greatly disfigured and covered with blood and wounds. *But thou art cast out of thy grave*—Deprived of a grave, or burying-place. Which very probably happened to Belshazzar, who, according to Dan. v. 30, was slain in the night in which the city was taken by Cyrus, when his people had neither opportunity nor heart to bestow an honourable interment upon him, and the conquerors would not suffer them to do it. *Like an abominable branch*—Like a rotten twig of a tree, which he that prunes the trees, casts away: and as raiment of those that are slain—Which, being mangled, and besmeared with mire and blood, is cast away with contempt. *That go down to the pit*—Who, being slain, are cast into

20 Thou shalt not be joined with them in burial, because thou hast destroyed thy land, and slain thy people: the seed of evil-doers shall never be renowned.

21 Prepare slaughter for his children for the iniquity of their fathers; that they do not rise, nor possess the land, nor fill the face of the world with cities.

22 For I will rise up against them, saith the LORD of hosts, and cut off from Babylon the name, and remnant, and son, and nephew, saith the LORD.

23 I will also make it a possession for the bitter, and pools of water: and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith the LORD of hosts.

5; Matt. xxiii. 35.—<sup>1</sup> Prov. x. 7; Jer. li. 62.—<sup>2</sup> 1 Kings xiv. 10.—<sup>3</sup> Job xviii. 19.—<sup>4</sup> Chap. xxxiv. 11; Zeph. ii. 14.

some pit. He saith, to the stones of the pit, because when dead bodies are cast in thither, men use to throw a heap of stones upon them. *As a carcass trodden under feet*—Neglected, like such a carcass. And this might literally happen to Belshazzar's dead body. *Thou shalt not be joined with them in burial*—Not buried, as they are. *Because thou hast slain thy people*—Thou hast exercised great tyranny and cruelty, not only to thine enemies, but even to thine own subjects. *The seed of evil-doers*—Such as Belshazzar was, being descended from that Nebuchadnezzar who had made such horrid slaughters and devastations in the world, merely to gratify his own insatiable lusts, and who had been so impious toward God and his temple, and so bloody toward his church and people; shall never be renowned—Or, shall not be renowned for ever: although I have long borne with thee and thy family.

Verses 21-23. *Prepare slaughter for his children*—O ye Medes and Persians, cut off all the branches of the royal family. This, it is probable, was actually done, for Belshazzar being slain, and the monarchy translated to the people last mentioned, it is not likely that any related to the family of the former monarchs were suffered to survive. *That they do not rise, nor possess the land*—Not recover their former power, nor fill the face of the world with cities—"It was the ambition of the great monarchs of those times, to build new cities, and call them by their own names, thereby to perpetuate their memory. Hence the cities took their rise, which were called by the names of Seleucia, Ptolemais, Alexandria, &c. Some render the latter part of the verse, *Nor fill the face of the world with enemies*, such as should continue a succession of war and bloodshed, and disturb the peace and quiet of mankind."—Lowth. *I will cut off from Babylon the name, &c.*—The remembrance of those that are dead, and the persons of those who yet survive. *I will make it a possession for the bittern*—A great water-fowl, which

A. M. 3274. 24 ¶ The LORD of hosts hath sworn, B. C. 730. saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand:

25 That I will break the Assyrian in my land, and upon my mountains tread him under foot: then shall <sup>a</sup> his yoke depart from off them, and his burden depart from off their shoulders.

26 This *is* the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth: and this *is* the hand that is stretched out upon all the nations.

<sup>a</sup> Chap. x. 27.—<sup>b</sup> 2 Chron. xx. 6; Job ix. 12; xxiii. 13; Psa. xxxiii. 11; Prov. xix. 21; xxi. 30; Chap. xliii. 13; Dan. iv. 31,

27 For the LORD of hosts hath <sup>a</sup> pur- A. M. 3274. posed, and who shall disannul *it*? B. C. 730. and his hand *is* stretched out, and who shall turn it back?

28 In the year that <sup>b</sup> King Ahaz died was this burden.

29 ¶ Rejoice not thou, whole Pales- B. C. 726. tina, <sup>c</sup> because the rod of him that smote thee is broken: for out of the serpent's root shall come forth a <sup>10</sup> cockatrice, <sup>d</sup> and his fruit *shall be* a fiery flying serpent.

35.—<sup>b</sup> 2 Kings xvi. 20.—<sup>c</sup> 2 Chron. xxvi. 6.—<sup>10</sup> Or, *adder*. <sup>d</sup> 2 Kings xviii. 8.

delights in solitary places, as also in watery grounds, such as those were about Babylon. *And pools of water*—The ground about Babylon was of itself very moist, because of the great river Euphrates running by it, which was kept from overflowing the country with charge and labour; this being neglected, when the city was destroyed, it was easily turned into pools of water. *And I will sweep it with the besom of destruction*—I will make a clear riddance of all its wealth and substance: see similar expressions 2 Kings xxi. 13. Bishop Lowth translates this clause nearly according to the version of the LXX. *And I will plunge it in the miry gulf of destruction, saith Jehovah, God of hosts.*

Verses 24–27. *The Lord of hosts hath sworn, &c.*—Here begins another prophecy against the Assyrians, which was to be fulfilled much sooner than the foregoing, even in the life-time of the prophet. But, “though of a peculiar and different, it is not of a totally foreign argument: it contains the epilogue and conclusion of the foregoing prophecy. As what the prophet foretold concerning the destruction of Babylon might justly seem great beyond expectation, he was desirous that the truth of the prediction should be collected from another remarkable and not dissimilar divine judgment, which should precede the completion of this prophecy, namely, the wonderful slaughter which the king of Assyria should meet with in Canaan itself, as an example of the divine indignation, and a pledge of the truth of similar predictions denouncing the destruction of the enemies of the people of God.” And here, to give his people greater assurance of the accomplishment of this prediction, and thereby to confirm their faith in it, and all other prophecies which his prophet was commissioned to deliver, God adds his solemn oath; *saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass, that I will break the Assyrian*—Sennacherib and his Assyrian army; *in my land*—In Judea, which was God's land in a peculiar sense, chosen by him, and inhabited by his people; *and upon my mountains tread him under foot*—In my mountainous country, for such Judea was, especially about Jerusalem, where his army was destroyed; *then shall his yoke depart, &c.*—See on chap. x. 27. *This the purpose upon*

*the whole earth*—Upon this vast empire, now in the hands of the Assyrians, and shortly to come into the hands of the Babylonians; *and this is the hand, &c.*—The providence of God executing his purpose.

Verses 28, 29. *In the year Ahaz died was this burden*—This is the second sermon of this second part of Isaiah's prophecies, (see the general argument, and the contents of chap. xiii.,) in which the prophet denounces judgment against the Philistines, exulting in the prosperous state of their affairs, under the reign of Ahaz, and conceiving on the death of that king, when this prophecy was delivered, still greater hopes of increasing prosperity. *Rejoice not thou, whole Palestina*—Hebrew, *Palestina*, כּל, *all of thee*, that is, all thy tribes, or clans. For they were still, as formerly, it seems, under the government of five lords or heads, 1 Sam. vi. 16; *because the rod of him that smote thee is broken*—Because Ahaz, the son of Uzziah, thy deadly enemy, is cut off; or, because the power of the kings of Judah, who were wont to be a great scourge to thee, is now much impaired. Uzziah had smitten and subdued the Philistines, 2 Chron. xxvi. 6, 7; but, taking advantage of the weak reign of Ahaz, they had since then not only recovered their former power, but had gained much more, had even invaded Judea, and taken and held in possession divers cities and villages in the southern part of that kingdom, 2 Chron. xxviii. 18. But the prophet here foretels the grievous calamities which they should suffer as well from Hezekiah, the son of Ahaz, as from the Assyrians; thus humbling their pride and boasting, and encouraging the pious and afflicted Jews with the hope of better times. *For out of the serpent's root shall come forth a cockatrice*—Or *basilisk*, as Bishop Lowth translates צפנ, a serpent of the most poisonous kind, termed כּוּפּוּף, a *fiery flying serpent*, in the next clause. As if he had said, As much as a basilisk, or fiery flying serpent, is more to be dreaded than a common viper; so much more reason have you to fear Hezekiah than his grandfather Uzziah, because the grandson will gain greater victories over you. This Hezekiah did, for *he smote the Philistines even unto Gaza, and the borders thereof*, 2 Kings xviii. 8. “A flying serpent,” says Lowth, “is what the Latins call *serpens jaculus*.”

A. M. 3278. 30 And the firstborn of the poor  
B. C. 726. shall feed, and the needy shall lie  
down in safety: and I will kill thy root with  
famine, and he shall slay thy remnant.

31 Howl, O gate; cry, O city; thou, whole  
Palestina, art dissolved: for there shall come

<sup>11</sup> Or, he shall not be alone.—<sup>12</sup> Or, assemblies.—<sup>c</sup> Ps. lxxxvii.  
1, 5; cii. 16.

which darts itself against any creature it meets; and they are called *fiery*, because they cause an inflammation where they sting.”

Verse 30. *And the firstborn of the poor*—Those who are most remarkably poor; *shall feed*—Shall have plenty of provisions, in spite of all thy attempts against them. The same Hezekiah, who shall be such a scourge to thee, Palestina, shall be a mild and gracious governor to his own subjects; he shall take care of them as a shepherd does of his flock, and relieve those who were oppressed in his father's time. It is probable, that the inhabitants of the southern parts of Judea, who were particularly exposed to the incursions of the Philistines, the Idumeans, and the Arabs, are chiefly meant here by the firstborn of the poor: and concerning these the prophet foretels, that under Hezekiah's government they should have food and security for themselves and flocks. *And I will kill thy root, &c.*—When the root is killed, the plant or tree is wholly destroyed. The meaning therefore is, I will utterly destroy thee, both root and branch, so that there shall be no remnant of thy people reserved, as it follows. This utter extirpation of the Philistines, here threatened, was begun by Hezekiah, and was completed by famine and various calamities, which came upon them afterward.

Verse 31. *Howl, O gate*—O people, who used to pass through the gates; *cry, O city*—O inhabitants of the city; or *city* may be put collectively for all their cities. *Thou, whole Palestina, art dissolved*—Hebrew, *ממלכתך*, *art melted*, which may be understood, either of the faintness of their spirits and courage, or of the dissolution of their state; *there shall come from the north a smoke*—A grievous judgment, or calamity, often signified by smoke, as Gen. xv. 17; Joel ii. 30; both because smoke is generally accompanied with fire, and because it darkens the air, and afflictions are frequently signified by *fire* and *darkness*. Many interpreters understand the prophet as speaking here of the calamity brought on the Philistines by Hezekiah, foretold in the preceding verses, observing that Judea lay to the north of some parts of Palestine. But certainly it lay more to the east than north of the greater part of that country: and accordingly, the Scriptures generally speak of the Philistines as being to the west of the Jews: see chap. xi. 14. It seems, therefore, that *Chaldea*, and

from the north a smoke, and <sup>11</sup> none <sup>A. M. 3278.</sup>  
*shall be alone* in his <sup>B. C. 726.</sup> <sup>12</sup> appointed times.

32 What shall *one* then answer the messengers of the nation? That <sup>c</sup> the Lord hath founded Zion, and <sup>f</sup> the poor of his people shall <sup>13</sup> trust in it.

<sup>f</sup> Zeph. iii. 12; Zech. xi. 11.—<sup>13</sup> Or, *betake themselves unto it.*

not Judea, is here meant by *the north*, as it generally is in the writings of the prophets; and that the calamity intended is not that spoken of in verses 29, 30, but a new affliction to be brought upon them by the Assyrians or Babylonians: probably the same which Jeremiah predicted as coming from the north on the Philistines, Jer. xlvii. 2, &c. *And none shall be alone in his appointed times*—When God's appointed time shall come, not one of all that numerous army that shall invade Palestine, shall desert his colours, lag behind the rest, or withdraw his hand, till the work of destruction be finished.

Verse 32. *What shall one then answer the messengers of the nation*—At the same time that “the prophet sees, as it were, a thick cloud, coming from the north, darkening the heavens, an emblem of the calamity coming from that quarter on the Philistines, he sees the messengers of that nation, as in a common danger, going to the king of Judah, and deliberating concerning the common safety. While he beholds the first he turns his discourse to the Philistines, and excites them to lamentation: but observing the second, he teaches the Jews what answer they should give to the messengers of that nation on this occasion:” see Jer. xlvii. 2, and Vitranga. What shall a Jew say in that day, when not only the Philistines, but even the Jews themselves, shall fall by the hands of one and the same enemy? *That the Lord hath founded Zion, &c.*—They shall give them this answer, That although Zion at present be in a very distressed and deplorable condition, and seems to be forsaken by her God, yet she stands upon a firm foundation, and God, who first founded her, will again restore and establish her; and his poor, despised people, shall resort to her, as to a strong and sure refuge. This verse seems evidently to be added, to express the very different condition of God's people from that of the Philistines, in the events of the Babylonian invasion: that, whereas the Philistines should be irrevocably destroyed thereby, and no remnant of them should be left, as was said verse 30; God's people, though they should be sorely scourged, and carried into captivity, yet should be strangely preserved, and, after some years, delivered, and restored to their own land; whereby it would appear that Zion stood upon a sure foundation, and although it was grievously shaken, yet it could not be utterly and finally overthrown.

## CHAPTER XV.

*This and the next chapter contain a prophecy of some great desolation coming upon the country of the Moabites, which bordered upon Judea, and had often been injurious and vexatious to it. We have here great lamentation made by the Moabites, and by the prophet himself for them, 1-5. The great calamities which should occasion and justify that lamentation, 6-9.*

A. M. 3278.  
B. C. 726.

**THE** <sup>a</sup>burden of Moab. Because in the night <sup>b</sup>Ar of Moab is laid waste, and <sup>1</sup>brought to silence; because in the night Kir of Moab is laid waste, and brought to silence;

<sup>2</sup> He is gone up to Bajith, and to Dibon, the high places, to weep: Moab shall howl over Nebo, and over Medeba: <sup>d</sup>on all their heads shall be baldness, and every beard cut off.

<sup>3</sup> In their streets they shall gird themselves with sackcloth: <sup>e</sup>on the tops of their houses, and

<sup>a</sup> Jer. xlviii. 1, &c.; Ezek. xxv. 8-11; Amos ii. 1.—<sup>b</sup> Num. xii. 28.—<sup>c</sup> Or, cut off.—<sup>d</sup> Chap. xvi. 12.—<sup>e</sup> Leviticus xxi. 5; Chap. iii. 24; xxii. 12; Jer. xlvii. 5; xlviii. 1, 37, 38; Ezek. vii. 18.—<sup>f</sup> Jer. xlviii. 38.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER XV.

Verse 1. *The burden of Moab*—A prophecy of the destruction of the Moabites, the inveterate and implacable enemies of the Jews, begun by the Assyrian, and finished by the Babylonian monarchs. This prophecy, which occupies this and the next chapter, very improperly separated from each other, makes the third discourse of this second part. The time of the delivery, and consequently of the completion of it, (which was to be in three years after,) is uncertain, neither of them being marked in the prophecy, nor 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 Salmanser 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 the principal strong places, Ar and Kir-haresh. Jeremiah has introduced much of this prophecy of Isaiah into his own larger prophecy against the same people, (chap. xlviii.) denouncing God's judgments on Moab, subsequent to the calamity here foretold, to be executed by Nebuchadnezzar." Bishop Lowth. *In the night*—Or, *in a night*, suddenly and unexpectedly, *Ar of Moab is laid waste*—The chief city of Moab, Num. xxi. 28. *Kir of Moab is laid waste*—Another eminent city of Moab, called more largely and fully, Kir-haresheth and Kir-haresh, Isa. xvi. 7, 11; Jer. xlviii. 31, 36.

Verse 2. *He is gone up to Bajith*—Which signifies a house. It is supposed to be the name of a place, so called from some eminent house or temple of their idols which was in it; *and to Dibon*—Another city of Moab; *to weep*—To offer their supplications with tears to their idols for help. *Moab shall howl over Nebo and Medeba*—Two considerable cities anciently belonging to the Moabites, from whom they were taken by the Amorites, and from them by

in their streets, every one shall howl, <sup>a</sup>weeping abundantly. A. M. 3278.  
B. C. 726.

<sup>4</sup> And Heshbon shall cry, <sup>f</sup>and Elealeh: their voice shall be heard *even* unto Jahaz: therefore the armed soldiers of Moab shall cry out; his life shall be grievous unto him.

<sup>5</sup> My heart shall cry out for Moab; <sup>3</sup>his fugitives shall flee unto Zoar, a <sup>b</sup>heifer of three years old: for <sup>i</sup>by the mounting up of Luhith with weeping shall they go it up; for in the way of Horonaim they shall raise up a cry of <sup>4</sup>destruction.

<sup>3</sup> Heb. descending into weeping, or coming down with weeping. <sup>f</sup> Chap. xvi. 19.—<sup>g</sup> Chap. xvi. 11; Jer. xlviii. 31.—<sup>h</sup> Or, to the borders thereof, even as a heifer.—<sup>b</sup> Chap. xvi. 14; Jer. xlviii. 34.—<sup>i</sup> Jer. xlviii. 5.—<sup>4</sup> Heb. breaking.

the Israelites; but were, it seems, recovered by the Moabites, in whose hands they now were. "The prophet so orders his discourse in this prophecy, as if, being placed on a high mountain, he beheld the army of the Assyrians, suddenly, and contrary to all expectation, directing their course toward Moab; and in this unforeseen attack, ravaging and plundering, rather than besieging, the principal cities and fortifications of this country; while the Moabites, astonished at the report of this event, burst forth into weeping and lamentation, hasten to the temples and altars of their god Chemosh, to implore his aid, making bare their heads, cutting off their hair, and filling all places with howling and lamentation, like desperate men; while some of them fall by the sword of the enemy, some of them flee toward Arabia, their goods, land, vineyards, &c., being left a spoil to the enemy." See Vitringa.

Verse 4. *And Heshbon shall cry, and Elealeh*—Two other Moabitish cities; of which see Num. xxi. 25, 26, and xxxii. 3, 37. *Their voice shall be heard unto Jahaz*—Another city in the utmost borders of Moab. *The armed soldiers shall cry out*—Even the warriors themselves, who should defend the state, shall lose all their spirit and courage, and join in the general lamentation and dismay: see Jer. xlviii. 34, 41. *His life shall be grievous unto him*—The Moabites shall generally long for death, to free them from those dreadful calamities which they perceive unavoidably coming upon them.

Verse 5. *My heart shall cry out for Moab*—"Hitherto the prophet had set forth the lamentations of the Moabites, but, seeing these future evils, as it were, present to his own mind, he compassionates their griefs, and declares his own participation of their sorrows." *His fugitives shall flee unto Zoar, &c.*—The meaning of this clause is thought to be, His fugitives shall cry, so as they may be heard unto Zoar; or, shall wander and cry as they go along the

A. M. 3278. 6 For the waters <sup>k</sup> of Nimrim shall  
B. C. 726. be <sup>6</sup> desolate: for the hay is withered  
away, the grass faileth, there is no green thing.

7 Therefore the abundance they have gotten,  
and that which they have laid up, shall they  
carry away to the <sup>6</sup> brook of the willows.

8 For the cry is gone round about the borders

<sup>k</sup> Num. xxxii. 36.—<sup>6</sup> Heb. *desolations*.—<sup>4</sup> Or, *valley*

way, even till they come to Zoar. *A heifer*—Or, *as a heifer*; as the words are translated Jer. xlviii. 34; that is, they shall send forth their cries, by weeping and lamenting, like a heifer. "*Three years old*, is mentioned only to denote a full-grown heifer, the lowing of which, naturalists have remarked, is deeper and more affecting than that of the male." Zoar was a town bordering upon Moab. *By the mounting up of Lahith*—It is not certain what place this was, but it is evident enough that it was some elevated tract, or ascent, in the extremity of Moab. Horonaim was also a city of Moab, situated probably in the descent from Luhith. *They shall raise up a cry of destruction*—Such a cry as men send forth when they are just falling into the pit of destruction. He signifies that the cry should be universal in all places where they should come, and reaching from one side of the country to the other.

Verses 6-8. *For the waters, &c.*—The prophet, in these verses, sets forth the causes of lamentation among the inhabitants of the southern part of Moab. The first is the desolation of their fruitful fields, verse 6. *The waters of Nimrim*, or, the waterish, or well-watered grounds, *shall be desolate*—Such grounds, being very fruitful, are commonly most inhabited and cultivated; but now they also, and much more the dry and barren grounds, should be desolate, and without inhabitant. *That which they have laid up, &c.*—Here we have a second cause of their grief: the property which they had acquired and reserved for their future use, and that of their offspring, should be seized and carried away by the Assyrians their enemies. *To the brook of the willows*—Or, rather, *to the valley of the willows*, as Bishop Lowth translates it, that is, to Babylon: see note on Psalm cxxxvii. 2. *The cry is gone round about the borders, &c.*—"The prophet, contemplating with the most lively imagination the consternation of all Moab, as if present to his view, scarcely satisfies himself in painting the scene. He repeats again the proposition, and supplies, by a general declara-

of Moab, the howling thereof unto A. M. 3278.  
Eglaim, and the howling thereof unto B. C. 726.  
Beer-elim.

9 For the waters of Dimon shall be full of blood: for I will bring <sup>7</sup> more upon Dimon, <sup>1</sup> lions upon him that escapeth of Moab, and upon the remnant of the land.

*of the Arabians*.—<sup>7</sup> Heb. *additions*.—<sup>1</sup> 2 Kings xvii. 25.

tion, what he might seem not to have expressed with sufficient perfection before. He therefore declares, that this lamentation, of which he speaks, shall not be private, nor peculiar to one place, or to a few, but common to all: and that the tempest shall not break upon this or that part of the country only, but shall afflict all Moab, every corner and boundary of it, and take in the whole land from Eglaim to Beer-elim, two cities in the extremities of Moab."—Vitringa.

Verse 9. *For the waters of Dimon*—This seems to be the same place with Dibon, mentioned verse 2; *shall be full of blood*—This is a third evil, and cause of lamentation; the great slaughter which the enemy should make of the people. *For I will bring more upon Dimon*—Hebrew, *I will place, or lay upon Dimon*, נוספות, *accessions, or additions*, that is, I will increase those waters by the torrents that shall flow into them from the blood of the slain. The expression is strong and elegant. Bishop Lowth, however, interprets the clause, "Yet will I bring more evils upon Dimon," that is, though the waters are full of blood, yet will I bring upon them further and greater evils. *Lions upon him that escapeth of Moab, &c.*—This is the fourth evil, the completion of all the rest, and the severest cause of their lamentation, that God would not even spare a remnant hereafter to restore and renew their fallen state; but would pursue them with his judgments to the last extremity, and send upon them, and on their desolate country, lions and other wild beasts, entirely to destroy all that remained. Vitringa, however, thinks that Nebuchadnezzar is pointed out in this clause; who, after the Moabites, reduced extremely low by the Assyrians, began to recruit themselves, should give the remnant of the nation to destruction, and complete the judgment which the Assyrian had begun: see Jer. iv. 7, and v. 6, and xlviii. 40. The Chaldee paraphrast must have so understood it, translating the word, which we render *lion, by king: A king with his army to destroy the Moabites.*

## CHAPTER XVI.

*The Moabites are exhorted to submit to the kings of Judah, and show kindness to the banished Jews, 1-5. They are threatened for their pride and arrogance, 6-8. The prophet bewails them, 9-11. Their judgment, 12-14.*

A. M. 3278. SEND <sup>a</sup>ye the lamb to the ruler  
B. C. 726. of the land <sup>b</sup>from <sup>1</sup>Sela <sup>2</sup>to the  
wilderness, unto the mount of the daughter of  
Zion.

2 For it shall be, *that*, as a wandering bird  
<sup>3</sup>cast out of the nest, *so* the daughters of Moab  
shall be at the fords of <sup>c</sup>Arnon.

3 <sup>4</sup>Take counsel, execute judgment; make

<sup>a</sup> 2 Kings iii. 4.—<sup>b</sup> 2 Kings xiv. 7.—<sup>1</sup> Heb. a rock.—<sup>2</sup> Or,  
Petra.—<sup>3</sup> Or, a nest forsaken.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER XVI.

Verses 1, 2. *Send ye the lamb, &c.*—The prophet continues his prophecy against Moab, and gives them counsel what to do to prevent, if possible, or at least to mitigate, the threatened judgment. First he advises them to be just to the house of David, and to pay the tribute they had formerly covenanted to pay to the kings of his line. David, it must be recollected, had subdued the Moabites, and made them tributaries to him, 2 Sam. viii. 2. Afterward they paid their tribute to the kings of Israel, 2 Kings iii. 4; which, it appears, was not less than 100,000 lambs annually. This it is likely had been discontinued, and neither paid to the kings of Israel nor those of Judah. Now it is thought the prophet here requires them to pay this tribute, or, at least, what they had covenanted with David to pay, to the king of Judah, who was now Hezekiah, that thereby they might at once do an act of neglected justice, and make him and the Jews their friends, which would be of great use to them in their calamity. These verses therefore are thus paraphrased by Vitranga: "Ye Moabites, who, subdued by David, and made tributary to his house and kingdom, have, with pride and arrogance, shaken off his yoke: placate in time, and render propitious to you, the Jews, and their king, by sending those lambs, which you owe to them as a tribute. Send them from Sela, or Petra, (which was most celebrated for its flocks, 2 Kings xiv. 7,) toward the desert, the desert near Jericho, a medium place between Sela and mount Zion, Josh. v. 10." Or, as the words may be rendered, *from Sela, of, or, in the wilderness.* "Pay this tribute, for it shall most certainly come to pass, that the daughters of the Moabites, like a wandering bird from a deserted nest, driven from their seats, must somewhere seek a place of safety in the great calamity which shall befall their nation. It is therefore now time to solicit the friendship of the Jews, and to remember the duty owing to them, but so long omitted; that when expelled from your own habitations, you may be received kindly by them, and dwell hospitably in their land, and under the shadow of their kings." Some, however, understand the prophet as advising them to send a lamb for a sacrifice unto God, the ruler of the land of the Moabites, as well as of that of the Jews; or the ruler of the earth, as ארץ is commonly rendered: to him who is the God of the whole earth, as he is called, chap. liv. 5. *Of all the kingdoms of the earth, chap. xxxvii. 16.* As if he had said, Make

thy shadow as the night in the midst  
of the noon-day; hide the outcasts;  
bewray not him that wandereth.

4 Let mine outcasts dwell with thee, Moab;  
be thou a covert to them from the face of the  
spoiler: for the <sup>5</sup>extortioner is at an end, the  
spoiler ceaseth, <sup>6</sup>the oppressors are consumed  
out of the land.

<sup>c</sup> Num. xxi. 13.—<sup>4</sup> Heb. bring.—<sup>5</sup> Heb. wringer.—<sup>6</sup> Heb.  
the treaders down.

your peace with God, by sacrifice, for all your injuries done to him and to his people. *The fords of Arnon* was the border of the land of Moab, where their daughters are supposed to be with a design to flee out of their own land, though they knew not whither.

Verses 3, 4. *Take counsel, &c.*—We have here the second counsel given to the Moabites, which "contains a complex of various offices, equity, justice, humanity, to be exercised toward those of the Israelites whom the Assyrian affliction had driven, or should drive, to their borders and cities, and who should seek refuge among them: which counsel is so given to the Moabites, by the prophet, as evidently to upbraid them for the fault of having neglected these offices; the pernicious consequences of which they were sure to feel in the ensuing calamities, if they altered not so bad a practice."—Dodd. *Execute judgment*—Hebrew, עשׂ פלייר, *make a distinction.* The expression denotes that act of the mind whereby it "discriminates truth from falsehood, right from wrong;" as if he had said, "Consider what becomes you, what is your duty in this case; what you owe to exiles and outcasts, both by the laws of equity and reason, of humanity and brotherly love." *Make thy shadow as the night*—Or, as the shadow of the night, large and dark, as the shadow of the earth is in the night-season. "Afford my exiled and afflicted people, who shall flee to you for safety, a safe retreat, defence, and succour against the extreme, the noon-day heat of the sharp persecution which so heavily oppresses them." The idea is taken from the comfort of a shady situation in those hot countries; and the metaphor is fully explained in what follows. Vitranga is of opinion that the prophet here refers to the distress of the Reubenites, Gadites, and Manassites under Tiglath-pileser. But it is more probable that he refers to the distress which should be caused in Judah by Pekah and Rezin, in the days of Ahaz, (chap. ix. 1,) or that by the Assyrians, when Sennacherib came up against the defenced cities of Judah, and took them, chap. xxxvi. 1; during which distresses, undoubtedly, many of the Jews sought shelter among the Moabites and other neighbouring nations. *For the extortioner is at an end*—Hebrew, אפס הכץ, *the presser, wringer, or oppressor hath left off*, or, as Bishop Lowth translates it, *is no more*; that is, shall shortly be destroyed, and my people shall ere long be restored, and then thou wilt not lose the fruit of thy kindness

A. M. 3278. 5 And in mercy <sup>d</sup> shall the throne  
B. C. 726. be <sup>7</sup> established: and he shall sit upon  
it in truth in the tabernacle of David, <sup>o</sup> judging,  
and seeking judgment, and hasting righteous-  
ness.

6 ¶ We have heard of the <sup>f</sup> pride of Moab; *he is very proud: even of his haughtiness, and his pride, and his wrath: <sup>g</sup> but his lies shall not be so.*

7 Therefore shall Moab <sup>h</sup> howl for Moab, every one shall howl: for the foundations <sup>i</sup> of Kir-hareseth shall ye <sup>o</sup> mourn; surely *they are stricken.*

8 For <sup>k</sup> the fields of Heshbon languish, and <sup>l</sup> the vine of Sibmah: the lords of the heathen have broken down the principal plants thereof, they are come *even unto Jazer, they wan-*

<sup>d</sup> Dan. vii. 14, 27; Mic. iv. 7; Luke i. 33.—<sup>7</sup> Or, *prepared.*  
<sup>e</sup> Psa. lxxii. 2; xcvi. 13; xciii. 9.—<sup>f</sup> Jer. xlvi. 29; Zeph. ii. 10.—<sup>g</sup> Chap. xxviii. 15.—<sup>h</sup> Jer. xlvi. 20.—<sup>i</sup> 2 Kings iii. 25.—<sup>o</sup> Or, *mutter.*

The bishop renders the next two clauses, "The destroyer ceaseth, he that trampled under foot is perished from the land." The present tense is put for the future, as it often is in prophecies. Thus "the prophet supports his counsel by a reason, the sum of which is, that oppression should cease, the spoilers of the earth be cut off, and the throne of clemency and grace established, on which a king of righteousness and equity should sit."

Verse 5. *And in mercy*—By my mercy. I am now punishing their sins, yet I will deliver them for my own mercy's sake. *The throne shall be established*—The kingdom of Judah. *He*—Their king; *shall sit upon it in truth*—That is, firmly and constantly; for truth is often put for the stability and certainty of a thing, as 2 Chron. xxxii. 1; Prov. xi. 18. *In the tabernacle of David*—In the house, or palace, which is called a *tent, or tabernacle*, with respect to the unsettledness of David's house, which now indeed was more like a tabernacle than a strong palace. *Seeking judgment*—Searching out the truth of things with care and diligence; *and hasting righteousness*—Neither denying nor yet delaying justice. Interpreters vary greatly concerning the application of this passage. Some refer it entirely to Hezekiah, a pious and just king, whose throne, after the chastisement of Sennacherib in Judea, was established in glory; others refer it immediately to the Messiah; and others again to both: to Hezekiah as the type, and to the Messiah, in a more sublime sense, as the antitype; and this seems to be nearly the opinion of Vitringa, who thinks that while the prophet was speaking of the advantages of the kingdom of Hezekiah, he was carried forward to a contemplation of the kingdom of Christ, and made use of such phrases as, in their full extent, can only be applied to that kingdom.

Verses 6, 7. *We have heard of the pride of Moab,*

dered *through* the wilderness: her A. M. 3278.  
branches are <sup>o</sup> stretched out, they are B. C. 726.  
gone over the sea.

9 Therefore <sup>m</sup> I will bewail with the weeping of Jazer the vine of Sibmah: I will water thee with my tears, <sup>n</sup> O Heshbon, and Elealeh: for <sup>10</sup> the shouting for thy summer-fruits and for thy harvest is fallen.

10 And <sup>o</sup> gladness is taken away, and joy out of the plentiful field; and in the vineyards there shall be no singing, neither shall there be shouting: the treading shall tread out no wine in *their presses*; I have made *their vintage*—shouting to cease.

11 Wherefore <sup>p</sup> my bowels shall sound like a harp for Moab, and mine inward parts for Kir-hareseth.

<sup>k</sup> Chap. xxiv. 7.—<sup>l</sup> Verse 9.—<sup>o</sup> Or, *plucked up.*—<sup>m</sup> Jer. xlvi. 32.—<sup>n</sup> Chap. xv. 4.—<sup>10</sup> Or, *the alarm is fallen upon, &c.*  
<sup>o</sup> Chap. xxiv. 8; Jer. xlvi. 33.—<sup>p</sup> Chap. xv. 5; lxiii. 15; Jer. xlvi. 36.

&c.—The prophet, having spoken to the Moabites, now turns his speech to God's people. The sense is, I do not expect that my counsels will have any good effect upon Moab; they will still carry themselves insolently and outrageously. *His lies shall not be so*—His vain imaginations, and false and crafty counsels, shall not take effect. *Therefore shall Moab howl for Moab*—One Moabite shall howl or lament to or for another; *for the foundations of Kir-hareseth*—An ancient and eminent city of Moab, called Kir, chap. xv. 1, and Kir-hareseth, verse 11, which was preserved when their other cities were ruined, and therefore the destruction of it was more lamented. *Surely they are stricken*—Or *broken, overthrown or destroyed.*

Verses 8–10. *The fields of Heshbon languish*—Either for want of rain, or, rather, because no men should be left to till and manure them. *And the vine of Sibmah*—These vines and those of Heshbon were greatly celebrated, and held in high repute with all the great men and princes of that and the neighbouring countries, and were propagated from thence, not only over all the country of Moab, but to the sea of Sodom; yea, scions of them, as is signified in the last clause of this verse, were sent even beyond the sea into foreign countries: but the prophet here foretels, that *the lords of the heathen*—That is, the Assyrians or Chaldeans, the great rulers of the eastern nations, would soon destroy them, and all other productions of the land; and then their shouting and singing for the vintage or harvest would utterly cease, as is expressed verses 9, 10.

Verses 11, 12. *Wherefore my bowels shall sound as a harp*—Through compassion. In excessive grief, the bowels are sometimes rolled together, so as to make an audible noise. Hereby he signifies the greatness of their approaching calamity, which, being so grievous to him, must needs be intolerable to

A. M. 3278. 12 And it shall come to pass, when  
B. C. 726. it is seen that Moab is weary on <sup>q</sup>the high place, that he shall come to his sanctuary to pray; but he shall not prevail.

13 This is the word that the LORD hath spoken concerning Moab since that time.

<sup>q</sup> Chap. xv. 2.—<sup>r</sup> Chap. xxi. 16.

them. And when it is seen that Moab is weary, &c.—When it shall appear to them and others, that all their other devotions are vain and ineffectual; he shall come to his sanctuary to pray—To the temple of his great god Chemosh; but he shall not prevail—His god can neither hear nor help him. In other words, the Moabites, “as their last efforts, shall go to their altars, there to perform their sacred rites to appease the anger of their deity: but, wearied herewith, they shall enter into some more sacred and celebrated sanctuary of their god, to pour forth their earnest supplications and prayers, but shall obtain nothing; thus proving the vanity of their superstition, and the imbecility of those false deities on whom they trusted.”

Verses 13, 14. This is the word that the Lord hath spoken—This prophecy, hitherto related; since that time—Since the beginning of God’s revelation to me concerning Moab hitherto; or, rather, a good while ago, for so the Hebrew, *מאז*, *meaz*, signifies, chap. xlv. 8, and elsewhere. This judgment, says the prophet, was denounced against Moab in former times, particularly by Amos, (chap. li. 1,) and is now confirmed, and the particular time specified when it shall be accomplished. For now the Lord hath spoken—Hath made this further discovery of his mind to me; saying, Within three years—To be computed, it seems, from the time of the delivery of this prophecy; as the years of a hireling—That is, within three years precisely counted; for hirelings

14 But now the LORD hath spoken, saying, Within three years, <sup>r</sup>as the years of a hireling, and the glory of Moab shall be contemned, with all that great multitude; and the remnant shall be very small and <sup>11</sup> feeble.

<sup>11</sup> Or, not many.

are very punctual in observing the time for which they are hired; and the glory of Moab shall be contemned—Their strength, and wealth, and other things in which they glory, shall be made contemptible to those who formerly admired them; with all that great multitude—With the great numbers of their people, of which they boasted. And the remnant shall be very small and feeble—Comparatively to what they were before. Vitringa is of opinion, that this prophecy was delivered at the same time with that preceding, that is, in the year when Ahaz died, at which time the Israelites, as well as the Jews, stood much in need of the kindness of the Moabites; so that it had its completion in the third year of King Hezekiah, namely, from the death of his father, which was really the fourth year of his reign, when Shalmaneser, coming against the Ephraimites, on a sudden attacked the Moabites, and plundered and destroyed their cities: see 2 Kings xviii. 9. This is also Bishop Lowth’s opinion, as has been stated in the note on chap. xv. 1. It may, however, be understood of some other great blow given to the Moabites; perhaps by Sennacherib, or by his son Esarhaddon; (in which case Isaiah must have delivered this prophecy some years later;) from which blow, notwithstanding, they in a little time recovered themselves, and flourished again, and continued so to do, till Nebuchadnezzar completed their destruction according to the prophecy of Jeremiah, chapter xlviii. 1, &c.

CHAPTER XVII.

Damascus, Samaria, Israel, and their cities, to be ruined by the Assyrians, 1–5. A remnant shall consider and repent, 6–8. The rest plagued for their impiety, 9–11. The wo of Israel’s enemies, 12–14.

A. M. 3263. THE <sup>a</sup>burden of Damascus. Be-  
B. C. 741. hold, Damascus is taken away

from being a city, and it shall be a ruinous heap. A. M. 3263. B. C. 741.

<sup>a</sup> Jer. xlix. 23; Amos i. 3; Zech. ix. 1; 2 Kings xvi. 9.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XVII.

Verse 1. The burden of Damascus—Both of that city and kingdom. But though “this prophecy, by its title, should relate only to Damascus, 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 is the fourth discourse of the second book of Isaiah’s prophecies, and “was delivered

probably soon after the prophecies of the seventh and eighth chapters, in the beginning of the reign of Ahaz. And it was fulfilled by Tiglath-pileser’s taking Damascus, and carrying the people captives to Kir, (2 Kings xvi. 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,

A. M. 3263. 2 The cities of Aroer *are* forsaken :  
B. C. 741. they shall be for flocks, which shall  
lie down, and <sup>b</sup> none shall make *them* afraid.

3 ° The fortress also shall cease from Ephraim,  
and the kingdom from Damascus, and the  
remnant of Syria: they shall be as the glory  
of the children of Israel, saith the LORD of  
hosts.

4 And in that day it shall come to pass, *that*  
the glory of Jacob shall be made thin, and <sup>d</sup> the  
fatness of his flesh shall wax lean.

5 ° And it shall be as when the harvest-man

<sup>b</sup> Jer. vii. 33.—<sup>c</sup> Chap. vii. 16; viii. 4.—<sup>d</sup> Chap. x. 16.

effected a few years after by Shalmaneser:" see  
2 Kings xvii. 3, and Bishop Lowth. *Behold Damas-  
cus is taken away from being a city*—It was, how-  
ever, afterward rebuilt, and prophesied against by  
Jeremiah, (chap. xlix. 23,) and by Zechariah, chap.  
ix. 1.

Verse 2. *The cities of Aroer are forsaken*—  
"What has Aroer," says Bishop Lowth, "on the  
river Arnon, (see Deut. ii. 36,) to do with Damascus?"  
He therefore follows the LXX., (who, he supposes,  
for ארער, Aroer, read ארר ארר, εις τον αιωνα,) and ren-  
ders the clause, *The cities are deserted for ever*.  
Grotius, however, thinks the present reading of the  
Hebrew text is right, and that this Aroer was a tract  
of ground in Syria, (a valley, say some, which lay  
between the mountains of Libanus and Anti-Libanus,  
) and not that Aroer which was on the confines  
of Moab and Ammon, and part of the possession of  
the Reubenites and Gadites. But as Tiglath-pileser  
carried the Reubenites and Gadites into captivity,  
(see 1 Chron. v. 26,) and made the country, which  
they had possessed, desolate, why may not the very  
Aroer, which was on the confines of Moab, be  
meant, and mentioned here, as Ephraim is in the  
next verse, as being confederate with Syria against  
Judah? *And none shall make them afraid*—Because  
the land shall be desolate, and destitute of men who  
might disturb them.

Verses 3-6. *The fortress also shall cease from  
Ephraim*—The meaning may be, that Damascus  
being destroyed, that fortress or protection, in which  
the Ephraimites had placed their confidence, should  
be taken; or, that at what time Damascus should be  
overthrown, and deprived of all government and  
power, the Ephraimites also should be weakened,  
and deprived of their chief fortresses by the Assy-  
rians; which latter seems to be the true sense: see  
Hos. x. 14; Mic. i. 6. The reader will observe, the  
Syrians of Damascus bordered upon the Ephraim-  
ites; and though they had long lived in a state of  
hostility with them, yet their King Rezin, on receiv-  
ing some injuries from Uzziah, king of Judah, had  
found means to unite them with him in an expedition  
against Jerusalem. As the design of that expedition  
was wholly frustrated, (see chap. vii. 3-9,) so it hast-  
ened the destruction of both those nations: for the

gathereth the corn, and reapeth the <sup>A. M. 3263.</sup>  
ears with his arm; and it shall be as he <sup>B. C. 741.</sup>  
that gathereth ears in the valley of Rephaim.

6 ¶ Yet gleanings-grapes shall be <sup>B. C. 741.</sup>  
left in it, as the shaking of an olive-  
tree, two or three berries in the top of the up-  
permost bough, four or five in the outmost  
fruitful branches thereof, saith the LORD God  
of Israel.

7 At that day shall a man look to his Maker,  
and his eyes shall have respect to the Holy  
One of Israel.

<sup>e</sup> Jer. li. 33.—<sup>f</sup> Chap. xxiv. 13.—<sup>g</sup> Mic. vii. 7.

Assyrians, who were called in by Ahaz to his help,  
and who had a long time threatened Syria, took this  
occasion to seize and destroy Damascus, and trans-  
port the Damascene Syrians to Assyria and Media,  
which same fate, partly at the same time, and partly  
a little after, befell the Ephraimites also; a common  
cause involving these nations in a common calamity.  
*In that day, the glory of Jacob shall be made thin*  
—Hebrew, רר, *attenuabitur, shall be diminished,  
emptied, or exhausted. And the fatness of his flesh  
shall wax lean*—Their principal citizens shall be  
spoiled of their dignity and wealth, and carried, with  
their property, into Assyria. *And it shall be as  
when a harvest-man gathereth the corn*—Taking  
care, as far as may be, that all be gathered in, and  
nothing left. So shall the whole body of the ten  
tribes be carried captive, some few gleanings only  
being left of them as it is in harvest. *As he that  
gathereth ears in the valley of Rephaim*—A very  
fruitful place near Jerusalem. Thus "the prophet  
explains the judgment upon Ephraim by two similes,  
and both elegant; the first taken from a beautiful  
body reduced by a consumption, meaning that their  
state should be deprived, not only of its chief citizens,  
but of all its power, wealth, and honour; that what-  
ever it formerly possessed, which gave excellence  
and beauty, should entirely waste away and be con-  
sumed. The second simile is taken from the autumnal  
gathering in of fruits, or from that fertile harvest,  
whether of corn, wine, or oil, which used to be  
gathered in the valley of Rephaim." *Yet gleanings  
grapes shall be left in it, &c.*—"Whereas the  
reapers are wont to leave a few ears of corn, and  
those that gather grapes and olives, a few of the  
worst bunches of the grapes, and of the worst ber-  
ries of the olives, so, from the harvest, which the  
Assyrian should reap in Ephraim, a few men, and  
those of the least consequence, should be left as a  
remnant in the land." This accordingly came to  
pass: some few Israelites were left after their cap-  
tivity, who joined themselves to Judah, and were  
carried captive to Babylon with them, from whence  
also they returned with them.

Verses 7, 8. *At that day shall a man*—Those few  
men that are left; *look to his Maker*—They shall  
sincerely respect, trust in, and worship God, and

A. M. 3263. 8 And he shall not look to the al-  
B. C. 741. tars, the work of his hands, neither shall respect *that* which his fingers have made, either the groves or the <sup>1</sup> images.

9 ¶ In that day shall his strong cities be as a forsaken bough, and an uppermost branch, which they left because of the children of Israel : and there shall be desolation.

10 Because thou hast forgotten <sup>h</sup>the God of thy salvation, and hast not been mindful of the Rock of thy strength, therefore shalt thou plant

<sup>1</sup> Or, *sun-images*.—<sup>h</sup> Psa. lxxviii. 19.—<sup>3</sup> Or, *removed in the day of inheritance, and there shall be deadly sorrow.*

God only. In other words, at that time, when God shall execute these severe judgments upon the Ephraimites, some, being fully convinced by experience that they had been deceived by their false prophets, and that their worship of idols had turned out as the true prophets foretold, shall turn themselves, by sincere repentance, to the God of their fathers, and, renouncing the errors of former times, and all their sins, shall worship and serve him in true faith and obedience.

Verse 9. *In that day*—The day of Jacob's trouble, of which he spake, verse 4; *shall his strong cities be as a forsaken bough*—The cities belonging to the ten tribes shall stand solitary and destitute of inhabitants, all the country about them being destroyed; *and an uppermost branch, which they left because of the children of Israel*—“The sense,” says Lowth, “is here imperfect: most expositors understand the words of the Assyrians, that they left some cities with a few inhabitants in the kingdom of Israel, that a remnant of that people might be preserved: see verse 6. But the copy which the LXX. followed, instead of the Hebrew words, החרש והאמרי, *hachresh vehaamir*, that is, *bough and uppermost branch*, must have read החוי והאמרי, *hachivi vehaemori*, the *Hirites and Amorites*: for they translate the verse thus: *Thy cities shall be forsaken, as when the Hirites and Amorites forsook them*, because of the *children of Israel*. Which reading gives a plain and full sense to the text.” Thus also his son, Bishop Lowth: “The translation of the LXX. has happily preserved what seems to be the true reading of the text, as it stood in the copies of their time. And it is remarkable, that many commentators, who never thought of admitting the reading of the LXX., yet understand the passage as referring to that very event, which their version expresses: so that, it is plain, nothing can be more suitable to the context.” Thus understood, the prophet's words were calculated to awaken the Israelites to a serious belief of this threatening, as they reminded them that God had inflicted the same judgment upon the Canaanites, and for the same sins of which they were guilty: and therefore gave them reason to apprehend, according to the prediction of Moses, that as they committed the same abominations, the land

pleasant plants, and shalt set it with  
strange slips : A. M. 3263  
B. C. 741.

11 In the day shalt thou make thy plant to grow, and in the morning shalt thou make thy seed to flourish : *but* the harvest *shall be* <sup>2</sup>a heap in the day of grief and of desperate sorrow.

12 ¶ Wo to the <sup>3</sup>multitude of many people, *which* make a noise <sup>1</sup>like the noise of the seas ; and to the rushing of nations, *that* make a rushing like the rushing of <sup>4</sup>mighty waters !

<sup>2</sup> Or, *noise*.—<sup>1</sup> Jer. vi. 23.—<sup>4</sup> Or, *many*.

would spew them out as it spewed out the nations which were before them.

Verses 10, 11. *Because thou, O Israel, hast forgotten the God of thy salvation*—That God, who was thy only sure defence; *therefore shalt thou plant pleasant plants*—Fetched from far countries, and therefore highly esteemed. The sense is, Thou shalt use much industry and cost, but to no purpose, as it follows. *In the day shalt thou make thy plant to grow, &c.*—Beginning early in the morning, thou shalt, from day to day, use all care and diligence, that what thou hast planted and sown may thrive; *but the harvest shall be a heap, &c.*—But in the time of your grief, or when this grievous calamity shall come, all your harvest shall be but one heap, very inconsiderable in itself, and easily carried away by your enemies: in other words, “when thou expectest to reap the fruit of thy labours, thou shalt find nothing but loss and disappointment.”—Lowth. See the margin, where the *day of inheritance* means the time of enjoying any thing which we have taken pains for.

Verses 12–14. *Wo, &c.*—“We have here the third member of this prophetic discourse, and the first part of the section concerning the unexpected overthrow of the Assyrians. After the prophet had exhibited the divine judgments upon the Syrians, (verses 1–3,) and upon the Ephraimites, (verses 4–11,) he immediately beholds the Assyrians themselves, after they had destroyed both those states, (that is, eight years after,) advancing against the Jews, that they might oppress and subject to them their state also. But, at the same time, he sees their grievous and sudden fall, that is, the fall of Sennacherib; for almost all ancient and modern interpreters are agreed that this prophecy refers to him.” *Wo to the multitude of many people*—Combined against Judah, namely, the Assyrians, whose army consisted of vast numbers, and of men of several nations. *Which make a noise like the noise of the seas*—Which invade my land and people with great force and fury, as the sea assaults the shore, or pours itself upon the land, when it has made a breach in the banks which before confined it. *And to the rushing of nations*—Hebrew, שון לאתי, *tumultuatio populorum*, the noise, rage, and impetuous fury of the people of dif-

A. M. 3263. 13 The nations shall rush like the  
B. C. 741. rushing of many waters: but God shall rebuke them, and they shall flee far off, and shall be chased as the chaff of the mountains before the wind, and like a

<sup>1</sup> Psa. ix. 5.—<sup>1</sup> Psa. lxxxiii. 13; Hos. xiii. 3.

ferent countries united in one mighty overwhelming army. Bishop Lowth translates the clause, *And to the roaring of the nations, who make a roaring like the roaring of mighty waters. Like the roaring of mighty waters do the nations roar.* And he observes that, "though this simile is taken from a common appearance, it is wrought up with such an elegant boldness and inexpressible propriety, that we are at a loss whether we should admire most the judgment or sublimity of the sacred writer." *But God shall rebuke them*—Not in words, but in deeds; shall discomfit and overthrow them. But the Hebrew, וַיִּנְחַם בּוֹ יְהוָה, should rather be rendered, *But God rebukes him, and he flees from far*, namely, Sennacherib, who is here immediately pointed out, one hundred and eighty-five thousand of his army being smitten with instantaneous death. The prophet's idea seems to have been taken from God's rebuke of the sea, when the Israelites passed through out of Egypt. *And they shall be chased as the chaff of the mountains*—The Jews used to thrash and winnow their corn on hills and places exposed to the wind, which dispersed and blew away the chaff; and like a rolling thing—Which is moved by the slightest touch, and much more by a violent wind. The word, which is גּוֹלְגֵל, is rendered *thistle-down* in the margin, and *gossamer*, which is the down of any plants, by Bishop Lowth. The metaphor shows

rolling thing before the whirlwind. A. M. 3263.  
B. C. 741. 14 And behold at evening-tide trouble; and before the morning he is not. This is the portion of them that spoil us, and the lot of them that rob us.

<sup>5</sup> Or, *thistle-down.*

with what ease God overcomes his enemies. *And behold at even-tide trouble*—Great terror and consternation among God's people for fear of their enemies; and before the morning he is not—Their enemies are cut off by the hand of God. The prophet here evidently "alludes to the time and circumstances of the judgment which was inflicted on the Assyrian by night, and indeed in one night. At even-tide the Jews were certainly in great terror, perplexity, and perturbation, when besieged by the Assyrians: in the morning, behold these their enemies were all dead corpses. Such is the sudden and unexpected deliverance which God sometimes grants to his people, when their enemies are ready to devour them: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. This is the portion of them that spoil us, &c.—This is a triumphant conclusion, uttered by the prophet in the name of God's people. "It holds good in all ages of the church; none can endeavour to remove this stone from its place, but they will find hurt to themselves, Zech. xii. 3. In this one example we see the fall of all the great empires and kingdoms of the world which oppose the kingdom of Christ, and the event of all the attempts of Satan tending to its destruction: in the evening, confusion; in the morning, serenity, arising by divine grace on the church." See Vitringa.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The prophecy contained in this chapter, says Bishop Lowth, "is one of the most obscure 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." Hence, as may be easily supposed, this prophecy has been very differently interpreted by learned men, with whose discordant opinions, however, we shall not trouble the reader, but rather shall lay before him that exposition which seems to be attended with the fewest difficulties, and therefore to be most probable. Vitringa, who has bestowed much labour upon it, considers it as being closely connected with the preceding prophecy concerning the destruction of the Assyrian army, of which he thinks it contains an enarration. According to him, we have a description of Egypt, 1, 2. A command to send messengers to them, as also to other nations, to inform them concerning this great work of divine justice to be effected on the Assyrian power, 3-6. The glory that would hereby redound to God, 7.

A. M. 3290. WO <sup>a</sup> to the land shadowing with  
B. C. 714. wings, which is beyond the  
rivers of Ethiopia:

<sup>a</sup> Chap. xx. 4, 5; Ezek. xxx.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XVIII.

Verse 1. *Wo to the land*—Or, rather, as Bishop Lowth renders it, and as the particle וְהוּ, here used, undoubtedly means, chap. lv. 1, and elsewhere, *Ho!*

2 That sendeth ambassadors by the A. M. 3290.  
sea, even in vessels of bulrushes upon B. C. 714.  
the waters, saying, Go, ye swift messengers,

4, 5, 9; Zeph. ii. 12; iii. 10.

to the land. The words seem evidently to contain an address to the land here meant, which is supposed to be Egypt, because of the attributes under which it is spoken of. 1st, It is said to be shadowing, or

A. M. 3290. to <sup>b</sup> a nation <sup>1</sup> scattered and peel-  
B. C. 714. ed, to a people terrible from their

beginning hitherto; <sup>2</sup> a <sup>3</sup> nation meted A. M. 3290.  
out and trodden down, <sup>4</sup> whose B. C. 714.

<sup>b</sup> Verse 7.—<sup>1</sup> Or, *outspread and polished.*—<sup>2</sup> Or, *a nation that meteth out, and treadeth down.*

<sup>3</sup> Hebrew, *a nation of line, line, and treading under foot.*—<sup>4</sup> Or, *whose land the rivers despise.*

*shadowed with wings*, a description which, it is thought, agrees to Egypt, as connected with Ethiopia, because it is situated between two mountains on the eastern and western side of the Nile, which, as it were, overshadow it, especially where it is most narrow, toward Ethiopia, and which unfold themselves more and more in the manner of two wings, from the south toward the north. Thus Vitringa interprets the first member of the prophet's description. But the Hebrew word, which our translators render *shadowing*, properly signifies a sort of timbrel, called in Latin *sistrum*, which was an instrument of music peculiar to the Egyptians in their sacrifices to Isis; and the two words here used, צלצל כנפים, *tziltzal kenaphim*, are interpreted by some, *a winged timbrel* or *cymbal*, which is an exact description of the Egyptian *sistrum*, and therefore is supposed to be made use of here as a distinguishing epithet of Egypt, termed *the land of the winged timbrel*, or *cymbal*. This interpretation is adopted by Bishop Lowth and many others. Both interpretations agree in this, that Egypt is the land intended; which is still more manifest from the second attribute mentioned as descriptive of it, that it is *beyond*, or rather *borders upon, the rivers of Ethiopia*, the word כְּעֵבֶר, signifying either *on this side*, or *on the further side*. The word כוש, *chush*, here rendered Ethiopia, sometimes signifies Arabia, and some interpreters think some rivers of a part of Arabia are meant, beyond which Egypt lay; but Vitringa, Bishop Lowth, and many others, understand the prophet as speaking of the Nile, and some great and celebrated rivers which flow into it from Ethiopia, and very much increase its waters. It is probable, that either the eastern branches of the lower Nile, the boundary of Egypt toward Arabia, are intended, or the parts of the upper Nile toward Ethiopia. It is thought the prophet the rather denominates Egypt from this epithet, because at this time it was under the power of the Ethiopians.

Verse 2. *That sendeth ambassadors by sea*—That is accustomed to send, or at this time is sending, ambassadors to strengthen themselves with leagues and alliances, or to encourage their confederates; *in vessels of bulrushes upon the waters*—This circumstance agrees perfectly well with Egypt; Pliny, Lucan, Diodorus Siculus, and Strabo, all affirming that the Egyptians commonly used on the Nile a light sort of ships, or boats, made of the reed papyrus. *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 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; travellers, 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 excite their attention to the promised visible interposition of Providence.” Thus Bishop Lowth; who further says, “I suppose that this 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.” *To a nation scattered*—Or *stretched out*, as many translate נִכְשָׁן. “Egypt, that is, the fruitful part of it, 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.” *And peeled*—Or rather *smoothed*, as נִמְרָט may be rendered. This, Bishop Lowth thinks, “either relates to the practice of the Egyptian priests, who made their bodies smooth by shaving off the hair; or, rather, to the country's being made smooth, perfectly plain and level, by the overflowing of the Nile.” *Terrible from the beginning hitherto*—This also well suits the Egyptians, whose kingdom was one of the most ancient, and continued long to be extremely formidable. And they were wont to boast extravagantly of the antiquity and greatness of their kingdom, asserting that gods were their first kings, and then demi-gods, and lastly men. *A nation meted out and trodden down*—Hebrew, נִי קוּ וְנִכְרָסָה, *a nation of line, line, and treading down*. See the margin. The prophet is here generally supposed to refer, 1st, To the necessity which the Egyptians were frequently under of having recourse to mensuration, in order to determine the boundaries of their lands, after the inundations of the Nile; which is thought by some to have given birth to the science of geometry; (Strabo, lib. 17;) and, 2d, To a peculiar method of tillage in use among them. “Both Herodotus and Diodorus 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 to tread in the seed; and without any further care expected the harvest.” *Whose land the rivers have spoiled*—The word נִבְזָא, here used, may either be rendered *spoiled*, or *despised*. It seems plainly to relate to the overflowing of the Nile; which, as it were, claims Egypt to itself, while it overwhelms with its waters the whole land, except the cities and towns, secured by the banks raised about them. It is true, this overflow is rather an advantage than a disadvantage to

A. M. 3290. land the rivers have spoiled!  
B. C. 714.

3 All ye inhabitants of the world, and dwellers on the earth, see ye, ° when he lifeth up an ensign on the mountains; and when he bloweth a trumpet, hear ye.

4 For so the LORD said unto me, I will take my rest, and I will ° consider in my dwelling-place like a clear heat ° upon herbs, and like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest.

5 For afore the harvest, when the bud is perfect, and the sour grape is ripening in the flower, he shall both cut off the sprigs with

° Chapter v. 26.—° Or, regard my set dwelling.—° Or, after rain.

the land, as it renders it fruitful; nevertheless it puts the inhabitants to very great inconveniences during its continuance.

Verse 3. *All ye inhabitants of the world, &c., see ye*—Take notice of what I say, and what God will do: Or, *Ye shall see*. “We have here the declaration made to the other people of the world, to expect the fall of the Assyrian. God invites all the people of the earth to this sight; that, as soon as they should observe the sign appointed by God, namely, the standards lifted up by Sennacherib, on the mountains of Judea, and the sound of the trumpets of the hostile army preparing to besiege Jerusalem, they should attend to the execution of this divine judgment.”—Vitringa.

Verse 4. *For so the Lord said unto me*—That is, revealed this thing to me from his secret purposes; *I will take my rest*—While the Assyrian is forming designs for the destruction of my people, I will seem to rest, as if I had no regard for their preservation. The reader will observe, God is said in Scripture to rest, or sit still, when he does not work on the behalf of a person or people; as, on the contrary, he is said to bestir himself when he acts for them. *And I will consider in my dwelling-place*—Namely, in the heavens, what time will be most proper for the execution of my purpose upon these proud blasphemers of my name, and persecutors of my people. This is spoken after the manner of men. *Like a clear heat upon herbs, &c.*—The meaning of these metaphorical expressions is, that God would not so rest as to lay aside all care and regard for his people; but that he rested with the best and most benevolent purpose of comforting them after this affliction, and of giving them refreshment, like that of a serene heat after a heavy rain, or a cloud of dew in the time of harvest.

Verse 5. *For afore the harvest*—Here the Lord informs his people how he would act toward those of their adversaries, for whom he had prepared this great slaughter. He compares them to a vine, which, after it hath sent forth its buds, then its

pruning-hooks, and take away and A. M. 3290.  
cut down the branches. B. C. 714.

6 They shall be left together unto the fowls of the mountains, and to the beasts of the earth: and the fowls shall summer upon them, and all the beasts of the earth shall winter upon them.

7 ¶ In that time ° shall the present be brought unto the LORD of hosts of a people ° scattered and peeled, and from a people terrible from their beginning hitherto; a nation meted out and trodden under foot, whose land the rivers have spoiled, to the place of the name of the LORD of hosts, the mount Zion.

° Psalm lxxviii. 31; lxxii. 10; Chapter xvi. 1; Zeph. iii. 10; Mal. i. 11.—° Or, outspread and polished, verse 2.

flowers, and the flowers the sour grapes, which too were beginning to ripen, is suddenly stripped of its shoots and branches by the pruning-hook of the vine-dresser, who leaves them, burdened with grapes, a prey to the fowls of heaven, and the beasts of the earth. By which allegory, continued through this and the sixth verse, the prophet means, that, when every thing respecting the Assyrians was in the most promising situation, when Sennacherib's great designs seemed almost mature, and just ready to be crowned with success, his mighty efforts should be in a moment frustrated, his vast expectations rendered abortive, and the chief part of his immense army made a prey to the beasts and birds.

Verse 7. *In that time*—After the execution of this signal judgment; *shall the present be brought unto the Lord, &c.*—Here the prophet foretels that Egypt, being delivered from the oppression of the Assyrian, 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. “The Egyptians,” it must be observed, “were in alliance with the kingdom of Judah, and were fellow-sufferers with the Jews, under the invasion of the 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 Chron. xxxii. 23,) that many brought gifts unto Jehovah, to Jerusalem, and presents to Hezekiah; so that he was magnified of all nations from thenceforth. And it is not to be doubted, that among these the Egyptians distinguished themselves in their acknowledgments on this occasion.” These offerings, then made from Egypt and other nations, were a prelude of a more perfect conversion of the Gentiles to the God of Israel; and there is nothing more certain than that God, after the remarkable overthrow of Sennacherib, was like the clear heat after rain, and like dew in the time of harvest, to the people of Israel. See Bishop Lowth and Vitringa.

## CHAPTER XIX.

The prophecy contained in this chapter is two-fold. The first part describes the evils which should happen to Egypt. These are enumerated, 1-4. The consequence of them is set forth, 5-10. The immediate causes of those evils, 11-17. The latter part exhibits declarations and promises concerning the grace of God, and the knowledge of true religion to be communicated to the Egyptians, with the causes and consequences of these benefits, 18-25.

A. M. 3294. **THE** <sup>a</sup>burden of Egypt. Behold, <sup>b</sup>the LORD <sup>b</sup>rideth upon a swift cloud, and shall come into Egypt: and <sup>c</sup>the idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence, and the heart of Egypt shall melt in the midst of it.

<sup>a</sup> Jer. xlvi. 13; Ezek. xxix, xxx.—<sup>b</sup> Psalm xviii. 10; civ. 3.  
<sup>c</sup> Exod. xii. 12; Jer. xliii. 12.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER XIX.

Verse 1. *The burden of Egypt*—Concerning the term *burden*, see on chap. xiii. 1. “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 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 favoured the people, and improved the country. To all these events the prophet seems to have had a view in this chapter;” which contains the fifth discourse of the second part of Isaiah’s prophecies, delivered at another time, and much later than the preceding, and copiously setting forth the fate of Egypt, a nation, from the remotest antiquity, famous in the East. See Bishop Lowth and Vitringa.

*Behold, the Lord rideth on a swift cloud*—As a general at the head of his army: or, as a judge going in state to the bench, to try and condemn malefactors. *He makes the clouds his chariots, and rides upon the wings of the wind*, with a power far above the reach of opposition or resistance, and with a majesty far excelling the greatest pomp and splendour of earthly princes. He is said to ride upon a *swift cloud*, to signify that the judgment should come speedily and unexpectedly: for God’s judgments do not linger when the time of his long-suffering is completed. *And the idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence*—From their seats, and from their former reputation. Or they shall *shake* or *tremble*, as the word *נָד*, here used, properly signifies. So far shall they be from helping the Egyptians, as they expect, that they shall tremble for themselves. *And*

2 And I will <sup>1</sup>set <sup>d</sup>the Egyptians <sup>A. M. 3294.</sup> against the Egyptians: and they <sup>B. C. 710.</sup> shall fight every one against his brother, and every one against his neighbour; city against city, and kingdom against kingdom.

3 And the spirit of Egypt <sup>2</sup>shall fail in the

<sup>1</sup> Heb. mingle.—<sup>d</sup> Judges vii. 22; 1 Sam. xiv. 16, 20; 2 Chron. xx. 23.—<sup>2</sup> Heb. shall be emptied.

*the heart of Egypt shall melt in the midst of it*—The Egyptians shall lose all their ancient strength and courage, and their very souls shall faint within them, through dread of their approaching calamities. From these particulars of the prediction we learn, that the prince who should come upon Egypt, as the executer of the decrees of the divine justice, should approach with the most swift and rapid motion; that he should throw down and destroy their idols, and fill all Egypt with the greatest consternation. Now it is certain that Cambyses, the son of Cyrus, the Persian, exactly fulfilled these things, particularly with respect to the idols of Egypt. “The first attempt made by Cambyses,” says Bishop Newton, “was upon Pelusium, a strong town at the entrance of Egypt, and the key of the kingdom; and he succeeded by the stratagem of placing before his army a great number of dogs, sheep, cats, and other animals, which being held sacred by the Egyptians, not one of them would cast a javelin or shoot an arrow that way: and so the town was stormed and taken, in a manner, without resistance. He treated the gods of Egypt with marvellous contempt, laughed at the people, and chastised the priests for worshipping such deities. He slew Apis, or the sacred ox which the Egyptians worshipped, with his own hand; and burned and demolished their other idols and temples; and would likewise, if he had not been prevented, have destroyed the famous temple of Jupiter Ammon. Ochus, too, who was another king of Persia, and subdued the Egyptians again, after they had revolted, plundered their temples, and caused Apis to be slain, and served up in a banquet to him and his friends.”

Verses 2, 3. *I will set the Egyptians against the Egyptians*—Two principal calamities to befall Egypt are foretold in this prophecy; the first of which is here described: civil wars should arise among them. *They shall fight every one against his brother and neighbour*—Whom he ought to love as himself. *City against city, and kingdom against kingdom*—“The LXX. read, *νομος ἐπὶ νομον*, province against province, Egypt being divided into prefectures, or provinces. Vitringa and others apply this to the time of the twelve kings, the anarchy that preceded, and the civil wars that ensued, in which Psammitichus prevailed over the rest; but it may, perhaps,

A. M. 3294. midst thereof: and I will <sup>3</sup> destroy  
B. C. 710. the counsel thereof: and they shall  
° seek to the idols, and to the charmers, and to  
them that have familiar spirits, and to the wi-  
zards.

4 And the Egyptians will I <sup>4</sup> give over <sup>†</sup> into  
the hand of a cruel lord; and a fierce king  
shall rule over them, saith the Lord, the LORD  
of hosts.

5 <sup>5</sup> And the waters shall fail from the sea, and  
the river shall be wasted and dried up.

6 And they shall turn the rivers far away;  
and the brooks <sup>h</sup> of defence shall be emptied  
and dried up: the reeds and flags shall wither.

<sup>3</sup> Heb. swallow up.—<sup>†</sup> Chap. viii. 19; xlvii. 12.—<sup>4</sup> Or, shut  
up.—<sup>5</sup> Chap. xx. 4; Jer. xvi. 26; Ezek. xxix. 19.—<sup>6</sup> Jer. li.  
36; Ezek. xxx. 12.

be more properly applied to what agrees better, in  
point of time, with other parts of the prophecy, the  
civil wars between Apries and Amasis, at the time  
of Nebuchadnezzar's invasion; and the civil wars a  
little before the country was finally subdued by  
Ochus. It is no wonder, that in such distractions  
and distresses as these, the Egyptians, being natu-  
rally a cowardly people, should be destitute of coun-  
sel, and that the spirit of Egypt should fail in the  
midst thereof, as the prophet foretels, (verse 3,) and  
that, being also a very superstitious people, they  
should seek to the idols, and to the charmers, and to  
them that had familiar spirits, and to the wizards.  
But their divination was all in vain," God having de-  
termined that they should be subdued and oppressed  
by cruel lords and tyrants, as it follows.

Verse 4. *The Egyptians will I give into the hand  
of a cruel lord, &c.*—This is the second calamity  
here threatened, and the most essential part of the  
prophecy; and "it may with great truth and prop-  
riety be understood of Nebuchadnezzar and the  
Babylonians, whose dominion was very grievous to  
the conquered nations: but with the greatest prop-  
riety and justice may be applied to the Persians,  
and especially to Cambyses and Ochus; one of  
whom put the yoke upon the neck of the Egyptians,  
and the other riveted it there, and who are both  
branded in history for cruel tyrants and monsters of  
men."—Bishop Newton.

Verses 5-10. *The waters shall fail from the sea,  
&c.*—The river Nile shall cease to pour its usual  
quantity of water into the sea, being wasted and  
dried up, as it follows. "Tremellius," says Lowth,  
"shows out of Herodotus, that this was literally  
fulfilled under the government of the twelve petty ty-  
rants who ruled Egypt after Sethon. And Scaliger  
understands it of a great drought, which occasioned  
a dearth, by the failing of the inundation of the  
Nile." *They shall turn the rivers*—Those rivulets,  
by which the waters of the Nile were distributed  
into several parts of the land, shall be turned far  
away, as they must needs be, when the river which

7 The paper-reeds by the brooks, by A. M. 3294.  
the mouth of the brooks, and every B. C. 710.  
thing sown by the brooks, shall wither, be driven  
away, <sup>5</sup> and be no more.

8 The fishers also shall mourn, and all they  
that cast angle into the brooks shall lament, and  
they that spread nets upon the waters shall  
languish.

9 Moreover they that work in <sup>i</sup> fine flax,  
and they that weave <sup>o</sup> net-works, shall be con-  
founded.

10 And they shall be broken in the <sup>7</sup> purposes  
thereof, all that make sluices and ponds <sup>o</sup> for  
fish.

<sup>h</sup> 2 Kings xix. 24.—<sup>†</sup> Heb. and shall not be.—<sup>i</sup> 1 Kings x.  
28; Prov. vii. 16.—<sup>o</sup> Or, white works.—<sup>7</sup> Heb. foundations.  
<sup>8</sup> Heb. of living things.

fed them was dried up. *The brooks of defence shall  
be emptied*—The several branches of the river Nile,  
which were a great defence to Egypt. *The reeds*  
—Which were useful to them for making their boats;  
*shall wither*—As they commonly do for want of  
water. *The paper-reeds shall wither*—These, by  
a needle, or other fit instrument, were divided into  
thin and broad leaves, which, being dried and fitted,  
were used, at that time, for writing; and conse-  
quently were a very good commodity for trade.  
*Every thing sown by the brooks shall wither*—And  
much more what was sown in more dry and un-  
fruitful places. *The fishers also shall mourn*—  
Because they can catch no fish; which was a great  
loss to the people, whose common diet this was.  
*They that work in fine flax*—That make fine linen,  
which was one of their best commodities; *shall be  
confounded*—Either for want of flax to work on, or  
for want of a demand of that which they have  
worked, or opportunity to export it. *They shall be  
broken, that make sluices, &c.*—Their business shall  
fail, either for want of water to fill their ponds, or  
for want of fish to replenish their waters. But it is  
probable the expressions in these verses are meta-  
phorical, and denote the decay of the strength,  
wealth, trade, and prosperity of Egypt, by metaphors  
taken from the decrease of the river Nile, upon the  
overflowing of which all the plenty and prosperity  
of that country depended. "The prophet," says  
Bishop Newton, "sets forth, in figurative language,  
the consequences of the forementioned subjection  
and slavery, the poverty and want, the mourning  
and lamentation, the confusion and misery which  
should be entailed on both them and their posterity."  
The Nile, the reader must observe, is supposed to  
"figure out the whole kingdom of Egypt. The  
reed, the lotus, the papyrus, and the other produc-  
tions of the Nile, signify the riches, merchandise,  
and whatever was found in the flourishing state of  
Egypt. And, as when the waters of the Nile are  
withdrawn, or dried up, or do not rise to their proper  
height, all things languish and wither in Egypt, and

A. M. 3294. 11 ¶ Surely the princes of <sup>h</sup> Zoan  
B. C. 710. *are* fools, the counsel of the wise coun-  
sellors of Pharaoh is become brutish : how say  
ye unto Pharaoh, *I am* the son of the wise, the  
son of ancient kings ?

12 <sup>1</sup> Where *are* they ? where *are* thy wise  
*men* ? and let them tell thee now, and let them  
know what the LORD of hosts hath purposed  
upon Egypt.

13 The princes of Zoan are become fools,  
<sup>m</sup> the princes of Noph are deceived ; they have  
also seduced Egypt, *even* <sup>9</sup> they <sup>10</sup> that are the  
stay of the tribes thereof.

14 The LORD hath mingled <sup>11</sup> a <sup>n</sup> perverse  
spirit in the midst thereof : and they have

<sup>h</sup> Num. xiii. 22.—<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. i. 20.—<sup>m</sup> Jer. ii. 16.—<sup>9</sup> Or, govern-  
ors.—<sup>10</sup> Heb. corners.—<sup>11</sup> Heb. a spirit of perverseness.

the greatest poverty and want ensue ; so the king-  
dom of Egypt being depressed under the dominion  
of its cruel lords the Persians, who should rule it by  
rapacious governors, all things should languish in  
that kingdom ; the cities, with the temples and orna-  
ments, be subverted ; their commerce, to which the  
Nile was so subservient, should fail ; their riches be  
consumed by strangers, and their lands be left un-  
cultivated. In short, the face of the country should  
be desolate and melancholy, as when the Nile with-  
held its necessary overflowings."—See Vitringa.

Verses 11–15. *Surely the princes of Zoan are  
fools, &c.*—Zoan was the chief city, in which the  
king and court frequently resided. In these verses  
the prophet describes "the immediate causes of these  
evils ; 1st, The folly of the princes and rulers, who  
valued themselves upon their wisdom ; and, 2d, The  
cowardice and effeminacy of the people in general.  
Egypt would not have become a prey to so many  
foreign enemies, but through the excessive weak-  
ness of the Egyptians, both in counsel and in action.  
They had not the courage even to defend themselves.  
They trusted chiefly to their Grecian and other  
mercenaries, who, instead of defending, were often  
the first to betray them."—Bishop Newton. *How  
say ye unto Pharaoh*—Why do ye put such false  
and foolish words into Pharaoh's mouth ? *I am the  
son of the wise*—Wisdom is hereditary and natural  
to me. This vain opinion of himself they cherished  
by their flatteries. *The son of the ancient kings*—  
The prophet derides the vanity of the Egyptians,  
who used to boast of the antiquity of their nation,  
and especially of their kings, who, as they pretended,  
had reigned successively for 10,000 years. *Where  
are thy wise men* ?—Who pretended, that either by  
their deep policy, or by their skill in astrology, or  
magic, they could certainly foresee things to come.  
*The princes of Noph are deceived*—Another chief  
city, and one of the king's seats, called also *Moph*,  
in the Hebrew text, (Hos. ix. 6,) and by other and  
later writers, *Memphis*. *They that are the stay*—

caused Egypt to err in every work <sup>A. M. 3294.</sup>  
thereof, as a drunken *man* staggereth <sup>B. C. 710.</sup>  
in his vomit.

15 Neither shall there be *any* work for Egypt,  
which <sup>o</sup> the head or tail, branch or rush, may  
do.

16 In that day shall Egypt <sup>p</sup> be like unto  
women : and it shall be afraid and fear, be-  
cause of the shaking of the hand of the LORD  
of hosts, <sup>q</sup> which he shaketh over it.

17 And the land of Judah shall be a terror  
unto Egypt, every one that maketh mention  
thereof shall be afraid in himself, because of the  
counsel of the LORD of hosts, which he hath  
determined against it.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Kings xxiii. 22 ; Chap. xxix. 10.—<sup>o</sup> Chap. ix. 14.—<sup>p</sup> Jer  
li. 30 ; Nahum iii. 13.—<sup>q</sup> Chap. xi. 15.

Their chief counsellors ; *of the tribes*—Of the pro-  
vinces, which he calls by a title borrowed from the  
Hebrews, in whose language he spake and wrote  
this prophecy. *The Lord hath mingled—Hath  
poured out*, or given them to drink, *a perverse spirit*  
—*A spirit of error, or delusion*, as the LXX. and  
Chaldee render it. That is, he has suffered them,  
in punishment of their sins, to take foolish steps, and  
follow pernicious counsels. *They have caused  
Egypt to err in every work*—In all their designs and  
undertakings. They have given such ill counsel,  
and pursued such wrong measures, that nothing has  
succeeded as it should. *Neither shall there be any  
work which the head or tail may do*—The people  
shall generally want employment, or, as some ex-  
plain it, all orders of men, from the highest to the  
lowest, shall fail in the discharge of their duty, or  
be unsuccessful in all they undertake.

Verses 16, 17. *In that day shall Egypt be like  
unto women*—Feeble and fearful, as it follows. The  
cowardice and effeminacy of the people in general,  
joined with their fear and trepidation, are here set  
forth as a second cause of their calamity ; and the  
reason of this, among other things, is drawn from a  
sense of the divine judgment. *They shall be like  
women, and fear, because of the shaking of the  
hand of the Lord, &c.*—Because they shall perceive  
that they do not fight with men only, but with the  
Lord of hosts, who now lifts up his hand against  
them, as he did against their forefathers. *The land  
of Judah shall be a terror unto Egypt*—That is, the  
calamities brought on the land of Judah by the  
Assyrians and Chaldeans. When the Egyptians shall  
hear of the ravages and desolations made in Judah,  
by the army of Sennacherib, and shall afterward be  
informed of its overthrow by Nebuchadnezzar, they  
shall be dreadfully afraid of suffering the same ca-  
lamities themselves, considering both their near  
neighbourhood to Judah, and their strict alliance  
therewith. Indeed Judah was their bulwark against  
the Assyrians and Babylonians, and when this bul-

A. M. 3294. 18 ¶ In that day shall five cities in the  
B. C. 710. land of Egypt <sup>r</sup>speak <sup>12</sup> the language  
of Canaan, and swear to the LORD of hosts;  
one shall be called, The city <sup>13</sup> of destruction.

<sup>r</sup> Zeph. iii. 9.—<sup>12</sup> Heb. *the lip*.—<sup>13</sup> Or, *of Heres, or, of the sun*.

wark was removed they had just cause to fear. "The threatening hand of God," says Bishop Lowth, "will be held out, and shaken over Egypt, from the side of Judea; through which the Assyrians will march to invade it." *Every one that makes mention thereof, &c.*—Poole thinks their fear of mentioning Judah's name might proceed partly from a sense of their guilt and misconduct toward Judah, and an apprehension that the God of Judah was calling them to an account for it. Perhaps, also, as the next clause seems to imply, they might have heard of the prophecies uttered in Judah concerning these very calamities coming upon them.

Verse 18. *In that day*—After that time, as this phrase is often used; that is, in the times of the gospel. This latter part of the prophecy contains an account of the salutary benefits which God would bestow on Egypt after the above-mentioned calamities. "Isaiah, to whom God had most clearly revealed the mystery of the calling of the Gentiles to the grace of Christ, everywhere takes occasion to speak of it; and frequently finishes his prophecies concerning the nations with a promise of the spiritual blessings designed for them by God; but he does this nowhere more explicitly than in the present passage;" in which one cannot but observe with what ease he passes from the one argument to the other. He had said that some of the Egyptians, when under these calamities, *should be afraid of the hand of the Lord of hosts, which he should shake over Egypt*, and should fear, *because of his counsel which he had determined against it*; and he now teaches, that this servile fear and dread should hereafter be turned into a religious fear, with this effect, that five cities in the land of Egypt, that is, that many of their chief cities, a certain number being put for an uncertain, should *speak the language of Canaan*—That is, should profess the Jewish religion, or agree with the Jews in their worship of one living and true God. Thus, *I will turn to the people a pure language*, (Zeph. iii. 9,) signifies, I will restore to the people a pure religion; or, I will change and purify their conversation, their hearts and lips, *that they may call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent*. And shall swear to the Lord of hosts—Swearing to the Lord implies the dedication and yielding up of a person or thing to the Lord, by a solemn vow or covenant, as appears from 2 Chron. xv. 14; Psa. cxxxii. 2; Isaiah xlv. 23, 24. *One*—Or one of them, namely, of the five; *shall be called the city of destruction*—Or, *of the sun*, as it is in the margin of our Bibles, meaning Heliopolis, a famous city in Egypt, and a chief seat of idolatry, being a city of the priests, as Strabo reports; and therefore its conversion to the faith was the more wonderful. It must be acknowledged,

19 In that day <sup>\*</sup>shall there be an A. M. 3294.  
altar to the LORD in the midst of the B. C. 710.  
land of Egypt, and a pillar at the border thereof  
to the LORD.

<sup>\*</sup> Gen. xxviii. 18; Exod. xxiv. 4; Jos. xxii. 10, 26, 27.

however, that there is much uncertainty as to the true reading of the text, whether it be עיר החרס, *city of the sun*, or, עיר החרס, *city of destruction*, and therefore "no one," as Bishop Lowth justly observes, "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," says he, "from the eighteenth 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."

Verse 19. *In that day shall there be an altar*—For God's worship; not a Levitical, but a spiritual and evangelical altar, as appears from hence, that the Levitical altar was confined to one place, Deut. xii. 13, 14. The altar is here put for the worship of God, as it is in many places, both of the Old and New Testaments. And nothing is more common in the prophets than to speak of gospel worship in those phrases of the law which were suitable to their own age. And, accordingly, when they speak of the Gentiles coming into the church, they represent them as serving the true God by such acts of devotion as were most in use in their own time, and therefore could be best understood by those to whom they directed their discourses. *And a pillar*—A monument of the true religion; (he alludes to the ancient custom of erecting pillars to God;) *at the border thereof*—Of the land, as before *in the midst of it*. The meaning is, There shall be evidences of their piety in all places. This passage evidently implies that the temple-service, which was confined to Jerusalem, should be abolished, as it was by the introduction of Christianity, and that the God of Israel should be worshipped with the most solemn rites, even in the most abhorred and unsanctified places, such as the Jews esteemed Egypt to be. Such is the meaning of this prophecy, as it refers to the Christian dispensation, and such will be its more remote and ultimate accomplishment. But, in its primary sense, it seems to relate to the conversion of the Egyptians to the Jewish religion; which was brought about by the following progressive changes. "Alexander the Great transplanted many of the Jews to Alexandria, and allowed them extraordinary immunities, equal to those of the Macedonians themselves. Ptolemy Soter carried more of them into Egypt, who enjoyed such advantages that many of them were allured to settle there. Ptolemy Philadelphus redeemed and released the captive Jews; and in his and his father's reign, the Jewish

A. M. 3294. 20 And 'it shall be for a sign and  
B. C. 710. for a witness unto the LORD of hosts  
in the land of Egypt: for they shall cry unto  
the LORD because of the oppressors, and he  
shall send them a saviour, and a great one, and  
he shall deliver them.

† Josh. iv. 20; xiii. 27.

Scriptures were translated into Greek. Ptolemy Euergetes, having subdued Syria, did not sacrifice to the gods of Egypt in acknowledgment of his victory, but, coming to Jerusalem, made his oblations to God after the manner of the Jews. Ptolemy Philometer and his queen, Cleopatra, committed the whole management of the kingdom to two Jews, Onias and Dositheus, who were the chief ministers and generals. This Onias obtained a license to build a temple for the Jews in Egypt, alleging for that purpose this very prophecy; and the king and queen, in their rescript, make honourable mention of the law and of Isaiah, and express a dread of offending God. The place chosen for this temple was in the prefecture of Heliopolis, or the city of the sun, likewise mentioned in prophecy. It was built after the model of the temple of Jerusalem, but not so sumptuous. Onias himself was made high-priest; other priests and Levites were appointed for the ministration, and divine service was daily performed there in the same manner as at Jerusalem, and continued as long: for Vespasian, having destroyed the temple at Jerusalem, ordered this to be demolished also." See Newton, *Proph.*, vol. i. p. 375.

Verses 20-22. *And it shall be for a sign*—Namely, the altar or pillar, last mentioned; *and for a witness unto the Lord of hosts*—To testify that they own the Lord for their God. *For they shall cry unto the Lord because of their oppressors*—Being sorely distressed, and finding that their idols are unable to help them, they shall turn unto the true God. *And he shall send them a saviour, and a great one*—In these words the prophet sets forth the cause of this happy change in Egypt, with its immediate effects, namely, their crying to the Lord in their distress, and his sending them a saviour, who should deliver them. "Here it is clearly foretold," says Bishop Newton, "that a great prince, sent by God, from a foreign country, should deliver the Egyptians from their Persian oppressors, and heal their country, which was smitten of God, and afflicted: and who could this be but Alexander, who is always distinguished by the name of *Alexander the Great*, and whose first successor in Egypt was called the *great Ptolemy*, and *Ptolemy Soter*, or the *saviour*? Upon Alexander's first coming into Egypt the people all cheerfully submitted to him out of hatred to the Persians, so that he became master of the country without any opposition. For this reason he treated them with humanity and kindness, built there a city, which, after his own name, he called Alexandria, appointed one of their own country for their civil governor, and permitted

21 And the LORD shall be known A. M. 3294.  
to Egypt, and the Egyptians shall B. C. 710.  
know the LORD in that day, and shall do  
sacrifice and oblation; yea, they shall vow a  
vow unto the LORD and perform it.

22 And the LORD shall smite Egypt: he shall

¶ Mal. i. 11.

them to be governed by their own laws and customs. By these changes and regulations, and by the prudent and gentle administration of some of the first Ptolemies, Egypt revived, trade and learning flourished, and, for a while, peace and plenty blessed the land. But it is more largely foretold, that, about the same time, the true religion and the worship of the God of Israel should begin to spread and prevail in the land of Egypt; and what event was ever more unlikely to happen than the conversion of a people so sunk and lost in superstition and idolatry, of the worst and grossest kind? It is certain that many of the Jews, after Nebuchadnezzar had taken Jerusalem, fled into Egypt, and carried along with them Jeremiah the prophet, who there uttered many of his prophecies concerning the conquest of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar. "From hence," and by the means above described, "some knowledge of God, and some notice of the prophecies, might easily be derived to the Egyptians." "By these means, the Lord must, in some degree, have been known to Egypt, and the Egyptians must have known the Lord—And, without doubt, there must have been many proselytes among them. Among those who came up to the feast of pentecost, (Acts ii. 10,) are particularly mentioned the dwellers in Egypt, and in the parts of Lybia about Cyrene, Jews and proselytes. Nay, from the instance of Candace's eunuch, (Acts viii. 27,) we may infer that there were proselytes even beyond Egypt, in Ethiopia. Thus were the Jews settled and encouraged in Egypt, insomuch that Philo represents their number as not less than a hundred myriads, or ten hundred thousand men." But though this prophecy concerning Egypt might have its first accomplishment in the deliverance of the Egyptians from the Persian yoke by Alexander the Great, and in that knowledge of the true God, and of his revealed will, which many of the Egyptians received under the government of the Ptolemies, through their intercourse with the Jews, and the translation of the Jewish Scriptures into the Greek language; yet, doubtless, this prediction has a further and higher aspect, as commentators in general have understood it, and refers to that spiritual redemption and salvation which the Egyptians, among many other ignorant and idolatrous Gentiles, were to receive, and actually did receive, by the coming of Christ, the great and only Saviour of lost mankind, and by the publication of his gospel to them. This appears still more evidently from the verses which follow. But the full and final accomplishment of this, as well as of many other important prophecies, shall

A. M. 3294. smite and heal it: and they shall re-  
B. C. 710. turn *even* to the LORD, and he shall be entreated of them, and shall heal them.

23 ¶ In that day \* shall there be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians.

\* Chap. xi. 16.

not take place till Mohammedanism and idolatry shall be completely overthrown, and *the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.*

Verses 23-25. *In that day, &c.*—Here the prophet proceeds to show the effect of this benefit of divine grace toward the Egyptians, namely, their spiritual alliance with the Assyrians and Israelites, with a great abundance of the divine blessings. *There shall be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria*—A happy correspondence and intercourse settled. *And the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, &c.*—They who were implacable enemies one to another, and both to the church of God, shall now be reconciled and united together in the service of God, and love to his church. *In that day shall Israel be the third*—The third party in that sacred league, whereby all of them oblige themselves to serve God. *With Egypt and with Assyria*—These are named, because they were the most obstinate enemies to God's church, but they are here put for all the Gentiles. *Even a blessing*—That is, Israel shall be a

24 In that day shall Israel be the A. M. 3294.  
third with Egypt and with Assyria, B. C. 710.  
*even* a blessing in the midst of the land:

25 Whom the LORD of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance.

† Psa. c. 3; Chap. xxix. 23; Hos. ii. 23; Eph. ii. 10.

*blessing.* This is peculiar to Israel, who is not only a third party, but is the most eminent of the three, as being the fountain by which the blessing is conveyed to the other two; because Christ was to be born of them, and the gospel-church and ordinances were first established among them, and from them derived to the Gentiles. *In the midst of the land*—Or, of those lands, namely, Egypt and Assyria, between which Israel lay: or, in the midst of the earth, as בְּקִרְבֵּי הָאָרֶץ, more properly means: which may be added, to imply that God's blessing should be conveyed from and by Israel, not only to the Egyptians and Assyrians, but to all the nations of the earth, in the midst of which the land of Israel might well be said to be. *Whom the Lord of hosts shall bless*—That is, which people, Israel, Egypt, and Assyria; of whom he speaks as of one people, because they were all to be united into one church. *Blessed be Egypt my people*—This title, and those which follow, that were peculiar to the people of Israel, should now be given to these and all other nations.

## CHAPTER XX.

We have in this chapter an addition to the discourse contained in the preceding, namely, a prediction of the carrying away of multitudes, both of the Egyptians and Ethiopians, into captivity by the king of Assyria. Here is, (1.) The sign by which this was foretold, which was the prophet's going, for some time, barefoot, and almost naked, like a poor captive, 1, 2. (2.) The explication of this sign, with the application of it to Egypt and Ethiopia, 3, 4. (3.) The scope and consequence of this prophecy, and the use the people of God should make of it, 5, 6.

A. M. 3294. IN the year that <sup>a</sup> Tartan came unto  
B. C. 710. Ashdod, (when Sargon the king of Assyria sent him,) and fought against Ashdod, and took it;

<sup>a</sup> 2 Kings xviii. 17.—<sup>1</sup> Heb. by the hand of Isaiah.

### NOTES ON CHAPTER XX.

Verse 1. *In the year that Tartan came to Ashdod*—Namely, to besiege it. Tartan is mentioned (2 Kings xviii. 17) as one of the generals of Sennacherib, who is generally supposed to be here meant by Sargon, which was probably one of the seven names by which Jerome, on this place, says he was called. Ashdod, or Azotus, was an eminent and strong city, formerly belonging to the Philistines, in the utmost part of the land of Canaan toward Egypt. Afterward, according to Herodotus, it held out twenty-nine years against Psammitichus, king of Egypt. It is likely that at this time it belonged to

2 At the same time spake the LORD A. M. 3294.  
<sup>1</sup> by Isaiah the son of Amoz, saying, B. C. 710.  
Go, and loose the <sup>b</sup> sackcloth from off thy loins, and put off thy shoe from thy foot. And he did

<sup>b</sup> Zech. xiii. 4.

Hezekiah's dominions, and that its inhabitants expected to be relieved during the siege by the Egyptians and Cushites, or Ethiopians. The taking of it, Bishop Lowth thinks, must have happened before Sennacherib's attempt on Jerusalem; when he boasted of his late conquests, chap. xxxvii. 25: and the warning of the prophet had a principal respect to the Jews also, who were too much inclined to depend on the assistance of Egypt.

Verse 2. *Go loose the sackcloth from off thy loins*—By the sackcloth is meant either the hairy garment usually worn by the prophets, or a mournful habit, such as was commonly made of sackcloth

A. M. 3294. 80, ° walking naked and barefoot.  
B. C. 710.

3 And the LORD said, Like as my servant Isaiah hath walked naked and barefoot three years <sup>d</sup> for a sign and wonder upon Egypt and upon Ethiopia ;

4 So shall the king of Assyria lead away <sup>2</sup> the Egyptians prisoners, and the Ethiopians captives, young and old, naked and barefoot, ° even

<sup>c</sup> 1 Sam. xix. 84 ; Mic. i. 8, 11. — <sup>d</sup> Chap. viii. 18. — <sup>e</sup> Heb. the captivity of Egypt. — <sup>f</sup> 2 Sam. x. 4 ; Chap. iii. 17 ; Jer. xiii.

which he wore in token of his grief for the great calamities that were already come upon Israel, and were coming on Judah. And he did so, walking naked and barefoot—Not wholly naked, but without his upper garment ; as slaves and prisoners used to do, whose condition he was to represent. This action was both agreeable to the mode of instruction made use of in those times, and, as it was intended to excite the attention of the Israelites, was likewise very well adapted to promote that intention.—Vitringa.

Verses 3-6. And the Lord—Who here explains and applies the sign, said, Like as my servant hath walked naked, &c., three years—Not constantly, but when he went abroad among the people, to whom this was appointed to be a sign. Bishop Lowth says, probably three days, to show, that within three years the Egyptians and Ethiopians should be conquered and made captives by the king of Assyria, and be in the same condition, and that the town should be taken. But it is objected, that although a day is usually put for a year in the prophetic scriptures, a year is never put for a day. The former interpretation, therefore, is more probable. For a sign and wonder, &c.—Either when this judgment should come, namely, three years after this prophecy was thus uttered, or how long it should continue, namely, for three years : for some have observed, that the Assyrians spent so much time in conquering Egypt

with their buttocks uncovered, to the A. M. 3294.  
<sup>3</sup> shame of Egypt. B. C. 710.

5 <sup>c</sup> And they shall be afraid and ashamed of Ethiopia their expectation, and of Egypt their glory.

6 And the inhabitant of this <sup>4</sup> isle shall say, in that day, Behold, such is our expectation, whither we flee for help to be delivered from the king of Assyria : and how shall we escape ?

22, 26 ; Mic. i. 11. — <sup>e</sup> Heb. nakedness. — <sup>f</sup> 2 Kings xviii. 21 ; Chap. xxx. 3, 5, 7 ; xxxvi. 6. — <sup>g</sup> Or, country, Jer. xlvii. 4.

and Ethiopia. So shall the king of Assyria lead away the Egyptians—Like beasts, as יָרֵה is commonly used. And they shall be afraid and ashamed—Namely, all they that shall trust to them, and glory in them. In which words, “we have the consequence of the divine judgment upon the Egyptians and Ethiopians, and the scope of the prophecy, namely, to convince the inhabitants of Palestine, and among these some factious persons in Jerusalem, of the vanity of the confidence they placed in them ; for when they should see the completion of this prophecy, they should then condemn their own folly for placing their expectations on so feeble a defence.” The inhabitant of this isle—Of this land, in which the prophet was, and to whose inhabitants these words were uttered. For the name of isles, or islands, is frequently given in Scripture, not only to lands encompassed with the sea, but also to such countries as were on the sea-coast, as Palestine or Canaan was. Shall say, Behold, such is our expectation—So vain is our hope, placed upon such a people as are unable to deliver themselves, and much more to deliver us : whither we flee for help—To whom we now and usually trust : and how shall we escape—Either by their help, who cannot defend themselves, or by our own strength, seeing they, who were much more potent than we are, could not escape ?

CHAPTER XXI.

We have here, under a mystical name, a second representation of the overthrow of Babylon by the Medes and Persians, 1, 2. The prophet, to show the dreadfulfulness of the calamity, represents himself as being seized with astonishment and horror at the prospect of it, 3, 4. An emblematical confirmation of it, 5-10. The burden of Dumah or Idumea, 11, 12. Of Arabia or Kedar, 13-17.

A. M. 3290. THE burden of the desert of the sea.  
B. C. 714. As <sup>a</sup> whirlwinds in the south pass

through ; so it cometh from the desert, A. M. 3290  
from a terrible land. B. C. 714.

<sup>a</sup> Zech.

ix. 14.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XXI.

Verse 1. The burden of the desert of the sea—That is, of Babylon, as is evident from verse 9. Some think it is so called prophetically, because, although it was at present a populous city, it was shortly to be made desolate, and turned into a marsh, and pools of water. But מַרְכָּיִם מַרְכָּיִם may be properly

rendered, the plain of the sea : for Babylon stood on a plain, and the country about it, and especially below it, toward the sea, was a great flat morass, often overflowed by the Euphrates and Tigris. “Semiramis,” says Herodotus, “confined the Euphrates within its channel, by raising great dams against it ; for before it overflowed the whole

A. M. 3290. **2** A <sup>1</sup> grievous vision is declared unto  
B. C. 714. me; <sup>b</sup> The treacherous dealer dealeth  
treacherously, and the spoiler spoileth. <sup>c</sup> Go up,  
O Elam: besiege, O Media; all the sighing  
thereof have I made to cease.

<sup>1</sup> He. *hard*.—<sup>b</sup> Chap. xxxiii. 1.—<sup>c</sup> Chap. xiii. 17; Jer. xlix.

country like a sea." And Abydenus, speaking of the building of Babylon, observes, "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." It was only by these means, it appears, and by the many canals that were made in the country, that it became habitable. It, however, still more fully and perfectly answered the title of *the plain*, or *desert of the sea*, here given it, in consequence of the Euphrates being turned out of its channel by Cyrus, and afterward suffered still to drown the neighbouring country, by which it became, in time, a great barren, morassy desert, which it continues to be to this day. See note on chap. xiii. 20.

This second prediction, concerning Babylon, (which, with the two short prophecies following, makes the sixth discourse of this second part of Isaiah's Visions,) "is a passage," says Bishop Lowth, "of a singular kind for its brevity and force; for the variety and rapidity of the movements; and for the strength and energy of colouring, 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. Then, in his own person, he describes the situation of things there; the security of the Babylonians, and, in the midst of their feasting, the sudden alarm of war. 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."

As *whirlwinds in the south*, &c.—Bishop Lowth's translation of this passage gives it a peculiar force and elegance.

"Like the southern tempests, violently rushing along, From the desert he cometh, from the terrible country. A dreadful vision! it is revealed unto me: The plunderer is plundered, and the destroyer is destroyed.

Go up, O Elam; from the siege, O Media!  
I have put an end to all her vexations."

By *southern tempests*, or *whirlwinds in the south*,

**3** Therefore <sup>d</sup> are my loins filled with  
A. M. 3290. pain: <sup>e</sup> pangs have taken hold upon  
B. C. 714. me, as the pangs of a woman that travaileth: I  
was bowed down at the hearing of *it*; I was  
dismayed at the seeing of *it*.

34.—<sup>d</sup> Chap. xv. 5; xvi. 11.—<sup>e</sup> Chap. xiii. 8.

the prophet means tempests in those extensive deserts which lay southward from Judea, in which the winds rush along with great force, as meeting with no obstruction from mountains, hills, trees, or buildings. To these he compares the sweeping and irresistible ruin which, by terrible armies, was about to come on Babylon from Media and Persia, through the deserts that lay between it and those countries. "The prophet," says Lowth, "renews his threatenings against Babylon, as he does afterward, (chap. xlvii.,) to convince the Jews, by this repetition, of the certainty of the event, and thereby support them under their captivity when it should come."

Verse 2. *A grievous vision is declared unto me*—A vision or prophecy, predicting dreadful calamities about to fall upon Babylon. *The treacherous dealer, &c.*—In these words the prophet either describes the sin of the Chaldeans, for which God would send the following judgment upon them, namely, they persisted in the practice of treachery and rapine, to which they had been so long accustomed; or he speaks of the Medes and Persians, and represents them as paying the Babylonians in their own coin, and using the same treachery and violence toward them which they had used toward others. The words may be properly rendered, *Thou, O Elam, that dealest treacherously with the treacherous dealer, or, that oppressest the oppressor, and spoilest the spoiler, go up, besiege, &c.* Babylon had long oppressed and ravaged other countries: and it was now her turn to be oppressed and ravaged. Elam was an eminent province of Persia, bordering upon Media, and is here put for Persia in general. God here gives the Medes and Persians their commission to go up and take Babylon, and thereby to put an end to the sighs and groans of the captive Jews, and of other nations held in bondage, and oppressed by that tyrannical and cruel empire.

Verses 3, 4. *Therefore my loins, &c.*—"We have here a symbolical description of the greatness of the Babylonish calamity; the prophet exhibiting in himself, as in a figure, an emblem of the extreme distress, consternation, and horror, which should ensue on this occasion." See chap. xv. 5, and xvi. 8, 9; Luke xxi. 26. He speaks of *his loins being filled with pain*, with a reference to the following similitude of child-bearing. *Pangs have taken hold on me*—Sharp and grievous pains, or extreme anguish, as the word פנין properly means, torments like those of a woman in labour. *I was, or, rather, I am, bowed down*—Oppressed with an intolerable load of sorrow and distress, *at the hearing of it*—Hebrew, כשכע, *that I cannot* (that is, cannot endure to) *hear it*. So Dr. Waterland, who reads the three next clauses thus: *I am dismayed that I cannot see*

A. M. 3290. 4 <sup>2</sup> My heart panted, fearfulness af-  
B. C. 714. frightened me: <sup>1</sup> the night of my pleasure  
hath he <sup>3</sup> turned into fear unto me.

5 <sup>4</sup> Prepare the table, watch in the watch-  
tower, eat, drink: arise, ye princes, and anoint  
the shield.

6 For thus hath the LORD said unto me, Go,

<sup>2</sup> Or, my mind wandered.—<sup>1</sup> Deut. xxviii. 67.—<sup>3</sup> Heb. put.

it: my heart panted: horror confounds me. Such was the distress and anguish, the confusion and dismay, undoubtedly, of myriads of the inhabitants of Babylon, on the night when the city was unexpectedly taken; and particularly of Belshazzar, when he saw the hand that wrote, and the writing on the wall, and especially when he heard Daniel's interpretation of it. Then, indeed, was the night of his pleasure turned into fear unto him, in which remarkable words the prophet alludes to the circumstance of Babylon's being taken in the night of an annual festival, "while the inhabitants were dancing, drinking, and revelling, which is more fully set forth in the next verse." According to Herodotus, the extreme parts of the city were in the hands of the enemy, before they, who dwell in the middle of it, knew any thing of their danger.

Verse 5. *Prepare the table*—Furnish it with meats and drinks, as it follows. The prophet foretels what the Babylonians would be doing when their enemies were upon the point of entering their city: *Watch in the watch-tower*—To give us notice of any approaching danger, that we may more securely indulge ourselves in mirth and pleasures. *Arise, ye princes*—Either, 1st, Ye princes of Babylon. Arise from the table, and run to your arms: which sudden alarm was the consequence of tidings from the watch-tower. Or, 2d, Ye Medes and Persians; as if he had said, While your enemies, the Babylonians, are feasting securely, prepare and make your assault. Most commentators understand the clause in this latter sense. Dr. Waterland, after Vitrina, renders it, *The table is spread: the watchman stands upon the watch; they eat, they drink: Arise now, ye princes, &c.* The words paint in lively colours the security and revelling of the Babylonians, at the very time when the divine command is given to the Medes and Persians to seize this proper moment to make the assault. See Jer. li. 11, 28, &c. The expression, *Anoint the shield*, means, *Prepare your arms*: make ready for the battle. The shield is put for all their weapons, offensive and defensive. They used to anoint their shields with oil to preserve and polish them, and make them slippery, that their enemies' darts might not fix in and penetrate, but slide off from them.

Verse 6. *For thus hath the Lord said unto me*—I speak only what God hath caused me to see and hear in a vision, the particulars whereof are related in the following verses. "The Holy Spirit, to make Isaiah, and, by him, the church, most certain of this memorable event, confirms the preceding revelation

set a watchman, let him declare what he seeth. A. M. 3290. B. C. 714.

7 <sup>h</sup> And he saw a chariot with a couple of horse-  
men, a chariot of asses, and a chariot of camels;  
and he hearkened diligently with much heed:

8 And <sup>4</sup> he cried, A lion: My lord, I stand  
continually upon the <sup>i</sup> watch-tower in the day

<sup>5</sup> Dan. v. 5.—<sup>h</sup> Verse 9.—<sup>4</sup> Or, cried as a lion.—<sup>i</sup> Hab. ii. 1.

by an elegant emblem, offered to the prophet in vision. This emblem exhibits to us the prophet commanded by God to set a watchman, in this verse; and, in what follows, the consequence of the execution of the command, namely, that the watchman attended accurately to the least motion of the nations against Babylon, and, after long expectation, had discovered what is afterward related. See Vitrina. The reader will observe, that as the command to set a watchman was given to the prophet in a vision, so it was executed by him only in a vision. It signified, however, what should really be done afterward, namely, when the Medes and Persians should march to besiege and attack Babylon.

Verse 7. *And he saw a chariot with two riders, &c.*—"This passage," says Bishop Lowth, "is extremely obscure from the ambiguity of the term רכב," (here rendered chariot,) "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." Or, as some think, the verse may be rendered, *He saw a cavalcade, two file of horse, (צמר פרשים) with ass-carriages, and carriages of camels; and he attended with very close attention.* According to this translation, the meaning is, that the watchman saw the army of the Medes and Persians, with their usual cavalcade of horse, (attended by those beasts of burden, asses and camels, which accompanied armies,) moving toward Babylon; upon which he gave the greatest attention possible. Or, according to the common reading, Darius and Cyrus, leading the Medes and Persians, are intended to be distinguished by the two riders, or the two sorts of cattle. The baggage of Cyrus's army, Herodotus tells us, was carried on camels.

Verses 8, 9. *And he cried, A lion*—"The present reading, אריה, a lion, is so unintelligible," says Bishop Lowth, "and the mistake so obvious, that I make no doubt that the true reading is, הריאה," (he that saw, or looked out,) "as the Syriac translator manifestly found it in his copy, who renders it by רוקא, speculator, the observer, or watchman. The bishop, therefore, renders the clause, *He that looked out on the watch cried aloud. My lord, I stand continually upon the watch-tower*—The watchman speaks these words to the prophet, who, by command from God, had set him in this station; to whom, therefore

A. M. 3290. time, and I am set in my ward <sup>5</sup> whole  
B. C. 714. nights.

9 And behold, here cometh a chariot of men, with a couple of horsemen. And he answered and said, <sup>k</sup> Babylon is fallen, is fallen; and <sup>l</sup> all the graven images of her gods he hath broken unto the ground.

<sup>5</sup> Or, every night.—<sup>k</sup> Jer. li. 8; Rev. xiv. 8; xviii. 2.—<sup>l</sup> Ch. xvi. 1; Jer. l. 2; li. 44.

he gives the following account of his discharge of the office wherewith he was intrusted. *In the daytime, &c., whole nights*—According to thy command I have stood, and do stand continually, both day and night, in my ward. This is said to express his great care and attention, and thereby to confirm the truth of the prediction which follows, as that which would as certainly come to pass, as if a watchman had descried the approach of an enemy afar off. *And behold, here cometh a chariot, &c.*—Or, as in verse 7, *a cavalcade of men; two file of horse, &c.* Bishop Lowth renders it, from the Syriac and Ephraim Syrus, *Behold, here cometh a man, one of the two riders: and he answered*—Answered to the prophet, who set him to watch, or the Lord, by whose command he was set. *Babylon is fallen, is fallen*—The expression is doubled, to show the certainty of the event. It is usual, likewise, for the prophets to speak of a thing future as if it were already accomplished, to signify that it will certainly be accomplished; and *all the graven images of her gods he hath broken, &c.*—“It is remarkable that Xerxes, after his return from his unfortunate expedition into Greece, partly out of religious zeal, being a professed enemy to image-worship, and partly to reimburse himself after his immense expenses, seized the sacred treasures, plundered or destroyed the temples and idols of Babylon, and thereby accomplished this prophecy.”—Bishop Newton.

Verse 10. *O my thrashing, &c.*—In these words, which form the conclusion of the prophecy, “the application, the end, and design of it, are admirably given in a short expressive address to the Jews, partly in the person of God, partly in that of the prophet.” The first words of the verse, *O my thrashing, and the corn of my floor*, are supposed to be spoken by God, in which *thrashing* is put for the corn thrashed, and the corn thrashed for people sorely afflicted and punished: as if he had said, “O my people, whom for your punishment I have made subject to the Babylonians, to try and to prove you, and to separate the chaff (or straw) 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.” The reader will observe, “the image of thrashing 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.” *That which I have heard, &c.*—Here “the prophet abruptly breaks off the speech of God, and instead

10 <sup>m</sup> O my thrashing, and the <sup>6</sup> corn A. M. 3290.  
of my floor: that which I have heard B. C. 714.  
of the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, have I declared unto you.

11 ¶ <sup>n</sup> The burden of Dumah. He calleth to me out of Seir, Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?

<sup>m</sup> Jer. li. 33.—<sup>6</sup> Heb. son.—<sup>n</sup> 1 Chron. i. 30; Jer. xlix. 7, 8; Ezek. xxxv. 2; Obad. 1.

of continuing it in the form in which he had begun, and in the person of God, he changes the form of address, and adds, in his own person, *That which I have heard, &c., have I declared unto you.*” In which words he signifies, that he had faithfully related to them what God had revealed to him, and that the predictions which he had uttered were not his own inventions, but the very word of God, which, therefore, would be infallibly accomplished in their season. See Bishop Lowth.

Verses 11, 12. *The burden of Dumah*—Or Idumea, as appears by the mention of mount Seir, which follows. This prophecy, “from the uncertainty of the occasion on which it was uttered, and from the brevity of the expression,” is acknowledged to be extremely obscure. The general opinion of interpreters seems to be, that it refers to the time of some common calamity, which the prophet foresaw would oppress Judea and the neighbouring countries, as suppose the invasion of the Assyrians, or the tyrannical domination of the Babylonians. During this calamity the prophet introduces the Idumeans, inquiring of him concerning the quality and duration of it. He informs them in answer, that “the calamity should soon pass from Judea, and that the light of the morning should arise to the Jews, while the Idumeans should be oppressed with a new and unexpected affliction; so that what should be a time of light to the Jews, should be to them a time of darkness. The prophet, foreseeing that they would scarcely believe his words, admonishes them that the matter was fixed, as they would find the more accurately they inquired into it.” According to this general view of the passage, the particular expressions may be interpreted as follows: *Watchman*—So they term the prophet, either seriously or in scorn, because the prophets were so called by God and by the people of the Jews; *what of the night*—What have you certain to tell us of the state of the night? *How far is it advanced? Do you observe no signs of the approach of the morning? That is, what do you observe of our present distress and calamity? Is there any appearance of its departure, and of the approach of the morning of deliverance? The prophet answers enigmatically, The morning cometh—Deliverance to the Jews; and also the night—To the Idumeans: to them I will give light; you I will leave in darkness. So St. Jerome and the Chaldee Paraphrase. See Dodd. Or the meaning of the prophet’s answer may be, “that the deliverance of the Jews would come in its appointed time; but that the day of their prosperity would be succeeded by a*

A. M. 3290. 12 The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will inquire, inquire ye: return, come.

13 ¶ The burden upon Arabia. In the forest in Arabia shall ye lodge, O ye travelling companies of Dedanim.

14 The inhabitants of the land of Tema brought water to him that was thirsty, they prevented with their bread him that fled.

15 For they fled from the swords, from the

\* Jeremiah xlix. 28.—<sup>1</sup> 1 Chron. i. 9, 32.—<sup>7</sup> Or, bring ye.  
<sup>8</sup> Or, for fear.

dark night of adversity: or, that after a short continuance of approaching prosperity to the Edomites, a dreadful ruin would come upon them, of which the prophet saw no end.—Scott. The last clause, *If ye will inquire, &c.*, is taken by some to be an exhortation to the Edomites, to consider their ways, to repent and turn to God. Lowth paraphrases it thus: "If you will inquire indeed, and ask questions in earnest, inquire of God first, ask his mercy, and afterward come again, and ye shall have a more favourable answer."

Verse 13. *The burden of Arabia*—"While God revealed to his prophet the fate of foreign nations, among others he declares that of those Arabians who inhabited the western part of Arabia Deserta, or *Petrea*," and bordered upon the Idumeans last mentioned. They are here termed *the companies of Dedanim*, being the descendants of Dedan, the son of Jokshan, the son of Abraham by Keturah; and *travelling companies*, because a great number of them used to travel together the same way, as now companies travelling together in those parts are called caravans. In saying, *In the forest shall ye lodge*, the prophet foretels that they should be driven into flight by the Assyrians, or that that populous country should be turned into a desolate wilderness.

Verses 14, 15. *The inhabitants of the land of Tema*—Another part of Arabia, (of which see Job vi. 19; Jeremiah xxv. 23,) namely, the posterity of Tema, Ishmael's son; *brought water to him that was thirsty*—To the Dedanites, who are here represented as being reduced to great straits, being forced to flee from the enemy without any provision for their subsistence. *They prevented with bread him that fled*—That is, that fled for his life from the sword of the enemy, as is more fully expressed in the next verse.

drawn sword, and from the bent bow, A. M. 3290 and from the grievousness of war. B. C. 714.

16 For thus hath the LORD said unto me, Within a year, according to the years of a hireling, and all the glory of Kedar shall fail:

17 And the residue of the number of archers, the mighty men of the children of Kedar, shall be diminished: for the LORD God of Israel hath spoken it.

\* Heb. from the face.—<sup>1</sup> Chap. xvi. 14.—<sup>7</sup> Psa. cxv. 5; Chap. lx. 7.—<sup>10</sup> Heb. bows.

"To bring forth bread and water, in such cases of distress, is an instance of common humanity; especially in these desert countries, in which the common necessaries of life, more particularly water, are not easily met with, or procured." See Deuteronomy xxiii. 4.

Verses 16, 17. *For thus hath the Lord said*—Hitherto the prophet had spoken figuratively: now he ceases to do so; *within a year*—From the time of the delivery of this prophecy, according to the years of a hireling—Namely, an exact year: for hirelings diligently observe and wait for the end of the year, when they are to receive their wages. And this prophecy "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, whose distress, on some such occasion, is the subject of this prophecy."—Bishop Lowth. *And all the glory of Kedar shall fail*—Their power and riches, and all things wherein they used to glory. The Kedarenes were another division of the Arabians, descended from Kedar, Ishmael's son, (Genesis xxv. 13,) who were famous for the use of the bow, as is intimated in verse 17, at which weapon their ancestor Ishmael was very expert, Genesis xxi. 20. The same people are said to dwell in the tents of Kedar, (Psalm cxv. 5; Cant. i. 5,) and were remarkable for their swarthy skin, the word *Kedar* signifying black or tawny. It is here foretold that they should suffer a grievous slaughter, whereby their *mighty men should be diminished*, and that they should be deprived of their flocks, tents, furniture, and wealth, and be obliged to save themselves by fleeing into the interior parts of the desert.

## CHAPTER XXII.

The contents of this chapter relate to the city of Jerusalem, and the neighbouring country. We have the grievous distress into which the Jews should be brought by the Assyrian invasion, under Sennacherib, or that of the Chaldeans, under Nebuchadnezzar, 1-7. A reproof given them for depending for preservation on the contrivances of their own wisdom, and neglecting to look to God, 8-11. For indulging themselves in profane joy and luxurious revelling, when they ought to

have humbled themselves under his mighty hand, which conduct God would certainly punish, 12-14. The displacing of Shebna for his pride, 15-19. Eliakim appointed his successor in office, to the great benefit of the country and his own honour, 20-24.

A. M. 3292. **T**HE burden of the valley of vision.  
B. C. 712. What aileth thee now, that thou art wholly gone up to the house-tops?

2 Thou that art full of stirs, a tumultuous city,  
\* a joyous city: thy slain *men are* not slain with the sword, nor dead in battle.

3 All thy rulers are fled together, they are bound <sup>1</sup> by the archers: all that are found in

\* Chapter xxxii. 13.—<sup>a</sup> Heb. of the bow.—<sup>b</sup> Jeremiah iv. 19; ix. 1.

these are bound together, *which* have fled from far. A. M. 3292. B. C. 712.

4 Therefore said I, Look away from me; <sup>b</sup> I <sup>2</sup> will weep bitterly, labour not to comfort me, because of the spoiling of the daughter of my people.

5 <sup>c</sup> For *it is* a day of trouble, and of treading down, and of perplexity <sup>d</sup> by the Lord GOD of

\* Heb. I will be bitter in weeping.—<sup>c</sup> Chap. xxxvii. 3.—<sup>d</sup> Lam. i. 5; ii. 2.

#### NOTES ON CHAPTER XXII.

Verses 1-3. *The burden of the valley of vision*—Of Judah, and especially of Jerusalem, called a *valley*, because a great part of it stood in a valley between the opposite hills of Zion and Acra, and between Acra and Moriah; (see Josephus's *Jewish War*, v. 13; and vi. 6;) and *the valley of vision*, because it was the seat of divine revelation, the place where chiefly prophetic visions were given, and where God manifested himself visibly in the most holy place. The reader will observe this is the seventh discourse of the second part; and relates to the calamity brought on Jerusalem by the invasion of the Assyrians or Chaldeans, or both, and to the fall of Shebna.

*What aileth thee now?*—The prophet refers here to the commotion into which the city was, or, he foresaw, would be, thrown upon the report of the approach of the hostile army to besiege it, and to the perturbation of the people's minds and the general confusion. *That thou art wholly gone up to the house-tops*—Either to reconnoitre the approaching enemy, or to consult for thine own safety. *Thou that art*—Or rather, *wast, full of stirs*—Of great trade, people hurrying to and fro about their business; *a tumultuous city*—Populous and noisy; *a joyous city*—Full of revelling and jollity. What ails thee now that the shops and mercantile houses are quitted, and there is no more walking in the streets, but thou art to be seen crowding 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. The terrace is frequented as much as any part of the house. On this, as the season favours, they walk, they eat, they sleep, they transact business, they perform their devotions. The house is built with a court within, into which chiefly the windows open; those that are 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-tops to satisfy his curiosity. In the same manner, when any one had occasion to make any thing pub-

lic, the readiest and most effectual way of doing it was, to proclaim it from the house-tops to the people in the streets."—Bishop Lowth.

*Thy slain men are not slain with the sword*—But either by famine or pestilence in the siege. Sennacherib's army having laid the country waste, and destroyed the fruits of the earth, provisions must needs be very scarce and dear in the city, which would be the death of many of the poorer sort of people, who would be constrained to feed on what was unwholesome. But this prediction, with that contained in the next verse, was more eminently fulfilled when the city was besieged by the Chaldeans. See Jer. xiv. 18; xxxviii. 2. And Vitringa is of opinion, that the prophet has that calamity in view, as well as the affliction suffered under the Assyrian invasion. *All thy rulers are fled together*—Zedekiah and his chief commanders, whose flight he foretels. See Jer. xxxix. 3, 4. *They are bound by the archers*—Bishop Lowth renders this clause, *they are fled from the bow*, that is, from the bows and arrows of the Assyrian archers: or, as others translate this former part of the verse, *All thy captains are fled together with a wandering flight from the bow*. That is, they are fled far and wide; *they are bound*—Namely, those who could not flee away fast enough to escape the Chaldeans. *All that are found in thee*—Namely, in the city, with Zedekiah, during the siege; for those who had fled to the Chaldeans saved their lives and liberties. Or, as the words, כל נכצותי, may be rendered, *All that are found of thee, or belonging to thee; which have fled from far*—Or, have fled a great way off, namely, who fled from Jerusalem, but were pursued and overtaken by the enemy. 2 Kings xxv. 4-7, and Jer. lii. 8-11.

Verses 4, 5. *Therefore said I, &c.*—"Behold the prophet here anticipating those lamentations which he was afterward to pour forth, and which Jeremiah so pathetically poured forth, an eye-witness of this calamity. For the expressions here are too strong to be applied to any other calamity than the great and final one, when the Jews were carried captives to Babylon;" of which the prophet had a clear foresight. *Look away from me*—Take off your eyes and thoughts from me, and leave me alone, that I may take my fill of sorrow. *Labour not to comfort me*—For all your labour will be lost. I neither can

A. M. 3292. hosts in the valley of vision, breaking  
B. C. 712. down the walls, and of crying to the  
mountains.

6 \* And Elam bare the quiver with chariots  
of men *and* horsemen, and † Kir ‡ uncovered  
the shield.

7 And it shall come to pass, *that* § thy choicest  
valleys shall be full of chariots, and the horse-  
men shall set themselves in array ¶ at the gate.

8 ¶ And he discovered the covering of Judah,  
and thou didst look in that day to the armour  
\* of the house of the forest.

\* Jer. xlix. 35.—† Ch. xv. 1.—‡ Heb. *made naked*.—§ Heb.  
*the choice of thy valleys*.—¶ Or, toward.

nor will receive any consolation. *Because of the spoiling, &c.*—Of that city and nation, whereof I am a member. The title of *daughter* is often given both to cities and nations, as hath been observed before. *For it is a day of treading down*—In which my people are trodden under foot by their insolent enemies; and of *perplexity by the Lord of hosts*—This is added, partly to show, that this did not happen without God's providence; and partly to aggravate their calamity, because, not only men, but God himself fought against them; *breaking down the walls*—Of the strong cities of Judah; which was done both by Sennacherib and by Nebuchadnezzar; and of *crying to the mountains*—With such loud and dismal outcries as should reach to the neighbouring mountains. "Who does not see," says Vitringa, "in Isaiah, thus weeping over Jerusalem, a type of Jesus weeping over this same city in its last extremity?"

Verses 6, 7. *And Elam bare the quiver*—This second member of the first part of this prophecy, which begins here, seems evidently to refer to the Assyrian invasion; for the Medes and Elamites, or Persians, were united with the Assyrians in the time of Sennacherib, but not of Nebuchadnezzar. The Persians were expert bowmen, as appears from Jer. xlix. 35, and from Strabo's testimony. *With chariots of men and horsemen*—As some of them fought on foot, so others from chariots and horses. *And Kir*—That is, the Medes, so called, from an eminent city and region of that name in Media, 2 Kings xvi. 9; Amos i. 5; *uncovered the shield*—Prepared their defensive and offensive weapons, and themselves, for the battle; for in times of peace arms were wrapped up and covered, to preserve them clean and fit for use. *Thy choicest valleys shall be full of chariots*—Valleys were the most proper places for the use of chariots; and the *horsemen at the gate*—To assist and defend the footmen, while they made the assault, and to prevent those who endeavoured to escape.

Ver. 8-11. *And he*—Namely, the enemy Sennacherib, of whose invasion he seems to speak; *discovered the covering of Judah*—Took those fenced cities which were a covering or safeguard, both to the peo-

9 <sup>h</sup> Ye have seen also the breaches A. M. 3292.  
of the city of David, that they are B. C. 712.  
many: and ye gathered together the waters of  
the lower pool.

10 And ye have numbered the houses of Jerusalem, and the houses have ye broken down to fortify the wall.

11 <sup>i</sup> Ye made also a ditch between the two walls for the water of the old pool; but ye have not looked unto <sup>h</sup> the maker thereof, neither had respect unto him that fashioned it long ago.

§ 1 Kings vii. 2; x. 17.—<sup>h</sup> 2 Kings xx. 20; 2 Chron. xxxii. 4, 5, 30.—<sup>i</sup> Neh. iii. 16.—<sup>h</sup> Chap. xxxvii. 26.

ple of Judah and to Jerusalem. *Thou didst look*—Or, rather, as Dr. Waterland and Bishop Lowth render it, *Thou shalt, or wilt look, &c.* For the prophet is evidently predicting an invasion which was future, and the behaviour of the Jews on that occasion. He is showing beforehand some of the causes of these judgments, namely, the crimes and vices of the people; and first, in these verses, their inconsideration and want of faith. *They would look, he says, to the armour of the house of the forest*—But not to God. The history (2 Chron. xxxii. 2, &c.) best explains this passage. From thence we learn, that the prince and the people were rather solicitous to seek for human defence, by fortifying their city, than for that which was divine, by having respect unto him who was their king and protector. *The house of the forest* is that mentioned 1 Kings vii. 2, where the armory was kept. See the note there. The prophet proceeds to foretel that they would see, that is, observe or consider, *the breaches of the city of David*—Namely, in order to the reparation of them, and to fortify the city; that they would *gather the waters of the lower pool*—In order that they might both deprive the enemy of water, and supply the city with it: of which see on 2 Chron. xxxii. 3, 4. That they would number *the houses of Jerusalem*—Namely, with a view to know their own strength, and the number of their people, that so they might lay the burdens more equally upon them, and make sufficient provision for them; that they would *break down the houses*—Namely, which stood upon or without the walls of their city, and which therefore would have given their enemies advantage against them, and have hindered the fortifying of the city. *But, adds he, ye have not looked, or will not look, unto the maker thereof*—That is, of Jerusalem, mentioned in the foregoing verse; *him that fashioned it*—Hebrew, *וְיָצַרָהּ*, the former, or framer of it, God, who made it a city, and the place of his special presence and worship; which also he had undertaken to protect, on condition that the people would observe his commands; to whom, therefore, they should have had recourse in this time of their distress. The expression *מִרְחוֹק*, of old, or long ago, may be added to aggravate their sin in distrusting

A. M. 3292. 12 And in that day did the Lord  
B. C. 712. GOD of hosts <sup>1</sup> call to weeping, and to  
mourning, and <sup>m</sup> to baldness, and to girding with  
sackcloth :

13 And behold joy and gladness, slaying oxen  
and killing sheep, eating flesh and drinking wine :  
<sup>n</sup> let us eat and drink ; for to-morrow we shall die.

14 <sup>o</sup> And it was revealed in mine ears by the  
LORD of hosts, Surely this iniquity <sup>p</sup> shall not  
be purged from you till ye die, saith the Lord  
God of hosts.

15 ¶ Thus saith the Lord God of hosts, Go,  
get thee unto this treasurer, *even* unto <sup>q</sup> Shebna,  
<sup>r</sup> which is over the house, and say,

<sup>1</sup> Joel i. 13.—<sup>m</sup> Ezra ix. 3 ; Chapter xv. 2 ; Micah i. 16.  
<sup>n</sup> Chap. lvi. 12 ; 1 Cor. xv. 32.—<sup>o</sup> Chap. v. 9.—<sup>p</sup> 1 Sam. iii.  
14 ; Ezek. xxiv. 13.—<sup>q</sup> 2 Kings xviii. 37.—<sup>r</sup> 1 Kings iv. 6.  
<sup>o</sup> Or, *O he*.—<sup>2</sup> Sam. xviii. 18 ; Matt. xxvii. 60.

that God who had now, for a long time, given proof  
of his care and kindness in defending that city.

Verses 12-14. *And in that day did, or will, the  
Lord call, &c.*—Another fault, which the prophet  
imputes to the carnal Jews, is impenitence, or carnal  
security. He foretels that God would call them to  
weeping and mourning, and other instances and evi-  
dences of humiliation and godly sorrow ; but that,  
instead thereof, he should find them given up to joy  
and gladness, slaying oxen, &c., that is, to levity and  
luxury, mirth and feasting : saying, *Let us eat and  
drink, for to-morrow we die*—The prophet tells us,  
that we shall certainly and suddenly be destroyed ;  
it concerns us, therefore, to make our best of the  
present time, and to be merry while we have oppor-  
tunity : a most perverse and desperate conclusion,  
proceeding from obstinate profaneness and contempt  
of God's judgments. *It was revealed in mine ears*  
—God himself hath said to me ; *Surely this iniquity  
shall not be purged till you die*—This, your harden-  
ing your hearts, under and against God's judgments,  
and defeating and rendering ineffectual the means  
provided for bringing you to repentance, shall never  
be forgiven you, but you shall feel the effects of such  
conduct, and of God's displeasure against you for it,  
as long as you live.

Verse 15. *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, &c.*—  
This second part of the prophet's discourse, which  
contains the judgment upon Shebna, seems to be so  
connected with the former as to give reason to sup-  
pose that this man was the chief among the profane  
nobles of that time, against whom the prophet de-  
clains in the preceding verses ; and that, having the  
first place in the state and palace after the king, he  
had, by his example, corrupted many others. We  
know nothing certain concerning him, further than  
that he was the *treasurer*, or steward of the king's  
household. He seems to have been a different per-  
son from that *Shebna, the scribe*, mentioned chap.  
xxxvii. 2. Some have thought that he was not a  
native Jew, but a foreigner, and a man of low birth ;

A. M. 3292. 16 What hast thou here, and whom  
B. C. 712. hast thou here, that thou hast hewed  
thee out a sepulchre here, <sup>6</sup> as he <sup>7</sup> that heweth  
him out a sepulchre on high, and that graveth  
a habitation for himself in a rock ?

17 Behold, <sup>7</sup> the LORD will carry thee away  
with <sup>8</sup> a mighty captivity, <sup>8</sup> and will surely cover  
thee.

18 He will surely violently turn and toss thee  
*like* a ball into a <sup>9</sup> large country : there shalt  
thou die, and there the chariots of thy glory  
*shall be* the shame of thy lord's house.

19 And I will drive thee from thy station, and  
from thy state shall he pull thee down.

<sup>7</sup> Or, *the LORD, who covered thee with an excellent covering, and  
clothed thee gorgeously, shall surely, &c.*, Verse 18.—<sup>8</sup> Hebrew,  
*the captivity of a man*.—<sup>9</sup> Esther vii. 8.—<sup>8</sup> Hebrew, *large of  
spaces*.

which they infer from "the pride of his desire to  
ennoble himself by a splendid sepulchre:" but of  
these things there is no evidence.

Verses 16-19. *What hast thou here?*—Or, *What  
dost thou here?* What right hast thou to this place  
and office ? *And whom hast thou here?*—What re-  
lations or family ? *That thou hast hewed thee out  
a sepulchre*—That thou art ambitious of raising a  
stately sepulchre for thyself and thine heirs ? *As he  
that heweth out a sepulchre on high*—In a high  
and eminent place ; *a habitation for himself in a  
rock*—A monument that shall preserve his memory  
to all succeeding times. *The Lord will carry thee  
away with a mighty captivity*—Will cause thee to  
be carried into captivity by a strong hand, or by the  
hand of a mighty man, from which, therefore, thou  
shalt not be able to escape. The Hebrew, *מטלטלך  
גבר*, is rendered by Dr. Waterland, *will throw  
thee out hence with a mighty throw*, and may also  
be rendered, *will cast thee away with the casting  
of a mighty man*, that is, with great force ; and *will  
surely cover thee*—Namely, with confusion, as is  
here implied, and as this phrase is more fully ex-  
pressed *Psa. cix. 29*. Or, this may be an allusion to  
the condition of mourners in general, and particular-  
ly of condemned persons, whose faces were wont to  
be covered. *He will violently turn and toss thee  
like a ball*—Hebrew, *צנף צנפה כרוך*, *rolling  
he will roll thee with the rolling of a ball ; into a  
large country*—Like a ball which is cast into a large  
and plain spot of ground, where, being thrown with  
great force, it runs far and wide. Or, *to a far coun-  
try*, meaning probably Assyria. *There shalt thou  
die*—After having lived in obscurity. *And the  
chariots of thy glory shall be the shame of thy lord's  
house*—The honour thou didst arrive at, and the  
chariots in which thou didst ride with so much state  
at Jerusalem, shall turn to thy shame, and to the re-  
proach of those who preferred so unworthy a person.  
Dr. Waterland translates the verse, *He will toss and  
whirl thee, as he were whirling a ball, &c.*, and

A. M. 3292. 20 ¶ And it shall come to pass in  
B. C. 712 that day, that I will call my servant  
Eliakim, the son of Hilkiah.

21 And I will clothe him with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle, and I will commit thy government into his hand: and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah.

22 And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder: so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open.

\* 2 Kings xviii. 18.—† Job xii. 14; Rev. iii. 7.

there shall be thy glorious chariots, O thou shame of thy lord's house. And I will drive thee, &c.—These are the Lord's words; and from thy state shall he pull thee down—Namely, the Lord shall; such sudden changes of persons being very usual in these writings.

Verses 20-22. *I will call my servant Eliakim*—By my Spirit fitting him for the work, and moving the heart of Hezekiah to call him to it. *And I will clothe him with thy robe, &c.*—There was a peculiar sort of robe and girdle, which was the badge of his office, which should be taken from him and given to Eliakim. *And he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem*—He shall not only have the authority of a father, which thou now hast, but he shall govern them with fatherly care and affection. *And the key, &c.*—As the robe and the girdle or baldric, mentioned in the preceding verse, were the ensigns of power and authority, so likewise was the key; being a significant emblem of the power of opening and shutting, of binding and loosing, of letting inferiors into an office, or putting them out of it; whence the delivering of the keys of a house or city into a person's hands signifies the giving him the power and possession of it, or the confirming to him such a grant. "To comprehend," says Bishop Lowth, "how the key could be borne on the shoulder, it will be necessary to observe, that one sort of keys, used by the ancients, was of considerable magnitude, and, as to the shape, very much bent and crooked. Homer (*Odyss.*, xxi. 6) describes the key of Ulysses's storehouse as *ευκαμπής*, a large curvature, which Eustathius explains by saying it was *δρεπανοειδής*, in shape like a reap-hook. Huetius 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. In allusion to the key as the ensign of power, the unlimited extent of that power is ex-

23 And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place; and he shall be for a glorious throne to his father's house.

24 And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his father's house, the offspring and the issue, all vessels of small quantity, from the vessels of cups, even to all the vessels of flagons.

25 In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, shall the nail that is fastened in the sure place be removed, and be cut down, and fall; and the burden that was upon it shall be cut off: for the LORD hath spoken it.

† Ezra ix. 8.—†† Or, instruments of viola.

pressed here with great clearness as well as force by the sole and exclusive authority to open and to shut. Our Saviour, therefore, has, upon a similar occasion, made use of a like manner of expression, Matt. xvi. 19; and in Rev. iii. 7 has applied to himself the very words of the prophet."

Verse 23. *I will fasten him as a nail*—I will establish the power in his hands, as a nail is fixed in the strong walls or solid timber of a house. "In ancient times, and in 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 moveables 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 into them afterward; and they were contrived so as to strengthen the walls by binding the parts together, as well as to serve for convenience. 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 by, but what conveys to us a low and contemptible idea. *Grace hath been showed from the Lord our God*, says Ezra, (ix. 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*."... Bishop Lowth. *And he shall be a glorious throne to his father's house*—By his prudent and righteous government he shall procure great glory, not only to himself, but to all that have any relation to him.

Verses 24, 25. *They shall hang upon him all the glory of his father's house*—Of his own kindred and family, who shall all depend upon him, and receive glory from him; *the offspring and the issue*

—Great and small, the children and grand-children, of his father's house. *All vessels of small quantity*—The meanest of them shall receive a lustre and advantage from their relation to him; *from the vessels of cups, &c.*—All sorts of vessels, great or small, mean or precious, may be hanged upon him, without any fear of falling. *In that day shall the nail, &c.*—This must be understood

of Shebna, as a repetition and confirmation of the sentence above denounced against him; *shall the nail that is fastened*—That seemed to be so, both in his own eyes, and in the eyes of others; *be removed and fall*—As above described; *and the burden that was upon it shall be cut off*—All those wicked officers that were advanced and supported by his power.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

*In this chapter is foretold, (1.) The lamentable desolation of Tyre, by the Chaldeans, to the consternation of the Tyrians themselves, and their neighbours, 1–14. (2.) The restoration of Tyre after seventy years, when their trade and commerce should flourish again, 15–17. (3.) The conversion of the Tyrians to God, 18.*

A. M. 3289. B. C. 715. **T**HE <sup>a</sup>burden of Tyre. Howl, ye ships of Tarshish; for it is laid waste, so that there is no house, no entering in: <sup>b</sup>from the land of Chittim it is revealed to them.

<sup>a</sup> Jer. xxv. 22; xlvii. 4; Ezek. xxvi., xxvii., xxviii.; Amos

## NOTES ON CHAPTER XXIII.

Verse 1. *The burden of Tyre*—Tyre was an ancient and wealthy city, situated upon the Mediterranean sea, and for many ages one of the most celebrated cities in those parts of the world. The Greek geographer, Strabo, says, that after Sidon, it was the greatest and most ancient city of the Phenicians. Accordingly, Bishop Lowth makes no question but it is meant Josh. xix. 29, where mention is made of the *strong city Tyre*, as existing when Canaan was divided by lot to the tribes of Israel. And it is mentioned also in the fragments of Sanchoniathon, the Phenician historian, who is reckoned to have lived about the time of Gideon, or somewhat later. In the days of David and Solomon it evidently appears to have been a place of great note, and it continued and increased in its commerce, wealth, population, and power, during the reigns of the subsequent kings of Israel and Judah. When Isaiah uttered this prophecy respecting its desolation, (which he did one hundred and twenty-five years at least before its accomplishment,) it stood firm in its strength and glory, abounded in riches, and was especially mighty in naval power, having lately conquered the navy which the Assyrians had brought against it. Yet this city, according to this prophecy, was destroyed, and that twice; first by Nebuchadnezzar, and long afterward by Alexander the Great. The former it withstood thirteen years, at the end of which time the inhabitants, wearied out by endless efforts, resolved to place the sea between them and their enemy, and accordingly passed into an island about half a mile from the shore, where, as Vitranga has proved at large from good authorities, a smaller city already stood, accounted a part of Tyre, and where had long been the principal station for ships. The city on the island was by this means greatly enlarged, and was afterward termed *New Tyre*. This stood out against Alexander seven

2 Be <sup>1</sup>still, ye inhabitants of the <sup>A. M. 3289.</sup>isle; thou whom the merchants of <sup>B. C. 715.</sup>Zidon, that pass over the sea, have replenished. 3 And by great waters the seed of Sihor, the

<sup>i. 9;</sup> Zech. ix. 2, 4.—<sup>b</sup> Verse 12.—<sup>j</sup> Heb. *silent*.

months; and before he could take it he was obliged to fill up the strait which separated the island from the continent. Although this prophecy first and more directly respects the former destruction, yet it seems to have some reference to the latter also; only it is here foretold, that seventy years after the former destruction, and before the latter, Tyre should recover her former power and glory, which came to pass accordingly. This is the eighth and last discourse of the second part of Isaiah's prophecies.

*Howl, ye ships of Tarshish*—By *Tarshish*, it seems, Tartessus in Spain is meant, a place which, in the course of trade, the Tyrians greatly frequented: see note on chap. ii. 16. Howling and lamenting are ascribed to the ships by a known figure; *for it is laid waste*—It shall shortly be laid waste; *so that there is no house, &c.*—Every house, or warehouse, shall be shut up, and all trade shall cease. *From the land of Chittim it is revealed to them*—Namely, to the ships, that is, the negotiators and mariners of Tarshish, whose gain proceeded principally from Tyre, and whom the prophet here addresses; as if he had said, "Lament and deplore the mournful fall of this city, which you shall hear of while you are trafficking in the most distant parts of the Mediterranean sea." Chittim, in Scripture, signifies all the countries lying upon that sea; and the words import that the news of the siege of Tyre should be dispersed through them all. Indeed, according to Jerome on verse 6, when the Tyrians saw they had no other means of escaping except by sea, while some of them fled in their ships to the adjoining island, as mentioned above, others of them took refuge in Carthage, and in the islands of the Ionian and Egean seas, from whence the news would easily reach Tarshish.

Verses 2, 3. *Be still, ye inhabitants of the isles*—Hebrew, כִּי־שָׁמֵט, *be silent*; as persons confounded, and not knowing what to say, or as mourners use to be.

A. M. 3289. harvest of the river, *is* her revenue; B. C. 715 and <sup>c</sup> she is a mart of nations.

4 Be thou ashamed, O Zidon: for the sea hath spoken, *even* the strength of the sea, saying, I travail not, nor bring forth children, neither do I nourish up young men, *nor* bring up virgins.

5 <sup>d</sup> As at the report concerning Egypt, *so* shall they be sorely pained at the report of Tyre.

6 Pass ye over to Tarshish; howl, ye inhabitants of the isle.

<sup>c</sup> Ezek. xxvii. 3.—<sup>d</sup> Chap. xix. 16.—<sup>e</sup> Ch. xxii. 2.—<sup>3</sup> Heb.

Silence is a mark of grief and consternation: see chap. xlvii. 5; Lam. xi. 10. The prophet here addresses the people of Tyre now fled to the island. The title of island, however, is often given by the Hebrews to places not surrounded by the sea, but only bordering upon it; *whom the merchants of Zidon have replenished*—With mariners and commodities. Tyre and Sidon, being cities near each other, and both famous for merchandise and navigation, helped to enrich each other. *And by great waters the seed of Sihor, &c.*—Sihor here means the river Nile, so called, as it is also Jer. ii. 18, and 1 Chron. xiii. 5, from the blackness of its waters charged with the mud, which it brings down from Ethiopia, when it overflows; as it was called by the Greeks *Melas*, and by the Latins *Melo*, for the same reason. “The English translation,” says Lowth, “published under Queen Elizabeth, gives us a clearer sense of this verse thus: *The seed of Nilus, growing by the abundance of waters, and the harvest of the river was her revenues.*” Egypt, by its extraordinary fertility, caused by the overflowing of the Nile, supplied the neighbouring nations with corn, by which branch of trade the Tyrians gained great wealth.

Verse 4. *Be thou ashamed, O Zidon*—Tyre is called the daughter of Zidon, verse 12, being built and first inhabited by a colony of the Zidonians. Or, rather, as Justin says, “The Zidonians, when their city was taken by the king of Ascalon, betook themselves to their ships, and landed and built Tyre.” Zidon, therefore, as the mother city, is here supposed to be deeply afflicted with the calamity of her daughter. *For the sea hath spoken*—That part of the sea in which Tyre was, and from which ships and men were sent into all countries; *even the strength of the sea*—This is added to explain what he meant by *the sea*, even Tyre, which might be called *the strength of the sea*, because it was strong at sea, both by its situation, and the strength of its naval forces; *saying, I travail not, &c.*—I, who was so fruitful that I sent forth colonies into other countries, (of which Carthage was one,) am now barren and desolate.

Verse 5. *As at the report concerning Egypt, &c.*—“The words, as they stand in our translation, imply, that the Zidonians, spoken of verse 4, or in general other neighbouring places, should be as much

7 *Is* this your <sup>e</sup> joyous city, whose A. M. 3289. antiquity *is* of ancient days? her own B. C. 715. feet shall carry her <sup>2</sup> afar off to sojourn.

8 Who hath taken this counsel against Tyre, <sup>f</sup> the crowning city, whose merchants *are* princes, whose traffickers *are* the honourable of the earth?

9 The LORD of hosts hath purposed it, <sup>3</sup> to stain the pride of all glory, *and* to bring into contempt all the honourable of the earth.

10 Pass through thy land as a river, O daugh-

*from afar off.*—<sup>f</sup> See Ezek. xxviii. 2, 12.—<sup>3</sup> Heb. to pollute.

concerned at the news of the destruction of Tyre as they were at the calamity of Egypt, mentioned chap. xix. But there is a difficulty in admitting this sense, because the destruction of Tyre here spoken of was before that of Egypt, if we mean that calamity of Egypt which is usually joined with the destruction of Tyre in the prophets: see Jer. xxv. 19, 22; Ezek. xxix. 18–20. Therefore others read this verse thus: *As soon as the report of Tyre shall come to, or be heard in, Egypt, they shall be in great pain* for it; namely, because they exported their corn to Tyre, and made a gainful trade by it.”—Lowth.

Verses 6, 7. *Pass ye over to Tarshish*—Flee from your own country to Tartessus in Spain, and there bewail your calamity. Or, betake yourselves for refuge to some of the parts to which you used to traffic. The LXX. say, *εἰς Καρχηδόνα, to Carthage*, which was a colony transplanted from Tyre. *Howl, ye inhabitants of the isle*—Of Tyre, as verse 2. *Is this your joyous city?*—That formerly lived in so much pomp, and pleasure, and security? *Whose antiquity is of ancient days*—See on verse 1. Tyre, though not so old as Zidon, yet certainly was of very high antiquity. Justin, in the passage above quoted, had dated the building of it at a certain number of years before the taking of Troy; but the number is lost in the present copies. *Her own feet shall carry her*—Whereas before, like a delicate lady, she would not set her foot to the ground, but used to be carried in stately chariots; *afar off to sojourn*—To seek for new habitations.

Verses 8, 9. *Who hath taken this counsel against Tyre?*—Words of admiration. Who, and where, is he that could imagine, or durst attempt such a thing as this? This is the work of God, and not of man. *The crowning city*—Which was a royal city, and carried away the crown from all other cities: *whose merchants are princes*—Equal to princes for wealth, and power, and reputation. *The Lord of hosts hath purposed it*—This is the Lord’s own doing; *to stain the pride of all glory*—God’s design is, by this example, to abase the pride of all the potentates of the earth, that they may see how weak they are when he sets himself against them.

Verse 10. *Pass through thy land*—Tarry no longer in thy own territories, but flee through them,

A. M. 3289. ter of Tarshish: *there is* no more  
B. C. 715. <sup>4</sup> strength.

11 He stretched out his hand over the sea, he shook the kingdoms: the LORD hath given a commandment <sup>5</sup> against <sup>6</sup> the merchant-city, to destroy the <sup>7</sup> strong holds thereof.

12 And he said, <sup>8</sup> Thou shalt no more rejoice,

<sup>4</sup> He. girdle.—<sup>5</sup> Or, concerning a merchantman.—<sup>6</sup> He. Canaan.

into other countries, for safety and relief. *As a river*—Swiftly, lest you be prevented; continually, till you be all gone, and in shoals and multitudes. *O daughter of Tarshish*—Tyre is here called the daughter of Tarshish, because it was enriched and increased by trade to that place: or, rather, as Bishop Lowth supposes, “because of the close connection and perpetual intercourse between the two cities, according to that latitude of signification in which the Hebrews used the word *son* and *daughter*, to express any sort of conjunction and dependence whatever.” *There is no more strength*—Or, *no more a girdle*, as in the margin: the girdle which strengthens the loins of a man being here put for strength, as frequently elsewhere, as if he had said, It behooves you, O Tyrians, to flee away, as I advise, for your city is unable to defend you; your wealth, the sinews of war, is lost; your walls are broken down; and your former friends and allies have forsaken you.

Verses 11, 12. *He*—Namely, the Lord, mentioned in the latter part of the verse; *stretched out his hand over the sea*—That is, Tyre, called the sea, (verse 4,) to overthrow it. *He shook*—Hebrew, רָרַגוּ, *he made to tremble, the kingdoms*—Either the two kingdoms of Tyre and Zidon, or the neighbouring and confederate kingdoms, which might justly quake at her fall, for the dreadfulness and unexpectedness of the event, and because Tyre was a bulwark and a refuge to them. *The Lord hath given a commandment, to destroy, &c.*—Hath put this design into the hearts of her enemies, and given them courage to attempt, and strength to execute it. *Thou shalt no more rejoice, oppressed virgin*—He calls her a *virgin*, because she had hitherto never borne the yoke of a conquering enemy; though withal he signifies that she should be oppressed, and, as it were, ravished, by her enemies. *Daughter of Zidon*—Tyre is called *the daughter of Zidon*, because she was first built and inhabited by a colony of the Zidonians; as Pliny calls Carthage *the daughter of Tyre*, because she was built by a colony of Tyrians. “It is certain,” says Lowth, “that of the two cities, Zidon was much the most ancient, being mentioned by Moses in his account of the peopling of the world after the flood, Gen. x. 19; and again, chap. xlix. 13. Afterward it is called by Joshua, *great Zidon*, Josh. xi. 8: Homer likewise takes notice of Zidon, but not of Tyre; and the authority of Strabo is express to the same purpose.” *Arise, pass over to Chittim, &c.*—See on verses 1 and 6. “Of all the Phenicians,” says Bishop Newton, “the Tyrians

O thou oppressed virgin, daughter of A. M. 3289.  
Zidon: arise, <sup>h</sup> pass over to Chittim; B. C. 715.

there also shalt thou have no rest.

13 Behold the land of the Chaldeans; this people was not, *till* the Assyrian founded it for <sup>i</sup> them that dwell in the wilderness: they set up the towers thereof, they raised up the

<sup>7</sup> Or, strengths.—<sup>8</sup> Rev. xviii. 22.—<sup>1</sup> Ver. 1.—<sup>i</sup> Psa. lxxii. 9.

were the most celebrated for their shipping and colonies. Tyre exceeded Zidon in this respect, as Strabo testifies, and sent forth colonies into Africa and Spain, unto and beyond the pillars of Hercules: and Quintus Curtius says that her colonies were diffused almost over the whole world. The Tyrians, therefore, having planted colonies at Tarshish, and upon the coasts of Chittim, it was natural for them, when they were pressed with dangers and difficulties at home, to flee to their friends and countrymen abroad for protection. That they really did so, St. Jerome asserts, upon the authority of Assyrian histories, which are now lost. But, it is here foretold, that, “though they should pass over to Chittim, yet even there they should find no quiet settlement; *There also shalt thou have no rest*—Megasthenes (an historian who lived about 300 years before Christ) is quoted by several ancient authors, for saying that Nebuchadnezzar subdued a great part of Africa and Spain, and proceeded as far as the pillars of Hercules. After he had subdued Tyre and Egypt, we may suppose he carried his arms further westward; and if he proceeded as far as Megasthenes reports, the Tyrians might well be said to *have no rest*, their conqueror pursuing them from one country to another. But besides this, and after this, the Carthaginians, and other colonies of the Tyrians, lived in a very unsettled state. Their history is made up of little but wars and tumults, even before their three fatal wars with the Romans, in every one of which their affairs grew worse and worse. Sicily and Spain, Europe and Africa, the land, and their own element, the sea, were theatres of their calamities and miseries; till, at last, not only the new, but old Carthage too, was utterly destroyed. As the Carthaginians sprung from the Tyrians, and the Tyrians from the Zidonians, and Zidon was the firstborn of Canaan, (Gen. x. 15,) so the curse upon Canaan seems to have pursued them to the most distant parts of the earth.”

Verse 13. *Behold the land of the Chaldeans, &c.*—This verse, in which there is much obscurity, will admit of different interpretations. One adopted by Dr. Lightfoot and some others, is to this purpose: Behold, how easily the land of the Chaldeans was destroyed by the Assyrians, though their own hands founded it, *set up the tower of Babylon*, and *raised up its palaces*; yet he, the Assyrian, brought it to ruin: the king of Assyria having lately taken Babylon, and made it tributary to the Assyrian empire. Another and more probable interpretation is thus stated by Poole, and adopted by Lowth: “You

A. M. 3289. palaces thereof, and he brought it to  
B. C. 715. ruin.

14 <sup>h</sup> Howl, ye ships of Tarshish: for your strength is laid waste.

15 ¶ And it shall come to pass in that day, that Tyre shall be forgotten seventy years, according to the days of one king: after the end of seventy years <sup>g</sup> shall Tyre sing as a harlot.

16 Take a harp, go about the city, thou har-

<sup>h</sup> Verse 1; Ezek. xxvii. 25, 30.—<sup>g</sup> Heb. it shall be unto Tyre

Tyrians, who think your city impregnable, cast your eyes upon the land and empire of the Chaldeans, or Babylonians; which though now it be a flourishing kingdom, and shall shortly become more glorious and potent, yet shall certainly be brought to utter ruin: and therefore your presumption is unreasonable and vain." The last clause especially, in the original, שמה למפלה, *he hath placed, or appointed, it for ruin*, seems evidently to favour this interpretation. Bishop Newton, however, (with whom Bishop Lowth, Dr. Waterland, and many others agree,) understands the prophet as speaking in this clause, not of the ruin of Babylon, but of Tyre. He therefore interprets the verse thus: "*Behold—An exclamation, that he is going to utter something new and extraordinary; the land of the Chaldeans—That is, Babylon, and the country about Babylon; this people was not—Was of no note or eminence; till the Assyrian founded it for them that dwell in the wilderness—They dwelt before in tents, and led a wandering life in the wilderness, till the Assyrians built Babylon for their reception. They set up the towers thereof, they raised up the palaces thereof—Herodotus, Ctesias, and other ancient historians agree, that the kings of Assyria fortified and beautified Babylon; and he—That is, this people,*" (as Bishop Lowth renders it,) "*mentioned before, the Chaldeans or Babylonians, brought it to ruin—That is, Tyre, which is the subject of the whole prophecy. The Assyrians were at that time the great monarchs of the East; the Chaldeans were their slaves and subjects; and therefore it is the more extraordinary that the prophet should, so many years beforehand, foresee the successes and conquests of the Chaldeans.*"

Verses 15–17. *And it shall come to pass, &c.*—Here begins the second part of this discourse, which contains an alleviation of the judgment decreed against Tyre. The prophet foretels, 1st, "That God would circumscribe within certain bounds his severity to Tyre, and within seventy years restore it to its former state;" and, 2d, "That in process of time the Tyrians should be converted to the true religion," verse 18. The former particular is predicted, first literally, and then figuratively. *Tyre shall be forgotten*—Neglected and forsaken by those who used to traffic with her; *seventy years, according to the days of one king*—"Or kingdom, meaning

lot that has been forgotten; make <sup>A. M. 3289.</sup> sweet melody, sing many songs, that <sup>B. C. 715.</sup> thou mayest be remembered.

17 And it shall come to pass after the end of seventy years, that the LORD will visit Tyre, and she shall turn to her hire, and <sup>1</sup> shall commit fornication with all the kingdoms of the world upon the face of the earth.

18 And her merchandise and her hire <sup>m</sup> shall be holiness to the LORD: it shall not be treasured

as the song of a harlot.—<sup>j</sup> Rev. xvii. 2.—<sup>m</sup> Zech. xiv. 20.

the Babylonian, which was to continue seventy years." *After the end of seventy years shall Tyre sing as a harlot, &c.*—The plain meaning of this metaphorical passage, says Bishop Newton, in which Tyre is represented as a harlot, "is, that she should lie neglected of traders and merchants for seventy years, as long as the Babylonian empire lasted, and after that she should recover her liberties and her trade, and draw in several of all nations to deal with her, and particularly the kings of the earth to buy her purples, which were worn chiefly by emperors and kings, and for which Tyre was famous above all places in the world. *Seventy years* was the time prefixed for the duration of the Babylonian empire. So long the nations were to groan under that tyrannical yoke, though these nations were subdued, some sooner, some later than others, Jer. xxv. 11, 12. Accordingly, at the end of seventy years, Cyrus and the Persians subverted the Babylonian empire, and restored the conquered nations to their liberty." The bishop observes further, that these seventy years may also be computed after another manner. "Tyre was taken by Nebuchadnezzar in the thirty-second year of his reign, and in the five hundred and seventy-third before Christ. Seventy years from thence will bring us down to the year five hundred and three before Christ, and the nineteenth of Darius Hystaspis. At that time, it appears from history that the Ionians had rebelled against Darius, and the Phœnicians assisted him with their fleets: and, consequently, it is reasonable to conclude that they were now restored to their former privileges. In the succeeding reign we find that they, together with the Sidonians, furnished Xerxes with several ships for his expedition into Greece. And, by the time of Alexander, the Tyrians were grown to such power and greatness that they stopped the progress of that rapid conqueror longer than any part of the Persian empire besides. But this is to be understood of the insular Tyre; for, as the old city flourished most before the time of Nebuchadnezzar, so the new city flourished most afterward, and this is the Tyre that henceforth is so much celebrated in history."

Verse 18. *And her merchandise, &c., shall be holiness to the Lord*—The meaning of the prophet is extremely clear, namely, "that the time should come, after the restoration of Tyre, in which the Tyrians, out of reverence to the true God, would

A. M. 3289. nor laid up; for her merchandise  
B. C. 715. shall be for them that dwell before the

LORD, to eat sufficiently, and for <sup>o</sup> du- A. M. 3289.  
rable clothing. B. C. 715.

<sup>o</sup> Heb.

old.

consecrate their wealth and gain to him, and would readily contribute that gain and wealth to the support of the teachers of true religion. In short, that the Tyrians should become converts to that religion. The reader will easily observe that the passage is metaphorical." "The Tyrians were much addicted to the worship of Hercules, as he was called by the Greeks, or of Baal, as he is denominated in Scripture; but, in process of time, by the means of some Jews and proselytes, living and conversing with them, some of them also became proselytes to the Jewish religion; so that we find a great multitude of people from the sea-coast of Tyre and Sidon came to hear our Saviour; and he, though peculiarly sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, yet came into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon; and the first fruits of the gospel there was a Tyrian woman, a woman of Canaan, as she is called, a *Syro-phenician by nation*. When St. Paul, in his way to Jeru-

salem, came to Tyre, he found disciples there, who were inspired by the Holy Ghost, and prophesied; and with them he *tarried seven days*. In the time of Dioclesian's persecution, the Tyrians were such sincere converts to Christianity that they exhibited several glorious examples of confessors and martyrs; and when the storm of persecution was blown over, under their Bishop Paulinus, they built an oratory, or rather a temple, for the public worship of God, the most magnificent and sumptuous in all Palestine. Eusebius produces this last occurrence in proof of the completion of Isaiah's prophecy; and St. Jerome is of the same opinion. To these proofs we will only add, that as Tyre consecrated its *merchandise and hire* unto the Lord, so it had the honour of being erected into an archbishopric, and the first under the patriarchate of Jerusalem, having fourteen bishops under its primacy; and in this state it continued several years."—Bishop Newton

CHAPTER XXIV.

After having foretold the destruction of the foreign nations, enemies to Judah, the prophet declares the judgments impending on the Jews themselves, for their apostacy and wickedness, and the desolation that should be brought on their whole country. This is the general subject of this chapter, in which we have, (1.) A threatening of these desolating judgments, 1-12. (2.) An assurance that in the midst of them the truly pious should be comforted, 13-16. (3.) A further threatening of the like desolations, 17-24. To which is added an assurance that, in the midst of all, God should be glorified. But concerning the particular application of the subject of this chapter, interpreters are not all agreed. Some refer it to the desolation caused by the invasion of Shalmaneser; others to the invasion of Nebuchadnezzar, and others to the destruction of the city and nation by the Romans. Perhaps it may have a view to all these three great desolations of the country, especially the last, to which some parts of it may seem peculiarly applicable.

A. M. 3292. BEHOLD, the LORD maketh the  
B. C. 712. earth empty, and maketh it  
waste, and <sup>1</sup> turneth it upside down, and

scattereth abroad the inhabitants A. M. 3292.  
thereof. B. C. 712.

2 And it shall be, as with the people, so with  
the face thereof.

<sup>1</sup> Heb. *perverteth*

NOTES ON CHAPTER XXIV.

Verse 1. *Behold, &c.*—According to Vitringa, the third book of Isaiah's prophecies begins with this chapter, and extends to the thirty-sixth, being divided into three discourses; the first comprehending four chapters, the second six, and the third two. The general subject of the book is the penal judgments denounced by God upon the disobedient Jews, and the enemies of the church, with the most ample promises to the true church. This first discourse, contained in this and the three following chapters, Bishop Lowth thinks, was delivered before the destruction of Moab by Shalmaneser, (see chap. xxv. 10.) and consequently before the destruction of Samaria, and probably in the beginning of Hezekiah's reign. *The Lord maketh the earth empty*—The

word *הארץ*, here translated *the earth*, may, with equal propriety, be rendered *the land*, as indeed it is in verses 3 and 13 of this chapter, and very frequently elsewhere. The land of Canaan seems to be here meant, including both Israel and Judah, which was made empty when the inhabitants of it were carried into captivity, which they were, first by the Assyrians, and then by the Chaldeans. And it was made still more empty and desolate in the last and great destruction of its cities and people, particularly of Jerusalem and its inhabitants by the Romans; of which see on Deut. xxviii. 62. To this destruction especially the prophet is thought to refer in many parts of this chapter.

Verses 2, 3. *And it shall be, as with the people, so with the priest, &c.*—The calamity shall be univer

A. M. 3292. the <sup>2</sup> priest; <sup>a</sup> as with the servant, so  
B. C. 712. with his master; as with the maid, so  
with her mistress; <sup>b</sup> as with the buyer, so with  
the seller; as with the lender, so with the bor-  
rower; as with the taker of usury, so with the  
giver of usury to him.

3 The land shall be utterly emptied, and utter-  
ly spoiled: for the LORD hath spoken this word.

4 The earth mourneth and fadeth away, the  
world languisheth and fadeth away, <sup>3</sup> the  
haughty people of the earth do languish.

5 <sup>c</sup> The earth also is defiled under the inha-  
bitants thereof; because they have transgressed

<sup>a</sup> Or. prince.—<sup>b</sup> Hos. iv. 9.—<sup>c</sup> Ezk. vii. 12, 13.—<sup>d</sup> Heb. the  
height of the people.—<sup>e</sup> Gen. iii. 17; Num. xxxv. 33.—<sup>f</sup> Mal.

sal, without any respect or distinction of persons or  
ranks of men; the priests themselves, having been  
partakers of the people's sins, shall also partake  
with them of their plagues. *As with the buyer, so with  
the seller*—The purchaser of lands shall have no  
more left than he that hath sold his patrimony; but  
all persons shall be made equal in beggary and  
slavery. *The land shall be utterly emptied and  
utterly spoiled*—Shall be deprived both of its riches  
and inhabitants. "As the public calamities coming  
upon the land were to be repeated, at various times  
and in various manners," the sacred writer is thought  
by some interpreters to have "accommodated his  
discourse to these calamities, and divided it into va-  
rious articles and gradations." See Vitringa.

Verse 4. *The earth, the land, mourneth and  
fadeth away*—Hebrew, אבלה נבלה, *abelah naba-  
lah, lamenteth, falleth. The world languisheth,  
&c.*—"The world," says Bishop Lowth, "is the same  
with the land; that is, the kingdoms of Israel and  
Judah; *orbis Israeliticus*," the Israelitish world.  
Heathen authors frequently speak of particular pro-  
vinces and countries under the name of *orbis, orbis  
habitabilis, and orbis terrarum, the world, the habit-  
able world, the whole world, &c.* And the same  
mode of speaking is often used in the Scriptures,  
where we not only find the Roman empire termed  
*the world*, (even *all the world*,) as Luke ii. 1; Acts  
xi. 28; but also Babylon, (Isa. xlii. 11,) and this very  
land of Judea, John xii. 19; and xviii. 20. *The  
haughty people of the land*—Hebrew, גבוהים עמ, *gav-  
uim am, the height of the people*, those of the highest  
dignity in it; or *the lofty people*, as Bishop Lowth  
renders it. Not only common people are depressed  
and sunk in sorrow, but the magistrates and rulers,  
the rich and powerful, the haughty and high-  
minded. Indeed, these are wont to suffer most  
under such calamities, either as having most to  
lose, or as not being used to hardships.

Verses 5, 6. *The earth also*—Rather, *And  
the land is defiled under the inhabitants thereof*—  
By the wickedness of its people. Here we have  
the causes of the divine judgment upon the land:  
*because they have transgressed the laws*—The laws

the laws, changed the ordinance, bro-  
ken the everlasting covenant.

A. M. 3292.  
B. C. 712.

6 Therefore hath <sup>d</sup> the curse devoured the  
earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate:  
therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned,  
and few men left.

7 <sup>e</sup> The new wine mourneth, the vine lan-  
guisheth, all the merry-hearted do sigh.

8 The mirth <sup>f</sup> of tabrets ceaseth, the noise of  
them that rejoice endeth, the joy of the harp  
ceaseth.

9 They shall not drink wine with a song;  
strong drink shall be bitter to them that drink it.

iv. 6.—<sup>g</sup> Chap. xvi. 8, 9; Joel i. 10, 12.—<sup>h</sup> Jer. vii. 34; xvi.  
9; xxv. 10; Ezek. xxvi. 13; Hos. ii. 11; Rev. xviii. 22.

of God revealed to them, and pressed upon them  
in a singular manner; *changed the ordinance*—God's  
ordinances concerning his worship and service; *bro-  
ken the everlasting covenant*—The covenant made  
between God and Abraham, and all his posterity,  
which was everlasting, both on God's part, who, upon  
the conditions therein expressed, engaged himself  
to be a God to them, and to their seed for ever; and  
on Israel's part, who were obliged thereby to con-  
stant and perpetual obedience through all genera-  
tions. *Therefore hath the curse*—The curse of God  
threatened to transgressors; *devoured the earth*—  
See this illustrated Zech. v. 1. *And they that dwell  
therein are desolate*—Reduced to poverty, by the  
spoiling of their goods. *The inhabitants are burn-  
ed*—Destroyed by fire and sword, or consumed by  
the wrath of God, which is often compared to fire;  
*and few men left*—The prophet's general meaning  
is, that the inhabitants of the land should waste away  
and be consumed, being partly cut off by the sword,  
partly dispersed by the public calamities, partly de-  
stroyed by famine, and partly carried into captivity,  
so that but few of them should remain, and they only  
of the poorer sort. And this was the face of things  
in Judea at the time referred to.

Verses 7-9. *The new wine mourneth, &c.*—In  
these verses we have a description, in metaphorical  
language, of the ruin and desolation brought on a  
once flourishing land by a destructive enemy. The  
wine, figuratively speaking, mourns, because there  
are none, or none but enemies to God and Israel,  
to drink it. *The vine languisheth*—Because there  
are no people left to dress it, or gather its grapes;  
or because it is broken down and spoiled by the  
enemy. In other words, the vineyards are destroyed,  
and the fruits of the earth consumed by hostile  
invasions. *The mirth of tabrets ceaseth*—There  
is no place for mirth or rejoicing, much less for  
the usual expressions of it, when men are under  
such great calamities. *They shall not drink wine  
with a song*—Those that can command wine under  
this scarcity will have no heart to drink it: nor  
would it, if drunk, be able to cheer their spirits  
amidst such great troubles.

A. M. 3292. 10 The city of confusion is broken  
B. C. 712. down: every house is shut up, that  
no man may come in.

11 *There is a crying for wine in the streets; all joy is darkened, the mirth of the land is gone.*

12 In the city is left desolation, and the gate is smitten with destruction.

13 ¶ When thus it shall be in the midst of the land among the people, *there shall be as the*

¶ Chap. xvii. 5, 6.

Verses 10-12. *The city*—Jerusalem, and other cities, for the word may be here taken collectively; *of confusion*—Hebrew, נָחַת, which signifies *vanity, emptiness, desolation, or confusion*. And the city may be thus called, either, 1st, In regard of the judgments of God coming upon it, as if he had termed it a city devoted to desolation and destruction: or, 2d, For its sin, a city of confusion and disorder; breaking all the laws and orders which God had established among them; or a city walking in and after *vanity*, worshipping vain idols, and pursuing vain things. And this may seem the most proper and suitable, that the sin of the city should be pointed out in this word, as the punishment is expressed in the next; *is broken down*—Its walls, palaces, and temple battered down and demolished; *every house is shut up*—Either for fear of the enemy, who have entered the city, or because the inhabitants are either fled or dead, or gone into captivity. This seems to be only applicable to the destruction of the city by the Chaldeans, or by the Romans. *There is a crying for wine*—For the want or loss of their wine; or for the spoiling of the vintage, whereby they were deprived of the means both of their profit and pleasure. *In the city is desolation*—In Jerusalem itself, that had been so much frequented, there shall be left nothing but desolation; grass shall grow in the streets. *The gate is smitten with destruction*—The gates of the city are totally ruined, so that the enemy may enter when and where they please. Or, all that used to pass and repass through the gates are smitten, and all the strength of the city is destroyed. How soon can God make a city of order, a city of confusion; and then it will soon be a city of desolation!

Verses 13, 14. *When thus it shall be in the midst of the land, &c.*—When this judgment shall be executed, there shall be left a remnant; as there are some few olives or grapes left after the vintage is over. *They shall lift up their voice, &c.*—The remnant shall sing for the glorious power and goodness of God manifested in their deliverance. *They shall cry aloud*—In a way of exultation and thanksgiving to God; *from the sea*—From the *isles of the sea*, as it is expressed in verse 15, that is, from the isles of the Western or Mediterranean sea, whither many of the Jews were scattered, and where they sojourned. “The great distresses brought upon Israel and Judah drove the people away, and dis-

shaking of an olive-tree, and as the A. M. 3292  
gleaning-grapes when the vintage is B. C. 712.  
done.

14 They shall lift up their voice, they shall sing for the majesty of the LORD, they shall cry aloud from the sea.

15 Wherefore glorify ye the LORD in the ‘fires, even <sup>b</sup> the name of the LORD God of Israel in the isles of the sea.

<sup>a</sup> Or, valleys.—<sup>b</sup> Mal. i. 11.

persed them all over the neighbouring countries; they fled to Egypt, to Asia Minor, to the islands and 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 is what the prophet seems to mean by the celebration of the name of JEHOVAH in the distant coasts, and in the uttermost parts of the land.”—Bishop Lowth.

Verse 15. *Wherefore glorify ye the Lord*—These seem to be the words of the prophet directing and exciting God’s people to glorify him in their afflictions, because of that deliverance which he had promised, and would assuredly grant them; *in the fires*—When you are in the furnace of affliction. But, as the word נְאִוִּים, here translated, *in the fires*, is not used elsewhere in Scripture, in this sense, others render it, *in the valleys*; and others again, *in the holes, or caves*: as if he had said, Glorify ye the Lord, who are forced to hide yourselves in secret places. Possibly, however, the word may be better rendered, *for lights, or illuminations*, which may be understood, either of the light of the truth which God would reveal to them, or of the comfort which God would confer upon them, light being frequently taken in both senses in Scripture. For this Hebrew word, in all other places of Scripture where it is found, signifies the *Urim*, which was in the high-priest’s breast-plate, and which properly signifies *lights or illuminations*, as both Jews and Christians understand it: see note on Exodus xxviii. 30. Add to this, that this part of the prophecy seems to concern the days of the gospel, and that light which the Jews should then receive by the Messiah, of whom the high-priest, with his ephod and urim, was a type. Thus understood, this is an exhortation to the converted Jews to bless God for the true Urim, even for Christ and the gospel. *The name of the Lord in the isles of the sea*—In remote countries beyond the sea, which in Scripture are commonly called *isles*. It is a just observation of Mr. Scott, that “the chief accomplishment of this prophecy seems to have been after the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. At that season there was a small company like the

A. M. 3292. B. C. 712. 16 ¶ From the <sup>5</sup> uttermost part of the earth have we heard songs, *even* glory to the righteous. But I said, <sup>6</sup> My leanness, my leanness, wo unto me! <sup>1</sup> the treacherous dealers have dealt treacherously; yea, the treacherous dealers have dealt very treacherously.

17 <sup>1</sup> Fear, and the pit, and the snare, *are* upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth.

18 And it shall come to pass, *that* he who fleeth from the noise of the fear shall fall into

the pit; and he that cometh up out of the midst of the pit shall be taken in

the snare: for <sup>1</sup> the windows from on high are open, and <sup>2</sup> the foundations of the earth do shake.

19 <sup>1</sup> The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly.

20 The earth shall <sup>o</sup> reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again.

<sup>5</sup> Hebrew, *wing*.—<sup>6</sup> Hebrew, *Leanness to me, or, My secret to me.*  
<sup>1</sup> Jer. v. 11.

<sup>1</sup> See 1 Kings xix. 17; Jer. xlviii. 43, 44; Amos v. 19.—<sup>1</sup> Gen. vii. 11.—<sup>2</sup> Psa. xviii. 7.—<sup>2</sup> Jer. iv. 23.—<sup>o</sup> Chap. xix. 14.

gleanings of the vine, or of the olive, which had embraced Christianity; and wherever they were dispersed among the nations, and in the isles of the sea, they lifted up their voice in songs of praise, while they beheld the majesty of God displayed in accomplishing these predictions; and mingled thanksgivings with their fervent prayers; nay, they excited one another to glorify God in the fiery trial of persecution, and though banished to the remotest regions. The destruction of Jerusalem was exceedingly conducive to the establishment of the Christian Church; and, in this respect, was the subject of joy and praise to the primitive Christians."

Verse 16. *From the uttermost part, &c.*—From all parts of the earth, or land, where the Jews are, or shall be, *have we heard songs*—Songs of joy and praise; *even glory to the righteous*—By the *righteous*, may be here understood, either, 1st, righteous and holy men, who formerly were despised, but now shall be honoured; or, 2d, the Lord, *the righteous one*, as the Hebrew לְיָדֵי צְדִיק, being singular, properly means; or, 3d, the Messiah, to whom this title of *the just, or righteous one*, is frequently given. *But I said*—But in the midst of these joyous tidings, I discern something which interrupts my joys, and gives me cause of bitter complaint and lamentation; *My leanness! my leanness!*—I faint and pine away for grief; for the following reason: *The treacherous dealers have dealt treacherously*—The Jews, who have been frequently guilty of great perfidiousness toward God, are now acting the same part. This he speaks of those who should live when the Messiah should be upon earth, foreseeing, by the Holy Spirit, that they would forsake God and reject their Messiah, and thereby bring utter destruction upon themselves. For even the Hebrew doctors expound this place of the perfidiousness of some Jews in the times of the Messiah. And it is not strange that so sad a sight made the prophet cry out, *My leanness, &c., the treacherous dealers, &c.* This he repeats, to show the horridness of the crime, and how deeply he was affected with it.

Verses 17, 18. *Fear, and the pit, and the snare, &c.*—Great and various judgments, some actually inflicted, and others justly feared, as the punishment of the last-mentioned perfidiousness of the Jews

toward God and their own Messiah. *He that fleeth from the fear, &c.*—Upon the report of some terrible evil coming toward him; *shall fall into the pit*—When he designs to avoid one danger, by so doing he shall plunge himself into another and greater mischief. *For the windows from on high are opened, &c.*—Both heaven and earth conspire against him. He alludes to the deluge of waters which God poured down from heaven, and to the earthquake which he often causes below. There is a remarkable elegance in the original of the 17th verse. The three Hebrew words, פָּחַד, *pachad*, פָּחַח, *pachath*, and פָּחַ, *pach*, being a *paronomasia*, or having an affinity in sound with each other, which cannot be translated into another language. And there is also great sublimity in the latter clause of the 18th verse, in which the ideas and expressions, taken from the deluge, are strongly expressive of that deluge of divine wrath which should fall upon, and totally overwhelm, the apostate Jews for rejecting and crucifying their own Messiah.

Verses 19, 20. *The earth is utterly broken down*—This is repeated again, to show the dreadfulness and certainty of these judgments, and to awaken the stupid Israelites. *The earth shall reel to and fro*—The people of the earth, the inhabitants of the land, shall be sorely perplexed and distressed, not knowing what to do, or whither to go. Or rather, the prophet here, in metaphorical expressions, borrowed from an earthquake, signifies how terribly Judea should be shaken by wars, desolations, and other divine judgments, to the entire overthrow of their church and commonwealth; *and shall be removed*—The people shall be removed; or their constitution, civil and religious, *like a cottage*—Or, *like a lodge* in a garden, of which this word is used, Isa. i. 8, which is soon taken down and set up in another place: or, *like a tent*, which is easily and commonly carried from place to place. *And the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it*—Upon their state and nation, especially the sin of crucifying the Lord of glory. *And it shall fall*—Their government shall be overturned, their state dissolved, and their nation ruined; *and not rise again*—Not till the latter days, when they shall believe in and receive Him whom they rejected and crucified.

A. M. 3292. 21 And it shall come to pass in that  
B. C. 712. day, that the LORD shall <sup>7</sup> punish the  
host of the high ones that are on high, <sup>p</sup> and  
the kings of the earth upon the earth.

22 And they shall be gathered together, <sup>8</sup> as  
prisoners are gathered in the <sup>9</sup> pit, and shall be

<sup>7</sup> Hebrew, visit upon.—<sup>p</sup> Psalm lxxvi. 12.—<sup>8</sup> Hebrew, with the gathering of prisoners.—<sup>9</sup> Or, dungeon.—<sup>10</sup> Or, found wanting.

Verses 21, 22. *It shall come to pass in that day*—At or soon after the time when God shall execute the above-mentioned judgment on the apostate Jews; that the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones—The proud and potent enemies of his people, who possess the high places of the earth; and the kings of the earth—The great monarchs of the world, who now scorn and trample on his people. Some think the idolatrous persecuting Roman empire is here intended, but what follows seems to require that we should understand these verses as a further prediction of the ruin of the Jewish constitution in church and state. Bishop Lowth translates them, *Jehovah shall summon on high the host that is on high; and on earth the kings of the earth*; which he interprets of “the ecclesiastical and civil polity of the Jews, which were to be destroyed;” the host of the high ones meaning the chief priests, with the high-priest at their head, or their ecclesiastical government, and the kings of the earth their civil power; the name of king being frequently given in Scripture unto inferior rulers. *And they shall be gathered together*—By God’s special providence, in order to their punishment. And thus the unbelieving Jews were generally gathered together at Jerusalem, to their solemn feasts, when Titus came and besieged and destroyed them; and shall be shut up in prison—As malefactors, which are taken in several places, are usually brought to one common prison. *After many days they shall be visited*—After the apostate Jews shall have been shut up in unbelief, and in great tribulations for many ages together, they shall be convinced of their sin in crucifying the Messiah, and brought home to God and Christ by true repentance. “The nation,” says Bishop Lowth, “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;” as is signified in the next verse.

Verse 23. *Then the moon shall be confounded*—The shadowy, typical, temporary, and imperfect

shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be <sup>10</sup> visited. A. M. 3292. B. C. 712.

23 Then the <sup>a</sup> moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the LORD of hosts shall <sup>r</sup> reign in <sup>s</sup> mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and <sup>11</sup> before his ancients gloriously.

<sup>a</sup> Chap. xiii. 10; lx. 19; Ezek. xxxii. 7; Joel ii. 31; iii. 1. <sup>r</sup> Rev. xix. 4, 6.—<sup>s</sup> Heb. xii. 22.—<sup>11</sup> Or, there shall be glory before his ancients.

dispensation of Moses, which afforded only a dim and uncertain light, like that of the moon, shall be eclipsed and vanish; and the sun ashamed—The glory of the civil government, also even of the kingdom of David itself, shall be obscured by the far greater splendour of the kingdom of Christ, the King of kings, at whose feet the kings of the earth shall fall down and worship. *When the Lord of hosts*—The Messiah, who, though man, is yet also God, and the Lord of hosts; shall reign in mount Zion, &c.—Shall come in the flesh, and set up his kingdom, first in Jerusalem, and afterward in all other nations; before his ancients—His ministers, who are, in some sort, the courtiers of this King of glory, as being continually attendant upon him, enjoying his presence, and executing the offices intrusted to them; and especially before his apostles, who were the witnesses of his divine words and works, and particularly of his resurrection and ascension, by which he entered upon his kingdom; and of the exercise of his royal power in subduing both Jews and Gentiles to himself. The word *ancient*, or *elder*, is not a name of age, but of office. And the ancients here represent, and are put for, the whole church, in whose name, and for whose service, they act.

Some think that, at the twenty-first verse, a transition is made from the ruin of the Jewish nation for opposing the gospel, to the destruction of the antichristian powers, which is to introduce the general prevalence of true religion, and the glory of Christ’s millennial reign; and that the twenty-first and twenty-second verses are intended of that destruction. There is, however, this objection to that interpretation: it is not reconcilable with the last clause of verse 22, namely, *after many days they shall be visited*. For surely these antichristian powers are not to be visited and restored. This clause indeed, considering the connection in which it stands, does not seem to be applicable to any event predicted in Scripture, but the conversion and restoration of the Jewish nation after the many ages of their dereliction and depression. Then, however, when the *fulness of the Gentiles* shall be brought in, and *all Israel shall be saved*, the twenty-third verse shall receive a far more complete accomplishment. The Messiah’s kingdom shall then appear in its greatest glory on earth; and the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed. Not only the borrowed light of inferior and subordinate states, but the splendour of the mightiest empires shall be eclipsed and put to shame by it.

CHAPTER XXV.

The prophet, reflecting on the contents of those great and glorious prophecies which he had delivered, concerning the destruction of God's enemies, and the deliverance of his people, and especially concerning the sending of the Messiah, and the establishment and enlargement of his kingdom, in spite of all opposition, and the great glory of it, as predicted in the last verse, here interrupts the course of his prophecies, and breaks forth into a solemn celebration of these wonderful works. (1.) He praises God for his judgments on his proud enemies, and the protection and help afforded to his poor and destitute people, 1-5. (2.) He foretels the rich provision which would be made for the spiritual wants of all mankind in the gospel, the glorious salvation of which he celebrates, 6-8. (3.) Shows the church's triumph in God, and over all her enemies thereupon, 9-12.

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**O** LORD, thou art my God; <sup>a</sup> I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name; <sup>b</sup> for thou hast done wonderful things; <sup>c</sup> thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth. 2 For thou hast made <sup>d</sup> of a city a heap; of a defenced city a ruin: a palace of strangers to be no city; it shall never be built.

3 Therefore shall the strong people glorify thee, the city of the terrible nations shall fear thee.

4 For thou hast been a strength to the poor;

a strength to the needy in his distress, <sup>e</sup> a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall.

5 Thou shalt bring down the noise of strangers, as the heat in a dry place; even the heat with the shadow of a cloud: the branch of the terrible ones shall be brought low.

6 ¶ And in <sup>f</sup> this mountain shall <sup>g</sup> the LORD of hosts make unto <sup>h</sup> all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees; of fat

<sup>a</sup> Exod. xv. 2; Psa. cxviii. 28. — <sup>b</sup> Psa. cxviii. 1. — <sup>c</sup> Num. xxiii. 19. — <sup>d</sup> Chap. xxi. 9; xxiii. 13; Jer. li. 37. — <sup>e</sup> Rev. xi.

13. — <sup>f</sup> Chap. iv. 6. — <sup>g</sup> Chap. ii. 2, 3. — <sup>h</sup> Prov. ix. 2; Matt. xxii. 4. — Dan. vii. 14; Matt. viii. 11.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XXV.

Verse 1. *O Lord—O Jehovah, thou art my God—In covenant with me: my friend, my father, my portion.* The prophet speaks in the name of the whole church, and of every true member of it. *I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name—Expressions these flowing from a deep and grateful sense of the divine goodness. Those that have Jehovah for their God are in duty bound to praise him. For thou hast done wonderful things—In different ages and nations from the beginning hitherto, especially for thy own people, and against their enemies. Thy counsels of old—Hebrew, כרחק, properly, from afar, signifying not only counsels long before taken, but which had been long before declared and published by the prophets; are faithfulness and truth—That is, thy counsels, from which all thy works proceed, and which thou hast from time to time revealed to thy prophets and people, which were of old, being conceived from all eternity, are true and firm, and shall certainly be accomplished.*

Verse 2. *Thou hast made of a city a heap—Niveveh, Babylon, Ar of Moab, or any other strong city, or fortress, possessed by the enemies of the people of God. Vitringa has made it appear probable that Babylon is chiefly meant, "which was emphatically called the city; which was remarkably fortified, and which was inhabited by strangers, as the Assyrians and Babylonians are commonly called in prophetic language, and in the destruction of which the ancient believers rejoiced most especially, having therein a pledge and earnest of future deliverance, and particularly a type of the deliverance of the Christian Church from persecution, by the fall of spiritual Babylon." See Rev. xviii. 20; and xix. 1. A palace of strangers—A royal city, in which were the palaces of strangers, that is, of the kings*

of strange people, or of the Gentiles. Bishop Lowth, on the authority of two MSS., instead of כרובי, *strangers*, reads כרובי, *proud ones*: which reading, he thinks, the LXX. countenance, as they render the word *acebow, the ungodly. To be no city; it shall never be built—It has been, or shall be, utterly and irrecoverably destroyed.*

Verses 3, 4. *Therefore shall the strong people fear thee—Thy stoutest enemies, observing thy wonderful works, shall be converted, or at least, convinced, and forced to tremble before thee. For thou hast been a strength to the poor—Hast defended thy poor and helpless people against the fiercest assaults of their enemies. When—Or rather, for, or therefore, as the particle כ, generally signifies; the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm—Of hail, rain, or wind, which makes a great noise, but without any effect; against the wall—Which stands firm in spite of it. It is probable the prophet, in these words, had a special respect to the miraculous deliverance of Jerusalem from the rage and attempt of Sennacherib; although the words be general, and include other deliverances of a like nature.*

Verse 5. *Thou shalt bring down the noise of strangers—The tumultuous noise, as the word properly signifies; the rage and furious attempts of those heathen nations that fought against God's people. As the heat in a dry place—With as much ease as thou dost allay the heat of a dry place, by the shadow of thy clouds, or by the rain which falls from black and shadowy clouds. Here again, as in verse 2, instead of strangers, Bishop Lowth reads, the proud. The branch of the terrible ones—Their arm or power, as a branch is the arm of a tree; shall be brought low—Shall be humbled and broken.*

Verses 6, 7. *And in this mountain—In mount Zion, namely, God's church, very frequently meant by*

A. M. 3292. things full of marrow, of wines on the  
B. C. 712. lees well refined.

7 And he will <sup>1</sup> destroy in this mountain the face of the covering <sup>2</sup> cast over all people, and <sup>3</sup> the veil that is spread over all nations.

8 He will <sup>1</sup> swallow up death in victory; and the LORD God will <sup>m</sup> wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the LORD hath spoken it.

9 And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; <sup>a</sup> we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the LORD; we have waited

<sup>1</sup> Heb. swallow up.—<sup>2</sup> Heb. covered.—<sup>3</sup> 2 Cor. iii. 15; Eph. iv. 18.—<sup>a</sup> Hos. xiii. 14; 1 Cor. xv. 54; Rev. xx. 14; xxi. 4.

the names of *Zion* and *Jerusalem*, both in the Old and New Testaments; *shall the Lord make unto all people*—Both Jews and Gentiles, who shall then be admitted to a participation of the same privileges and ordinances; *a feast of fat things*—A feast made of the most delicate provisions: which is manifestly meant of the ordinances, graces, and comforts given by God in his church. *Of wines on the lees*—Which have continued upon the lees a competent time, whereby they gain strength, and are afterward drawn out and refined. *He will destroy the face of the covering*—The covering of the face, or the veil, as the next clause expounds it, namely, of ignorance of God, and of the true religion; *cast over all people*—Which then was upon the Gentiles and the Jews, 2 Cor. iii. 14–16. This is a manifest prophecy concerning the illumination and conversion of the Gentiles.

Verse 8. *He*—The Lord, expressed both in the foregoing and following words, even the Messiah, who is both God and man; *will swallow up death*—Shall, by his death, destroy the power of death, (Heb. ii. 14.) take away the sting of the first death, and prevent the second death, and give eternal life to all that truly believe in him. *In victory*—Hebrew, לִצְחָה, *unto victory*, that is, so as to overcome it perfectly; which complete victory Christ hath already purchased for, and will, in due time, actually confer upon his people. *And will wipe away tears*—Will take away from his people all sufferings and sorrows, with all the causes of them, which deliverance is begun here and perfected in heaven. *The rebuke of his people*—The reproach and contempt cast upon his faithful people by the ungodly world; *shall he take, &c.*—From all the church and people of God, wheresoever they shall be. *For the Lord hath spoken it*—Therefore doubt it not, though it seem incredible to you.

Verse 9. *And it shall be said in that day*—By God's people, in the way of triumph and reply to their enemies; *Lo, this is our God*—Your gods are senseless and impotent idols; but our God is omnipotent, and hath done these great and glorious works which fill the world with admiration. We may well boast of him, for there is no god like him. *We have*

for him, ° we will be glad and rejoice A. M. 3292.  
in his salvation. B. C. 712.

10 For in this mountain shall the hand of the LORD rest, and Moab shall be <sup>3</sup> trodden down under him, even as straw is <sup>4</sup> trodden down for the dunghill.

11 And he shall spread forth his hands in the midst of them, as he that swimmeth spreadeth forth *his hands* to swim: and he shall bring down their pride together with the spoils of their hands.

12 And the <sup>p</sup> fortress of the high fort of thy walls shall he bring down, lay low, and bring to the ground, *even* to the dust.

<sup>m</sup> Rev. vii. 17; xxi. 4.—<sup>a</sup> Gen. xlix. 18; Tit. ii. 13.—<sup>o</sup> Ps. xx. 5.  
<sup>3</sup> Or, thrashed.—<sup>4</sup> Or, thrashed in Madmenah.—<sup>p</sup> Chap. xxvi. 5.

*waited for him*—To appear in flesh; have waited for the coming of our Messiah, or Saviour, long since promised, and have waited a long time; and now at last he is come into the world, bringing salvation with him.

Verse 10. *For in this mountain*—In the gospel church; (he alludes to mount Zion, which was a type of it;) *shall the hand of the Lord rest*—His powerful and gracious presence (which is often signified in Scripture by God's hand) shall have its constant and settled abode: it shall not move from place to place, as it formerly did, with the tabernacle; nor shall it depart as it did from Jerusalem, but shall continue in his church, even to the end of the world, Matt. xxviii. 20. *And Moab shall be trodden down under him*—Under his feet, as appears by the following similitude. The Moabites, having been constant and implacable enemies to Israel, are here put for all the enemies of God's church, as the Edomites upon the same account are, chap. xxxiv. 6, and lxiii. 1. *Even as straw is trodden down*—Even as easily and effectually as the straw, left upon the ground, is trampled upon by the feet of men and beasts.

Verses 11, 12. *And he*—Either, 1st, Moab, who, being plunged into a sea of troubles, shall endeavour to swim out of it, but to no purpose; or, 2d, The Lord, (who is designed by this pronoun *he*, both in the latter clause of this verse, and in the following verse,) whose power they shall be no more able to resist than the waters can resist a man that swims, who, with great facility, divides them hither and thither. The former sense is adopted by Bishop Lowth, who says, "I cannot conceive that the stretching out the hands of a swimmer can be any illustration of the action of God stretching out his hands over Moab to destroy it." The latter, however, is preferred by most interpreters, as connecting best with the following clause. And they consider the comparison as implying, that God should extend his powerful hands on every side, to the utmost limits of Moab, to bring down his enemies, as a swimmer stretches out his hands to beat down with them the opposing waters.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

In this chapter we have a second doxology, or song of praise, in which the great things God had engaged, in the foregoing chapter, to do for his people, and against his and their enemies, are celebrated. It is prepared to be sung when that prophecy shall be accomplished. In this song the people of God are taught to triumph in the safety, both of the church in general, and of every particular member of it, under the divine protection, and in an assurance of the destruction of all opposing powers, 1-6. To walk with God, and wait for him in the worst and darkest times, 7-9. To lament the stupidity of those who neither regard the mercies nor the judgments of God, 10, 11. To encourage themselves and one another with hopes, that God would still continue to deliver and do them good, 12-14. To recollect God's providences toward them in their low and distressed condition, and their deportment under them, 15-18. In confident expectation of relief and deliverance in the needful time, and of a glorious resurrection to hide themselves under the divine protection, while the wicked are punished and cut off for their iniquities, 19-21

A. M. 3292. B. C. 712. **I**N <sup>a</sup> that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; We have a strong city; <sup>b</sup> salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks.

2 <sup>c</sup> Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the <sup>1</sup> truth may enter in.

3 Thou wilt keep *him* <sup>2</sup> in perfect peace *whose* <sup>3</sup> mind *is* stayed on *thee*: because he trusteth in thee.

4 Trust ye in the LORD for ever: <sup>d</sup> for in the

<sup>a</sup> Ch. ii. 11.—<sup>b</sup> Ch. lx. 18.—<sup>c</sup> Psa. cxviii. 19, 20.—<sup>1</sup> Heb. truths.—<sup>2</sup> Heb. peace, peace; Chap. lvii. 19.—<sup>3</sup> Or, thought, or,

## NOTES ON CHAPTER XXVI.

Verses 1, 2. *In that day*—When God shall do such glorious works for the comfort of his people, as are described in the foregoing chapter; *shall this song be sung in the land of Judah*—In the church of God, often signified by the titles of Judah, Jerusalem, Zion, and the like. *We have a strong city*—Jerusalem, or the church, which is often compared to a city. *Salvation will God appoint, &c.*—God's immediate and saving protection shall be to his church instead of walls. *Open ye the gates*—Of the city, mentioned verse 1. An expression which implies the increase of the number of believers, and the enlargement of the church. *That the righteous nation*—The whole body of righteous men, whether Jews or Gentiles; (for he seems to speak here, as he apparently did in the foregoing chapter, of the times of the gospel;) *which keepeth the truth*—Which is sincere and steadfast in the profession and practice of the true religion; *may enter in*—May be received and acknowledged as true members of the church, which all such persons undoubtedly are.

Verses 3, 4. *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace*—Hebrew, *in peace, peace*; peace with God, and peace of conscience; peace at all times, and under all events; *whose mind is stayed on thee*—Hebrew, *צַר כָּכִין*, *the thought*, or, *mind fixed*, or, *the stayed mind*, as Bishop Lowth renders it; that is, the man whose thoughts and mind are fixed and settled on thee by faith, as the next clause explains it. In the foregoing verse, the righteous are represented as being admitted into the city, and here as being preserved and defended in it by God's almighty power. *Trust ye in the Lord*—Ye, who truly turn to and obey him; *for ever*—In all times and conditions, and as long as you live; *for in the Lord Jehovah*—In

LORD JEHOVAH is <sup>4</sup> everlasting strength: A. M. 3292. B. C. 712.

5 ¶ For he bringeth down them that dwell on high; <sup>o</sup> the lofty city, he layeth it low; he layeth it low, *even* to the ground; he bringeth it *even* to the dust.

6 The foot shall tread it down, *even* the feet of the poor, *and* the steps of the needy.

7 The way of the just *is* uprightness: <sup>f</sup> thou, most upright, dost weigh the path of the just.

imagination.—<sup>d</sup> Ch. xlv. 17.—<sup>e</sup> Heb. *this Rock of ages*, Deut. xxxii. 4.—<sup>o</sup> Chap. xxv. 12; xxxii. 19.—<sup>f</sup> Psa. xxxvii. 23.

him who was, and is, and is to come; *is everlasting strength*—Hebrew, *צוֹר עוֹלָמִים*, *the rock of ages*; which will assuredly support those who build their confidence thereon. That is, he is a sure refuge to all those that trust in him through all generations.

Verses 5, 6. *For he bringeth down*—Hebrew, *he hath brought down*, or, as it may be rendered, *he will bring down, them that dwell on high*—He speaks not so much of height of place, as of dignity and power, in which sense also he mentions *the lofty city* in the next clause; which may be understood, either of proud Babylon, or of all the strong and stately cities of God's enemies. *The foot shall tread it down*—God will bring it under the feet of his poor, weak, and despised people. The meaning is, you have good reason for trusting in God, for he can and does raise up some and throw down others, according to his own good pleasure.

Vere 7. *The way of the just is uprightness*—Hebrew, *דִּישׁוּרִים*, *righteousness*. The just proceed steadily on in the practice of the various duties of righteousness, which they owe to God and man; or, their way is *evenness*, or *plainness*, as the word may be rendered. It is their constant care and endeavour to walk with God in an even, steady course of obedience and holy conversation. Bishop Lowth translates the clause, *the way of the righteous is perfectly straight*, not crooked, involved, and intricate, like that of the wicked. *Thou, most upright, dost weigh the path of the just*—Dost mark and consider it, and observe the various difficulties and dangers that will occur in it, and wilt give them grace sufficient for them; or, thou dost *examine it*. Thou, who art most upright in all thy ways, and therefore a lover of uprightness, and of all upright men, dost weigh, dost narrowly observe and ponder, *the path of the*

A. M. 3292. 8 Yea, <sup>a</sup>in the way of thy judgments, O LORD, have we waited for thee; the desire of *our* soul *is* to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee.

9 <sup>b</sup>With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early: for when thy judgments *are* in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.

<sup>c</sup> Chap. lxiv. 5.—<sup>d</sup> Psa. lxiii. 6; Cant. iii. 1.—<sup>e</sup> Eccles. viii. 12; Rom. ii. 4.

*just*; the whole course of their actions, and, which is implied, dost approve of them, and direct them to a happy issue. This seems to be the most common meaning of the word  $\text{שָׁפַט}$ , here rendered to *weigh*: see Prov. iv. 26, and v. 21. It bears, however, another sense, Psa. lxxviii. 50, namely, to *make the way plain*, or, to remove obstructions out of it. In this sense Bishop Lowth understands it here, and therefore translates the clause, *thou most exactly levellest the path of the righteous*. While the way of the wicked is perplexed, and rugged, and full of obstructions, God makes the way of the righteous plain and easy before them, by preventing or removing those things that would be stumbling-blocks to them, so that they walk safely and comfortably forward in the path of duty.

Verses 8, 9. *Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O Lord*—That is, as some understand it, of *thy ordinances and commandments*, in which we carefully and conscientiously walk; or, in the way of *thy chastisements*. As we, thy people, have loved and served thee, when thou didst make our way smooth and pleasant before us, so we have not forsaken thee, but waited upon thee, when thou didst see fit, for our trial, to make it difficult and troublesome. We have possessed our souls in patience under thy chastisements, and have waited thy time for our deliverance. *The desire of our soul is to thy name*—Hebrew, *to thy name and thy memory*; that is, to the remembrance of thy nature and attributes, according as thou hast made thyself known by thy word and works. And so the sense of this clause is, our affections are not alienated from thee by thy judgments, but we still continue to desire thy presence and favour, and we support and comfort ourselves with the remembrance of what thou art, and what thou hast done, and what thou hast promised to be to, and do for, thy people. *With my soul*—Sincerely and most affectionately; *have I desired thee*—The prophet speaks this in the name of all God's people; *in the night*—In the time of affliction, often termed *night*, or *darkness*; or, rather, in the night, properly so called, as appears from the next clause, wherein *early*, or in the morning, is opposed to it. When others are sleeping, my thoughts and desires are working toward thee. *Yea, with my spirit within me*—By fervent and importunate prayer for thy loving-kindness; *will I seek thee early*—Betimes in the morning. *For when thy*

A. M. 3292. 10 <sup>i</sup>Let favour be showed to the wicked, *yet* will he not learn righteousness: in <sup>k</sup>the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the LORD.

11 LORD, *when* thy hand is lifted up, <sup>l</sup>they will not see: *but* they shall see, and be ashamed for *their* envy <sup>m</sup>at the people; yea, the fire of thine enemies shall devour them.

<sup>n</sup> Psa. cxliii. 10.—<sup>o</sup> Job xxxiv. 27; Psa. xxviii. 5; Chap. v. 12. <sup>p</sup> Or, toward thy people.

*judgments are in the earth*—And good reason it is that we should thus desire and seek thee in the way of thy judgments, because this is the very design of thy judgments, that men should thereby be awakened to learn and return to their duty; and this is a common effect of them, that those who have been careless in prosperity are made wiser and better by afflictions.

Verses 10, 11. *Let favour be showed to the wicked*—If thou dost spare them, when thou chastisest thy own people, and grantest them health, prosperity, and other blessings; yet *will they not learn righteousness*—They will not be led to repentance by thy goodness; and therefore it is requisite thou shouldst send thy judgments into the earth, to reckon with men for abused mercies. *In the land of uprightness*—Even in thy church, and among thy people, where righteousness is taught, professed, and, among many, practised; and where unrighteousness is discountenanced and punished; *will he*—The wicked man, *deal unjustly*—Hebrew,  $\text{יַעַזְבֵּב}$ , *will act perfidiously, perversely, or injuriously*; and *will not behold the majesty of the Lord*—Although God gives such plain and clear discoveries of his majesty and glory, not only in his words, but also in his works, and in all the dispensations of his providence, whether those of justice, or those of grace; and especially in his glorious patience and mercy toward wicked men; yet they wilfully shut their eyes against these discoveries, and will not believe, or will not consider, and lay to heart, what a God of terrible and glorious majesty he is. *Lord, when thy hand is lifted up*—To smite and chastise them, in order that by repentance, faith, and prayer, they may make their peace with thee; *they will not see*—They will not take notice of it; are not aware that thou art angry with them, and about to execute thy judgments upon them. Nay, even when thou dost actually smite and punish them, they are guilty of the same obstinate blindness as when thou dost only threaten them, shutting their eyes against the clearest convictions of guilt and wrath, and ascribing to chance, common fate, or second causes, what is manifestly a divine correction and rebuke. They regard not the symptoms of their own ruin, but cry, "Peace, peace," when thou, the holy and righteous God, art waging war against them. *But they shall see*—Whether they will or not. They shall know and feel, and that by sad experience, what they would not learn by other and easier ways. Atheists,

A. M. 3292. 12 ¶ LORD, thou wilt ordain peace  
B. C. 712. for us: for thou also hast wrought all  
our works <sup>6</sup> in us.

13 O LORD our God, <sup>2</sup> other lords besides thee have had dominion over us; but by thee only will we make mention of thy name.

14 They are dead, they shall not live; they

<sup>6</sup> Or, for us.

scorners, and the carnally secure shall shortly feel what now they will not believe, that *it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God*. They will not see the evil of sin, and particularly the sin of hating and persecuting the people of God; but they shall, at length, be convinced to their sorrow, by the tokens of God's displeasure against them for it, that what is done against his people, God takes as done against himself. *And be ashamed for their envy at the people*—They shall see that they have done God's people a great deal of wrong, and therefore shall be ashamed of it, and of the enmity and envy which produced it. *Yea, the fire of thine enemies, &c.*—Such fire or wrath as thou usest to pour forth upon thy implacable enemies.

Verse 12. *Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us*—That is, for thy true and genuine church and people. Though thou hast afflicted us, (verse 8,) yet the time will come when we shall be in a very different, yea, in a happy condition. Or, referring to what he had last said, he means, as thou wilt destroy thine and our enemies, so thou wilt bless us, thy people, with peace and prosperity. *For thou hast wrought all our works in us*—Hebrew, לננו, to, or for us. All the good works done by us are the effects of thy grace. And all the good and great works which have been wrought for us, all the wonderful deliverances and singular blessings vouchsafed us, came from thee. The argument is this: God hath done great things for us, and delivered us formerly upon many occasions, and therefore he will still deliver us, and give us peace.

Verses 13, 14. *O Lord our God, &c.*—The people of God, having already obtained their deliverance in part, with the overthrow and destruction of their enemies, proceed to unfold and express their hope, that God would perfect all his good works for them. *Other lords besides thee*—Who art our only King, Lawgiver, and Judge; and besides those governors who have been appointed over us by thee, and have ruled us in subordination to thee; even foreign and heathen lords, such as the Philistines formerly, and lately the Assyrians, and afterward (as the prophet foresaw would come to pass) the Babylonians, *have had dominion over us*—Have exercised a tyrannical power over us. The reader will observe, the song begun, verse 1, is continued, and Isaiah is foretelling what the language of the church would be after her deliverance. *By thee only*—By thy favour and help, by which alone we have been rescued from the tyranny of our enemies, and not by our merits or strength; *will we make mention of thy name*—

are deceased, they shall not rise: there- A. M. 3292.  
fore hast thou visited and destroyed B. C. 712.  
them, and made all their memory to perish.

15 Thou hast increased the nation, O LORD, thou hast increased the nation; thou art glorified: thou hadst removed *it* far unto all the ends of the earth.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Chron. xii. 8.

Celebrate thy praise, and trust in thee for the future. Bishop Lowth renders the clause, *Thee only, and thy name, henceforth will we celebrate*. *They are dead, &c., they shall not rise*—Those tyrants are destroyed, they shall never live or rise again to molest us. He probably refers to the miraculous destruction of Sennacherib's army before Jerusalem, and to the overthrow of the Babylonian empire. *Therefore hast thou visited and destroyed them, &c.*—That they might be thus effectually destroyed thou didst undertake the work; and thou hast perfectly accomplished it, and abolished the monuments or memorials of their greatness and glory. The prophet speaks of what he foresaw, with certainty, would be done, as though it were effected already.

Verse 15. *Thou hast increased the nation*—Namely, the Jewish nation, which multiplied exceedingly in Egypt, and afterward in Canaan, so that they filled the land. But the prophet perhaps foretels their increase after their return from captivity in Babylon; and, as some think, that increase of the church (called the righteous nation, verse 2) which was to take place in gospel days. *Thou art glorified*—In faithfully fulfilling thy promises made to Abraham concerning the multiplication of his seed, and making him *the father of many nations*. *Thou hast removed it far unto all the ends of the earth*—Thou hast scattered thy people over all the world, so that they are found in every nation under heaven, where they are witnesses for thee, the only living and true God, against idolaters of all descriptions. This was the case before, and at the time of the coming of the Messiah, and of the opening of the gospel dispensation, Acts ii. 5. And in a little time, the Gentiles being called into the church of God, the Christians were spread over all parts of the Roman empire, and far beyond its utmost limits, and they were much more faithful witnesses of the truth than the Jews had ever been. But, as the Hebrew of the first clause of this verse, ספפת לנו, when literally rendered, is only, *thou hast added to the nation*; some think the prophet does not speak of adding to their number, or increasing them, but rather of adding to their plagues or chastisements. This, it must be acknowledged, would agree well with what follows. Then the interpretation of the next clauses would be, *Thy justice is glorified in their punishment, and thou hast removed them out of their own land, and suffered them to be carried captive to the ends of the earth*. This, as the reader will easily observe, would accord perfectly with what follows to the end of the chapter.

A. M. 3292. 16 LORD, <sup>a</sup> in trouble have they vi-  
B. C. 712. sited thee; they poured out a <sup>7</sup> prayer  
when thy chastening was upon them.

17 Like as <sup>o</sup> a woman with child, that draw-  
eth near the time of her delivery, is in pain,  
and crieth out in her pangs; so have we been  
in thy sight, O LORD.

18 We have been with child, we have been

<sup>a</sup> Hos. v. 15.—<sup>7</sup> Heb. *secret speech*.—<sup>o</sup> Chap. xiii. 8; John

Verses 16-18. O Lord, in trouble—Amidst the various calamities brought upon them for their correction, and especially in their captivity; *have they*—Name-ly, thy people; *visited thee*—Come into thy presence with their prayers and supplications; *they poured out a prayer*—Prayed much and earnestly, as the expression implies; *when thy chastening was upon them*—When thou wast punishing them for their sins. *Like as a woman is in pain, &c.*—A comparison often used to express men's consternation under great calamities, from which they cannot deliver themselves; *so have we been in thy sight*—Such has been our anguish and danger, of which thou, O Lord, hast been a witness. *We have been with child*—That is, we have had great expectation of a speedy and happy deliverance, have been big with hopes; and *we have been in pain*—Have comforted ourselves with this, that the joyful birth would make us forget our misery, but, alas! *we have, as it were, brought forth wind*—We have had the torment of a woman in child-bearing, but not the comfort of a living child. "We have had no good issue of all our pangs and throes; they did not produce deliverance and ease, as in the case of travailing women, but all our own labours proved abortive: in vain we struggled with our enemies, who were still too mighty for us," and we were utterly unable to effect our deliverance. *To bring forth wind*, is much the same kind of phrase with *feeding on wind*, and *reaping wind*, Hos. xii. 1, and viii. 7; and signifies, to take a great deal of pains to no purpose. This seems to be spoken of the siege which the Jewish people endured, and of all their other labours and sufferings to prevent their coming under the Chaldean yoke. Thus the attempt of Zedekiah to withstand Nebuchadnezzar we find only brought greater evils upon the country, 2 Chronicles xxxvi. 13. *We have not wrought any deliverance in the earth*—In our land, where we had far greater advantages than we could have had elsewhere. *Neither have the inhabitants of the world*—The Assyrians, Chaldeans, or our other enemies; *fallen*—By our means.

Verse 19. *Thy dead men shall live*—The prophet here, speaking in the name of God, turns his speech to God's church, and gives her a cordial to support her in that deep distress which he had foretold she should suffer, and which is described in the preceding verse. Thy dead men are not like those mentioned verse 14, for they shall not live, as was there said, but thine shall live. You shall certainly be

in pain, we have as it were brought  
forth wind: we have not wrought any  
deliverance in the earth; neither have <sup>p</sup> the in-  
habitants of the world fallen.

19 <sup>q</sup> Thy dead men shall live, together with my  
dead body shall they arise. <sup>r</sup> Awake and sing,  
ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew  
of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.

xvi. 21.—<sup>p</sup> Psa. xvii. 14.—<sup>q</sup> Ezek. xxxvii. 1.—<sup>r</sup> Dan. xii. 2.

delivered from all your fears and dangers. For here, as Bishop Lowth observes, "The deliverance of the people of God, from a state of the lowest depression, is explained by images taken from the resurrection of the dead." And nothing is more frequent, both in Scripture and other authors, than for great calamities to be compared to death, and deliverance from them to *reviving*, a *resurrection*, and *life*; and particularly the captivity of the Jews in Babylon, and their deliverance out of it, is largely expressed by this very similitude, Ezek. xxxvii. 11, &c. "It appears from hence," says Bishop Lowth, "that the doctrine of the resurrection 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." *Together with my dead body shall they arise*—It is to be observed here, that the words, *together with*, are supplied by our translation, there being nothing for them in the Hebrew. "All the ancient versions," says Bishop Lowth, "render the word in the plural; they read נבלותי, *my dead bodies*." The Vulgate has it, *Interfecti mei resurgent, My slain men shall rise*. The Syriac and Chaldaic read, *their dead bodies*; and the LXX. εγερθησονται οι εν τοις μνημείοις, *those that are in their graves shall be raised*. It seems this clause is added merely as an amplification or repetition of the former, being entirely equivalent therewith, and expressing only that the Jewish Church, with which the prophet connects himself, as being a member of it, should be delivered out of captivity in Babylon, but not that he himself should either personally suffer in that captivity, or have a part in that deliverance. Thus, in a similar way, (1 Thess. iv. 15, 17,) the apostle connects himself with those that should be found alive at Christ's second coming, *we who are alive, &c.*, certainly not intending to signify that he personally should be alive at that time. *Awake, &c.*—Out of your sleep, even *the sleep of death, ye that dwell in the dust*—You that are dead and buried in the earth. *For thy dew*—The favour and blessing of God upon thee; *is as the dew of herbs*—Which refreshes and revives them, and makes them grow and flourish. *And the earth shall cast out the dead*—As an abortive birth is cast out of the womb, to which the grave is compared, Job i. 21. But, as the verb רפיל, here used, does not properly signify to *cast out*, but to *cast*

A. M. 3292. 20 ¶ Come, my people, \*enter  
B. C. 712. thou into thy chambers, and shut  
thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were  
\* for a little moment, until the indignation be  
overpast.

\* Exod. xii. 22.—† Psa. xxx. 5; Chap. liv. 7; 2 Cor. iv. 17.

down, or cause to fall, these words are by many, both ancient and later interpreters, rendered otherwise, namely, *thou wilt cast down*, or *she*, that is, the church, *shall cast down the land of the giants, or violent ones*. Thus the Vulgate: *Thou shalt draw into ruin the land of the giants*; and the LXX., *η δε γη των ασεβων πεσειται, the land of the ungodly shall fall, or be brought down*. The sense is, the church shall prevail against all oppressors, and shall cast them down: when brought low she shall rise, but her enemies shall not.

Verses 20, 21. *Come, my people, &c.*—These two verses are supposed not to belong to the song which takes up the preceding part of the chapter, but to be an address of the prophet to the people of God on the contents of it. Having foretold their wonderful deliverance, and the utter destruction of their enemies, lest they should suppose that these predictions would immediately begin to be fulfilled, and thereby should meet with a disappointment, which might shake their faith respecting the future fulfilment of them, he here warns them that they must first expect storms, and exhorts them to prepare for them, and patiently to wait God's time for the accomplishment of his promises. *Enter thou into thy chambers, &c.*—Withdraw thyself from the company and conversation of the people of the world, lest partaking with them in their sins, thou shouldst also partake of their plagues; and shut thy doors about thee—Separate and seclude thyself, as far as may be, from men and things, and give thyself up to meditation on these awful dispensations of divine justice and mercy, and to prayer. Having entered into thy closet, and shut thy door, pour out thy supplications and intercessions before thy Father, who seeth in

21 For behold, the LORD \* cometh out A. M. 3292.  
of his place to punish the inhabitants B. C. 712.  
of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also  
shall disclose her \* blood, and shall no more  
cover her slain.

\* Mic. i. 3; Jude 14.—\* Heb. bloods.

secret. *Hide thyself, as it were*—In this time of danger and calamity, when the judgments of God are so awfully abroad in the earth, put thyself under the protection of his providence and grace, by faith and prayer. He alludes to the common practice of men, who, when there are storms or dangers abroad, betake themselves to their houses or chambers for safety: or, it may be, to the history, Exod. ix. 19, 20; or, to the command of Moses to the Israelites, (Exod. xii. 22.) not to go out of the doors of their houses, while the destroying angel was going through the land of Egypt; or, to the like charge given to Rahab, as the condition of her preservation, Josh. ii. *For a little moment*—Whereby he intimates, that all their afflictions, how long and tedious soever they might seem, were but short and momentary in comparison of that happiness which was reserved for them; until the indignation be overpast—The dreadful effects of God's anger, mentioned in the next verse. *For the Lord cometh out of his place*—Cometh down from heaven, which, in Scripture, he is frequently said to do, when he undertakes any great and glorious work, either of delivering his people or destroying their enemies. The expression is borrowed from the manner of princes, who come out of their palaces either to sit in judgment, or to fight against their enemies, both which things God is here represented as doing. *To punish the inhabitants of the earth*—All the enemies of God and of his people; for their iniquity—For all their sins, and especially for oppressing and persecuting his church. *The earth also shall disclose her blood*—The innocent blood which hath been shed upon the earth shall be brought to light, and shall be severely revenged upon the murderers.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

"The subject of this chapter," says Bishop Lowth, "seems to be the nature, the measure, and the design of God's dealings with his people." We have his judgments inflicted on their great and powerful enemies, 1. His constant care and protection of his favourite vineyard, 2-8. The moderation with which the severity of his judgments had been and is tempered, 7, 8. The end and design of them, to recover his church from idolatry, 9-11. The recalling of them, on their repentance, from their several dispersions, 12, 13.

A. M. 3292. IN that day the LORD, with his sore  
B. C. 712. and great and strong sword, shall

<sup>1</sup> Or, crossing like a bar.

punish leviathan the <sup>1</sup> piercing serpent, A. M. 3292.  
\* even leviathan that crooked serpent; B. C. 712.

\* Psa. lxxiv. 13, 14.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER XXVII.

Verse 1. *In that day, &c.*—This verse, which Bishop Lowth considers as being connected with the

last two verses of the preceding chapter, is translated by him as follows: "In that day shall Jehovah punish with his sword; his well-tempered, and great, and

A. M. 3292. and he shall slay <sup>b</sup> the dragon that is  
B. C. 712. in the sea.

2 ¶ In that day <sup>c</sup> sing ye unto her, <sup>d</sup> A vine-  
yard of red wine.

3 • I the LORD do keep it; I will water it  
every moment: lest *any* hurt it, I will keep it  
night and day.

4 Fury is not in me: who would set <sup>f</sup> the  
briers and thorns against me in battle? I

<sup>b</sup> Chap. li. 9; Ezek. xxix. 3; xxxviii. 2.—<sup>c</sup> Chapter v. i.  
<sup>d</sup> Psa. lxxx. 8; Jer. ii. 21.—<sup>e</sup> Psa. cxxi. 4.—<sup>f</sup> 2 Sam. xxiii.  
6; Chap. ix. 18.

strong sword; Leviathan the rigid serpent, and Leviathan the winding serpent: and shall slay the monster that is in the sea." And he observes, "The animals here mentioned seem to be, *the crocodile*, rigid, by the stiffness of the back-bone, 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; *the sea-monster*, or *the 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." Vitringa, who considers the prophecy contained in verse 19 of the preceding chapter, as referring to the deliverance granted to the Jews under the Maccabees, thinks that by the first two of these creatures, *the piercing, or rigid serpent*, and *the crooked, or winding serpent*, "the kingdoms of Egypt and Assyria are meant, as they existed after the times of Alexander the Great; and by *the whale*, the kingdom of Arabia, and the other neighbouring nations, which were adversaries to the people of God; or that by these three animals are to be understood the persecutors and adversaries of the church, who should exist successively in the world, and be destroyed by the divine judgments." But whether this be the right interpretation of the allegory is much to be questioned.

Verses 2, 3. *In that day*—When these powerful enemies shall be destroyed. *Sing ye unto her*—Hebrew, וְיָגֵד לָהּ, *answer ye her*, or *say ye to her*, namely, to the church of God. *A vineyard of red wine*—"Behold a vineyard," or, "Thou art a vineyard of red wine," that is, of the choicest and best wine, which in those parts was red, as appears both from the Scriptures and from heathen authors. *I the Lord do keep it, &c.*—I will protect my church from all her enemies, and supply her with my ordinances, word, and Spirit, with all necessary means and helps. "The import of these two verses," says Lowth, "is, that when the enemies of God's people are destroyed, among other songs and thanksgivings, this acknowledgment shall be made to the praise of God, and of the church which he protects, that as she is fruitful in all good works, so God continually watches over her, and defends her from danger."

would <sup>2</sup> go through them, I would burn <sup>a</sup> them together. A. M. 3292.  
B. C. 712.

5 Or let him take hold <sup>e</sup> of my strength, *that*  
he may <sup>b</sup> make peace with me, *and* he shall  
make peace with me.

6 He shall cause them that come of Jacob <sup>i</sup> to  
take root: Israel shall blossom and bud, and  
fill the face of the world with fruit.

7 ¶ Hath he smitten him, <sup>3</sup> as he smote those

<sup>2</sup> Or, *march against*.—<sup>e</sup> Chapter xxv. 4.—<sup>b</sup> Job xxii. 21.  
<sup>i</sup> Chap. xxxvii. 31; Hos. xiv. 5.—<sup>3</sup> Heb. *according to the stroke*  
*of those*.

Verses 4, 5. *Fury is not in me*—Namely, against my vineyard or my people; I have been displeased with them, and have chastized them, but I am not implacable toward them, and resolved utterly to destroy them, as their enemies are. *Who would set the briers and thorns against me, &c.*—Yet if any hypocrite in the church, false professor, or wilful sinner, shall offer to contend with me, he shall feel the effects of my fury. Or, more largely, thus: "Though fury doth not belong to me, and vengeance be called my strange work, (ch. xxviii. 21.) yet if the briers and thorns, that is, the wicked and incorrigible, bid defiance to me, they will find I shall soon destroy and consume them like fire." *Or let him take hold of my strength, &c.*—Rather, let such a one return to me, and make his peace with me, by unfeigned repentance and living faith, *and he shall make peace with me*—For I am always ready to receive returning sinners, and to pardon the truly penitent, who have recourse to me for mercy and salvation.

Verse 6. *He shall cause them of Jacob to take root*—To be firmly settled in their possessions. The words may be rendered, *In times to come he shall cause Jacob to take root. Israel shall blossom and bud*—Shall revive and flourish. The metaphor of a vine is still pursued, and these expressions signify the increase of the Jewish people, after their return from their captivity in Babylon. *And fill the face of the world with fruit*—Their posterity shall be so numerous that their own land shall not be sufficient for them, but they shall be forced to seek habitations in other countries, and shall replenish them with people. This prediction was indeed fulfilled after the captivity; for the Jews filled all Judea and Syria, and were spread over all the Roman empire, as appears, not only from their own histories, but from the books of the New Testament. See note on ch. xxvi. 15. But, perhaps, this is chiefly intended to be understood of the spiritual seed of Jacob, or of believers, who are often called God's Israel, as Rom. ix. 6, and elsewhere.

Verse 7. *Hath he smitten him*—Namely, Jacob; *as he smote those that smote him*?—The question implies a denial. He hath not so smitten him. He hath not dealt so severely with his people as he hath with their enemies, whom he hath utterly destroyed. *Or is he slain as those slain by him*—Namely, those slain by God on the behalf of Israel? The meaning

A. M. 3292. B. C. 712. that smote him? or is he slain according to the slaughter of them that are slain by him?

8 <sup>1</sup> In measure, <sup>4</sup> when it shooteth forth, thou wilt debate with it: <sup>5</sup> he<sup>1</sup> stayeth his rough wind in the day of the east wind.

9 By this therefore shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged; and this is all the fruit to take away his sin; when he maketh all the stones of the altar as chalk-stones that are beaten in sunder, the groves and <sup>6</sup> images shall not stand up.

<sup>1</sup> Job. xxiii. 6; Psa. vi. 1; Jer. x. 24; xxx. 11; xlv. 28; 1 Cor. x. 13.—<sup>4</sup> Or, when thou sendest it forth.—<sup>5</sup> Or, when he removeth it.—<sup>6</sup> Psa. lxxviii. 39.

is, God had never permitted the Jews to be smitten to their entire destruction, as he had their enemies, but had always taken care to preserve a remnant.

Verse 8. *In measure when it shooteth forth*—Rather, *In measure when thou sendest it forth*, as *בכפאמארה בשלחה*, may be properly rendered. The words seem to be addressed by the prophet to God, and to signify that God would observe a measure in punishing the Jewish people, and not go beyond a certain degree; and that he then would send them forth again, namely, from captivity: from which God, after they had suffered sufficient correction, would deliver them by a singular providence. *Thou wilt debate, or contend with it*—God is said to debate or contend with men, when he executes his judgments upon them. But *תריבנה* may be rendered, *Thou wilt contend for it*, that is, undertake its cause and defend it. This is still spoken of God's singular protection of the Jews, when they returned from Babylon. *He stayeth his rough wind*—He mitigates the severity of the judgment; *in the day of the east wind*—In the time when he sendeth forth his east wind, that is, very grievous and destructive calamities. The east wind, being a dry, blasting wind, and the most violent and destructive of all others in those parts of the world, is frequently put, in the Scriptures, for the calamities of war, and such like wasting judgments: see Jer. iv. 11, 12; Ezek. xvii. 10; and xix. 12; Hos. xiii. 15. Here it seems to be mentioned with a reference to the shooting forth of the branches of the vine, spoken of in the foregoing words, that wind being very prejudicial to tender shoots.

Verse 9. *By this therefore*—By this manner of God's dealing with his people; *shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged*—Hebrew, *כפר*, expiated, or forgiven: that is, by these chastisements Jacob shall be brought to true repentance, and in consequence thereof shall be pardoned. *And this is all the fruit*—The effect designed to be produced, by these severe corrections; *to take away his sin*—Not to destroy the sinner, as others are often destroyed by the calamities brought upon them, but only to take away the guilt and power of his sins; *when he, &c.*—Which sin of Jacob shall be taken away, and the punishment thereof removed, when he shall give

10 ¶ Yet the defenced city shall be desolate, and the habitation forsaken, and left like a wilderness: <sup>m</sup> there shall the calf feed, and there shall he lie down, and consume the branches thereof.

11 When the boughs thereof are withered, they shall be broken off: the women come and set them on fire: for <sup>n</sup> it is a people of no understanding: therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and <sup>o</sup> he that formed them will show them no favour.

<sup>6</sup> Or, sun-images.—<sup>m</sup> Chapter xvii. 2; xxxii. 14.—<sup>n</sup> Deut. xxxii. 28; Chap. i. 3; Jer. viii. 7.—<sup>o</sup> Deut. xxxii. 18; Chap. xliii. 1, 7; xlv. 2, 21, 24.

such an evidence of the reality of his repentance as to destroy all the objects, instruments, means, and signs of idolatry out of the land; *when he maketh the stones of the altar*—Namely, the idolatrous altar, or altars, *as chalk-stones*—That is, broken into small pieces, and reduced to powder and dust. Possibly he may say, *the altar*, with respect to that particular altar which Ahaz had set up in the place of God's altar; and this prophecy might be delivered in Ahaz's time, while that altar stood and was used. He seems to allude to Moses's showing his detestation of idolatry, by taking the golden calf, burning it, and grinding it to powder: and he intimates that when their repentance should be sincere, it would discover itself in a similar way. It must be observed, that of all sins, which are of a heinous nature, the Jews, till they were carried into captivity, were most inclined to idolatry, and for that sin especially, most of God's judgments, which they had hitherto suffered, had been inflicted upon them. But of that most unreasonable and wicked inclination they were in a great measure cured by that severe punishment, the seventy years captivity in Babylon. *The groves and images shall not stand up*—Shall be thrown down with contempt and indignation.

Verses 10, 11. *Yet, &c.*—Before this glorious promise, concerning the removal of Israel's sin and calamity, shall be fulfilled, a dreadful and desolating judgment shall come upon them. *The defenced city shall be desolate*—Jerusalem, and the rest of the defenced cities of the land, the singular number being put for the plural; *and the habitation forsaken*—The most inhabited and populous parts of the country; or, as *נדה* properly signifies, their *pleasant habitation*, whether in the city or country; *left like a wilderness*—Which was the case in the time of the Babylonish captivity. *There shall the calf feed*—The calf is put for all sorts of cattle, which, it is foretold, should securely feed there, because there should be no man left to disturb or annoy them; *and consume the branches thereof*—Of their pleasant habitation; of the young trees that grow up in that desolated country. *When the boughs thereof are withered*—As they will be when they are thus gnawed and cropped by cattle; *they shall be broken off*—That there may be no hopes of their recovery.

A. M. 3292. 12 ¶ And it shall come to pass in  
B. C. 712. that day, *that* the LORD shall beat off  
from the channel of the river unto the stream  
of Egypt, and ye shall be gathered one by one,  
O ye children of Israel.

13 <sup>p</sup> And it shall come to pass in that day,

<sup>p</sup> Chap. ii. 11.

*The women come, &c.*—He mentions women, because the men would be destroyed. *For it is a people of no understanding*—They neither know me, nor themselves; neither my word, nor my works: they know not the things which concern their peace, but blindly and wilfully go on in sin. *Therefore he that made them*—Both as they are creatures, and as they are his people; for this also is expressed by *making, or forming; will not have mercy on them*—So as to save them from this dreadful calamity and ruin, which they bring on themselves. Thus he overthrows their false and presumptuous conceit, that God would never destroy the work of his own hands, nor the seed of Abraham his friend.

Verses 12, 13. *It shall come to pass, &c., that the Lord shall beat off*—Or, *beat out*: which is not meant in the way of punishment, but as an act of mercy, as is evident from the following clause of this, and of the next verse: the sense is, He shall sever, and take from among the nations, and gather together, like thrashed corn into the garner; *from the channel of the river unto the stream of Egypt*—All the Israelites that are scattered in those parts. It is a metaphor taken from thrashing, or beating out and separating the pure grain from the chaff. *And ye shall be gathered one by one*—Which signi-

<sup>q</sup> *that* the great trumpet shall be A. M. 3292.  
blown, and they shall come which B. C. 712.  
were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the LORD in the holy mount at Jerusalem.

<sup>q</sup> Matt. xxiv. 31; Rev. xi. 15.

fies God's exact and singular care of them. *And in that day the great trumpet shall be blown*—God shall summon them, as it were, by the sound of trumpet, namely, by an eminent call, or act of his providence on their behalf. He alludes to the custom of calling the Israelites together with trumpets: of which see Num. x. 2, 3. *And they shall come which were in the land of Assyria*—Into which the ten tribes had been carried captive; *and the outcasts in the land of Egypt*—Where many of the Jews were, as is manifest, both from the Scriptures and from other authors. This prediction had its first accomplishment in the restoration of the Jews from Babylon, to whom many of the Israelites from Assyria were joined, and returned with them; and to whom many from Egypt, and other parts, came and united themselves, and having rebuilt the city and temple, worshipped the Lord, as is here said, *in his holy mountain at Jerusalem*. But this prophecy has manifestly a further aspect, and foretels the restoration of the Jews in the latter times; when, the gospel trumpet having been blown, and the fulness of the Gentiles brought in, the Jews shall be gathered from their several dispersions, united to God's church, numbered among his true worshippers, and probably reinstated in their own land.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

*In this chapter the Ephraimites are reprov'd for their pride and drunkenness, their security and sensuality, 1-4. A gracious promise of God's favour is made to Judah, termed the residue of his people, 5, 6. A reproof is given to many of them also, for the same vices, and for their stupidity and unteachableness under the instructions which the prophets gave them in the name of God, 7-13. Their rulers are reprov'd and threatened for their contempt of God's judgments; and, after a gracious promise of Christ and his grace, they are given to know that their hopes of escaping the judgments of God were false, and would certainly deceive them, 14-22. All this is confirm'd by a comparison drawn from the method which the husbandman takes with his ground and grain, 23-29.*

A. M. 3279. **W**O to <sup>a</sup> the crown of pride, to the  
B. C. 725. drunkards of Ephraim, whose

<sup>a</sup> Verse 3.

### NOTES ON CHAPTER XXVIII.

Verse 1. *Wo, &c.*—The second discourse of the third book of Isaiah's prophecies, according to Vitranga, begins here, and is continued to the end of the thirty-third chapter. He supposes that the whole of it was delivered before the expedition of Sennacherib, and on occasion of some solemn embassy sent to Egypt to implore the help of the

<sup>b</sup> glorious beauty is a fading flower, A. M. 3279.  
which are on the head of the fat val- B. C. 725.

<sup>b</sup> Verse 4.

Egyptians against the Assyrians. *To the crown of pride*—The proud state and kingdom of the ten tribes, commonly called Ephraim; or, as some think, Samaria, the capital city, is chiefly intended, which was situated, says Maundrell, "on a long mount of an oval figure; having first a fruitful valley, and then a ring, or crown, of hills running round about it." *Journey from Aleppo*, p. 59. It is thought

A. M. 3279. leys of them that are <sup>1</sup> overcome with  
B. C. 725. wine!

2 Behold, the LORD hath a mighty and strong one, <sup>c</sup> which as a tempest of hail and a destroying storm, as a flood of mighty waters overflowing, shall cast down to the earth with the hand.

3 <sup>d</sup> The crown of pride, the drunkards of Ephraim, shall be trodden <sup>2</sup> under feet:

4 And <sup>e</sup> the glorious beauty, which is on the head of the fat valley, shall be a fading flower, and as the hasty fruit before the summer; which when he that looketh upon it seeth, while it is yet in his hand he <sup>3</sup> eateth it up.

5 ¶ In that day shall the LORD of hosts be

for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of his people, A. M. 3279.  
B. C. 725.

6 And for a spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment, and for strength to them that turn the battle to the gate.

7 ¶ But they also <sup>f</sup> have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; <sup>g</sup> the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment.

8 For all tables are full of vomit and filthiness, so that there is no place clean.

<sup>1</sup> Heb. broken.—<sup>c</sup> Chap. xxx. 30; Ezek. xiii. 11.—<sup>d</sup> Verse 1.  
<sup>2</sup> Heb. with feet.—<sup>e</sup> Verse 1.

<sup>f</sup> Heb. swalloweth.—<sup>g</sup> Prov. xx. 1; Hos. iv. 11.—<sup>h</sup> Chap. lvi. 10, 12.

that the prophet alludes to the crown of flowers which used to be worn by the drunkards in their revels; "an image not unfrequently made use of by the prophets, to convey a strong idea of the universal depravity and folly of the nation." *To the drunkards of Ephraim*—Having many and excellent vines among them, the Ephraimites were much exposed to this sin, and very frequently guilty of it, verse 7; Hos. vii. 5; Amos vi. 6. *Whose glorious beauty is a fading flower*—Whose glory and greatness shall suddenly wither and perish, like the garlands of flowers wherewith they crown their heads, amidst their intoxicating cups. *Which are on the head of the fat valleys*—Which proud and drunken Israelites have their common and chief abode in Samaria, the head of the kingdom, and seated at the head of fat and rich valleys which encompassed it.

Verses 2-4. *Behold, the Lord hath*—Namely, at his command, prepared and ready to execute his judgments; *a mighty and strong one*—Shalmaneser, the king of Assyria; *which, as a tempest of hail, &c., shall cast down*—The crown of pride, to the earth, by his hand—By the hand of God, which shall strengthen him in this work. *The crown, the drunkards, shall be trodden under feet*—The expression is emphatical; the crown which was upon their own heads shall be trodden under the feet of others; and they, whose drunkenness made them stagger and fall to the ground, shall be trodden down there. *The glorious beauty shall be as the hasty fruit*—That is, the first ripe fruit, which, coming before the season, and before other fruits, is most acceptable. *Which he that seeth it eateth up*—Which, as soon as a man sees, he plucks it off and devours it as soon as he can get it into his hand. And so shall it be with Ephraim's glory, which his enemies shall covet and spoil, and devour greedily. "The image," says Bishop Lowth, "expresses, in the strongest manner, the great ease with which the Assyrians should take the city and the whole kingdom, and the avidity

with which they should seize the rich prey without resistance."

Verses 5, 6. "Thus far," says Bishop Lowth, "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 favourable prognostication of their affairs under Hezekiah: but soon changes to reproofs and threatenings, for their intemperance, disobedience, and profaneness." *In that day*—When the kingdom of Israel shall be utterly destroyed; *the Lord of hosts shall be for a crown of glory, &c.*—Shall give eminent glory and beauty unto the residue of his people—Unto the kingdom of Judah, who shall continue in their own country, when Israel is carried into captivity. *And for a spirit of judgment, &c.*—He explains how, or wherein, God would glorify and beautify them, even by giving wisdom to their rulers, and courage to their soldiers; which two things contribute much to the strength, safety, and glory of a nation. *To them that turn the battle to the gate*—Who not only drive their enemies from their land, but pursue them into their own lands, and besiege them in their own cities.

Verse 7. *But they also have erred*—But, alas! Judah is guilty of the same sins with Israel, therefore they also must expect the same calamities, of which he speaks afterward. *The priest*—To whom strong drink was expressly forbidden in the time of their sacred ministrations; *and the prophet*—The teachers, who should have been patterns of sobriety to the people, and to whom sobriety was absolutely necessary for the right discharge of their office; *have erred*—In their conversation and in their holy administrations. *They are swallowed up of wine*—They are, as we say, drowned in it. *They err in vision*—The prophets miscarry in their sacred employment of prophesying or teaching, which is

A. M. 3279. 9<sup>b</sup> Whom shall he teach know-  
B. C. 725. ledge? and whom shall he make to

understand <sup>4</sup> doctrine? *them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts.*

10 For precept <sup>5</sup> must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, *and* there a little:

11 For with <sup>6</sup> stammering <sup>1</sup> lips and another tongue <sup>7</sup> will he speak to this people.

12 To whom he said, *This is the rest where-with ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing: yet they would not hear.*

13 But the word of the LORD was unto them,

<sup>a</sup> Jeremiah vi. 10.—<sup>4</sup> Hebrew, *the hearing.*—<sup>5</sup> Or, hath been.  
<sup>6</sup> Heb. *stammerings of lips.*

sometimes called *vision*. *They stumble in judgment*—The priests mistake in pronouncing the sentence of the law, which was their duty.

Verses 9, 10. *Whom shall he*—Namely, God, or his prophet, or minister; *teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine?*—Who is there among this people, that are capable and willing to be taught the good knowledge of God? *them that are weaned from the milk, &c.*—A minister may as soon teach a young child as these men. *For precept must be upon precept, &c.*—They must be taught like little children, slowly, and with leisure, the same things being often repeated, because of their great dulness. *Line upon line*—One line of the book after another, as children are taught to read.

Verses 11, 12. *For*—Or, rather, *therefore*, as the particle ׀ is often used. For the prophet here evidently intends to express the punishment of their dulness. *With stammering lips, and another tongue*—By people of a strange language, whom he will bring among them, and into whose power he will deliver them; *will he speak to this people*—Seeing they will not hear him speaking by his prophets and ministers, in their own language, they shall hear their enemies speaking to them in a strange language. It was a great aggravation of the misery of the Jews, during their captivity, that they did not understand the language of the Chaldeans, whose captives they were. *To whom he said*—To which people, the Lord, by his ministers, said, *This*—This doctrine, or the word of the Lord, as it follows, verse 13; *is the rest*—The only way, in the observance of which you will find rest. *Wherewith, &c.*—The word *wherewith* is supplied by our translators, there being nothing for it in the Hebrew, which is, *cause ye the weary to rest*—Namely, your weary minds and weary country. As if he had said, As rest is offered you by the prophets in God's name, do you embrace it; which is to be done by hearkening to God's word. So shall this people, which hath been so often, and so long, wearied and harassed by great and manifold calamities, find rest and peace. *Yet they would not hear*—They were

precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, *and* there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken.

14 ¶ Wherefore hear the word of the LORD, ye scornful men, that rule this people which is in Jerusalem.

15 Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: <sup>k</sup> for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves:

<sup>1</sup> 1 Corinthians xiv. 21.—<sup>7</sup> Or, *he hath spoken.*—<sup>k</sup> Amos ii. 4.

wilfully ignorant, and obstinately refused the very means of instruction.

Verse 13. *But the word of the Lord was unto them, &c.*—The sense of the passage thus rendered, may be, that they spake of God's word with scorn and contempt, repeating the prophet's words, (which are as peculiar in sound, as they are strong and expressive in sense, קו לקו, קו לקו, צו לצו, צו לצו, *tzav latzav, tzav latzav, kav lakav, kav lakav.*) in a scoffing manner, and with a ridiculous tone of voice; as if they had said, It seems the prophet takes us to be mere children, that need to be taught the very rudiments of knowledge, and that but slowly. *Precept upon precept, line upon line, &c.*—That these were scornful men and mockers, is affirmed verses 14, 22; and, as scoffers frequently catch the words out of other men's mouths, and use them in the way of derision; so it may be thought they did with the prophet's words. But the clause may be rendered a little otherwise, as indeed it is by divers learned men, thus: *And the word of the Lord shall be unto them, precept upon precept, &c.*; as this method has been used, and was altogether necessary for them, so it still is, and for the future shall be. As they were children in understanding, they shall continue to be such; they shall be ever learning, and never come to the knowledge of the truth; as they formerly would not, so now they shall not profit by the word, and their sin shall be their punishment. *That they may, or might go, and fall backward*—This will be the event, or consequence of their sin: they will fall backward, which is the worst and most dangerous way of falling; and so be broken to pieces.

Verses 14, 15. *Wherefore hear, ye scornful men*—Who make a mock at sin, and at God's word and threatenings, and who doubt not that by your crafty counsels, and human efforts, you shall escape God's judgments; who *have said*—In your hearts; *we have made a covenant with death, &c.*—We are as safe from death and hell, or the grave, (as the word מוֹת here means,) as if they had entered into covenant with us, that they would not invade us. "To

A. M. 3279. 16 ¶ Therefore thus saith the Lord  
B. C. 725. God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation<sup>1</sup> a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.

17 ¶ Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xlix. 42; Psa. cxviii. 22; Matt. xxi. 42; Acts iv. 11; Rom. ix. 33; x. 11; Eph. ii. 20; 1 Pet. ii. 6, 8.

be in covenant with any thing, is a kind of proverbial expression to denote perfect security from evil, and mischief from it:” see Job v. 23; Hos. ii. 18. *When the overflowing scourge*—The calamity which the prophets speak of as coming; *shall pass through*—Namely, the land: if it should pass through, which, however, we do not believe it will; *it shall not come unto us*—We shall escape. *For we have made lies our refuge, &c.*—These words the prophet puts into their mouths, as declarative of the real nature of their false confidence and vain hopes of safety: as if he had said, You are confident the calamity shall not come to you, because you have taken sanctuary in a refuge of lies! You depend on your vain idols, or on your riches, or strength, or crafty devices, which will all fail you. Or, you hope to secure yourselves by your arts of cunning and falsehood, but you will find yourselves disappointed.

*Verse 16. Therefore, thus saith the Lord*—Because your refuges are vain and deceitful; therefore I will direct you to a better and surer refuge, which will never fail those that trust to it, which God hath prepared in Zion. But if you shall despise and reject that refuge, which I now offer to you all; if you will not believe, then know, that *I will lay judgment to the line, &c.*, as it follows, verse 17. Some think that in this famous prophecy, *Behold I lay in Zion, &c.*, the prophet only means to tell these scorners, that God would protect Jerusalem, but not them, whom he would suffer to perish; and that he “expresses the protection which God would afford it under the image of laying a foundation for new walls, with the largest and hardest stones, and those most fit for the purpose, to make it impregnable, and to stand for ages.” But to understand the prophet thus, is to make him utter a false prophecy, which was afterward contradicted by facts. For Jerusalem, whether we understand thereby the city or its inhabitants, was not protected, but given up into the hands, first of the Chaldeans, and then of the Romans, to be destroyed. Certainly, as Lowth observes, “this prophecy cannot belong to any but Christ, to whom it is often applied in the New Testament. But it may import thus much, with respect to the time wherein Isaiah lived, that those should never be disappointed who believed in God, who had made peculiar promises to his church, which should be eminently fulfilled at the coming of the Messiah, in whom all God’s promises made to his people should receive their final accomplishment.” Understood of Christ, the interpretation of every expression in the passage is natural and easy; *Be-*

hail shall sweep away<sup>m</sup> the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding-place.

18 And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be<sup>s</sup> trodden down by it.

<sup>m</sup> Verse 15.—<sup>s</sup> Heb. a treading down to it.

*hold I lay*—I have promised it, and in the fulness of time will perform it; *in Zion*—In my church; *for a foundation*—Upon which I will build my church, the foundation of all the confidence, hope, and comfort of my people; *a stone*—Not Hezekiah, as some have supposed, but the Messiah, as appears, 1st, From those passages of the Old Testament, in which he is called a stone, as Psa. cxviii. 22; Isa. viii. 14; Dan. ii. 34–45; Zech. iii. 9. 2d, From those texts of the New Testament, in which this prophecy is directly expounded of him, as Rom. ix. 32, 33; 1 Pet. ii. 4. 3d, From the last clause, wherein faith in this stone is required, which is not to be placed in any mere man, or mere creature. *A tried stone*—Which I have tried and approved, as every way sufficient for a foundation to support the building. *A precious corner-stone*—Uniting the several parts of the building together, making Ephraim and Judah, and Jews and Gentiles, though now implacable enemies, one church, and giving not only strength, but beauty and glory to the building, as corner-stones frequently do. *A sure foundation*—Upon whom you may securely rest; one who will not fail nor deceive you, as your refuges of lies will. *He that believeth*—Namely, this promise, or places his confidence in this stone, as it is explained 1 Pet. ii. 6; *shall not make haste*—Shall not hastily catch at any way of escaping his danger, whether it be right or wrong, but shall patiently wait upon God in his way till he deliver him. The words שׁוֹרֵר אֵל, here rendered, *shall not make haste*, are by the LXX. translated, ἢ μὴ κατασχευῶθῃ, shall in no wise be ashamed or confounded, because precipitation, or haste, commonly exposes men to shame and confusion.

*Verse 17. Judgment also will I lay to the line, &c.*—I will execute just judgment, as it were by a line and plummet annexed to it; that is, with exactness and care. I will severely punish and utterly destroy all who reject that stone. *For the line and plummet, or the plumb-line*, was not only used in erecting buildings, but also in pulling them down; those parts of the building being thus marked out which were to be demolished. *And the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, &c.*—My judgments (which in the Scriptures are compared to a storm of hail or rain) shall discover the vanity of all your crafty and wicked devices, and shall sweep you away with the besom of destruction in spite of them.

*Verses 18, 19. And your covenant with death shall be disannulled*—Made void, or of none effect. *Ye shall be trodden down*—Namely, by the overflowing

A. M. 3279. 19 From the time that it goeth forth  
B. C. 725. it shall take you: for morning by  
morning shall it pass over, by day and by night:  
and it shall be a vexation only <sup>9</sup> to understand  
the report.

20 For the bed is shorter than that a man  
can stretch himself on it: and the covering  
narrower than that he can wrap himself in it.

21 For the LORD shall rise up as in mount  
<sup>a</sup> Perazim, he shall be wroth as in the valley  
of <sup>o</sup> Gibeon, that he may do his work, <sup>p</sup> his  
strange work; and bring to pass his act, his  
strange act.

22 Now therefore be ye not mockers, lest  
your bands be made strong: for I have heard

<sup>9</sup> Or, when he shall make you to understand doctrine.—<sup>a</sup> 2 Sam. v. 20; 1 Chron. xiv. 11.—<sup>o</sup> Joshua x. 10, 12; 2 Samuel v. 25; 1 Chron. xiv. 16.—<sup>p</sup> Lam. iii. 33.—<sup>q</sup> Ch. x. 22; Dan. ix. 27.

scourge, which you flattered yourselves should not come unto you. *From the time that it goeth forth*—Namely, from me into the land, it shall assuredly, and with the first, seize upon and carry away you scoffers. *Morning by morning it shall pass over, &c.*—It shall not only come to you, but it shall abide upon you; and when it hath passed over you, it shall return again to you, morning after morning, and shall follow you day and night, without giving you the least respite. *It shall be a vexation to understand the report*—So dreadful shall the judgment be, that it shall strike you with horror when you only hear the rumour of its approach.

Verses 20, 21. *For the bed is shorter, &c.*—For those lying refuges, to which you trust, will not be able to give you that protection which you expect from them, no more than a man can stretch himself upon a bed that is too short for him. *For the Lord shall rise up as in mount Perazim*—Where he fought against the Philistines, 2 Sam. v. 20. *He shall be wroth as in Gibeon*—Where he fought against the Canaanites, (Josh. x. 10, &c.,) and afterward against the Philistines, 1 Chron. xiv. 16. *That he may do his strange work*—For this work of bringing total destruction upon Israel was contrary to the benignity of his own nature, and to the usual way of dealing with his people. The calamities and alarms occasioned by the Assyrian invasion under Sennacherib were a partial accomplishment of this prophecy. It was still more fully accomplished in the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, and the Babylonish captivity: but certainly it did not receive its perfect fulfilment till the destruction of that city, and of the church and state of the Jews by the Romans, after their obstinate rejection of their Messiah, the corner-stone, here spoken of. This alone fully answers the import of these awful predictions of divine wrath and vengeance.

Verse 22. *Now therefore be not mockers*—For your own sakes do not make a mock of God's word

from the Lord God of hosts <sup>a</sup> a con- A. M. 3279  
sumption, even determined upon the B. C. 725.  
whole earth.

23 ¶ Give ye ear, and hear my voice;  
hearken, and hear my speech.

24 Doth the ploughman plough all day to  
sow? doth he open and break the clods of his  
ground?

25 When he hath made plain the face thereof,  
doth he not cast abroad the fitches, and scatter  
the cummin, and cast in <sup>10</sup> the principal wheat,  
and the appointed barley, and the <sup>11</sup> rye in their  
<sup>12</sup> place?

26 <sup>13</sup> For his God doth instruct him to dis-  
cretion, and doth teach him.

<sup>10</sup> Or, the wheat in the principal place, and barley in the appointed place.—<sup>11</sup> Or, spelt.—<sup>12</sup> Heb. border?—<sup>13</sup> Or, And he bindeth it in such sort as his God doth teach him.

and threatenings, as you use to do. *Lest your bands be made strong*—Lest thereby you make the judgments of God, which are often compared to bands, more sure and unavoidable, and more severe and terrible, as bands are when they are tied faster and more strongly upon a prisoner. *For I have heard from the Lord a consumption, &c.*—God hath assured me that he will utterly root out the people of Israel, the kingdom of the ten tribes; as indeed he did in Hezekiah's reign, and the Jews, the kingdom of the two tribes, in the reign of Zedekiah.

Verses 23–25. *Give ye ear*—Observe what I say, and do you judge if it be not reasonable. “We have here the last member of this section, in which this severe judgment of God, denounced in the preceding verses, is defended by a parable taken from agriculture, wherein the prophet represents allegorically the intentions and methods of the divine judgments.” “As the husbandman uses various methods in preparing his land, and adapting it to the several kinds of seed 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 judgment with mercy; in order to reclaim the wicked, to improve the good; and finally, to separate the one from the other.”—Bishop Lowth.

Verse 26. *For his God doth instruct him*—The art of husbandry is so necessary for the support of human life, that all men have ascribed its original to God as the inventor and ordainer of it. *The Most High hath ordained husbandry*, saith the son of Sirach, Eccles. vii. 15. In like manner, Virgil, *Georg.*, lib. i. line 121:

A. M. 3279. 27 For the fitches are not thrashed  
B. C. 725. with a thrashing instrument, neither  
is a cart-wheel turned about upon the cummin ;  
but the fitches are beaten out with a staff, and  
the cummin with a rod.

28 Bread-corn is bruised ; because he will

<sup>r</sup> Psa. xcii. 5 ;

“—————Pater ipse colendi  
Haud facilem esse viam voluit, primus ; per artem  
Movit agros—————.”

“Himself invented first the shining share,  
And whetted human industry by care ;  
Himself did handicrafts and arts ordain ;  
Nor suffer'd sloth to rust his active reign.”

By other heathen, the invention of agriculture is ascribed to the goddess Ceres.

Verses 27-29. “Four methods of thrashing are here mentioned, by different instruments: the *flail*, the *drag*, the *wain*, and the *treading of cattle*. The *staff*, or *flail*, was used for the grain that was too tender to be treated in the other methods. The *drag* consisted of a sort of frame of strong planks, made rough at the bottom, with hard stones or iron: it was drawn by horses or oxen over the corn-sheaves

not ever be thrashing it, nor break it A. M. 3279.  
with the wheel of his cart, nor bruise B. C. 725.  
it with his horsemen.

29 This also cometh forth from the LORD  
of hosts, <sup>r</sup> which is wonderful in counsel, and  
excellent in working.

Jer. xxxii. 19.

spread on the floor, the driver sitting upon it. The *wain* was much like the former, but had wheels with iron teeth, or edges, like a saw. 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. The last method is well known from the law of Moses, which forbids the ox to be muzzled when he treadeth out the corn, Deut. xxv. 4.”—Bishop Lowth. *This also cometh from the Lord of hosts, &c.*—This part of the husbandman's discretion expressed in these verses, as well as that expressed in verses 24, 25. These words contain the application of the similitude. The husbandman manages his affairs with common discretion ; but God governs the world and his church with wonderful wisdom: he is great and marvellous, both in the contrivance of things, and in the execution of them.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

One principal “subject of this and the four following chapters is the invasion of the Assyrians, and the great distress of the Jews while it continued ; their sudden and unexpected deliverance by God's immediate interposition in their favour ; 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.” That section of the prophet's discourse which is contained in this chapter is directed wholly to the Jews of Jerusalem, and is nearly of the same argument with the preceding. It may be divided into two parts ; the first containing the denunciation of a temporal, the second, of a spiritual judgment. It is foretold, (1.) That Jerusalem should be greatly distressed, but that their enemies, who distressed them, should be baffled and defeated, 1-8. (2.) A reproof is given to three sorts of sinners. To those that were stupid and regardless of the warnings given them, 9-12. To those that were formal and hypocritical in their religious performances, 13, 14. And to those that profanely despised God's providence, and set up their own projects in competition with it, 15-17. (3.) Precious promises of grace and mercy are made to a remnant whom God would sanctify, and in whom he would be sanctified, when their enemies and persecutors should be cut off, 18-24.

A. M. 3279. WO <sup>1</sup> to <sup>a</sup> Ariel, to Ariel, <sup>2</sup> the  
B. C. 725. city <sup>b</sup> where David dwelt ! add

ye year to year ; let them <sup>3</sup> kill sacri- A. M. 3279.  
fices. B. C. 725.

<sup>1</sup> Or, O Ariel, that is, the lion of God.—<sup>a</sup> Ezek. xliii. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Or, of the city.—<sup>b</sup> 2 Sam. v. 9.—<sup>3</sup> Heb. cut off the heads.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER XXIX.

Verse 1. *Wo to Ariel*—This word signifies a strong lion, or the lion of God, and is used concerning lion-like men, as it is rendered 1 Chron. xi. 22 ; and of God's altar, as it is translated Ezek. xliii. 15, 16 ; which seems to be thus called, because it devoured and consumed the sacrifices put upon it, as greedily and as irresistibly as the lion doth his prey. “That Jerusalem is here called by this name,” says Bishop Lowth, “is very certain ; but the reason of this name,

and the meaning of it, as applied to Jerusalem, are 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, אור אל, which should issue from thence to consume his enemies: compare chap. xxxi. 9. Some, according to the common derivation of the word, suppose that it is called the lion of God, or the strong lion, on account of the

A. M. 3279. 2 Yet I will distress Ariel, and there  
B. C. 725.

shall be heaviness and sorrow : and it shall be unto me as Ariel.

3 And I will camp against thee round about, and will lay siege against thee with a mount, and I will raise forts against thee.

4 And thou shalt be brought down, and shalt speak out of the ground, and thy speech shall be low out of the dust, and thy voice shall be, as of one that hath a familiar spirit, ° out of the ground, and thy speech shall 4 whisper out of the dust.

° Chap. viii. 19.—<sup>d</sup> Heb. *peep*, or, *chirp*.—<sup>d</sup> Chap. xxv. 5.  
° Job xxi. 18 ; Chap. xvii. 13.

strength of the place, by which it was enabled to resist and overcome all its enemies. There are other explanations of this name given, but none that seems to be perfectly satisfactory." *The city where David dwelt*—The royal city, and seat of David and his posterity, which is probably here mentioned, because this was the ground of their confidence, and also to intimate that their relation to David, and their supposed interest in the promises made to him and to his seed, should not secure them from the destruction here threatened. *Add ye year to year, &c.*—The prophet speaks ironically: Go on year after year, and *kill sacrifices* at the appointed times, whereby you think to appease me; but all shall be in vain. For know, that God will punish you for your hypocritical worship, consisting of mere form, destitute of true piety. As the latter clause, יִקְרָא יְהוָה, is literally, *Let the feasts go round*, it is probable this discourse was delivered at the time of some great feast.

Verse 2. *Yet will I distress Ariel*—Notwithstanding all your sacrifices, by bringing and strengthening her enemies against her. *And there shall be heaviness and sorrow*—Instead of your present joy and festivity. *And it shall be to me as Ariel*—That is, either, 1st, I will treat her like a strong and fierce lion, which the people, among whom it is, endeavour by nets and pits, and divers other ways, to take and destroy. Or, 2d, I will make *Ariel* the city like *Ariel* the altar, filling it with sacrifices, even of men, whom I will slay in my anger; which act of God is called his sacrifice, Ezek. xxxix. 17–19. Agreeably to this latter interpretation, Bishop Lowth renders the clause, *It shall be unto me as the hearth of the great altar*: that is, as he explains it, "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."

Verses 3, 4. *And I will camp against thee, &c.*—That is, by those enemies whom I will assist and enable to take and destroy thee. The prophet may here refer to different sieges of Jerusalem, that of Sennacherib, that of the Chaldeans, or even to that of the Romans. *Thou shalt be brought down—thy*

5 Moreover, the multitude of thy A. M. 3279.  
strangers shall be like small dust, B. C. 725.

and the multitude of the terrible ones shall be ° as chaff that passeth away : yea, it shall be † at an instant suddenly.

6 † Thou shalt be visited of the LORD of hosts with thunder, and with earthquake, and great noise, with storm and tempest, and the flame of devouring fire.

7 † And the multitude of all the nations that fight against Ariel, even all that fight against her and her munition, and that distress her,

† Chap. xxx. 13.—‡ Chap. xxviii. 2 ; xxx. 30.—‡ Chap. xxxvii. 36.

*speech shall be low*—Thou, who now speakest so loftily, shalt be humbled, and in a submissive manner, and with a low voice, shalt beg the favour of thine enemies. *As of one that hath a familiar spirit, out of the ground*—"That the souls of the dead uttered a feeble, stridulous sound, very different from the natural human voice, was a popular notion among the heathen, 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*, *ventri- loqui*. 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. From these arts of the necromancers, the popular notion seems to have arisen that the ghost's voice was a weak, stridulous, almost an articulate sort of sound, very different from the speech of the living."—Bishop Lowth.

Verses 5–7. *Moreover*—Or, rather, *But, the multitude of thy strangers*—Of the strangers that encamp and fight against thee; *shall be like small dust*—Dispersed by the least breath of air; *and the multitude of the terrible ones*—Of the Assyrian army, terrible for courage and ferocity; *shall be as the chaff that passeth away*—Which is quickly carried away by the wind. *Yea, at an instant, suddenly*—This dissipation and destruction of thine enemies shall be as instantaneous as it is unexpected. Bishop Lowth, who considers these verses as containing "an admirable description of the destruction of Sennacherib's army, with a beautiful variety of the most expressive and sublime images, adapted to show the greatness, the suddenness, and horror of the event," gives us the following elegant and striking translation of them, which will give the reader a more just and enlarged view of their meaning, than any note wherewith we might attempt to explain it:

A. M. 3279. shall be <sup>i</sup> as a dream of a night-vision.  
B. C. 725.

8 <sup>k</sup> It shall even be as when a hungry *man* dreameth, and behold, he eateth; but he awaketh, and his soul is empty: or as when a thirsty *man* dreameth, and behold, he drinketh; but he awaketh, and behold, *he is faint*, and his soul hath appetite: so shall the multitude of all the nations be, that fight against mount Zion.

9 ¶ Stay yourselves, and wonder; <sup>6</sup> cry ye out, and cry: <sup>1</sup> they are drunken, <sup>m</sup> but not with wine; they stagger, but not with strong drink.

<sup>i</sup> Job xx. 8. — <sup>k</sup> Psa. lxxiii. 20. — <sup>6</sup> Or, *take your pleasure and riot.* — Chapter xxviii. 7. — <sup>m</sup> Chapter li. 21. — <sup>n</sup> Romans xi. 8. — <sup>o</sup> Psa. lxi. 23; Chap. vi. 10.

But the multitude of the proud shall be like the small dust;  
And like the flitting chaff, the multitude of the terrible:

Yea, the effect shall be momentary, in an instant.  
From Jehovah there shall be a sudden visitation,  
With thunder, and earthquake, and a mighty voice;  
With storm, and tempest, and flame of devouring fire.

And like as a dream, a vision of the night,  
So shall it be with the multitude of all the nations,  
that fight against Ariel;  
And all their armies, and their towers, and those that distress her.

The reader will observe, that this view of the passage has the sanction of the Vulgate version, and is approved by Prebendary Lowth, Vitringa, Dr. Waterland, Henry, and several others. Some, however, think that these verses should be connected with the preceding, and that the prophet continues in them to describe the judgment to be inflicted on Jerusalem.

Verse 8. "As when a hungry man dreameth; and, lo! he seemeth to eat; but he awaketh, and his appetite is still unsatisfied: and as a thirsty man, &c. So shall it be with the multitude of all the nations, which have set themselves in array against mount Zion." Thus Bishop Lowth. The Assyrians had swallowed up Jerusalem in their imagination: but God would suddenly disappoint all their hopes, and send them away empty and confounded. For, the reader will observe, "Sennacherib and his mighty army are not here 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."

Verses 9, 10. *Stay yourselves and wonder*—The

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10 For <sup>a</sup> the LORD hath poured <sup>A. M. 3279.</sup>  
out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, <sup>B. C. 725.</sup>  
and hath <sup>o</sup> closed your eyes: the prophets  
and your <sup>6</sup> rulers, <sup>p</sup> the seers hath he covered.

11 And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a <sup>7</sup> book <sup>q</sup> that is sealed, which *men* deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: <sup>r</sup> and he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed:

12 And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned.

<sup>6</sup> Heb. *heads*, Chapter iii. 2; Jer. xxvi. 8. — <sup>p</sup> 1 Sam. ix. 9.  
<sup>7</sup> Or, *letter.* — <sup>q</sup> Chap. viii. 16. — <sup>r</sup> Dan. xii. 4, 9; Rev. v. 1-5, 9; vi. 1.

prophet, having described the temporal judgment coming on the Jews, (see the contents of the chapter,) proceeds now to predict the spiritual one, the first gradation of which is contained in these and the two following verses, which both describe the judgment and the consequence of it. It is the same with that predicted chap. vi. 9-12; and viii. 14, 15. On which see the notes. Hebrew, *התמהמהו ותכרו*, *Pause and be astonished*. Stop and consider the stupidity of this people, and you cannot but wonder at it. *Cry ye out, and cry*—Through amazement and horror. *They are drunken, but not with wine*—But with stupidity and folly, which makes them, like drunken men, insensible of their danger, and not knowing what to do. *For the Lord hath poured out upon you*—Hath suffered to come upon you, in a way of righteous judgment, and as a punishment for your *loving darkness rather than light; the spirit of deep sleep*—Hardness of heart, and insensibility of your danger and misery. *The prophets and your rulers*—Your magistrates and ministers, whose blindness and stupidity are a great curse to the people; *hath he covered*—Permitted to be covered with the veil of ignorance and stupidity; that is, he hath withdrawn his abused light and grace from them, so that they no more see things in a true light than if a thick veil were spread over them. *The prophets and seers* here mean the same persons.

Verses 11, 12. *And the vision of all*—Of all your prophets, or every vision; *is unto you as the words of a book that is sealed*—Which no man can read while it is sealed up, as books then sometimes were, being in the form of rolls. *Which men deliver to one that is learned*—That understands the language in which the book is written; *saying, Read this—he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed*—Mere human learning, without supernatural illumination, will not enable any man rightly to understand the word of God, and things divine: see 1 Cor. ii. 11, 14. *The book is delivered*—Unsealed and opened; *to him that is unlearned—and he saith, I cannot read it; for I am unlearned*. Thus, neither the learned nor the unlearned among the Jews were any better

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A. M. 3279. 13 ¶ Wherefore the LORD said,  
B. C. 725.

\* Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by † the precept of men :

14 † Therefore, behold, † I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, even a marvellous work and a wonder: † for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid.

15 † Wo unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the LORD, and their works

‡ Ezek. xxxiii. 31 ; Matthew xv. 8 ; Mark vii. 6.—† Col. ii. 22.—‡ Hab. i. 5.—§ Heb. I will add.—¶ Jer. xlix. 7 ; Obad.

for the messages which God sent them by his servants the prophets, nor desired to be better.

Verses 13, 14. *Forasmuch as this people draw near to me*—Namely, in acts of worship ; *with their mouth*—Speaking to me in prayer and praise, and promising and professing to serve me ; *and with their lips do honour me*—With mere outward devotion and bodily worship ; *but have removed their heart far from me*—Do not render me that love and gratitude, that regard and obedience, which I require ; *and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men*—By mere human wisdom, and not by my word and Spirit. They worship and serve me, not in such a manner as I have prescribed, but according to men's inventions, preferring the devices and traditions of their false prophets before my institutions. Or, their religion is merely of human, not of divine, origin : it is the fruit of corrupt nature, and not of renewing grace. *I will proceed to do a marvellous work*—A thing that will scarce be believed ; *for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish*—Shall disappear and vanish. A veil shall be cast upon the eyes of their minds, and their folly shall be made manifest to all. The most refined arts of their politicians shall not avail their authors, nor be able to preserve them from God's judgments ; and their most wise and learned men shall lose their usual discretion, and be infatuated. This threatening was remarkably fulfilled in the Jews of our Lord's time, who crucified him out of fear of the Romans, and thereby brought the Romans upon them ! And " their learned rabbis, ever since, have minded little else but fabulous stories, and the Cabbalists have vented trifles for profound mysteries." As, in rejecting Christ and his gospel, they removed their hearts far from God, therefore God justly removed wisdom far from them, and hid from their eyes the things that belonged even to their temporal peace.

Verses 15, 16. *Wo unto them that seek deep*—Hebrew, *הַמְעַיִן עֲמֵק*, *that make, or dig deep* ; a metaphor from persons digging deep into the earth, that they may hide what they wish to keep safe and unknown. *To hide their counsel from the Lord*—

are in the dark, and † they say, Who † seeth us ? and who knoweth us ?

16 Surely your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the potter's clay : for shall the † work say of him that made it, He made me not ? or shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, He had no understanding ?

17 ¶ *Is it not yet a very little while, and † Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be esteemed as a forest ?*

18 And † in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind

‡ 1 Cor. i. 19.—† Chap. xxx. 1.—‡ Psa. xciv. 7.—§ Chap. xlv. 9 ; Rom. ix. 20.—¶ Chap. xxxii. 15.—‡ Chap. xxxv. 5.

Who vainly imagine that they can conceal their hypocrisy and secret wickedness from him, and can deceive, not only men, but God, by their external professions and services ; or, who think they can carry on their projects without the observation or interposition of Providence. *And their works are in the dark*—Their wicked counsels are contrived, and their idolatry is practised, in secret and dark places, of which see Ezek. viii. 12. *And they say, Who seeth us ?*—Neither God nor man can discover us. *Surely your turning of things upside down*—" Your giving things unexpected turns, or false appearances, to hide your true designs, shall signify no more toward producing the intended effect, than the clay does without the artificer." Dr. Waterland renders the verse, " This perverseness of yours is as if the potter were reputed as clay ; that the work should say of its maker, He made me not ; or the thing framed, say of him that framed it, He hath no understanding." Bishop Lowth reads the passage in the interrogative form, and thereby gives it still more force : " Perverse as ye are ! shall the potter be esteemed as the clay ? Shall the work say of the workman, He hath not made me ?" &c. " We, and all our works are in the hands of God, as clay in the hands of the potter, to give what form and fashion to them he pleases ; and when the finest schemes are laid, he can work things to a quite contrary end."—Lowth.

Verse 17. *Is it not a very little while, &c.*—The following paragraph, to the end of the chapter, relates to the times of the gospel ; the prophet foretelling therein, in figurative language, the rejection of the Jews and the calling of the Gentiles. Lebanon, a barren mountain, a desolate wilderness, here stands for the Gentile world. This was to be turned into a fruitful field—Hebrew, *לְכַרְמֶל*, *into Carmel, or the vineyard of God*, as the word signifies. On the other hand, the fruitful field, what had formerly been the vineyard of God, the Jewish Church, should be esteemed as a forest—See this interpretation confirmed, chap. xxxii. 15 ; and Matt. xv. 7, 8.

Verses 18, 19. *In that day, &c.*—In these two verses

A. M. 3279. shall see out of obscurity, and out of  
B. C. 725. darkness.

19 \* The meek also <sup>9</sup> shall increase *their* joy in the LORD, and <sup>†</sup> the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.

20 For the terrible one is brought to naught, and <sup>‡</sup> the scorner is consumed, and all that <sup>‡</sup> watch for iniquity are cut off:

21 That make a man an offender for a word, and <sup>‡</sup> lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, and turn aside the just <sup>‡</sup> for a thing of naught.

\* Ch. lxi. 1.—<sup>9</sup> Heb. *shall add*.—<sup>†</sup> Jam. ii. 5.—<sup>‡</sup> Ch. xxviii. 14, 22.—<sup>‡</sup> Mic. ii. 1.—<sup>‡</sup> Amos v. 10, 12.—<sup>‡</sup> Prov. xxviii.

we have the first happy consequence of Lebanon's becoming a fruitful field, "the spiritual blessings of light and understanding in divine things, and of joy and consolation to be diffused among the Gentiles, formerly deaf and blind." *The deaf hear the words of the book*—That is, the truths of divine revelation are declared to the heathen, and their ears are opened to hear, and their hearts to understand them. *And the eyes of the blind to see*—They who had been for ages in a state of the greatest spiritual blindness and darkness, shall be enlightened with the clear and satisfactory knowledge of God and his will. *The meek also*—Humble and meek believers of the Gentiles, opposed to these proud and scornful Jews, spoken of in the former part of this, and in the foregoing chapter; *shall increase their joy in the Lord*—Shall greatly rejoice in this, that Jehovah is now their God and portion. *And the poor among men*—The poor in spirit, or the poor of this world, to whom, especially, the gospel has been and is to be preached, or those whom the Jews viewed as a mean and despicable people; *shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel*—Whom before they neither knew nor regarded.

Verses 20, 21. *For, &c.*—Here we have the second event connected with the calling of the Gentiles, the punishment of the enemies of God and his truth. *For the terrible one is brought to naught*—The proud and potent enemies of those meek and poor believers, mentioned in the last verse, such as the unbelieving Jews and their rulers, and the heathen potentates, were in the first age of Christianity. *And the scorner is consumed*—The scornful opposers of God's word and servants. *And all that watch for iniquity*—That early and diligently apply themselves to the practice of wickedness. *That make a man an offender for a word*—That condemn a man, as if he were a great criminal, for a verbal reproof; *and lay a snare for him that reproveth*—For God's faithful prophets and ministers, whose office it is to reprove ungodly men; *in the gate*—Where the people used to assemble, both upon civil and sacred accounts, and where prophets used to deliver their prophecies. *And turn aside*—From his right; *the just*—Hebrew, *the just, or righteous one*, meaning chiefly the prophets and ministers of God, and especially Christ, often called

22 Therefore thus saith the LORD, A. M. 3279  
<sup>1</sup> who redeemed Abraham, concern- B. C. 725.  
ing the house of Jacob, Jacob shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale.

23 But when he seeth his children, <sup>m</sup> the work of my hands, in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel.

24 They <sup>n</sup> also that erred in spirit <sup>10</sup> shall come to understanding, and they that murmured shall learn doctrine.

10.—<sup>1</sup> Jos. xxiv. 3.—<sup>m</sup> Chap. xix. 25; xlv. 11; lx. 21; Eph. ii. 10.—<sup>n</sup> Chap. xxviii. 7.—<sup>10</sup> Heb. *shall know understanding*.

*the Just One*, both in the Old and New Testaments; *for a thing of naught*—Not for any great advantage, but for a trifle, which was a great aggravation of their injustice, or, *with vanity*, as כְּהוֹרֵא signifies, that is, with vain and frivolous pretences, or without any colour of reason or justice. Vitringa applies all this to those who opposed Christ and his apostles.

Verses 22-24. *Therefore thus saith the Lord*—These verses contain the third consequence of turning Lebanon into a fruitful field; "a wonderful increase of the true seed of Abraham and Jacob disseminated through the whole world, in whom those patriarchs, according to the promises given them by God, might be able to recognise their true image." *Who redeemed Abraham*—From manifold dangers, and especially from idolatry, in which his family and ancestors were generally involved; *Jacob shall not now be ashamed*—The posterity of Jacob, who had great cause to be ashamed for their continued infidelity, for their persecutions of God's prophets and righteous servants, and for their rejection of their own Messiah, shall, at last, be brought back unto the God of their fathers, and to their own Messiah. *Neither shall his face now wax pale*—Through fear of their enemies, who from time to time had molested them, for now they shall be delivered from them all, and shall serve God *without fear*, Luke i. 74. *But when he seeth his children*—When the believing seed of Jacob shall see those children whom they have begotten to God, by the gospel, even the Gentiles; *the work of my hands*—*The children, not of the flesh, but of the promise*, whom I, by my almighty grace, have regenerated; *in the midst of him*—Incorporated with the Jews, into one and the same body; *they shall sanctify my name, &c.*—Instead of despising and hating the Gentiles, and envying them the grace of God, they shall praise and glorify God with them, and for them. *They also that erred*—Those Gentiles who had erred from God's truth, being led aside by a lying spirit to idolatry, and all manner of impiety; *shall come to understanding*—Shall come to the knowledge of the truth; *and they that murmured, &c.*—They that would not receive the doctrine of God, but murmured at his faithful teachers who delivered it; *shall learn doctrine*—Shall receive God's truth in the love of it.

## CHAPTER XXX.

The prophecy of this chapter, like that of the preceding, relates to the approaching danger of Jerusalem by Sennacherib's invasion. (1.) Those who, in that distress, trusted to the Egyptians for help, and were in haste to fetch succours from thence, are reproved and threatened, 1-7. (2.) A terrible threatening is denounced against those who slighted the important advice given them by the prophets in the name of God, 8-17. (3.) A gracious promise is made to those who trusted in God, that they should not only be brought out of their troubles, but should see happy days after them, in the enjoyment of both temporal and spiritual blessings, 18-26. (4.) A prophecy of the total ruin of the Assyrian army, which should be an occasion of great joy, and an introduction to those happy times, 27-33.

A. M. 3279. B. C. 725. **W**O to the rebellious children, saith the LORD, <sup>a</sup> that take counsel, but not of me; and that cover with a covering, but not of my Spirit, <sup>b</sup> that they may add sin to sin:

2 <sup>c</sup> That walk to go down into Egypt, and <sup>d</sup> have not asked at my mouth; to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and to trust in the shadow of Egypt!

3 <sup>e</sup> Therefore shall the strength of Pharaoh be your shame, and the trust in the shadow of Egypt your confusion.

<sup>a</sup> Chapter xxix. 15.—<sup>b</sup> Deut. xxix. 19.—<sup>c</sup> Chapter xxxi. 1. <sup>d</sup> Num. xxvii. 21; Jos. ix. 14; 1 Kings xxii. 7; Jer. xxi. 2; xlii. 2, 20.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER XXX.

Verses 1-5. *Wo to the rebellious children*—The Jews, who called themselves God's children, though they were rebellious ones, as was said chap. i. 2. *That take counsel*—That consult together, and resolve what to do; *but not of me*—Not following nor asking my advice, which I encouraged and commanded them to do. *And cover with a covering*—Seek protection; *but not of my Spirit*—Not such as by my Spirit, speaking in my word, I have directed and required them to seek; *that they may add sin to sin*—That unto all their other sins, by which they have deserved and provoked my judgments, they may add distrust of my power and mercy, and put confidence in an arm of flesh. *That walk to go down into Egypt*—That send ambassadors to Egypt for succour, which the Jews were prone to do upon all occasions, and did now upon the invasion of the king of Assyria, chap. xx. 5, 6; *and have not asked at my mouth*—Either by the priests or prophets, as they were commanded to do in weighty cases. *The strength of Pharaoh shall be your shame*—Not only unprofitable, but mischievous to you. *For his princes*—The princes of Judah; *were at Zoan*—Sent thither by the king, or by their brethren. *His ambassadors came to Hanes*—An eminent city of Egypt, called more largely Tahapanes. *They were all ashamed*—Both the messengers and they who sent them; *of a people that could not profit them*—For, though the Egyptians, in conjunction with the Ethiopians, did so far assist the Jews as to give a diversion to Sennacherib's forces; yet, being entirely routed, they became rather a burden than a help to the Jews, and are therefore (chap. xxxvi. 6) compared to a broken reed, which not only fails the hand that leans upon it, but pierces and wounds it.

4 For his princes were at <sup>f</sup> Zoan, A. M. 3279. B. C. 725. and his ambassadors came to Hanes.

5 <sup>g</sup> They were all ashamed of a people that could not profit them, nor be a help nor profit, but a shame, and also a reproach.

6 <sup>h</sup> The burden of the beasts of the south: into the land of trouble and anguish, from whence *come* the young and old lion, <sup>i</sup> the viper and fiery flying serpent, they will carry their riches upon the shoulders of young asses, and their treasures upon the bunches of camels, to a people that shall not profit them.

<sup>e</sup> Chap. xx. 5; Jer. xxxvii. 5, 7.—<sup>f</sup> Chap. xix. 11.—<sup>g</sup> Jer. ii. 36.—<sup>h</sup> Chapter lvii. 9; Hosea viii. 9; xii. 1.—<sup>i</sup> Deut. viii. 15.

Verses 6, 7. *The burden of the beasts of the south*—The burden of riches or treasures, carried upon beasts travelling southward. In these verses the prophet has before his eyes “the ambassadors of the Jews, or, as some think, also of Hosea, and the Ephraimites, (see 2 Kings xvii. 4.) bearing their splendid and sumptuous presents on asses and camels into Egypt; and perceiving that they would reap no advantage from this proud and sumptuous embassy, and that the whole would be fruitless, or rather would raise the indignation of the Assyrians, he cannot refrain, but exhibits, to the life, the whole scheme of this imprudence, folly, and incredulity, as it was immediately presented to his prophetic sight, with its shameful and sorrowful event.” *Into the land of trouble and anguish*—Into Egypt and Ethiopia, for both were joined together in this matter, (see chap. xx.,) whose land seems to be called a *land of trouble, &c.*, prophetically, because they should distress and not help those that applied to and trusted in them, as was said of the Assyrians in the like case, 2 Chron. xxviii. 20. Bishop Lowth, who supposes that the deserts are here meant, which the Israelites passed through when they came out of Egypt, renders it, *by*, or *through a land of distress, &c.* But it seems more likely, as it certainly was more important, that the land to which, than that *through* which, they went, should be spoken of. Besides, the direct road from Judea to Egypt was not through such a country as is here described. *From whence come the young and old lion, &c.*—This may be understood literally, for “Egypt, at this time, joined to Ethiopia, was, of all countries, most fertile of every fierce and wild creature, which the nature of man abhors, both terrestrial and aquatic.” See *Boch. Hieroz.*, p. ii. l. iii. c. 13. The words, however,

A. M. 3279. 7 <sup>k</sup> For the Egyptians shall help in  
B. C. 725. vain and to no purpose: therefore  
have I cried <sup>l</sup> concerning this, <sup>1</sup> Their strength  
is to sit still.

8 ¶ Now go, <sup>m</sup> write it before them in a  
table, and note it in a book, that it may be  
for <sup>2</sup> the time to come for ever and ever:

9 That <sup>n</sup> this is a rebellious people, lying  
children, children that will not hear the law  
of the LORD:

10 <sup>o</sup> Which say to the seers, See not; and  
to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right  
things, <sup>p</sup> speak unto us smooth things, prophecy  
deceits;

11 Get you out of the way, turn aside out of  
the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease  
from before us.

12 Wherefore thus saith the Holy One of  
Israel, Because ye despise this word, and trust in  
<sup>q</sup> oppression and perverseness, and stay thereon:

<sup>k</sup> Jer. xxxvii. 7.—<sup>l</sup> Or, to her.—<sup>m</sup> Verse 15; Chap. vii. 4.  
<sup>n</sup> Hab. ii. 2.—<sup>o</sup> Heb. the latter day.—<sup>p</sup> Deut. xxxii. 20; Chap.  
i. 4; Verse 1.—<sup>q</sup> Jer. xi. 21; Amos ii. 12; vii. 13; Mic. ii. 6.  
P 1 Kings xxii. 13; Mic. ii. 11.

may have a higher and mystical meaning, and by these wild and savage creatures may be designed the craft and cruelty of the Egyptians and Ethiopians, and the danger and injury the Jews, or Israelites, would bring upon themselves by a confederacy with them. *Therefore have I cried concerning this*—This counsel, or practice; *their strength is to sit still*—It is safer and better for them to stay quietly at home, seeking to God for help, than to go or send to Egypt for it.

Verses 8-11. *Now go, write it before them*—Write this prophecy and warning, which I have now delivered, in their presence; *in a table, and in a book*—So it was to be written twice over, once in a table, to be hung up in some public place, that all present might read it; and again in a book, that it might be kept for the use of posterity. *That it may be for the time to come*—As a witness for me and against them, that I have given them fair warning, and that they have wilfully run upon their own ruin. *That they are lying children*—Who profess one thing, and practise another; *that will not hear the law of the Lord*—The commands of God, either contained in the Scriptures, or delivered by the mouth of the prophets, whereby these practices were expressly forbidden them. *Which say to the seers, See not, &c.*—This they said in effect, in that they were not willing to know and do the will of God. *They loved darkness rather than light. Prophecy not unto us right things*—The prophets told them of their faults, and warned them of their misery and danger, but they could not bear it. They wanted *smooth things* to be spoken to them, things that would give them no pain, but please their corrupt

13 Therefore this iniquity shall be to  
you <sup>a</sup> as a breach ready to fall, swell-  
ing out in a high wall, whose breaking <sup>r</sup> cometh  
suddenly at an instant.

14 And <sup>s</sup> he shall break it as the breaking  
of <sup>t</sup> the potter's vessel that is broken in pieces;  
he shall not spare: so that there shall not be  
found in the bursting of it a sherd to take fire  
from the hearth, or to take water *withal* out of  
the pit.

15 For thus saith the Lord God, the Holy  
One of Israel; <sup>u</sup> In returning and rest shall ye  
be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall  
be your strength: <sup>v</sup> and ye would not.

16 But ye said, No; for we will flee upon  
horses; therefore shall ye flee: and, We will  
ride upon the swift; therefore shall they that  
pursue you be swift.

17 <sup>w</sup> One thousand shall flee at the rebuke of  
one; at the rebuke of five shall ye flee: till ye

<sup>a</sup> Or, fraud.—<sup>b</sup> Psa. lxii. 3.—<sup>c</sup> Chap. xxix. 5.—<sup>d</sup> Psa. ii. 9;  
Jer. xix. 11.—<sup>e</sup> Heb. the bottle of potters.—<sup>f</sup> Verse 7; Chap.  
vii. 4.—<sup>g</sup> Matt. xxiii. 37.—<sup>h</sup> Rev. xxvi. 8; Deut. xxviii. 25;  
xxxii. 30; Jos. xxiii. 10.

minds, and flatter them in their sins. *Get ye out of the way*—In which you now walk, out of your present course of preaching unpleasing and frightful things; or, out of our way. For the prophets stood in their way, like the angel in Balaam's road, with the sword of God's wrath drawn in their hands, so that these sinners could not proceed on in their sinful practices without terror; and this they took heinously. *Cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us*—Do not trouble us with harsh and repeated messages from God, as you use to do.

Verses 12-14. *Because ye despise this word, and trust in oppression*—In the wealth which you have gotten by oppression, whereby you now think to procure Egyptian succours; *and perverseness*—In your perverse and rebellious course of sending to Egypt for help. *This iniquity shall be to you as a breach, &c.*—Like a wall, which is high, and seems to be strong, but, swelling out in some parts, upon the least accident falleth down suddenly to the ground. Such shall be the issue of your high and towering confidence in Egypt. *And he shall break it*—Namely, God, or the enemy whom God will send against you.

Verses 15-17. *In returning*—From your present purpose of sending to Egypt; or, as the LXX., the Syriac, and Arabic understand it, in returning to God; *shall ye be saved*—Preserved from the power of your enemies. *In quietness and confidence*—In a calm and quiet submission to the divine will, and a confidence placed on his mercy, power, and faithfulness; *shall be your strength*—Your support under your troubles, and your ability to withstand your invaders. *But ye said, No; for we will flee upon*

A. M. 3279. be left as <sup>5</sup> a beacon upon the top of a  
B. C. 725. mountain, and as an ensign on a hill.

18 ¶ And therefore will the LORD wait, that he may be gracious unto you, and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you: for the LORD is a God of judgment: <sup>7</sup> *blessed are* all they that wait for him.

19 For the people <sup>2</sup> shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem: thou shalt weep no more: he will be

<sup>a</sup> Or, a tree bereft of branches, or, boughs, or, a mast.—Psa. ii. 12; xxxiv. 8; Prov. xvi. 20; Jer. xvii. 7.

*horses; on the swift*—We will have swift horses from Egypt, that, in case of danger, we may escape from our enemies. It is probable many of the richer sort intended to flee, and perhaps did actually flee into Egypt, having sent their treasures thither before them. *Therefore shall ye flee*—Your sin shall be your punishment: you will flee, and you shall flee. *One thousand at the rebuke of one*—You shall be so dispirited and enervated by your fears, that, instead of one of you *chasing a thousand*, as God promised you should do, if you were obedient, a thousand of you shall be chased by one of your enemies. *At the rebuke, or assault, of five*—Of a comparatively small number; *shall ye flee*—All of you, however numerous; *till ye be left, &c.*—Till ye be generally destroyed, and but a few of you left. “The meaning of the whole period is, that if the Jews, in the uncertain state of their affairs, would abstain from all endeavours to defend themselves by foreign aid, and would commit themselves to the care and providence of God, with settled minds, in faith and hope, they should then be safe, and avoid the calamities which threatened them.” But this they would not do; they were determined to seek for preservation or deliverance from the yoke of the Assyrians in the help of the Egyptians, and therefore it is foretold they should meet with the calamities here mentioned; and “should be seized with such a panic fear that, when they came to the point, they should turn their backs on their enemies, and flee with that swiftness wherewith they had thought to make their enemies flee, insomuch that very few of them should escape the common destruction.”

Verse 18. *And therefore*—Because of your great misery: for the misery of God’s people is frequently mentioned in Scripture as a motive to God’s mercy: or, *notwithstanding*, as לכן may be rendered; *will the Lord wait*—Patiently expect your repentance, and stop the course of his proceedings against you, that you may have an opportunity of making your peace with him, and of preventing your utter ruin. *He will be exalted*—He will lift up himself, and exert his power gloriously in your behalf; *that he may have mercy upon you*—That he may show his mercy in your deliverance. *For the Lord is a God of judgment*—That is, he is wise and just in all the dispensations of his providence, acting toward his people with equity and moderation. *Blessed are all they that wait for him*—In the way of their duty,

very gracious unto thee at the voice of <sup>A. M. 3279.</sup>  
thy cry; when he shall hear it, he will <sup>B. C. 725.</sup>  
answer thee.

20 And *though* the LORD give you <sup>a</sup> the bread of adversity, and the water of <sup>6</sup> affliction, yet shall not <sup>b</sup> thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers:

21 And thine ears shall hear a word behind

<sup>a</sup> Chap. lxxv. 9.—<sup>b</sup> 1 Kings xxii. 27; Psa. cxxvii. 2.—<sup>c</sup> Or, oppression.—<sup>d</sup> Psa. lxxiv. 9; Amos viii. 11.

with faith and patience; that will not take any indirect course to extricate themselves out of their straits, but patiently expect God to appear for them in his own way and time: which is a much surer way to safety and happiness than having recourse to mere human aids, and placing confidence in the arm of flesh.

Verse 19. *For, &c.*—“The consolatory part of this discourse begins here, which is connected with the preceding part by the last clause of the former verse, *Blessed, &c.* Here follows, therefore, a series of excellent blessings, to be conferred by God after these judgments. And the prophet hath so ordered his style in setting them forth, that when he seems to promise only temporal blessings to the church, he would be understood mystically under these figurative emblems.”—Vitringa. *The people shall dwell in Zion, &c.*—This is the first of these blessings, the restoration of their state upon their repentance and earnest prayers: as if he had said, Although the time is coming when the people shall be banished from Jerusalem and carried into captivity; yet after a set time they shall return and have a fixed and comfortable abode in Jerusalem, the seat of their religion, and metropolis of their republic. This was in part fulfilled upon their return from Babylon, “when the tears which they had shed in their banishment were wiped away, and God heard the prayers and vows of his people, after the time of his indignation was expired.” But it was more fully accomplished in the times of the gospel, when many of them were, and the whole body of them shall be, brought into Christ’s church, often called Zion and Jerusalem.

Verses 20, 21. *And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity*—Although in that time and state of the church you will be subject to many outward straits and afflictions, which was the case with the Jews after their restoration from Babylon, and which was also the lot of the first converts to Christianity; *yet shall not thy teachers be removed, &c.*—As they have been in former times, both in Israel and Judah, when the godly prophets, and other instructors of the people, were but few, and when they were persecuted and banished by their wicked rulers. The Jews, after their return from Babylon, were blessed with many excellent instructors, as appears from the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, at the head of which we must place these two eminent

A. M. 3279. B. C. 725. thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.

22 <sup>d</sup> Ye shall defile also the covering of <sup>7</sup> thy graven images of silver, and the ornament of thy molten images of gold: thou shalt <sup>8</sup> cast them away as a menstruous cloth; <sup>9</sup> thou shalt say unto it, Get thee hence.

23 <sup>f</sup> Then shall he give the rain of thy seed, that thou shalt sow the ground withal; and

<sup>c</sup> 1 John i. 7.—<sup>d</sup> 2 Chron. xxxi. 1; Chapter ii. 20; xxxi. 7. <sup>e</sup> Heb. the graven images of thy silver.—<sup>f</sup> Heb. scatter.—<sup>g</sup> Hos.

servants of God. In the times of the New Testament, however, God provided still better for his church, sending his Son, the great teacher of his people, into the world; and pouring forth the gifts and graces of the Spirit in abundance, increasing the number of faithful ministers, and promising a continued succession of them to the end of the world. This is the second great benefit predicted by the prophet to follow these judgments. *Thine eyes shall see thy teachers*—They shall be present in your assemblies, instructing, exhorting, warning, and encouraging you from time to time. The original word, כוֹרֵי, here used, means *ordinary teachers*, and not those of an extraordinary kind, such as the prophets or seers were. *And thine ears shall hear a word, &c.*—As often as need shall require, thou shalt hear the voice of God's word and Spirit directing thee in thy course: *behind thee*—A metaphor, borrowed either from shepherds, who used to follow their sheep, and to recall them when they went out of the way; or from travellers, who, if they go out of the right way, are oftentimes admonished of their error, and recalled by some other passenger or person behind them.

Verse 22. *Ye shall also*—To show your contempt of it; *defile the covering of thy graven images*—The leaves or plates, wherewith their wooden images were frequently covered: *and the ornament of thy molten images*—Or, the coat, or covering; Hebrew, אֶפְרָה, the ephod, as the word is rendered, Exod. xxviii. 8; and xxxix. 5; which was a costly and glorious robe. The images also were of gold: for the idolaters spared no cost in the making and adorning of their idols. *Thou shalt cast them away, &c.*—Thou shalt so deeply abhor idolatry that thou shalt cast away, with indignation, all the monuments and instruments thereof. This prophecy was fulfilled in some measure even before the Assyrian invasion, as we learn from 2 Chron. xxxi. 1; Hezekiah inciting the people to destroy idolatry out of the land. Probably it was fulfilled still more upon the deliverance of Jerusalem from Sennacherib's army, which, doubtless, would convince thousands of individuals of the almighty power of Jehovah, of the impotence of idols, and the sin and folly of worshipping them. But it was verified in the whole body of the Jewish nation, at their return from their captivity in Babylon, for they abhorred idols ever after. Add to this,

bread of the increase of the earth, and it shall be fat and plenteous: in that day shall thy cattle feed in large pastures.

24 The oxen likewise and the young asses that ear the ground shall eat <sup>9</sup> clean <sup>10</sup> provender, which hath been winnowed with the shovel and with the fan.

25 And there shall be <sup>8</sup> upon every high mountain, and upon every <sup>11</sup> high hill, rivers and streams of waters in the day of the

xiv. 8.—<sup>f</sup> Matt. vi. 33; 1 Tim. iv. 8.—<sup>g</sup> Or, savoury.—<sup>h</sup> Heb. leavened.—<sup>i</sup> Chap. ii. 14, 15; xlv. 3.—<sup>j</sup> Heb. lifted up.

it is accomplished daily in the conversion of souls, by the power of divine grace, from spiritual idolatry, to the fear and love of God. This deliverance from the love and practice of idolatry is the third blessing here represented as being conferred on the people, after the forementioned judgments. In the two following verses we have a fourth.

Verses 23, 24. *Then shall he give thee the rain of thy seed*—Or rather, to, or for thy seed, namely, when thou hast newly sown it, which was called the former rain; or, such as thy seed requires, which may include both the former and the latter rain. Their sins, the cause of all God's judgments, being removed by their sincere repentance and God's gracious pardon, God showers down his blessings upon them. "When he gives them their teachers," says Henry, "and they give him their hearts, so that they begin to seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness, then all other things are added unto them." *And bread of the increase of the earth*—Which shall be the fruit of thy own land and labour. *And it shall be fat and plenteous*—Excellent for quality, which is called fat, Deut. xxxii. 14, and abundant for quantity. This promise, by the special blessing of God, was remarkably fulfilled after the defeat of Sennacherib, (chap. xxxvii. 30.) God thus repairing the losses they sustained by that devastation. *The oxen likewise, &c., shall eat clean provender*—There shall be such plenty of corn that the very beasts, instead of straw, shall eat corn; and that not in the ear, or with the straw, but the pure grain. Vitringa, with some other commentators, thinks it appears plainly, from the next two verses, that the prophet is to be understood in this passage as speaking, not so much literally as figuratively, and that the words contain a splendid promise of pure and abundant spiritual provision, made by the Lord for his people, in the ministry of the word, the spiritual sowing; the effusions of his Spirit, the rain of the seed; and in the due administration of his various ordinances, the large pastures in which his flock feeds.

Verse 25. *On every high mountain, and every high hill*—Which are commonly dry and barren; *shall be rivers and streams of water*—Fertilizing and refreshing blessings, showered down by God upon his church and people. This verse certainly cannot be understood literally, and the mystical meaning, according to Vitringa and some others, is,

A. M. 3279. great slaughter, when the towers  
B. C. 725. fall:

26 Moreover <sup>h</sup> the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be seven-fold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the LORD bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound.

27 ¶ Behold, the name of the LORD cometh

<sup>h</sup> Chap. lx. 19, 20.—<sup>12</sup> Or, and the grievousness of flame.  
<sup>13</sup> Heb. heaviness.

“that in all the more celebrated places, whether of kingdoms or cities, there should be synagogues, public schools, or oratories, in which the word of God, and the doctrine of pure religion, should be copiously taught, and the waters of sound instruction poured out.” so that the lovers of true wisdom, piety, and virtue, might there quench their thirst. The time in which these benefits should be conferred upon the church is denoted by this character, namely, *in the day of the great slaughter, when the towers shall fall*—That is, when God should take severe vengeance upon the enemies of his people. Perhaps the destruction of Jerusalem and of the temple, with the subversion of the Jewish state, and the slaughter of immense multitudes of Jews, events connected with the calling of the Gentiles, and the extensive propagation of the gospel, might be first in the prophet’s view. The words may further refer to the overthrow of the pagan, persecuting Roman empire, and the great slaughter that preceded or accompanied it. But, undoubtedly, the words ultimately refer to the destruction of all the antichristian powers, the subversion of the fortresses and towers of Satan’s kingdom, making way for the universal diffusion of divine truth and spread of true religion. “This shall be remarkably fulfilled,” says Lowth, “at the time when there shall be a terrible destruction of God’s enemies, (Rev. xiv. 20, and xix. 21,) and when the great ones of the earth shall fall, denoted here by high towers, or the fortifications of mystical Babylon.”

Verse 26. *The light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun*—For constancy and brightness, which, as also the following clause, is to be understood metaphorically, of that glorious and happy state of the church which should take place in future times. *And the light of the sun seven-fold, as the light of seven days*—As if the light of seven days were combined together in one. Its light shall then be transcendently more bright and glorious than ever it was before. Which magnificent expressions seem evidently to be too high for the deliverance of the Jews, either from Sennacherib or out of Babylon; and do much better agree to the times of the gospel, in which the light is far more clear, and the grace of God conferred on his people much more abundant, than ever it was in former times. *In the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people, &c.*—When God shall effectually cure the wounds

from far, burning *with his anger*, A. M. 3279.  
<sup>12</sup> and the burden *thereof is* <sup>13</sup> heavy: B. C. 725.

his lips are full of indignation, and his tongue as a devouring fire:

28 And <sup>1</sup> his breath, as an overflowing stream, <sup>h</sup> shall reach to the midst of the neck, to sift the nations with the sieve of vanity: and *there shall be* <sup>1</sup> a bridle in the jaws of the people, causing *them* to err.

<sup>1</sup> Chapter xi. 4; 2 Thessalonians ii. 8.—<sup>h</sup> Chapter viii. 8.  
<sup>1</sup> Chapter xxxvii. 29.

and breaches of his people, first making up the breach between himself and them, then making Israel and Judah to be one, and making Jews and Gentiles to be one fold under one shepherd.

Verses 27, 28. *Behold, &c.*—Here begins the last part of the discourse contained in this chapter, in which the prophet gives an earnest of those greater blessings promised, for times to come, by assuring his people of the approaching destruction of the Assyrian forces. “It is an exquisitely fine and sublime passage, and closely connected with the argument and scope of the whole discourse, in that it teaches that the Jews and Israelites had no need to flee to Egypt for help against the Assyrians, to the neglect of their duty toward God, since God was perfectly sufficient to defend them, and had determined to destroy the Assyrian.”—Vitrina. *The name of the Lord* is here put for the Lord himself, and he is said to *come from far*, either as coming unexpectedly, or as having for a long time appeared to withdraw his presence, and withhold his help from his people; *burning with anger*—Determined to take signal vengeance on his enemies. *And the burden thereof is heavy*—The punishment which he will inflict will prove very grievous and intolerable. *His lips are full of indignation*—He hath pronounced a severe sentence against them, and will give command for the execution of it. *And his breath*—His anger, or rather, the effects thereof; (the expression is borrowed from men’s discovering their anger by strong and vehement breathing; see on Job iv. 9;) *as an overflowing stream*—Coming from him as vehemently as a mighty torrent of waters; *shall reach to the midst of the neck*—Shall bring the Assyrian into a most dangerous condition, as a man, who is in waters which reach to his neck, is in great danger of being drowned; see on chap. viii. 8. *To sift the nations with the sieve of vanity*—To shake and scatter, as it were, with a sieve, the Assyrian army, made up of the people of different nations. “Vanity,” says Lowth, “sometimes signifies destruction: so chap. lvii. 13. *Vanity shall take them*, that is, they shall be destroyed. And here *the sieve of vanity* is such a one as doth not separate the chaff in order to save the corn, but makes an entire riddance, as when chaff is scattered before the wind.” Bishop Lowth translates the clause, *To toss the nations with the van of perdition*, judging that נפח rather signifies a *van* than a sieve, and observing from Kimchi, “The

A. M. 3279. 29 Ye shall have a song, as in the  
B. C. 725. night <sup>m</sup> when a holy solemnity is kept ;  
and gladness of heart, as when one goeth with  
a pipe to come into the <sup>a</sup> mountain of the LORD,  
to the <sup>14</sup> Mighty One of Israel.

30 ° And the LORD shall cause <sup>15</sup> his glorious  
voice to be heard, and shall show the lighting  
down of his arm, with the indignation of his  
anger, and *with* the flame of a devouring fire,  
*with* scattering, and tempest, <sup>p</sup> and hail-stones.

31 For <sup>q</sup> through the voice of the LORD shall

<sup>m</sup> Psa. xlii. 4.—<sup>a</sup> Ch. ii. 3.—<sup>14</sup> Heb. *Rock*, Deut. xxxii. 40.  
<sup>o</sup> Chap. xxix. 6.—<sup>15</sup> Heb. *the glory of his voice*.—<sup>p</sup> Chap.  
xxviii. 2 ; xxxii. 19.—<sup>q</sup> Chap. xxxvii. 36.—<sup>r</sup> Chap. x. 5, 24.

use of the van 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."

Verses 29-31. *Ye shall have a song, &c.*—You shall have occasion of great joy, and of singing songs of praise for your stupendous deliverance from that formidable enemy ; *as in the night, &c.*—He mentions the night, either because the Jewish feasts began in the evening, and were celebrated with great joy during a part of the night, as well as on the following day ; or because he has a particular respect to the solemnity of the passover, in which they spent some considerable part of the night in rejoicing, and singing sacred songs before the Lord. *As when one goeth, &c.*—Like the joy of one that is going up to the solemn feasts with music. *The Lord shall cause his glorious voice to be heard*—His thunder, metaphorically taken for a terrible judgment. "This destruction shall be from the immediate hand of God, in which he shall as evidently appear as if he had discomfited the army by a tempest of thunder, and lightning, and hail-stones, as he formerly destroyed the Canaanites and Philistines."—*Lowth. And show the lighting down of his arm*—Upon the Assyrian, whom he will smite with a deadly blow in the face of the world ; *with the indignation of his anger*—With great wrath ; which is signified by heaping so many words of the same signification together. *The Assyrian, who smote with a rod*—Who was the rod wherewith God smote his people and other nations : he who used to smite others shall now be smitten himself.

Verse 32. *Where the grounded staff shall pass*—Instead of כִּטָּה מוֹכֵרָה, *the grounded, or founded staff*, of which, he says, no one yet has been able to make any tolerable sense. Bishop Lowth, on the authority of two MSS., (one of them ancient,) reads כִּטָּה מוֹכֵרָה, *the staff of correction*, which Le Clerc also supposes to be the true reading. The bishop,

the Assyrian be beaten down, <sup>r</sup> which A. M. 3279.  
smote with a rod. B. C. 725.

32 And <sup>16</sup> in every place where the grounded  
staff shall pass, which the LORD shall <sup>17</sup> lay  
upon him, *it* shall be with tabrets and harps :  
and in battles of <sup>a</sup> shaking will he fight <sup>18</sup> with it.

33 <sup>1</sup> For Tophet is ordained <sup>19</sup> of old : yea, for  
the king it is prepared ; he hath made *it* deep  
and large : the pile thereof is fire and much  
wood ; the breath of the LORD, like a stream  
of brimstone, doth kindle it.

<sup>16</sup> Heb. *every passing of the rod founded*.—<sup>17</sup> Heb. *cause to rest upon him*.—<sup>18</sup> Chap. xi. 15 ; xix. 16.—<sup>19</sup> Or, *against them*.  
<sup>1</sup> Jer. vii. 31 ; xix. 6, &c.—<sup>19</sup> Heb. *from yesterday*.

therefore, translates the clause thus : *And it shall be, that wherever shall pass the rod of correction, which Jehovah shall lay heavily upon him, it shall be accompanied with tabrets and harps ;* that is, as the bishop explains it, "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." *And in battles of shaking, &c.*—Or, as it may be better rendered, in fierce or tremendous battles *shall he*, namely, the Lord, *fight against them*, that is, against the Assyrians.

Verse 33. *For Tophet is ordained of old*—"Tophet is a valley very near to Jerusalem, to the south-east, called also *the valley of Hinnom*, or *Gehenna* ; where the Canaanites, and afterward the Israelites, sacrificed their children, by making them pass through the fire ; that is, by burning them in the fire, to Moloch." It is supposed to have been called *Tophet*, from the drums, timbrels, or tabrets, which sounded there, to drown the cries of the children thus inhumanly murdered : see notes on Lev. xviii. 21 ; 2 Kings xxiii. 10 ; and Josh. xv. 8. Hence the word "is used for a place of punishment by fire, and by our Saviour in the gospel for hell-fire, as the Jews themselves had applied it." As the place had been thus polluted by idolatry, Josiah, to render it as despicable and abominable as possible, ordered the filth of the city and dead carcasses to be thrown there, and made it a common burying-place. There also fires were kept continually burning, as the Jews say, to consume dead bodies, bones, and such sordid things. Vitringa justly observes, "that Tophet must be understood here, not in a literal, but in a figurative sense, for the *place of punishment* to be inflicted upon the Assyrians, by the burning indignation of God ; in the same manner as *gehenna* denotes the place of punishment of the reprobate : that the *fire* and *much wood* denote the *matter of the punishment* destined for the king of Assyria and his army, as well with respect to its nature and effect, as its cause : see Rev. xix. 20. *The making the valley deep and large*, signifies the same as the *pile* constructed of *much wood* ; namely, the greatness of the destruction to be spread through the extensive army of the Assyrian ; and indeed it was necessary this *valley*

and this pile should be large, to contain one hundred and eighty-five thousand men. The meaning of the phrase, *ordained of old*, is, that God had absolutely fixed and determined this event. It was *prepared for the king*; whereby the prophet shows, that his army first, and Sennacherib himself afterward, should become obnoxious to the divine judgment. And the last phrase, *the breath of the Lord, &c.*, alludes to the destroying angel, the executors of his

judgment: see chap. x. 17. This is the literal interpretation of the words, wherein the prophet represents the Assyrian destruction as the type of that of all the enemies and persecutors of the church; and further, these destructions as a figure of the infernal fire, wherein the unbelieving and cruel persecutors of the church shall be tormented for ever, and which is said to be *prepared for the devil and his angels*," Matt. xxv. 41.

CHAPTER XXXI.

In this chapter the same subject is continued which was treated of in the preceding. (1.) A *wo* is pronounced on those that trusted to the Egyptians, and not to God, for succour, when the Assyrian army invaded them, 1-3. (2.) An assurance is given them, that God would take care of Jerusalem in that time of danger and distress, 4, 5. (3.) They are called to repentance and reformation, 6, 7. (4.) The prophet foretels the fall of the Assyrian army, 8, 9.

A. M. 3279. **WO** to them <sup>a</sup> that go down to  
B. C. 725. Egypt for help; and <sup>b</sup> stay on  
horses, and trust in chariots, because *they are*  
many; and in horsemen, because they are  
very strong; but they look not unto the Holy  
One of Israel, <sup>c</sup> neither seek the LORD!

2 Yet he also *is* wise, and will bring evil,  
and <sup>d</sup> will not <sup>1</sup> call back his words: but will  
arise against the house of the evil-doers, and  
against the help of them that work iniquity.

3 Now the Egyptians *are* <sup>e</sup> men, and not  
God; and their horses flesh, and not spirit.  
When the LORD shall stretch out his hand,

<sup>a</sup> Chap. xxx. 2; xxxvi. 6; Ezek. xvii. 15.—<sup>b</sup> Psa. xx. 7; Chap. xxxvi. 9.—<sup>c</sup> Dan. ix. 13; Hos. vii. 7.—<sup>d</sup> Num. xxiii. 19.—<sup>e</sup> Heb. remove.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XXXI.

Verses 1-3. *Wo to them that go down to Egypt, &c.*—As the Jews did, contrary to God's command, Deut. xvii. 16. *And stay on horses*—For Egypt had many and choice horses. *But they look not unto the Lord*—Their confidence in the creature was accompanied with, and produced, a distrust of God, and a neglect of seeking to him by prayer for his help. *Yet he also is wise, &c.*—You think you are wise, in engaging the Egyptians; but God is not inferior to them in wisdom or strength, but much superior, and therefore you have done foolishly in preferring them before him, who will execute his judgments upon you, notwithstanding all the Egyptians can do. *And will not call back his words*—His threatenings denounced against you; *but will arise against the evil-doers*—Against this wicked and rebellious people; *and against the help*—That is, the helpers, as it is explained in the next verse; *of them that work iniquity*—That act in direct opposition to the express command of God. *The Egyptians are men, and not God*—And therefore are utterly unable to defend you, either without or against God's will; *and their horses, flesh*—Weak and frail, and not

both he that helpeth shall fall, and he <sup>A. M. 3279.</sup>  
that is holpen shall fall down, and <sup>B. C. 725.</sup>  
they all shall fail together.

4 For thus hath the LORD spoken unto me,  
<sup>f</sup> Like as the lion and the young lion roaring  
on his prey, when a multitude of shepherds is  
called forth against him, *he* will not be afraid  
of their voice, nor abase himself for the <sup>2</sup> noise  
of them: <sup>g</sup> so shall the LORD of hosts come  
down to fight for mount Zion, and for the hill  
thereof.

5 <sup>h</sup> As birds flying, so will the LORD of hosts  
defend Jerusalem; <sup>i</sup> defending also he will

<sup>e</sup> Psa. cxlvi. 3, 5.—<sup>f</sup> Hos. xi. 10; Amos iii. 8.—<sup>g</sup> Or, multitude.—<sup>h</sup> Chap. xlii. 13.—<sup>i</sup> Deut. xxxii. 11; Psa. xci. 4. <sup>j</sup> Psa. xxxvii. 40.

*spirit*—Not like spiritual substances, such as the angels, who are immortal, and invisible to men. *When the Lord shall stretch out his hand*—Shall exert his power to oppose or punish them, *both he that helpeth and he that is holpen shall fall, &c., together*—And their alliance shall prove their joint ruin.

Verses 4, 5. *For, or but or, nevertheless, thus hath the Lord spoken*—That is, although you have done evil in sending to Egypt for help, and they will not be able to help you, yet the Lord will of his own grace, and for the glory of his own name, give you that help and deliverance which you do not deserve, and had no reason to expect from him. *Like as the lion roaring on his prey*—When he is ready to seize upon and devour it; *he will not be afraid, nor abase himself*—So as to be in the least moved, either to quit his prey, or to make any more haste than otherwise he would do in seizing it. *So shall the Lord of hosts fight for mount Zion*—With such an unshaken and undaunted resolution, not to be moved by any opposition: and he will as easily and irresistibly destroy the Assyrian army, as a lion tears a lamb in pieces. *As birds flying, &c.*—Which come

A. M. 3279. deliver it ; and passing over he will  
B. C. 725. preserve it.

6 ¶ Turn ye unto *him* from whom the children of Israel have <sup>1</sup> deeply revolted.

7 For in that day every man shall <sup>1</sup> cast away his idols of silver, and <sup>3</sup> his idols of gold, which your own hands have made unto you for <sup>2</sup> a sin.

8 ¶ Then shall the Assyrian <sup>2</sup> fall with the

<sup>1</sup> Hos. ix. 9.—<sup>1</sup> Chap. ii. 20 ; xxx. 22.—<sup>3</sup> Heb. *the idols of his gold*.—<sup>1</sup> 1 Kings xii. 30.—<sup>2</sup> 2 Kings xix. 35 ; Chapter xxxvii. 36.

from above, and so cannot be kept off ; which fly swiftly, and engage themselves readily and resolutely, when they perceive their young ones are in danger. Bishop Lowth renders the clause, *As the mother birds hovering over their young ; so shall Jehovah, God of hosts, protect Jerusalem*—With such care and compassion, such swiftness and resolution. *Defending also he will deliver it*—That is, he will so defend it as to secure the continuance of its safety, and not suffer it to fall into the enemy's hand. *And passing over he will preserve it*—The word פָּסַח, here rendered *passing over*, is the word constantly used of the destroying angel's passing over the houses of the Israelites, when he slew all the firstborn of the Egyptians, (Exod. xii.,) to which history the prophet seems here to refer. The destroying angel was to pass over Jerusalem, and leave it untouched, although it deserved to be destroyed, and was only to smite the Assyrian army. The besiegers were to be slain by the pestilence, but none of the besieged were to take the infection.

Verses 6, 7. *Turn ye unto him, &c.*—Let the consideration of this gracious promise engage you to repent of all your sins, and among the rest, of your carnal policies in seeking and trusting to Egypt for help, and sincerely to return to God. *From whom the children of Israel*—From whom not only the Israelites, strictly so called, those of the ten tribes, but from whom you of the two tribes, you Jews, who are also the children of Israel, and therefore are under very great obligations to God, *have deeply revolted*—In your hearts and lives, your affections being alienated from him, and set upon your sins and idols, and your actions a scene of disobedience to his laws. *For in that day*—When the Assyrian shall invade your land ; *every man shall cast away*

sword, not of a mighty man ; and A. M. 3279.  
the sword, not of a mean man, B. C. 725.  
shall devour him : but he shall flee <sup>4</sup> from the sword, and his young men shall be <sup>5</sup> discomfited.<sup>6</sup>

9 And <sup>o</sup> he <sup>7</sup> shall pass over to <sup>8</sup> his strong hold for fear, and his princes shall be afraid of the ensign, saith the LORD, whose fire is in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem.

<sup>4</sup> Or, *for fear of the sword*.—<sup>5</sup> Or, *tributary*.—<sup>6</sup> Heb. *for melting, or, tribute*.—<sup>o</sup> Chap. xxxvii. 37.—<sup>7</sup> Heb. *his rock shall pass away for fear*.—<sup>8</sup> Or, *his strength*.

*his idols*—You shall find the vanity of those idols to which you have trusted ; and therefore shall cast them away with indignation, and be forced to seek to Jehovah for help ; *which your hands have made unto you for sin*—That is, as instruments of your sin of idolatry, and of many other sins connected therewith.

Verses 8, 9. *Then shall the Assyrian, &c.*—When you have cast away your idols, and seriously sought unto God for help ; both which things were performed by Hezekiah ; *fall by the sword, not of a mighty man, &c.*—Not of any man, mean or mighty, but of an angel. *But he shall flee from the sword*—From, or for fear of, that plague, which so strangely and suddenly destroyed his army. *And his young men*—Hebrew, בְּחֹרֵי, *his choice young men*, his guards, and valiant commanders, and soldiers, *shall be discomfited*—Hebrew, לִכְס יִהְיֶה, *shall be for melting, or shall melt away* ; a great part of them being destroyed by the angel, and the hearts of the rest melting for fear. *And he shall pass to his strong hold*—Sennacherib shall flee away with all speed from Jerusalem, to his strong city of Nineveh. Or, as it is in the margin, which see. *And his princes shall be afraid of the ensign*—Of the Lord's ensign, which he hath lifted up against them. Or, as וַחֲזוּ כִנֹּכַח, may be properly rendered, *shall be struck with consternation at his flight*. *Saith the Lord, whose fire is in Zion*—That is, either, 1st, whose fire is continually burning upon the altar in Zion ; a sign that his presence and residence are there. Or, rather, 2d, who is, and will appear to be, in Zion like a fire, to defend his people, and to consume their enemies. Thus God promises that he would be, unto Jerusalem, *a wall of fire round about*, Zech. ii. 5. See also Zech. xii. 6.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

This chapter contains a prophecy of the reign of Hezekiah, typifying the reign of Christ in the gospel church. Here is predicted, (1.) The reformation with which he should begin his reign, and the happy influence it should have on the people, who had been wretchedly corrupted and debauched in the reign of his predecessor, 1-8. (2.) The great calamities which should come upon the Jews by the Assyrians and Chaldeans, but especially by the Romans and others in the times of the gospel, 9-14. (3.) The purity, peace, and plenty of the latter part of Hezekiah's reign, emblematical of the holiness, peace, and glory of the gospel church in the apostolic and millennial periods, 15-20.

A. M. 3279.  
B. C. 725.

**BEHOLD,** <sup>a</sup> a King shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment.

2 And a man shall be as a hiding-place from the wind, and <sup>b</sup> a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a <sup>1</sup> great rock in a weary land.

3 And <sup>c</sup> the eyes of them that see shall not be dim, and the ears of them that hear shall hearken.

4 The heart also of the <sup>2</sup> rash shall understand knowledge, and the tongue of the stammerers shall be ready to speak <sup>3</sup> plainly.

<sup>a</sup> Psalm xlv. 1, &c.; Jer. xxiii. 5; Hos. iii. 5; Zech. ix. 9.  
<sup>b</sup> Chap. iv. 6; xxv. 4.—<sup>1</sup> Heb. heavy.—<sup>c</sup> Chapter xxix. 18;

## NOTES ON CHAPTER XXXII.

Verse 1. *Behold, a king*—Hezekiah, a type of Christ, and Christ typified by him, *shall reign in righteousness*—Therefore Hezekiah was not king when this prophecy was delivered. And whereas some say that he speaks of the good government of Hezekiah, after the destruction of Sennacherib, it is easy to observe, that his government was as good before that time as afterward; and that in the very beginning of his reign he ruled with righteousness and the fear of God. *And princes*—The ministers of state, judges, and magistrates under the king, *shall rule in judgment*—Shall execute their offices with integrity and faithfulness. “Ahaz and his princes had ruled very wickedly, but a king was about to mount the throne who would reign in righteousness, employ upright magistrates, and protect the people, both from internal oppression, by his equitable administration, and from external invaders, by his faith and prayers.”—Scott. But although these expressions are, in some sort, applicable to Hezekiah and his good reign, they are much more true of Christ and his reign, as are also several other expressions here used, especially those in the third and fourth verses, which evidently relate to happier times than Hezekiah lived to see. And therefore we may justly say, “That the reformation which Hezekiah made was but a shadow of those greater improvements in grace and holiness, which properly belong to the times of the gospel.—Lowth.

Verses 2-4. *And a man*—Either the man or king spoken of, or each of his princes, *shall be a hiding-place*—A protection to the people under their government, especially to such as are oppressed or injured by those that are more powerful than they; *from the wind*—From the rage and violence of evil men. *As rivers of water in a dry place*—Not less refreshing and acceptable shall this king and his princes be to their subjects. *And as the shadow of a great rock*—In a dry and scorched country, which is called *weary*, because it makes travellers weary; as *death* is called *pale* in other authors, because it makes men's faces pale. *And the eyes of them that see*—Of the people, who shall not shut their eyes

5 The vile person shall be no more called liberal, nor the churl said *to be* bountiful.

6 For the vile person will speak villany, and his heart will work iniquity, to practise hypocrisy, and to utter error against the LORD, to make empty the soul of the hungry; and he will cause the drink of the thirsty to fail.

7 The instruments also of the churl *are* evil: he deviseth wicked devices to destroy the poor with lying words, even <sup>4</sup> when the needy speaketh right.

8 But the liberal deviseth liberal things;

xxxv. 5, 6.—<sup>2</sup> Heb. hasty.—<sup>3</sup> Or, elegantly.—<sup>4</sup> Or, when he speaketh against the poor in judgment.

and ears against the good counsels and examples of their religious king and rulers, as they have done formerly; both princes and people shall be reformed. *The heart also of the rash*—Who were hasty in judging of things; which is an argument of ignorance and folly; *shall understand knowledge*—Shall become more knowing and considerate in their judgments and actions. *And the tongue of the stammerers*—Who used to speak of the things of God darkly, doubtfully, and unwillingly; *shall be ready to speak plainly*—As men's understandings shall be enlightened, so their speech shall be reformed: which, though it was in part fulfilled in Hezekiah, yet was truly and fully accomplished only by Christ, who wrought this wonderful change in an innumerable company, both of Jews and Gentiles.

Verses 5, 6. *The vile person*—Base and worthless men; *shall be no more called liberal*—Shall no longer be reputed honourable, because of their high and honourable places, but wickedness shall be discovered wherever it is, and virtue manifested and rewarded. *Nor the churl said to be bountiful*—The sordid and covetous man; but under this one vice all vices are understood, as under the opposite virtue of bountifulness all virtues are comprehended. *For the vile person will speak villany*—Men shall no longer be miscalled; for every one will discover what he is by his words and actions. *And will work iniquity*—He will, from time to time, be devising wickedness, that he may execute it when he hath opportunity. *To practise hypocrisy*—To do bad things, though with a pretence of religion and justice. *To utter error*—To pass unjust sentences, directly contrary to the command of God. *To cause the drink, &c.*—Whereby they take away the bread and drink of the poor.

Verses 7, 8. *The instruments also of the churl are evil*—Hebrew, כלי, *the vessels*. It is a word of a very general signification among the Hebrews, and signifies any person or thing which is employed in a man's service. The sense is, that such covetous or wicked princes must willingly choose and employ wicked men in their affairs, because such men will, without any regard to conscience or

A. M. 3279. and by liberal things shall he <sup>5</sup> stand.  
B. C. 725.

9 ¶ Rise up, ye women <sup>d</sup> that are at ease; hear my voice, ye careless daughters; give ear unto my speech.

10 <sup>6</sup> Many days and years shall ye be troubled, ye careless women; for the vintage shall fail, the gathering shall not come.

11 Tremble, ye women that are at ease; be troubled, ye careless ones: strip you, and make you bare, and gird sackcloth upon your loins.

<sup>5</sup> Or, be established.—<sup>d</sup> Amos vi. 1.—<sup>6</sup> Heb. days above a year.—<sup>7</sup> Heb. the fields of desire.—<sup>e</sup> Chap. xxxiv. 13; Hosea

justice, serve all their exorbitant desires. It includes, however, his counsels, practices, and arts, which are here declared to be generally evil. *He deriseth wicked devices*—He uses all his understanding and art to do injuries to others; to destroy the poor with lying words—With false and unrighteous decrees. *When the needy speaketh right*—When their cause is just and good. *But the liberal deriseth liberal things*—He who is truly liberal and virtuous, will show it by designing and practising liberal or virtuous actions. *And by liberal things shall he stand*—He who does so will not destroy himself thereby, as wicked men falsely suppose, but establish and advance himself. “The Christian reader need not be told how exactly the particulars, expressed in these verses, belong to Christ’s kingdom, who is a *hiding-place* from the storm of sin and the world, John xvi. 33; whose kingdom is a kingdom of light, of faith, of love; all whose subjects are enlightened by the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ; who gave eyes to the blind, ears to the deaf, tongues to the dumb, and, by his divine grace, changed the most churlish and illiberal dispositions into generosity and love.” Vitringa.

Verses 9–12. *Rise up, &c.*—The prophet, to show the sinners and hypocrites in Zion, (ch. xxxiii. 14,) that they must not expect to receive blessings from God, such as he had just now predicted, while they remained in a state of impenitence, denounces against them the calamities which should come upon them; 1st, By the Assyrian, and then by the Babylonish destruction. *Ye women that are at ease*—That indulge yourselves in idleness and luxury; shake off your carelessness and sloth, and prepare yourselves to hear the sentence pronounced by God concerning you. *Hear my voice, ye careless daughters*—Hebrew, בְּטוּחֹת, ye confident and secure, who are insensible of your sin and danger. *Many days and years*—Hebrew, עַל שָׁנָה, days above a year; that is, a year and some days; which, it seems, expresses the time of the continuance of the judgment by the Assyrians; that it should last some days above one year, as indeed it did, and no longer; for Hezekiah reigned in all but twenty-nine years, 2 Kings xviii. 2. And Sennacherib invaded the country in his fourteenth year; and, after his defeat and

12 They shall lament for the teats, A. M. 3279.  
B. C. 725. for <sup>7</sup> the pleasant fields, for the fruitful vine.

13 <sup>8</sup> Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briars; <sup>9</sup> yea, upon all the houses of joy in <sup>f</sup> the joyous city:

14 <sup>8</sup> Because the palaces shall be forsaken; the multitude of the city shall be left; the <sup>9</sup> forts and towers shall be for dens for ever, a joy of wild asses, a pasture of flocks;

ix. 6.—<sup>8</sup> Or, burning upon, &c.—<sup>f</sup> Chap. xxii. 2.—<sup>g</sup> Chap. xxvii. 10.—<sup>9</sup> Or, clefts and watch-towers.

departure, God promised and added to him fifteen years more, 2 Kings xx. 6. *For the vintage shall fail*—During the time of the Assyrian invasion. *The gathering shall not come*—Namely, of the other fruits of the earth; as that feast which was observed after the gathering of all the fruits was called the feast of ingathering, Ex. xxiii. 16. *Tremble, ye women, &c.*—It seems probable, from these repeated addresses to the women, that those of Jerusalem especially, and, perhaps, also of many of the other towns in Judea, were, at that time, peculiarly vain, luxurious, dissipated, and wanton, and regardless of all religion. The prophet, therefore, especially addresses them, and warns them that a time of trouble awaited them. *Strip ye and make ye bare*—Put off your ornaments, as God commanded upon a like occasion, (Ex. xxxiii. 5,) that you may put on sackcloth instead of them, as mourners and penitents used to do. *They shall lament for the teats*—For the pleasant and fruitful fields which, like teats, yielded you plentiful and excellent nourishment.

Verses 13, 14. *Upon the land, &c., shall come up thorns and briars*—If any of you think there is no great cause for such trembling and lamentation, on account of a calamity which shall last but for a year and some days, know that this affliction by the Assyrians is but an earnest of further and sorer judgments. For the time is coming when this land shall be laid desolate; and, instead of vines and other fruits, it shall yield nothing but briars and thorns. *Yea, upon all the houses of joy*—Upon that ground where now your houses stand, in which you take your fill of mirth and pleasure. *Because the palaces*—Hebrew, אֲרָמוֹן, the palace, the king’s house, and other magnificent buildings in the city, shall be forsaken—Shall be destitute of inhabitants. *The multitude of the city shall be left*—Shall be forsaken of God and given up into their enemies’ hands. *The forts, &c., shall be for dens for ever*—For a long time; a joy of wild asses—Desolate places, in which wild asses delight to be. “This description,” says Bishop Lowth, “of impending distresses 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

A. M. 3279. 15 ¶ Until <sup>h</sup> the Spirit be poured  
B. C. 725. upon us from on high, and <sup>i</sup> the wild-  
erness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field  
be counted for a forest.

16 Then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness,  
and righteousness remain in the fruitful field.

17 <sup>k</sup> And the work of righteousness shall be  
peace; and the effect of righteousness, quiet-  
ness and assurance for ever.

<sup>h</sup> Psalm civ. 30; Joel ii. 28.—<sup>i</sup> Chapter xxix. 17; xxxv. 2.  
<sup>k</sup> James iii. 18.—<sup>l</sup> Chap. xxx. 30.

which follows was not fulfilled under the Mosaic  
dispensation; they belong to the kingdom of Mes-  
siah.”

Verse 15. *Until the Spirit be poured upon us, &c.*  
—And this calamity shall, in a manner, continue  
until the time come in which God will pour, or, as  
עֵרָה, properly signifies, *reveal*, that is, evidently  
and plentifully confer his Spirit upon his people.  
Which was done, in some sort, upon their return  
from Babylon, when God, by his Spirit, moved  
Cyrus to give them liberty of returning to Jerusalem,  
and the people to return and build the city and tem-  
ple. But it was far more clearly and fully accom-  
plished in the days of the Messiah, when God's  
Spirit was in a most evident and glorious manner  
poured forth upon the apostles and other believing  
Jews, to the astonishment of their very adversaries;  
and when the following promises were, in a good  
measure, fulfilled, and are more fully to be accom-  
plished in God's due time. *And the wilderness be a  
fruitful field*—Which expressions are to be under-  
stood allegorically of the conversion of the Gentile  
nations, which had been long barren, and of the  
rejection of the Jews in the time of the Messiah.  
See on chap. xxix. 17.

Verses 16–18. *Then judgment*—Just judgment, as  
the next clause explains it, *shall dwell in the wild-  
erness*—In what had formerly been a wilderness,  
namely, among the Gentiles, now supposed to be  
converted to Christianity; by whom righteousness  
also shall be practised, and among whom it shall  
remain. *And the work of righteousness shall be  
peace*—The effect of this righteousness shall be  
peace of conscience, possessed by all that practise it,  
and tranquillity, of mind, as well as peace with God.  
Or, perhaps, outward prosperity may be chiefly  
intended. *And the effect*—Hebrew, עֵבֶרָה, *the service,  
of righteousness, quietness, and assurance for ever*  
—הַשְׁקֵט וְנִטְחָה. *The being truly  
righteous before God, and walking in his ordinances  
and commandments blameless*, (Luke i. 6,) shall be  
attended with an assurance of God's favour, and a

18 And my people shall dwell in a <sup>A. M. 3279.</sup>  
peaceable habitation, and in sure dwell- <sup>B. C. 725.</sup>  
ings, and in quiet resting-places.

19 <sup>1</sup> When it shall hail, coming down <sup>m</sup> on  
the forest; <sup>10</sup> and the city shall be low in a  
low place.

20 Blessed *are* ye that sow beside all waters,  
that send forth *thither* the feet of <sup>n</sup> the ox and  
the ass.

<sup>m</sup> Zechariah xi. 2.—<sup>10</sup> Or, *and the city shall be utterly abased.*  
<sup>n</sup> Chap. xxx. 24.

dependance on him for the fulfilment of his promises;  
from whence will arise a holy serenity and security  
of mind, with a lively and joyful expectation of eter-  
nal felicity, of which no external circumstances of  
prosperity or adversity can deprive the possessors.  
*And my people*—The converted Gentiles, who shall  
then be my people; or the Jews upon their conver-  
sion to Christianity in the latter days; *shall dwell  
in a peaceable habitation*—Shall be safe and happy  
under the peculiar protection and care of God.

Verse 19. *When*—Or, rather, *And it shall hail*—  
As my blessings shall be poured down upon my peo-  
ple, who, from a wilderness, are turned into a fruitful  
field, so my judgments (which are signified by *hail*,  
chap. xxviii. 2, 17, and elsewhere) shall fall upon  
them who were a fruitful field, but are turned into a  
forest, as was said verse 15; that is, upon the unbe-  
lieving and rebellious Jews. *And the city*—Jerusa-  
lem, which, though now it was the seat of God's  
worship and people, yet he foresaw would be the  
great enemy of the Messiah; *shall be low in a low  
place*—Hebrew, בְּשִׁפְלָה הַשִּׁפְלָה, *shall be humbled with  
humiliation*; that is, *shall be greatly humbled, or  
brought very low*.

Verse 20. *Blessed are ye that sow, &c.*—As the  
barren forest shall be destroyed, so the fruitful field  
shall be improved and bring forth much fruit, which  
is signified by a declaration of the blessedness of  
them that sow in it; *beside all waters*—In all moist  
and flat grounds which are likely to yield good fruit;  
or, *in every well-watered place*, as Bishop Lowth  
renders it, who quotes Sir John Chardin as observ-  
ing, that the place exactly answers the manner of  
planting rice in the East; concerning which, see the  
note on Eccles. xi. 1. But this passage, as well as  
that in the foregoing verses, is to be understood mys-  
tically of the times of the gospel, and of the great  
and happy success of the ministers of it, whose spiri-  
tual sowing of the word, accompanied with the in-  
fluences of the Holy Ghost, produced much fruit in  
the Gentile nations, to the glory of God and their  
own comfort.

### CHAPTER XXXIII.

*In this chapter, which is a triumphant ode upon the destruction of Sennacherib's army before Jerusalem, the prophet sets  
forth the several scenes of that transaction with all the beauties of a poetical description. (1.) He addresses himself to*

*Sennacherib, briefly, but strongly and elegantly, expressing the injustice of his designs, and the sudden disappointment of them, 1. (2.) He introduces the Jews, with himself, offering up earnest supplications to God in their present distressful condition, 2. (3.) Foretels, as an answer to their prayers, the discomfiture and dispersion of the Assyrians, and that they should become an easy prey to those whom they intended to subdue, 3, 4. (4.) Introduces a chorus of Jews, acknowledging the mercy and power of God, who had undertaken to protect them, and extolling the wisdom and piety of their King Hezekiah, who had placed his confidence in God, 5, 6. (5.) He describes the distress and despair of the Jews upon Sennacherib's marching against Jerusalem, and sending his summons to them to surrender, 7-9. (6.) God is introduced, declaring that he will interpose in this critical situation of affairs, and disappoint the vain hopes of the enemies of his people, by utterly consuming them, 10-13. (7.) We have a description of the dreadful apprehensions of the wicked in those times of distress and danger, finely contrasted with the confidence and security of the righteous, 14-22. The ode concludes 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 Jews, 23, 24. "Could a translation," says Lowth, "be made of this chapter, that should come up to the original, it would appear to be as noble a piece of poetry as is to be found in the most admired writings of the ancients."*

A. M. 3279.  
B. C. 725.

**W**O to thee <sup>a</sup> that spoilest, and thou *wast* not spoiled; and dealest treacherously, and they dealt not treacherously with thee! <sup>b</sup> when thou shalt cease to spoil, thou shalt be spoiled; *and* when thou shalt make an end to deal treacherously, they shall deal treacherously with thee.

2 O LORD, be gracious unto us; <sup>c</sup> we have

<sup>a</sup> Chap. xxi. 2; Hab. ii. 8.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XXXIII.

Verse 1. *Wo to thee that spoilest*—To Sennacherib, who wasted the land of Judah. The prophet speaks "as if he had found this great spoiler," to whom he addresses himself, "in the very act of spoiling, and was face to face denouncing the divine judgment upon him." *And thou wast not spoiled*—Hadst not received the like injuries. "It is the practice of the great oppressors of the world to make war upon their neighbours without any just provocation, or having received any real injury from them; and it is against such practices that this wo is denounced."—Lowth. *And dealest treacherously*—So Sennacherib dealt with Hezekiah, 2 Kings xviii. 14, 17. *And, or when, they dealt not treacherously with thee*—Hezekiah and the Jews did not. "We read, indeed, (2 Kings xviii. 7,) that Hezekiah rebelled against the king of Assyria; but the meaning is no more than that he would not stand to those dishonourable terms of slavery, to which his father Ahaz had submitted, when he professed himself the servant of the king of Assyria," (2 Kings xvi. 7,) begging his assistance against the Syrians and Ephraimites, for which he paid him well; but the king of Assyria did not keep his agreement with him, for he distressed him, but strengthened him not, 2 Chron. xxviii. 20. *When thou shalt cease to spoil, thou shalt be spoiled*—When thou hast performed the work of chastising my people, to which I have sent thee, thou also shalt be spoiled by thine enemies. The further meaning of this prediction may be, that when the Assyrians, glutted, as it were, with their conquests, should cease to make any further conquests, and give themselves up to luxury and pleasure, then other nations, either mindful of the injuries which they had received from them, or out

waited for thee: be thou their arm <sup>A. M. 3279.</sup> every morning, our salvation also in <sup>B. C. 725.</sup> the time of trouble.

3 At the noise of the tumult the people fled; at the lifting up of thyself the nations were scattered.

4 And your spoil shall be gathered *like* the gathering of the caterpillar: as the running to

<sup>b</sup> Rev. xiii. 10.—<sup>c</sup> Chap. xxv. 9.

of rapacity, would attack them in their turn, and spoil them, as they had spoiled others: which came to pass accordingly. Their calamities seem to have begun from the times that Dejoes, king of the Medes, shook off their yoke, about seven hundred years before Christ: for other nations soon followed his example.

Verse 2. *O Lord, be gracious unto us*—The prophet and the pious Jews, contemplating the calamity coming upon their country, here direct their prayer unto God for themselves and their people. *Be thou their arm*—That is, their strength, namely, the strength of all that trust in thee, and wait for thee, Psa. xxv. 3; *every morning*—Hebrew, *בבקר*, in the mornings; that is, every day seasonably and speedily; on all occasions as they need. In mentioning the mornings, the prophet is thought to refer to the time of the morning sacrifice, which was the morning hour of prayer with the pious Jews; but he includes all other times of prayer, in all which he desires God to hear and answer his people, and to be their salvation all the day long, and especially to support them in the time of trouble.

Verses 3, 4. *At the noise of the tumult*—Which shall be made upon the angel's destroying the army; *the people fled*—Namely, those of the army who escaped that stroke. *At the lifting up of thyself*—To execute judgment; *the nations were scattered*—The people of divers nations which made up Sennacherib's army. *And your spoil*—That treasure which you have raked together by spoiling divers people; *shall be gathered*—By the Jews at Jerusalem, when you shall be forced to flee away with all possible speed, leaving your spoils behind you; *like the gathering of the caterpillar*—As caterpillars gather and devour all the fruits of the earth, which was a



A. M. 3279. 14 The sinners in Zion are afraid ;  
B. C. 725. fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire ? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings ?

15 He that <sup>a</sup>walketh <sup>4</sup>righteously, and speaketh <sup>5</sup>uprightly ; he that despiseth the gain of <sup>6</sup>oppressions, that shaketh his hands from

<sup>a</sup>Ps. xv. 2 ; xxiv. 4.—<sup>4</sup> Heb. in righteousnesses.—<sup>5</sup> Heb. uprightnesses.

the clause, "Your breath shall be the fire that shall consume you." *The people shall be as the burnings of lime*—Shall be perfectly consumed, as when chalk-stones are reduced to lime ; calcining, or reducing to ashes, being one of the last effects of fire. Thus we learn from this period, that when the calamity of the people, as well as the insolence of their enemies, should be come to the height, God would delay no longer, but immediately interpose and severely punish the oppressors, and thereby exalt his glory before the eyes of the nations, whom he calls upon, in the next words, to consider his doings. *Hear, ye afar off, &c.*—So remarkable a judgment as this deserves to be known, and laid to heart, by all men, both far and near.

Verse 14. *The sinners in Zion are afraid*—This is spoken, not of the Assyrians, but of the Jews. The prophet, having foretold the deliverance of God's people, and the destruction of their enemies, for the greater illustration of that wonderful work, may be here considered as returning to the description of the dismal condition in which the Jews, especially such of them as were unbelieving and ungodly, should be before this deliverance came. For, although the pious Jews would be, in some measure, supported by a sense of God's favour, and by his promises, delivered to them by Isaiah, yet very many of them, probably the generality, he foresaw, would be filled with horrors, and expectations of utter destruction. *Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire?*—How shall we be able to abide the presence, and endure, or avoid, the wrath of that God, who is a consuming fire ; who is now about to destroy us utterly by the Assyrians, and will afterward burn us with unquenchable fire ? Or, the prophet may be considered as describing, in these words, the consternation with which the sinners in Zion would be struck, when they should see the Assyrian army destroyed ; for the destruction of that is the fire spoken of immediately before, (verses 11, 12,) and they were conscious to themselves of having provoked this God, by their secret worshipping of other gods, as well as by many other sins. As if he had said, This miraculous destruction of the Assyrians shall strike even the most profane among the Jews, who used to scoff at God's threatenings, with terror, lest he should proceed in wrath against themselves ; so that they shall say, *Who among us shall dwell with this devouring fire?*—Before which so vast an army is as thorns ? *Who shall dwell with these everlasting burnings?*—Which have made the Assyrians as the burnings of

holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of <sup>7</sup>blood, and <sup>8</sup>shutteth his eyes from seeing evil ;

16 He shall dwell on <sup>9</sup>high : his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks : bread shall be given him ; his waters shall be sure.

17 Thine eyes shall see the King in his

<sup>6</sup> Or, deceits.—<sup>7</sup> Heb. bloods.—<sup>8</sup> Psa. cxix. 37.—<sup>9</sup> Hebrew heights, or, high places.

lime ? How shall we be able to endure the wrath of this God, which, if it once seize upon us, will utterly consume us, and will also be a pledge and forerunner of eternal torments in hell, if not prevented by timely repentance ? For, since it is sufficiently evident from both the Old and New Testaments, that the Jews, except the Sadducees, did generally believe in the rewards and punishments of a future life ; it is not strange if their guilty consciences made them dread both present judgments here, and the terrible consequences of them hereafter.

Verses 15, 16. *He that walketh righteously*—He who, being first made righteous by the justification of his person, and the renovation of his nature, (see on Gen. xv. 6, and Psa. xxxii. 1, 2,) afterward practises righteousness in all its branches, (1 John iii. 7, 8,) and particularly in all his dealings with men, of which the following clauses explain it ; *and speaketh uprightly*—Hebrew, מִשְׁרֵי, *uprightnesses*, who speaks what is true and right, and with an honest intention. Who does not think one thing and speak another, but whose word is to him as sacred as his oath ; *that despiseth the gain of oppressions*—Who is so far from coveting gain unjustly gotten, that he despises it ; thinks it a mean and sordid, as well as a wicked thing, to enrich himself by any injustice done to, or hardship put upon, his neighbour ; *that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes*—Or, from taking, or receiving them, as הָמָךְ is often rendered ; who will not receive, much less will retain bribes ; *that stoppeth his ears, &c.*—Who will not assent, or even hearken, to any counsels or practices tending to shed innocent blood ; or to any kind of cruelty toward any one ; or to any suggestions inciting him to revenge ; *and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil*—That abhors the very sight of sin committed by others, and who himself watches against the occasions of it. Those that would preserve the purity of their souls, must keep a strict guard on the senses of their bodies ; stop their ears to temptations, and turn away their eyes from beholding vanity. *He shall dwell on high*—Out of the reach of danger ; *his place of defence—the munitions of rocks*—The divine power will keep him safe, as though he were in a tower, strong and impregnable, fortified by nature as well as art. God, the Rock of ages, will be his place of defence. *Bread shall be given him, &c.*—God will furnish him with all things needful. They that fear the Lord shall not want any thing that is good for them.

Verses 17, 18. *Thine eyes shall see the king in*

A. M. 3279. beauty : they shall behold <sup>9</sup> the land  
B. C. 725. that is very far off.

18 Thy heart shall meditate terror. <sup>p</sup> Where  
is the scribe ? where is the <sup>10</sup> receiver ? where  
is he that counted the towers ?

19 <sup>a</sup> Thou shalt not see a fierce people, <sup>r</sup> a  
people of deeper speech than thou canst per-  
ceive ; of a <sup>11</sup> stammering tongue, *that thou  
canst not understand.*

20 <sup>a</sup> Look upon Zion, the city of our solemn-  
ities : thine eyes shall see <sup>b</sup> Jerusalem a quiet

<sup>9</sup> Heb. *the land of far distances.*—<sup>p</sup> 1 Cor. i. 20.—<sup>10</sup> Heb.  
*weigher.*—<sup>a</sup> 2 Kings xix. 32.—<sup>r</sup> Deut. xxviii. 49 ; Jer. v. 15.  
<sup>11</sup> Or, *ridiculous.*—<sup>b</sup> Psa. xlvi. 12.

*his beauty*—Hezekiah, in a more prosperous condi-  
tion than formerly. Having put off his sackcloth,  
and all the sadness of his countenance, he shall ap-  
pear publicly in his beauty, in his royal robes, and  
with a pleasing aspect, to the great joy of all his lov-  
ing subjects. Thine eyes shall see the King Mes-  
siah, (typified by Hezekiah,) triumphing over all his  
enemies, and ruling his own people with righteous-  
ness. Those that walk uprightly shall not only have  
bread given them, and their water sure, but they  
shall see, by faith, *the King of kings, in his beauty,*  
the beauty of holiness, and that beauty shall be upon  
them. *They shall behold the land that is very far  
off*—The siege being raised, by which they were  
kept close within the walls of Jerusalem, they shall  
be at liberty to go abroad without danger of falling  
into the enemies' hands, and they shall visit the ut-  
most corners of the nation, and take a prospect of  
the adjacent country, which will be the more pleas-  
ant after so long a confinement. Bishop Lowth  
renders it, *They (thine eyes) shall see thine own  
land far extended.* We may apply the words to  
the heavenly Canaan, that *land which is very far  
off*, which believers behold by faith, and comfort  
themselves with the prospect of it in evil times.  
*Thy heart shall meditate terror*—Bishop Lowth  
reads, *Thy heart shall reflect on the past terror.*  
Thou shalt call to mind, with delight and thankful-  
ness, the former troubles and distresses in which  
thou wast involved. *Where is the scribe, &c.*—  
Every one shall, with pleasure, reflect on the dan-  
gers they have escaped, and shall ask, in a triumph-  
ant manner, *Where is the scribe, or muster-master,  
of the Assyrian army ? Where is the receiver*—Their  
*weigher, or treasurer ? Where is he that counted  
the towers*—"That is," says Bishop Lowth, "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 tow-  
ers ; that he might know where to make the assault  
with the greatest advantage." Thus understood, the  
words are considered as containing Jerusalem's tri-  
umph over the vanquished army of the Assyrians ; and  
the rather, because the apostle alludes to them in his  
triumphs over the learning of this world ; when it  
was baffled by the gospel of Christ, 1 Cor. i. 20. The

habitation, a tabernacle *that shall not* A. M. 3279.  
be taken down ; <sup>u</sup> not one of <sup>x</sup> the B. C. 725.  
stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall  
any of the cords there be broken.

21 But there the glorious LORD *will be unto*  
us a place <sup>12</sup> of broad rivers *and streams* ;  
wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither  
shall gallant ships pass thereby.

22 For the LORD is our judge, the LORD is  
our <sup>y</sup> lawgiver,<sup>13</sup> <sup>z</sup> the LORD is our King ; he  
will save us.

<sup>1</sup> Psa. xlvi. 5 ; cxxv. 1.—<sup>a</sup> Chap. xxxvii. 33.—<sup>x</sup> Chapter  
liv. 2.—<sup>12</sup> Heb. *broad of spaces, or, hands.*—<sup>y</sup> James iv. 12.  
<sup>13</sup> Heb. *statute-maker.*—<sup>z</sup> Psa. lxxxix. 18.

virgin, the daughter of Zion, despises all their mili-  
tary preparations. Poole, however, with some others,  
thinks these words are rather to be considered as the  
language of the Jews in the time of their distress,  
and that they are here recorded to give a lively rep-  
resentation of it ; the officers here mentioned not  
seeming to be those of the Assyrian army, but rather  
those of the Jews, who, upon the approach of the  
Assyrians, began to be more active in making milita-  
ry preparations for the defence of the city, and to  
choose such officers as were necessary and useful for  
that end, such as these, here mentioned were ; name-  
ly, *the scribe, or, muster-master*, who was to make  
and keep a list of the soldiers, and to call them to-  
gether as occasion required ; *the receiver*, who received  
and laid out the money for the charges of the war ;  
*and he that counted the towers*, who surveyed all the  
parts of the city, and considered what towers or for-  
tifications were to be made or repaired for the secu-  
rity of it. And unto these several officers the people  
resorted with great distraction and confusion, to ac-  
quaint them with all occurrences, or to transact busi-  
ness with them, as occasion required.

Verse 19. *Thou shalt not see a fierce people*—As  
Moses said of the Egyptians, (Exod. xiv. 13,) *The  
Egyptians, whom you have seen to-day, you shall  
see them again no more* ; so I say of the Assyrians,  
that fierce and warlike people, whom thou hast seen,  
with great terror, near the walls of Jerusalem, thou  
shalt see them again no more ; *a people of a deeper  
speech, &c.*—A foreign nation whose language is un-  
known to thee. *Of a stammering tongue, &c.*—Of  
which see on Isa. xxviii. 11.

Verses 20–22. *Look upon Zion*—Contemplate  
Zion's beauty and safety, and her glorious and pec-  
uliar privileges ; *the city of our solemnities*—This  
was the chief part of Zion's glory and happiness,  
that God was solemnly worshipped, and the solemn  
assemblies and feasts kept in her. *Thine eyes shall  
see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, &c.*—What is here  
predicted was but very obscurely and imperfectly  
fulfilled in the literal Zion ; but was, and will be,  
clearly and fully accomplished in the mystical Zion,  
the church of God, in the times of the gospel, against  
which we are assured *the gates of hell shall not pre-  
vail*, Matt. xvi. 18. *There*—In and about Zion, *the*

A. M. 3279. 23 <sup>14</sup> Thy tacklings are loosed ; they  
B. C. 725. could not well strengthen their mast ;  
they could not spread the sail : then is the prey  
of a great spoil divided ; the lame take the prey.

<sup>14</sup> Or, *They have forsaken thy tacklings.*

glorious Lord will be a place of broad rivers—  
Though we have nothing but a small and contemptible  
brook to defend and refresh us, yet God will be  
as sure a defence, and source of consolation to us, as  
if we were surrounded with great rivers. *Wherein  
shall go no galley*—No ships of the enemies shall  
be able to come into this river to annoy us. *For the  
Lord is our judge*—To judge for us, to plead our  
cause against our enemies, as the ancient judges of  
Israel did. *The Lord is our lawgiver, &c.*—Our  
chief governor, to whom it belongs to give laws, and  
to defend his people.

Ver. 23, 24. *Thy tacklings are loosed*—This apostrophe  
of the prophet is directed to the hostile nation.  
Having designed their army under the notion  
of a gallant ship, (verse 21,) he here represents their  
undone condition by the metaphor of a ship, tossed  
in a tempestuous sea, having her cables broke, and  
all her tacklings loose, so that she could have no  
benefit of her masts and sails ; and therefore is quickly  
swallowed up. *They could not strengthen their  
mast*—Namely, the Assyrians could not, of whom  
he still speaks, as in the first clause he spake to them.  
*The lame take the prey*—They who came to spoil  
and prey upon my people, shall become a prey to  
them, and shall be forced to flee away so suddenly  
that they shall leave so many spoils behind them,  
that, when strong and active men have carried away  
all that they desired, there shall be enough left for  
the lame, who come last to the spoil. Thus God  
would bring good out of evil ; and not only deliver  
Jerusalem, but enrich it, and abundantly recompense  
the losses it had sustained. *And the inhabitant shall*

24 And the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick : <sup>A. M. 3279.</sup> the people that <sup>B. C. 725.</sup>  
dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity.

<sup>a</sup> Jer. 1. 20.

*not say, I am sick*—As the lame shall take the prey,  
so shall the sick, notwithstanding their weakness,  
make a shift to get to the abandoned camp, and  
seize something for themselves. In this sense the  
clause is understood by Bishop Lowth, and many  
other interpreters. Or, the sense may be, There  
shall be such a universal transport of joy upon this  
occasion, that even the sick shall, for the present,  
forget their sickness, and the sorrows of it, and join  
with the public in its rejoicings ; the deliverance  
of their city shall be their cure : or, they shall have  
no cause to complain of any sickness or calamity ;  
they shall be fully delivered from all their enemies  
and troubles ; and shall enjoy perfect tranquillity  
and prosperity. *The people that dwell therein shall  
be forgiven their iniquity*—This may be added,  
either, 1st, As the reason of the foregoing privilege ;  
their sins, the main causes of their distresses,  
shall be pardoned ; and therefore their sufferings,  
the effects of sin, shall cease : or, 2d, As an  
additional favour. They shall not only receive  
from me a glorious temporal deliverance, but,  
which is infinitely better, the pardon of all their  
sins, and all those spiritual and everlasting  
blessings which attend upon that mercy. Observe  
here, reader, sin is the sickness of the soul :  
when God pardons sin, he heals the disease ;  
and when the diseases of sin are healed by  
pardoning mercy, the sting of bodily sickness  
is taken out, and the cause of it removed : so  
that either the inhabitant shall not be sick,  
or, at least, shall not say, *I am sick*—If  
iniquity be taken away, we have little reason  
to complain of outward affliction : *Son, be of good  
cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee.*

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

The contents of this and the next chapter make one distinct prophecy ; “ an entire, regular, and beautiful poem,” says Bishop Lowth, “ 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 former of these parts of the prophecy is contained in this chapter, in which we have, (1.) A demand of universal attention, 1. (2.) A direful scene of blood and confusion presented, 2-7. (3.) The reason given for these judgments, 8. (4.) The continuance of this desolation, the country being made like the lake of Sodom, 9, 10 ; and the cities abandoned to wild beasts and melancholy fowls, 11-15. (5.) The solemn ratification of all this, 16, 17.

A. M. 3279. COME <sup>a</sup> near, ye nations, to hear ;  
B. C. 725. and hearken, ye people : <sup>b</sup> let the  
earth hear, and <sup>1</sup> all that is therein ; the world,

<sup>a</sup> Psa. xlix. 1.—<sup>b</sup> Deut. xxxii. 1.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER XXXIV.

Verse 1. *Come, &c.*—Here begins the third discourse of the third part of Isaiah's prophecies, and is

and all things that come forth of A. M. 3279.  
it. B. C. 725.

2 For the indignation of the LORD is upon

<sup>1</sup> Heb. the fulness thereof.

continued to the end of the next chapter. It is connected with the preceding, and, Vitringa thinks, was delivered at the same time. It is divided into two

A. M. 3279. all nations, and *his* fury upon all their  
B. C. 725. armies: he hath utterly destroyed  
them, he hath delivered them to the slaughter.

3 Their slain also shall be cast out, and  
their stink shall come up out of their car-  
casses, and the mountains shall be melted with  
their blood.

4 And <sup>d</sup>all the host of heaven shall be dis-  
solved, and the heavens shall be <sup>e</sup>rolled to-  
gether as a scroll: <sup>f</sup>and all their host shall fall

<sup>c</sup> Joel ii. 20.—<sup>d</sup> Psa. cii. 26; Ezek. xxxii. 7, 8; Joel ii. 31; iii. 15; Matthew xxiv. 29; 2 Pet. iii. 10.—<sup>e</sup> Revelation vi. 14.

sections: the first, contained in this chapter, exhibits judgments upon the adversaries of the church, and particularly upon Edom; the latter, in chap. xxxv., the jubilee of the church, and its happy, flourishing state. The events foretold are represented as being of the highest importance, and of universal concern, and all nations are called upon to attend to the declaration of them. Thus the prophet: *Come near, ye nations, and hear; hearken, ye people*—As if he had said, Let the people of all nations take notice of what I am about to say, as that wherein they are generally concerned, and by the consideration whereof they may be instructed and reformed, and so delivered from the calamity here denounced.

Verses 2, 3. *For the indignation of the Lord is upon all nations*—Not only upon the Assyrians, and those nations which are confederate with them in their expedition against Judea, but upon all other enemies of my people. *He hath utterly destroyed them*—He will infallibly destroy all of them. *Their slain also shall be cast out*—Into the fields, where they shall lie unburied, and be left a prey to ravenous beasts and birds. In which words he implies, either that such vast numbers would be slain, that the survivors would not be able to find time or place to bury them, or that they should be held in such contempt and abhorrence that none would be inclined to do them that office: *and the mountains*—About Jerusalem, where they are supposed to be gathered, to fight against her, like the Assyrians; *shall be melted with their blood*—Shall be covered with their blood, which shall flow down abundantly from them with great force, and dissolve, and carry down with it a part of the soil of the mountains, as great showers of rain frequently do. This sentence upon the nations, which thus exhibits a kind of general judgment, to be executed upon the enemies of God and his people, by the sword of God, is sufficient to strike terror into every hearer.

Verse 4. *And all the host of heaven*—The sun, moon, and stars; *shall be dissolved*—We have frequently had occasion to observe, that, in the prophetic language, the heavenly luminaries represent kings, empires, and states: see note on chap. xiii. 10. The prophet here foretels the overthrow and dissolution of such states and kingdoms as were hostile to his church, whether under the Jewish or Christian

down, as the leaf falleth off from the  
vine, and as a <sup>g</sup>falling fig from the  
fig-tree.

5 For <sup>h</sup>my sword shall be bathed in heaven: behold, it <sup>i</sup>shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my curse, to judgment.

6 The sword of the LORD is filled with blood, it is made fat with fatness, and with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams: for <sup>k</sup>the LORD hath a sacrifice in Boz-

<sup>f</sup> Chap. xiv. 12.—<sup>g</sup> Rev. vi. 14.—<sup>h</sup> Jer. xlvi. 10.—<sup>i</sup> Jer. xlix. 7; Malachi i. 4.—<sup>k</sup> Chapter lxiii. 1; Jeremiah xlix. 13; Zeph. i. 7.

dispensation. Or, alluding to a horrid tempest raging furiously, during which the heavens grow black, the sun disappears, and the stars seem to fall to the earth, and it appears as if the whole body of the heavens were about to be utterly dissolved, he intends to signify, that, during these destructive judgments, of which he speaks, the confusion and consternation of mankind would be as great as if all the frame of the creation were broken into pieces. Some, indeed, understand the words as intended of the day of general and final judgment, but the context preceding and following will not agree with such an interpretation. And it is very usual for the prophetic writers, both of the Old and New Testaments, to represent great and general changes and calamities in such words and phrases as properly agree to the day of judgment, and the dissolution of all things: as, on the contrary, they often set forth the glorious deliverances of God's people by such expressions as properly and literally belong to the resurrection from the dead.

Verses 5, 6. *For my sword shall be bathed*—In the blood of these people; *in heaven*—Where God dwells; in which this is said to be done, because it was there decreed and appointed. Or, it shall, as it were, be sharpened and made ready in heaven, to bathe itself on earth. *It shall come down upon Idumea*—Upon the Edomites, who, though they were nearly related to the Israelites, yet were their implacable enemies. But these are named for all the enemies of God's church, of whom they were an eminent type. *The people of my curse*—Whom I have devoted to utter destruction, as the word properly signifies. *The sword of the Lord is filled with blood*—Shall drink its fill of blood. The metaphor is taken from a great glutton, who is almost insatiable. *With the blood of lambs, &c.*—By lambs, and goats, and rams, he means people of all ranks and conditions, high and low, rich and poor. Dr. Waterland renders the verse, "When my sword in heaven is bathed, behold it shall sink deep into Idumea, into the people whom I have devoted to judgment." *For the Lord hath a sacrifice*—So the prophet terms this bloody work, because it was done by God's command, and for the honour of his justice and righteous government, and therefore was a service acceptable to him; *in Bozrah*—A chief city of Edom, (chap.

A. M. 3279. rah, and a great slaughter in the land  
B. C. 725. of Idumea.

7 And the <sup>2</sup>unicorns shall come down with them, and the bullocks with the bulls; and their land shall be <sup>3</sup>soaked with blood, and their dust made fat with fatness.

8 For *it is* the day of the LORD's <sup>1</sup>vengeance, and the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion.

9 <sup>m</sup>And the streams thereof shall be turned

<sup>2</sup> Or, *rhinoceros*.—<sup>3</sup> Or, *drunken*.—<sup>1</sup> Chap. lxiii. 4.—<sup>m</sup> Deut. xxix. 23.—<sup>n</sup> Rev. xiv. 11; xviii. 18; xix. 3

lxiii. 1,) and a type of those cities which should be most hostile to God's people.

Verses 7, 8. *And the unicorns shall come down*—The word רֵעָמִים, *reemim*, here rendered *unicorns*, is the same with that used Num. xxiii. 22, where see the note. Bishop Lowth renders it here, *wild goats*; and Dr. Waterland, *stags*. But many learned men prefer the marginal reading, *rhinoceros*. It is impossible to determine precisely what sort of a creature is meant, but it is allowed by all that it was a beast of great strength and fierceness, and that it is here used metaphorically, together with the *bullocks and bulls*, for princes and potentates, which should be brought down and humbled, or should *fall down*, as Bishop Lowth reads it, according to the LXX. and *Syriac*, namely, as beasts do when they have received a deadly blow; that is, they shall be sacrificed, with the lambs, goats, and rams, the inferior people, mentioned verse 6. *And their land shall be soaked with blood*—Hebrew, רִוּוּהָ, *watered*, as with rain coming oft upon it, and in abundance; and *their dust*—Their dry and barren land; *made fat with fatness*—With the fat of the sacrifices, namely, of the slain men, mingled with it. *For it is the day of the Lord's vengeance*—This is the time which God hath long since appointed and fixed to vindicate the cause of his oppressed and persecuted people against all their enemies; *for the controversy of Zion*—Dr. Waterland reads, *for the avenging of Zion*. Upon the whole, “the meaning of this period,” from verse 5. “is, that on a certain day of judgment, which is elsewhere called the *great day of the Lord's vengeance*, a mighty slaughter should be made of the hardened enemies of the church, (which had been a long time oppressed and afflicted by them,) with the effusion of much blood, and the destruction of many great, noble, and powerful men. The figure is taken from the master of a family, who, preparing a great feast, and a sacrifice, finds it necessary to slay many lambs, rams, and fatted animals, so that his knife may be said to be *inebriated* with the blood and fat of the slain.” As to the application of this prophecy, in which the Edomites are particularly mentioned, it may be observed that they, together with the rest of the neighbouring nations, were ravaged and laid waste by Nebuchadnezzar, and the general devastation spread through all these countries by him may be the event which the prophet

into pitch, and the dust thereof into A. M. 3279.  
brimstone, and the land thereof shall B. C. 725.  
become burning pitch.

10 It shall not be quenched night nor day; <sup>a</sup>the smoke thereof shall go up for ever: <sup>o</sup>from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever.

11 <sup>p</sup>But the <sup>4</sup>cormorant and the bittern shall possess it; the owl also and the raven shall dwell in it: and <sup>q</sup>he shall stretch out upon it the

<sup>o</sup> Mal. i. 4.—<sup>p</sup> Chap. xiv. 23; Zeph. ii. 14; Rev. xviii. 2.  
<sup>4</sup> Or, *pelican*.—<sup>q</sup> 2 Kings xxi. 13; Lam. ii. 8.

had first in view in this chapter: but, as Bishop Lowth observes, “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 so 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, or how it could be the consequence of them, as it is there represented to be. 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. This seems here to be the case with Edom and Bozra. It seems, therefore, reasonable to suppose, with many learned expositors, that this prophecy has a further 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 Scriptures warrant us to expect.” Vitringa is of opinion, that Papal, as well as heathen Rome, *red* or *drunken* with the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus, is here meant. And he observes, that “*Rome*, which, in the Hebrew, signifies *fortification*, well answers to Bozra, which signifies a *fortified city*.” Is not the destruction of the antichristian powers foretold in the xviiith, xviiiith, and sixth chapters of the Revelation by St. John, here intended by Isaiah? and especially the destruction in Armageddon, termed the *great day of God Almighty*, Rev. xvi. 14, and that described chap. xix. 17-19? Certainly these terrible destructions are to prepare the way for that millennial reign of Christ, described Rev. xx., and which seems to be intended in the next chapter of this prophecy.

Verses 9-15. *And the streams thereof*—The rivers, which seem most secure from the judgment here threatened; *shall be turned into pitch, &c.*—The country shall be dealt with as Sodom and Gomorrah were, even utterly destroyed, as it were, by fire, or burning pitch and brimstone, thrown down upon it from heaven. *From generation to generation it shall lie waste*—It shall be irrecoverably ruined, and shall remain a spectacle of God's vengeance to all succeeding ages. *The cormorant, &c., shall possess it*—The inhabitants shall be wholly cut off, and it shall be entirely possessed by those creatures which

A. M. 3279. line of confusion, and the stones of  
B. C. 725. emptiness.

12 They shall call the nobles thereof to the kingdom, but none shall be there, and all her princes shall be nothing.

13 And thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof: and it shall be a habitation of dragons, and a court for owls.<sup>6</sup>

14 The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with the wild beasts of the island, and the satyr shall cry to his fellow; the screech-owl also shall rest there, and find for herself a place of rest.

<sup>1</sup> Chapter xxxii. 13; Hos. ix. 6.—<sup>2</sup> Chapter xiii. 21.—<sup>3</sup> Or, ostriches.

delight in deserts and waste places; see Isa. xiii. 21, 22; and xiv. 23. He shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion, &c.—He shall use the line, and the stone, or plummet, joined to it, not to build it up, but to mark it out for destruction and desolation. Thus the prophet goes on to “paint, in the most chosen figures, an image of the land and city desolated by war, wasted by fire, and devoted to eternal desolation, by the divine judgment; which should not only be deprived of its inhabitants, and left to impure beasts and birds, but also, by the desolations brought upon it, should be rendered uninhabitable, and present the appearance of the infernal flames, like another Sodom and Gomorrah, sending forth continually black smoke and horrid smells. The desolation of Babylon is set forth in similar terms, chap. xiii. 19, &c. Though Rome pagan and the Roman powers have already suffered great desolation from the Goths and others, yet Vitringa is of opinion that this prophecy has not yet had its full completion, but will hereafter have it in the destruction of Papal Rome. The state of Italy, and the sulphurous soil in the vicinity of Rome, render the probability of this devastation greater.”—Dodd.

Verses 16, 17. Seek ye out of the book of the Lord—Here the prophet confirms the preceding predic-

15 There shall the great owl make her nest, and lay, and hatch, and gather under her shadow: there shall the vultures also be gathered, every one with her mate.

16 ¶ Seek ye out of the book of the LORD, and read: no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate: for my mouth, it hath commanded, and his spirit, it hath gathered them.

17 And he hath cast the lot for them, and his hand hath divided it unto them by line: they shall possess it for ever, from generation to generation shall they dwell therein.

<sup>4</sup> Hebrew, daughters of the owl.—<sup>5</sup> Heb. Ziim.—<sup>6</sup> Heb. Ijim.  
<sup>7</sup> Or, night monster.—<sup>8</sup> Mal. iii. 16.

tion; and, “to convict hypocrites, and confirm the pious, assures them of the certain completion of his prophecy.” He terms it, and his other prophecies, *The book of the Lord*, as being a part of divine revelation; and he supposes they would be extant at the time of the completion of their contents, and therefore invites all men to seek into and consider them in all their parts, in order that, comparing the events with the predictions, they might be fully satisfied of the truth of them, and thereby might find their faith in them, and all the other parts of God’s book, confirmed. *Not one of these shall fail*—No, not so much as the minutest circumstance, even respecting the impure beasts now mentioned. *None shall want her mate*—As I have said that the vultures should all have their mates, so it shall be: *for my mouth*—The mouth of the Lord; *it hath commanded*—The direful muster of the beasts and fowls; these marks and evidences of desolation; *and his Spirit*—That is, his power; *it hath gathered*—Shall gather all his creatures together, as he formerly brought the creatures to Adam and to Noah, by an instinct which he put into them. *And he hath cast the lot for them, &c.*—He hath divided the land to them, as it were, by lot and line, as Canaan was divided among the Israelites.

CHAPTER XXXV.

In this chapter we have, (1.) The flourishing state of the church, after the overthrow and destruction of its enemies. (2.) An exhortation to the ministers of the church to confirm and comfort the weak and afflicted people of God, from the certain hope of this benefit. (3.) An enarration of the privileges of the church at this time; such as, Illumination, 5. Alacrity in duty, 6. A diffusion of grace among persons of all orders, and in places heretofore subject to Satan, 6, 7. The purity and holiness of the church, 8. Its preservation, in peace and security, from the temptations of Satan and public persecutions, 9. Its unity, joy, and consolation in this flourishing state, 10.

A. M. 3279. THE wilderness and the solitary  
B. C. 725. place shall be glad for them; and

the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as  
the rose.

<sup>a</sup> Chap.

lv. 12.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XXXV.

Verse 1. The wilderness and solitary place, &c.—As the land of the church’s enemies, which had

enjoyed many external blessings and comforts, shall be turned into a desolate wilderness, as was declared in the foregoing chapter, so, on the contrary, Em-

A. M. 3279. 2 <sup>b</sup> It shall blossom abundantly, and  
B. C. 725. rejoice, even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the LORD, and the excellency of our God.

<sup>b</sup> Chap. xxxii. 15.—<sup>c</sup> Job iv. 3, 4; Heb. xii. 12.

manuel's land, or the seat of God's church and people, which formerly was barren and despised, like a wilderness, shall flourish exceedingly. We have more than once had occasion to observe, that by the *wilderness* is generally meant the Gentile world: now, it is here foretold, that, through the influence of the gospel and the grace of God, it should put on a new face, and become like a pleasant and fruitful garden; that multitudes of converts to the true religion should be made therein, and a vast number of spiritual and holy worshippers should be raised up to God in it. Some, indeed, would interpret this chapter as referring merely to the flourishing state of Hezekiah's kingdom in the latter part of his reign, or to the cultivation of Judea again after the return of the Jews from the captivity of Babylon. But, as Bishop Lowth observes, that it has a view beyond any such events as these, "is plain from every part, especially from the middle of it, where the miraculous works wrought by our blessed Saviour are so clearly specified that we cannot avoid making the application. And our Saviour himself has, moreover, plainly referred to this very passage, as speaking of him and his works, Matt. xi. 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 receive their sight, &c., 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 further view; and this part of the prophecy may run parallel to 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 Scripture as preparatory to it." We may conclude, therefore, with certainty, that as the slaughters and desolations foretold in the former chapter look far beyond the calamities brought on Idumea and the neighbouring nations, by the Assyrians or Chaldeans; so does the bright and pleasant picture of the prosperity and happiness of God's people, drawn in this chapter, look far beyond any felicity experienced by the Jews, either in any part of Hezekiah's reign, or after the return from Babylon. It is undoubtedly the flourishing state of the kingdom of Christ, or of the gospel church, composed of Jews and Gentiles, which is

3

3 ¶<sup>c</sup> Strengthen ye the weak hands, A. M. 3279.  
and confirm the feeble knees. B. C. 725.

4 Say to them *that are* of a <sup>1</sup> fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come *with vengeance*, even God *with a recompense*; he will come and save you.

<sup>1</sup> Heb. *hasty*.

here predicted, and especially as it shall exist in the latter days, after the destruction of all the antichristian powers, when the fulness of the Gentiles shall be brought in, and all Israel shall be saved.

Verse 2. *It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice*—Great shall be the prosperity and felicity of God's church in these gospel days. Spiritual blessings are often set forth under the emblems of fruitfulness and plenty, as the reader may see, chap. iv. 2; xxx. 23; xxxii. 15, and elsewhere. *The glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, &c.*—The prophet goes on to express the great change which should be made in the Gentile world by the gospel. For Lebanon was a mountain famous for its excellent cedars, Carmel was a most delightful woody mountain, and Sharon a most pleasant place for pasture; so that all these added together express great excellence: as if he had said, Whatever was valuable and desirable in the Mosaic economy shall be translated into, and appear in perfection in, the gospel of Christ; and the Gentile world, formerly a wilderness, shall be as much enriched with spiritual blessings, and be as fruitful in all the graces and virtues which belong to true and genuine religion, as ever Judaea was, and abundantly more. *They*—Who formerly were in the wilderness of heathenism; *shall see the glory of the Lord*—The glorious discoveries and effects of God's power and goodness to his people.

Verses 3, 4. *Strengthen ye the weak hands*—Ye prophets and ministers of God, comfort and encourage his people, who are now ready to faint, with hopes of that salvation which, in due time, he will work for them. The prophet mentions *hands* and *knees*, because the strength or weakness of any man eminently appears in those parts. *Say to them that are of a fearful heart*—Who, because of their own weakness and the strength of their enemies, are discouraged and cast down: Hebrew, לַנְּחֻרֵי לֵב, *that are hasty of heart*, that are for betaking themselves to flight, upon the first alarm, and for giving up the cause. *Be strong, fear not*—Resist your fears, confide in the power, love, and faithfulness of God, who has promised to deliver those that trust in him, and has engaged, that as your day is your strength shall be, and you shall become strong. *Behold, your God will come*—Though he seem to be absent, and to have departed from you, he will come and abide with you. *He will come with vengeance*—Namely, upon your enemies; *and save you*—The destruction he brings upon your enemies will be the means of your deliverance and salvation. If we suppose this to be spoken with any reference to the state of the Jews in Babylon, God avenged them when he overthrew the Babylonish empire, and brought them back to

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A. M. 3279. 5 Then the <sup>d</sup> eyes of the blind shall  
B. C. 725. be opened, and <sup>e</sup> the ears of the deaf  
shall be unstopped.

6 Then shall the <sup>f</sup> lame man leap as a hart, and  
the <sup>g</sup> tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness  
shall <sup>h</sup> waters break out, and streams in the desert.

7 And the parched ground shall become a  
pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in  
<sup>i</sup> the habitation of dragons, where each lay,

<sup>d</sup> Chap. xxix. 18; xxxii. 3, 4; xlii. 7; Matt. ix. 27, &c.; xi. 5;  
xii. 22; xx. 30, &c.; xxi. 14; John ix. 6, 7. — <sup>e</sup> Matt. xi. 5;  
Mark vii. 32. — <sup>f</sup> Matt. xi. 5; xv. 30; xxi. 14; John v. 8, 9;  
Acts iii. 2, &c.; viii. 7; xiv. 8, &c. — <sup>g</sup> Chap. xxxii. 4; Matt.

their own land. But, undoubtedly, the words are primarily intended of the coming of the Messiah in the flesh, and of the redemption and deliverance of God's people through him; that is, of such as embraced Christianity, whom God signally avenged for all the malice and cruelty which the Jews had exercised upon them, when, by the Romans, he laid Jerusalem even with the ground, and cut off many hundreds of thousands of them by the sword, by famine, and other ways, for their obstinate rejection of the gospel, and crucifying of their Messiah. Thus Christ is said to have been *set for the fall*, as well as *rising again, of many in Israel*.

Verses 5-7. *Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened*—The poor Gentiles, who before were blind and deaf, shall now have the eyes and ears of their minds opened to see God's works, and to hear and receive his word. And, in token hereof, many persons who are literally and corporally blind and deaf, shall have sight and hearing miraculously conferred upon them; all which things being so fully accomplished in Christ, and, as has been just observed, applied by him to himself, it is plain that this prophecy belongs primarily to the times of the gospel. *Then shall the lame leap as a hart*—For joy, or shall proceed readily and nimbly in the way of duty. *And the tongue of the dumb shall sing*—The praises of his Redeemer and Saviour. *For in the wilderness shall waters break out*—The most dry and barren places shall be made moist and fruitful: which is principally meant of the plentiful effusion of God's grace upon such persons and nations as had been wholly destitute of it. *In the habitation of dragons shall be grass, &c.*—Those dry and parched deserts, in which dragons have their abode, shall yield abundance of grass, and reeds, and rushes, which grow only in moist ground. Thus it was when Christian churches were planted and flourished in the cities of the Gentiles, which for many ages had been habitations of dragons, or rather of devils, Rev. xviii. 2. When the property of the idols' temples was altered, and they were converted to the service of Christianity, then the habitations of dragons became fruitful fields.

Verse 8. *And a highway shall be there, and a way*—The highway and the way are not to be taken for two different ways, but for one and the same way, even a cast-way, which is both raised ground, as the

shall be <sup>2</sup> grass with reeds and rushes. A. M. 3279  
B. C. 725

8 And a highway shall be there,  
and a way, and it shall be called, The way of holiness; <sup>k</sup> the unclean shall not pass over it; <sup>3</sup> but it shall be for those: the way-faring men, though fools, shall not err therein.

9 <sup>1</sup> No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there:

ix. 32; xii. 22; xv. 30. — <sup>h</sup> Chapter xli. 18; xliii. 19; John vii. 38, 39. — <sup>i</sup> Chap. xxxiv. 13. — <sup>3</sup> Or, a court for reeds, &c.  
<sup>k</sup> Chap. lii. 1; Joel iii. 17; Rev. xxi. 27. — <sup>4</sup> Or, for he shall be with them. — Lev. xxvi. 6; Chap. xi. 9; Ezek. xxxiv. 25.

former Hebrew word סליל signifies, *and a way* for persons to travel in, as the latter word here used means, both signifying a convenient, prepared, plain, and common road or path for travellers; namely, the way of truth and duty marked out by the gospel, which is the rule both of our faith and practice. "The knowledge of the truth and will of God," says Mr. Scott, "when made very plain and clear to any people, is like casting up a highway through a country that was before impassable. The Gentile world was a desert, in this as well as in other respects; no highway to God and heaven was to be there met with. But this advantage began to be vouchsafed to the nations when the gospel was sent to them," and the way of duty was plainly marked out. *And it shall be called, The way of holiness*—Trodden by holy men, and filled with holy practices; the way of holy worship, and a holy conversation. *The way of holiness* is that course of religious duties in which men ought to walk and press forward, with an eye to the glory of God and their own felicity, in the enjoyment of him. It is "not a way of *sufferance*," says Henry, "but an *appointed* way, a way into which we are directed by a divine authority, and in which we are protected by a divine warrant: it is the king's, yea, the King of kings' highway, in which we may be waylaid, but cannot be stopped. It is the good old way, (Jer. vi. 16.) the way of God's commandments. *The unclean shall not pass over it*—Either to defile it, or to disturb those that walk in it. It is a way by itself, distinguished from the way of the world; for it is a way of separation from, and nonconformity to, this world." The expression further means, that unclean persons shall, by a proper exercise of good discipline, be kept out of Christ's church on earth, as they certainly shall not be admitted into his kingdom in heaven. *But it shall be for those*—Termed afterward *the redeemed*, who shall walk there, verse 9. But Bishop Lowth and some interpreters think the clause may be better rendered, *He, namely, God, shall be with them walking in the way*; that is, he shall be their companion and guide in the way. Hence, *though fools*, they shall not err therein—The way shall be so plain and straight, that even the most foolish travellers cannot easily mistake it.

Verse 9. *No lion shall be there, &c.*—It shall not only be a plain, but a safe way. They that keep

A. M. 3279. 10 And the <sup>m</sup>ransomed of the  
B. C. 725. LORD shall return, and come to  
Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their

heads: they shall obtain joy and glad- A. M. 3279.  
ness, and <sup>n</sup>sorrow and sighing shall B. C. 725.  
flee away.

<sup>m</sup> Chap. li. 11.—<sup>n</sup> Chap. xxv. 8 ;

lxv. 19 ; Rev. vii. 17 ; xxi. 4.

close to God in this way, keep out of the reach of Satan, the roaring lion: that wicked one toucheth them not; nor shall any of their other spiritual enemies be suffered to destroy, subdue, or bring them into bondage. They may proceed with a holy security and serenity of mind, and may be quiet from the fear of evil. This is the same promise with that of Isaiah xi. 9: *They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain.*

Verse 10. *And the ransomed of the Lord*—They whom God shall rescue from their captivity and slavery in Babylon, say some; *shall return and come to Zion*—Shall be restored to their own land, from whence they had been carried captive. But the following expressions are far too magnificent and emphatical to be answered by the mere return of the Jews to Judea and Jerusalem, which was accompanied and followed by many sighs and sorrows, as appears both from sacred and profane historians. We must, therefore, of necessity, understand this verse as being intended, like the preceding verses, of gospel times, and therefore by the *ransomed of the Lord* we must understand those who are delivered

from the guilt and power of sin, and from every kind of spiritual bondage, whether to the devil, the world, or the flesh. These may be said to *return, and come to Zion, with songs*, when they unite themselves to God's church and people on earth, and more especially when they arrive at the heavenly Canaan, and are admitted into the New Jerusalem, the city of the living God, and incorporated in a glorious society, with an innumerable company of angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect; with the general assembly and church of the first-born, who are written in heaven. Then, indeed, are their heads crowned with everlasting joy; and they obtain joy and gladness in perfection, and sorrow and sighing flee away for ever. Thus these prophecies, which relate to the Assyrian invasion, conclude, for the support of the people of God, under that and other subsequent calamities, and to direct their joy, in their deliverance from them, to something higher. And thus should our joyful hopes and cheering prospects of eternal life swallow up both all the joys and all the sorrows of this present time.

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

In this and the three following chapters is contained the historical part of the book of Isaiah, relating a memorable transaction, strongly confirmative of the divine mission of our prophet, and illustrative of some of the foregoing predictions. In this chapter we have the invasion of Judah by Sennacherib, 1. <sup>a</sup> He sends Rabshakeh, who, by his blasphemous persuasion, tempts Hezekiah to despair, and the people to revolt, 2-22.

A. M. 3291. NOW <sup>a</sup> it came to pass in the four-  
B. C. 713. tenth year of King Hezekiah,

that Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the defenced cities of Judah, and took them.

B. C. 712. 2 ¶ And the king of Assyria sent  
Rabshakeh from Lachish to Jerusalem unto King Hezekiah with a great army. And he stood by the conduit of the upper pool in the highway of the fuller's field.

3 Then came forth unto him Eliakim, Hezekiah's son, which was over the house, and

Shebna the scribe, and Joah, Asaph's A. M. 3292.  
son, the recorder. B. C. 712.

4 <sup>b</sup> And Rabshakeh said unto them, Say ye now to Hezekiah, Thus saith the great king, the king of Assyria, What confidence is this wherein thou trustest?

5 I say, sayest thou (but they are but <sup>2</sup> vain words) <sup>3</sup> I have counsel and strength for war: now on whom dost thou trust, that thou rebellest against me?

6 Lo, thou trustest in the <sup>c</sup> staff of this

<sup>a</sup> 2 Kings xviii. 13, 17; 2 Chron. xxxii. 1.—<sup>1</sup> Or, secretary.  
<sup>b</sup> 2 Kings xviii. 19.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. a word of lips.—<sup>3</sup> Or, but counsel and strength are for the war.—<sup>c</sup> Ezek. xxix. 6, 7.

### NOTES ON CHAPTER XXXVI.

Verse 1. *Now it came to pass, &c.*—The history related in this and the three following chapters is contained, almost wholly in the same words, 2 Kings xviii, xix, xx; where see the notes. It was probably first written by this prophet, and from him taken

into the second book of Kings to complete that history: and we may conjecture that it is that part of the account of Hezekiah's reign which is said to have been written by Isaiah, 2 Chron. xxxii. 32. It is inserted here, because it casts great light on several particulars of the foregoing prophecies; and chapter xxxix.

A. M. 3292. broken reed, on Egypt; whereon if  
B. C. 712. a man lean, it will go into his hand,  
and pierce it: so is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all  
that trust in him.

7 But if thou say to me, We trust in the  
LORD our God: *is it* not he, whose high  
places and whose altars Hezekiah hath taken  
away, and said to Judah and to Jerusalem,  
Ye shall worship before this altar?

8 Now therefore give 'pledges, I pray thee,  
to my master the king of Assyria, and I will  
give thee two thousand horses, if thou be able  
on thy part to set riders upon them.

9 How then wilt thou turn away the face of  
one captain of the least of my master's ser-  
vants, and put thy trust on Egypt for chariots  
and for horsemen?

10 And am I now come up without the  
LORD against this land to destroy it? the  
LORD said unto me, Go up against this land,  
and destroy it.

11 Then said Eliakim, and Shebna, and  
Joah, unto Rabshakeh, Speak, I pray thee,  
unto thy servants in the Syrian language;  
for we understand *it*: and speak not to us in  
the Jews' language, in the ears of the people  
that *are* on the wall.

12 But Rabshakeh said, Hath my master  
sent me to thy master and to thee to speak  
these words? *hath he* not sent me to the men  
that sit upon the wall, that they may eat their  
own dung, and drink their own piss with you?

13 ¶ Then Rabshakeh stood, and cried with  
a loud voice in the Jews' language, and said,  
Hear ye the words of the great king, the king  
of Assyria.

<sup>4</sup> Or, hostages.—<sup>5</sup> Or, Seek my favour by a present.

contains a prophecy of the captivity, and is an intro-  
duction to the remainder of Isaiah's prophecies, a  
great part of which relate to the restoration of  
the Jews, and their return from Babylon to their

14 Thus saith the king, Let not He- A. M. 3292.  
zekiah deceive you: for he shall not be B. C. 712.  
able to deliver you.

15 Neither let Hezekiah make you trust in  
the LORD, saying, The LORD will surely deli-  
ver us: this city shall not be delivered into  
the hand of the king of Assyria.

16 Harken not to Hezekiah: for thus saith  
the king of Assyria, <sup>5</sup> Make <sup>6</sup> an agreement  
with me *by* a present and come out to me:  
<sup>4</sup> and eat ye every one of his vine, and every  
one of his fig-tree, and drink ye every one  
the waters of his own cistern;

17 Until I come and take you away to a  
land like your own land, a land of corn and  
wine, a land of bread and vineyards.

18 Beware lest Hezekiah persuade you, say-  
ing, The LORD will deliver us. Hath any of  
the gods of the nations delivered his land out  
of the hand of the king of Assyria?

19 Where *are* the gods of Hamath and  
Arphad? where *are* the gods of Sepharvaim?  
and have they delivered Samaria out of my  
hand?

20 Who *are they* among all the gods of these  
lands, that have delivered their land out of my  
hand, that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem  
out of my hand?

21 But they held their peace, and answered  
him not a word: for the king's commandment  
was, saying, Answer him not.

22 Then came Eliakim the son of Hilki-  
ah, that *was* over the household, and Shebna the  
scribe, and Joah, the son of Asaph, the re-  
corder, to Hezekiah with *their* clothes rent,  
and told him the words of Rabshakeh.

<sup>6</sup> Heb. Make with me a blessing.—<sup>4</sup> Zech. iii. 10.

own land. For the same reason, the history of the  
taking of Jerusalem by the Babylonians is annexed  
to Jeremiah's prophecies, because it helps to explain  
and confirm several passages in them.

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

Hezekiah mourns, and sends to Isaiah to pray for him and the people, 1-5. He comforts them, 6, 7. Sennacherib, called  
away against the king of Ethiopia, sends a blasphemous letter to Hezekiah, 8-13. His prayer, 14-20. Isaiah's pro-  
phesy, 21-35. An angel slays the Assyrians, 36. Sennacherib is slain at Nineveh by his own sons, 37, 38.

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B. C. 712.

AND <sup>a</sup> it came to pass, when King Hezekiah heard *it*, that he rent his clothes, and covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the LORD.

2 And he sent Eliakim, who *was* over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests, covered with sackcloth, unto Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz.

3 And they said unto him, Thus saith Hezekiah, This day *is* a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and of <sup>1</sup> blasphemy: for the children are come to the birth, and *there is* not strength to bring forth.

4 It may be the LORD thy God will hear the words of Rabshakeh, whom the king of Assyria his master hath sent to reproach the living God, and will reprove the words which the LORD thy God hath heard: wherefore lift up *thy* prayer for the remnant that is <sup>2</sup> left.

5 So the servants of King Hezekiah came to Isaiah.

6 ¶ And Isaiah said unto them, Thus shall ye say unto your master, Thus saith the LORD, Be not afraid of the words that thou hast heard, wherewith the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed me.

7 Behold, I will <sup>3</sup> send a blast upon him, and he shall hear a rumour, and return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.

8 ¶ So Rabshakeh returned, and found the king of Assyria warring against Libnah: for he had heard that he was departed from Lachish.

9 And he heard say concerning Tirhakah king of Ethiopia, He has come forth to make war with thee. And when he heard *it*, he sent messengers to Hezekiah, saying,

10 Thus shall ye speak to Hezekiah king of Judah, saying, Let not thy God, in whom thou trustest, deceive thee, saying, Jerusalem shall not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.

11 Behold, thou hast heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands by destroying them utterly; and shalt thou be delivered?

<sup>a</sup> 2 Kings xix. 1.—<sup>1</sup> Or, provocation.—<sup>2</sup> Heb. found.—<sup>3</sup> Or, put a spirit into him.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XXXVII.

Verse 36. *Then the angel of the Lord went forth*—When "Sennacherib, in his opprobrious message to Hezekiah and his subjects, not only inveighed

12 Have the gods of the nations delivered them which my fathers have destroyed, *as* Gozan, and Haran, and Rezeph, and the children of Eden which *were* in T'elassar?

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13 Where *is* the king of <sup>b</sup> Hamath, and the king of Arphad, and the king of the city of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivah?

14 ¶ And Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers, and read it: and Hezekiah went up unto the house of the LORD, and spread it before the LORD.

15 And Hezekiah prayed unto the LORD, saying,

16 O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, that dwellest *between* the cherubim, thou *art* the God, *even* thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; thou hast made heaven and earth.

17 <sup>c</sup> Incline thine ear, O LORD, and hear; open thine eyes, O LORD, and see: and hear all the words of Sennacherib, which hath sent to reproach the living God.

18 Of a truth, LORD, the kings of Assyria have laid waste all the <sup>d</sup> nations, and their countries,

19 And have <sup>e</sup> cast their gods into the fire; for they *were* no gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone: therefore they have destroyed them.

20 Now therefore, O LORD our God, save us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou *art* the LORD, *even* thou only.

21 ¶ Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent unto Hezekiah, saying, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Whereas thou hast prayed to me against Sennacherib king of Assyria:

22 This *is* the word which the LORD hath spoken concerning him; The virgin, the daughter of Zion, hath despised thee, *and* laughed thee to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at thee.

23 Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed; and against whom hast thou exalted *thy* voice, and lifted up thine eyes on high? *even* against the Holy One of Israel.

<sup>b</sup> Jeremiah xlix. 23.—<sup>c</sup> Daniel ix. 18.—<sup>d</sup> Hebrew, lands.  
<sup>e</sup> Hebrew, given.

against them, but blasphemously reviled even their God, bringing down the great God of Israel to the contemptible level of the gods of the nations, putting him to open defiance, and charging him with im-

A. M. 3292. 24 <sup>6</sup> By thy servants hast thou re-  
B. C. 712.

proached the LORD, and hast said, By the multitude of my chariots am I come up to the height of the mountains, to the sides of Lebanon; and I will cut down <sup>7</sup> the tall cedars thereof, and the choice fir-trees thereof: and I will enter into the height of his border, and <sup>8</sup> the forest of his Carmel.

25 I have digged, and drunk water; and with the sole of my feet have I dried up all the rivers of the <sup>9</sup> besieged places.

26 <sup>10</sup> Hast thou not heard long ago, how I have done it; and of ancient times, that I have formed it? now have I brought it to pass, that thou shouldest be to lay waste defended cities into ruinous heaps.

27 Therefore their inhabitants were <sup>11</sup> of small power, they were dismayed and confounded: they were as the grass of the field, and as the green herb, as the grass on the house-tops, and as corn blasted before it be grown up.

28 But I know thy <sup>12</sup> abode, and thy going out, and thy coming in, and thy rage against me,

29 Because thy rage against me, and thy tumult, is come up into mine ears, therefore <sup>d</sup> will I put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest.

30 And this shall be a sign unto thee, Ye shall eat this year such as groweth of itself; and the second year that which springeth of the same: and in the third year sow ye, and

<sup>6</sup> Heb. By the hand of thy servants.—<sup>7</sup> Heb. the tallness of the cedars thereof, and the choice of the fir-trees thereof.—<sup>8</sup> Or, the forest and his fruitful field.—<sup>9</sup> Or, fenced and closed.—<sup>10</sup> Or, Hast thou not heard how I have made it long ago, and formed it of ancient times? should I now bring it to be laid waste, and defended cities to be ruinous heaps? as 2 Kings xix. 25.

potence to his face, it was time for the Lord to vindicate his honour, to assert his supremacy and power, and to make both parties sensible that he was 'glorious in might, equally able to help and to cast down, to save and to destroy.' Accordingly, this blasphemous tyrant had scarcely advanced to the holy city, before his forces were instantly broken, and he was obliged to retreat with shame and confusion." By this tremendous act, Jehovah made it visible to all the nations, especially to the Jews, who had greatly apostatized from his worship and service, and strangely gone over to the heathen idolatry, changing their glory for that which did not profit, that he was a God, "mighty in strength, and excellent in power;" that he was truly what he had styled himself, *The Lord of hosts; and that there was no other god that could deliver after this sort.*—Dodd.

reap, and plant vineyards, and eat <sup>A. M. 3292.</sup>  
the fruit thereof. <sup>B. C. 712.</sup>

31 And <sup>13</sup> the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward:

32 For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and <sup>14</sup> they that escape out of mount Zion: the <sup>o</sup> zeal of the LORD of hosts shall do this.

33 Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with <sup>15</sup> shields, nor cast a bank against it.

34 By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this city, saith the LORD.

35 For I will <sup>f</sup> defend this city to save it, for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake.

36 ¶ Then the <sup>g</sup> angel of the LORD went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses.

37 ¶ So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh.

38 And it came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword; and they escaped into the land of <sup>16</sup> Armenia: and Esar-haddon his son reigned in his stead.

<sup>11</sup> Hebrew, short of hand.—<sup>12</sup> Or, sitting.—<sup>d</sup> Chapter xxx. 28; Ezekiel xxxviii. 4.—<sup>13</sup> Hebrew, the escaping of the house of Judah that remaineth.—<sup>14</sup> Hebrew, the escaping.—<sup>15</sup> 2 Kings xix. 31; Chap. ix. 7.—<sup>16</sup> Heb. shield.—<sup>f</sup> 2 Kings xx. 6; Chapter xxxviii. 6.—<sup>g</sup> 2 Kings xix. 35.—<sup>16</sup> Hebrew, Ararat.

Verses 37, 38. So Sennacherib departed, &c.—*"The great king, the king of Assyria,"* says Henry, "looks very little when he is thus forced to return, not only with shame, because he cannot accomplish what he had projected with so much assurance, but with fear and terror, lest the angel that had destroyed his army should destroy him; yet he is made to look less when his own sons, that should have guarded him, sacrificed him to his idol, whose protection he sought. God can quickly stop the breath of those who breathe out threatenings and slaughter against his people, and will do it when they have filled up the measure of their iniquity." *The Lord is known by the judgments which he executeth;* known especially to be a God that resists the proud, and fails not to take speedy and exemplary vengeance on the insolent revilers of his Godhead, and the contemptuous blasphemers of his divine power and glory.

We may observe, upon the whole of this wonderful story, that many very important ends were evidently answered by the war which God permitted the king of Assyria to make on Hezekiah, and the invasion of Judea, and by the remarkable issue of that calamity. Hereby, 1st, The Jews were chastised for their various idolatries and other sins, and many of them, no doubt, were humbled and brought to repentance. 2d, The faith of their pious king was tried, and, in consequence of the extraordinary deliverance granted him and his subjects, was greatly increased and confirmed in the power and faithfulness of God. 3d, The people of God were taught and encouraged in all their dangers and distresses

to have recourse to him, their refuge and strength, their very present and never failing help in trouble. 4th, A demonstration was given, in the face of the whole world, of the almighty power of Jehovah, and of his superiority over all the gods of the heathen. And, lastly, by this signal vengeance taken on a proud and haughty blasphemer, mankind were given to know that the God of Israel, the only living and true God, was a holy and jealous, as well as a mighty God, who would not give his glory to another, nor suffer it to be insulted with impunity; and were warned of the consequences of reviling and blaspheming his glorious name.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

In this chapter we have the sickness of Hezekiah, and the sentence of death which he received from Isaiah, 1. His prayer in his sickness, 2, 3. The answer of peace which God gave to that prayer, assuring him that he should recover, and live yet fifteen years; and that, for a sign thereof, the sun should go back ten degrees, 4-8. Hezekiah's thanksgiving for his recovery, 9-20. The means he was enjoined to use in order to his recovery, and the end he had in view in desiring it, 21, 22.

A. M. 3292. B. C. 712. **I**N <sup>a</sup>those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz came unto him, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, <sup>b</sup>Set <sup>1</sup>thy house in order: for thou shalt die, and not live.

2 Then Hezekiah turned his face toward the wall, and prayed unto the LORD.

3 And said, <sup>c</sup>Remember now, O LORD, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done *that which is good* in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept <sup>2</sup>sore.

4 ¶ Then came the word of the LORD to Isaiah, saying,

5 Go and say to Hezekiah, Thus saith the LORD, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will add unto thy days fifteen years.

6 And I will deliver thee and this <sup>A. M. 3292. B. C. 712.</sup> city out of the hand of the king of Assyria: and <sup>d</sup>I will defend this city.

7 And this *shall be* <sup>e</sup>a sign unto thee from the LORD, that the LORD will do this thing that he hath spoken;

8 Behold, I will bring again the shadow of the degrees, which is gone down in the <sup>3</sup>sun-dial of Ahaz ten degrees backward. So the sun returned ten degrees, by which degrees it was gone down.

9 ¶ The writing of Hezekiah king of Judah, when he had been sick, and was recovered of his sickness:

10 I said in the cutting off of my days, I shall go to the gates of the grave: I am deprived of the residue of my years.

11 I said, I shall not see the LORD, *even* the

<sup>a</sup> 2 Kings xx. 1; 2 Chron. xxxii. 24.—<sup>b</sup> 2 Samuel xvii. 23.  
<sup>1</sup> Heb. Give charge concerning thy house.—<sup>c</sup> Neh. xiii. 14.

<sup>d</sup> Heb. with great weeping.—<sup>e</sup> Chap. xxxvii. 35.—<sup>2</sup> Kings xx. 8; Chap. vii. 11.—<sup>3</sup> Heb. degrees by, or, with the sun.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Verses 1-8. In those days was Hezekiah sick—See notes on 2 Kings xx. 1-11.

Verse 9. Grotius is of opinion that this song was dictated by Isaiah. But it is more probable, as Hezekiah was a truly pious man, and inspired by the Holy Spirit, that he was moved thereby to write this form of thanksgiving, both as a testimony of his own gratitude to God, and for the instruction of future ages.

Verses 10, 11. I said—Within myself; I concluded, in the cutting off of my days—When my

days were cut off by the sentence of God, related verse 1; I shall go to the gates of the grave—I perceive that I must die without any hopes of prevention. The grave is called man's long home, Eccles. xii. 5; and the house appointed for all living, Job xxx. 23; and death opens the gates of this house. I am deprived of the residue of my years—Which I might have lived according to the common course of nature, and of God's dispensations; and which I hoped to live for the service of God and of my generation. I shall not see the Lord—I shall not behold his beauty and glory as he manifests them in his

A. M. 3292. LORD, <sup>f</sup> in the land of the living : I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world.

12 <sup>r</sup> Mine age is departed, and is removed from me as a shepherd's tent : I have cut off like a weaver my life : he will cut me off <sup>4</sup> with pining sickness : from day *even* to night wilt thou make an end of me.

13 I reckoned till morning, *that*, as a lion, so will he break all my bones : from day *even* to night wilt thou make an end of me.

<sup>f</sup> Psa. xxvii. 13 ; cxvi. 9. — <sup>4</sup> Job vii. 6. — <sup>4</sup> Or, *from the thrum.*

temple, in his oracles and ordinances ; I shall not enjoy him : for *seeing* is frequently put for enjoying ; *even the Lord in the land of the living*—In this world, which is often so called ; which limitation is prudently added, to intimate that he expected to see God in another place and manner, on the other side death ; but he despairs of seeing him any more on this side death, as he had seen him in the sanctuary, Psa. lxxiii. 2. *I shall behold man no more, &c.*—I shall have no more society with men upon earth. Many good men, under the law, had but imperfect notions of a future state, and thought it a great unhappiness to be deprived, by death, of the communion of saints here upon earth. But by *not seeing the Lord in the land of the living*, Hezekiah might probably mean that he should not see the effects of God's grace and goodness in the deliverance of his people.

Verse 12. *Mine age is departed*—The time of my life is expired ; *and is removed as a shepherd's tent*—Which is easily and speedily removed : *I have cut off*—Namely, by my sins, provoking God to do it ; or, I have concluded, and declare that my life is, or will be, soon cut off : for men are often said, in the Scriptures, to do those things that they only declare and pronounce to be done ; *like a weaver my life*—Who cutteth off the web from the loom, either when it is finished, or before, according to his pleasure. *He—God ; will cut me off with pining sickness*—With a consuming disease, wasting my spirits and life ; *from day, even till night, wilt thou make an end of me*—That is, either, 1st, This sickness will kill me in the space of one day ; or, 2d, Thou dost pursue me night and day with continual pains, and wilt not cease till thou hast made a full end of me ; so that I expect every day will be my last day. Bishop Lowth translates this verse : " My habitation is taken away, and is removed from me, like a shepherd's tent : my life is cut off, as by the weaver ; he will sever me from the loom ; in the course of the day thou wilt finish my web." Vitrin-ga and Dr. Waterland read the verse nearly in the same manner, considering the similitude of the weaver as being continued to the end of it.

Verses 13, 14. *I reckoned till morning, &c.*—When night came I reckoned I should die before the next morning, my pains being as great as if my bones had been broken, and the whole frame of my body

14 Like a crane or a swallow, so did I chatter : <sup>h</sup> I did mourn as a dove : mine eyes fail *with looking* upward : O LORD, I am oppressed : <sup>5</sup> undertake for me.

15 What shall I say ? he hath both spoken unto me, and himself hath done *it* : I shall go softly all my years <sup>i</sup> in the bitterness of my soul.

16 O LORD, by these *things men* live, and in all these *things is* the life of my spirit : so wilt thou recover me, and make me to live.

<sup>h</sup> Chap. lix. 11. — <sup>5</sup> Or, *ease me.* — <sup>i</sup> Job vii. 11 ; x. 1.

crushed by a lion. Bishop Lowth reads : *I roared until the morning like the lion ; so did he break to pieces all my bones. Like a crane or a swallow, &c.*—" My pains were sometimes so violent that they forced me to cry aloud ; at other times my strength was so exhausted that I could only groan inwardly, and bemoan my unhappy condition in sighs." *I did mourn as a dove*—Whose mournful tone is observed Isa. lix. 11, and elsewhere ; *mine eyes fail with looking upward*—While I lift up my eyes and heart to God for relief in vain ; *O Lord, I am oppressed*—Namely, by my disease, which, like a serjeant, hath seized upon me, and is haling me to the prison of the grave ; *undertake for me*—Stop the execution, and rescue me out of his hands.

Verse 15. *What shall I say?*—I want words sufficiently to express my deep sense of God's dealings with me ; *he hath spoken, &c.*—He foretold it by his word, and effected it by his hand. In this verse he seems to make a transition into the thanksgiving, which is undoubtedly contained in the following verses, and so the sense is, He hath sent a gracious message to me, by his prophet, concerning the prolongation of my life, and himself hath made good his word. Thus the words are understood by the Chaldee paraphrast, the LXX., and by the Syriac and Arabic interpreters. To this purpose also Bishop Lowth reads the clause. *He hath given me a promise, and he hath performed it. I shall go softly all my years*—I will conduct myself with humble thankfulness to God for conferring so great a favour upon so unworthy a person, as long as I live. I shall never forget my unworthiness and his loving kindness ; *in the bitterness of my soul*—That is, or rather, *upon, or after it* : or, as the Chaldee paraphrast reads it, *because of my deliverance from bitterness of soul.*

Verse 16. *By these things men live*—By virtue of thy gracious word, or promise, and powerful work ; or, by thy promises, and thy performance of them : and therefore it is not strange that one word of God hath brought me back from the jaws of death. *And in all these things is the life of my spirit*—As all men's lives are thy gift, so I shall always acknowledge the preservation of mine to be owing to thy goodness in promising, and thy faithfulness in fulfilling thy promise. *So wilt thou recover me, &c.*—Or, *for thou hast recovered me. Thou hast restored my health and prolonged my life.*—Bishop Lowth.

A. M. 3292. 17 Behold, <sup>6</sup>for peace I had great bit-  
B. C. 712. terness : but <sup>7</sup>thou hast in love to my  
soul *delivered it* from the pit of corruption : for  
thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back.

18 For <sup>8</sup>the grave cannot praise thee, death  
cannot celebrate thee : they that go down into  
the pit cannot hope for thy truth.

19 The living, the living, he shall praise  
thee, as I *do* this day : <sup>1</sup>the father to the chil-  
dren shall make known thy truth.

<sup>6</sup> Or, on my peace came great bitterness.—<sup>7</sup> Heb. thou hast loved my soul from the pit.—<sup>8</sup> Psa. vi. 5 ; xxx. 9 ; lxxxviii. 11 ;

Verse 17. *Behold, for peace I had great bitterness*—“When I perceived and feared no evil, and seemed to enjoy my usual health, then this terrible evil came upon me.” The Hebrew, however, לשלתי כר לו כר, may be properly rendered, *Behold my grievous anguish is turned into ease* ; or, *My great bitterness was unto peace*, that is, became the occasion of my safety and comfort, for it drove me to prayer, and prayer prevailed with God for a gracious answer, and the prolonging of my life. *Thou hast in love to my soul, &c.*—That is, in kindness to me, (the soul being put for the man,) *delivered it from the pit of corruption*—This is an emphatical circumstance, for sometimes God prolongs men's days in anger, foreknowing that they will only fill up still more the measure of their iniquities. *For thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back*—Thou hast forgiven those sins that brought this affliction upon me, and, upon that account, hast removed the punishment of them.

Verses 18–20. *For the grave cannot praise thee*—The dead cannot be instruments of promoting thy glory among men upon earth, or of making thy goodness known to others, which I desire and determine to do. *They cannot hope for thy truth*—Cannot expect nor receive the accomplishment of thy promised goodness in this world. *The living, &c., shall praise thee*—They are especially obliged to do it, and they only have the privilege of doing it among men on earth. *The father to the children, &c.*—They shall not only praise thee while they live, but shall take care to propagate and perpetuate thy praise to all succeeding generations. Or, he means, “Thy wonderful mercy toward me shall be

20 The LORD *was ready* to save me : therefore we will sing my songs  
to the stringed instruments all the days of our life in the house of the LORD.

21 For <sup>2</sup>Isaiah had said, Let them take a lump of figs, and lay *it* for a plaster upon the bile, and he shall recover.

22 <sup>3</sup>Hezekiah also had said, What *is* the sign that I shall go up to the house of the LORD ?

cxv. 17 ; Eccles. ix. 10.—<sup>1</sup> Deut. iv. 9 ; vi. 7 ; Psa. lxxviii. 3, 4. <sup>2</sup> 2 Kings xx. 27.—<sup>3</sup> 2 Kings xx. 8.

recorded for the benefit of after ages ; and fathers shall mention it to their children, as an instance of thy faithfulness.” *The Lord was ready to save me*—Was a present help to me, ready to hear and succour me upon my praying to him in my great extremity. *Therefore will we sing my songs*—Both I and my people will sing those songs of praise which are due, especially from me, for God's great mercy to me ; *to the stringed instruments*—Or, *to the harp*, (as Bishop Lowth renders it,) which was according to the custom of those times. Some infer from this verse that Hezekiah composed several other sacred songs, some of which may be still extant among the Psalms. *All the days of our life in the house of the Lord*—Here we are taught, that the proper fruit of deliverance from evil is thanksgiving, diffusing itself through all the actions of our life. This passage exhibits to us especially a picture of our duty and state as *Christians*, who, redeemed as we are by the precious blood of the Son of God from everlasting destruction, ought, with all the powers of our souls and bodies, to celebrate his name and glory, so that our whole life may appear one continued thanksgiving.—Vitringa.

Verses 21, 22. *For Isaiah had said, Let them take a lump of figs*—See note on 2 Kings xx. 7. *Hezekiah also had said*—Or, *for Hezekiah had said ; What is the sign that I shall go up*—Namely, within three days, as is more fully related 2 Kings xx. 5, 8 ; *to the house of the Lord?*—For thither he designed to go first, partly that he might pay his vows and thanksgivings to God, and partly that he might engage the people to praise God with him and for him.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

The king of Babylon sends ambassadors with letters and a present to Hezekiah, who shows them his treasures, 1, 2. Isaiah foretels the Babylonish captivity, 3–7. Hezekiah's resignation, 8.



things. Much of Christ and of gospel grace we met with in the foregoing part of this book; but in this latter part we shall find much more: and, as if it were designed for a prophetic summary of the New Testament, it begins with the subject which begins the gospels, the voice of one crying in the wilderness, chap. xl. 3; and concludes with that which concludes the book of the Revelation, the new heavens and the new earth, chap. lvi. 22."

In this chapter we have, (1.) A command to comfort God's people with the glad tidings of redemption, 1, 2. (2.) These tidings introduced by a voice in the wilderness, giving assurance that all obstruction shall be removed, and that though all creatures fail and fade, the word of God shall be confirmed and accomplished, 3-8. (3.) A joyful prospect given to the people of God of the happy consequences of this redemption, 9-11. (4.) The sovereignty and power of that God magnified, who effects this redemption, 12-17. (5.) Idols triumphed over, and idolaters upbraided with their folly, 18-26. (6.) The people of God reproved for their fears and dependences, and encouragement given them by gracious promises, 27-31.

A. M. 3294. COMFORT ye, comfort ye my  
B. C. 710. people, saith your God.

2 Speak ye<sup>1</sup> comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her<sup>2</sup> warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: <sup>3</sup> for she hath received of the LORD's hand double for all her sins.

3 ¶ <sup>b</sup> The voice of him that crieth in the

<sup>1</sup> Heb. to the heart.—<sup>2</sup> Or, appointed time.—<sup>3</sup> Job xlii. 10; Chap. lxi. 7.—<sup>b</sup> Matt. iii. 3; Mark i. 3; Luke iii. 4; John

#### NOTES ON CHAPTER XL.

Verses 1, 2. *Comfort ye, &c.*—"The prophet, in the foregoing chapter, had delivered a very explicit declaration of the impending dissolution of the kingdom of Judah, and of the captivity of the royal house of David, and of the people, under the king 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 favour. 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, was necessary, in the design and order of Providence, for the fulfilling of God's promises of establishing a more glorious and 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 intimation of the latter, and sometimes is so fully possessed with the glories of the future more remote kingdom, that he seems to leave the more immediate subject of his commission almost out of the question."—Bishop Lowth.

*Comfort ye my people*—Ye prophets and ministers of the Lord, which now are, or hereafter shall be; the LXX. say, *ιερεις, ye priests*; deliver the following comfortable message from me to my people, that they may not sink under their burdens. *Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem*—Hebrew, *לֵב יְרוּשָׁלַם, to the heart of Jerusalem*. So the LXX., *λαλησατε εις την καρδιαν*. And cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished—Proclaim in my name, that the time of her servitude, captivity, and misery, is finished. The LXX. render it, *Comfort her, οτι πλησθη η ταπεινωσις αυτης, because her humiliation, that is, the time of her humiliation, is fulfilled*. *Her iniquity is pardoned*—I am reconciled to her; I will not impute sin to her, so as to punish her any longer for it. *She hath received at the Lord's hand double, &c.*—

wilderness, <sup>o</sup> Prepare ye the way of A. M. 3294.  
the LORD, <sup>d</sup> make straight in the de- B. C. 710.  
sert a highway for our God.

4 Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: <sup>o</sup> and the crooked shall be made <sup>3</sup> straight, and the rough places <sup>4</sup> plain:

i. 23.—<sup>c</sup> Mal. iii. 1.—<sup>d</sup> Psalm lxxviii. 4; Chapter xlix. 11. <sup>o</sup> Chap. xlv. 2.—<sup>3</sup> Or, a straight place.—<sup>4</sup> Or, a plain place.

Not twice as much as her sins deserved, for she herself confesses the contrary, Lam. iii. 22; Ezra ix. 13; but abundantly enough to answer God's design in this chastisement, which was to humble and reform them, and to warn others by their example; *double* being often put for *abundantly*. Or, "double in proportion to God's usual severity in punishing men's sins." See Jer. xvi. 18, and xvii. 18; Rev. xviii. 6. God always punishes men *less than their iniquities deserve*; yet he showed greater severity against the sins of the Jews than toward those of other nations, Dan. ix. 12; Amos iii. 2. For as they had received more peculiar favours from God, and a clearer knowledge of his will, than the rest of mankind, their sins were the more aggravated, and required a severer chastisement. Vitringa, however, and Bishop Lowth, not to mention some other learned interpreters, understand the clause in a different light. The meaning, according to the former, is, "that though God might, with great justice, punish the sins of his people more severely, yet, at this time of grace, he would cease from his severity, would forgive their sins, and crown them with a *double portion of his blessings*." And the bishop, comparing the passage with ch. lxi. 7; Job xlii. 10; and Zech. ix. 12, (which see,) translates the verse, "Speak ye animating words to Jerusalem, and declare unto her that her warfare is fulfilled; that the expiation of her iniquity is accepted; that she shall receive, at the hands of Jehovah, blessings double to the punishment of all her sins."

Verses 3, 4. *The voice of him that crieth*—Or, as the Hebrew may be properly rendered, *A voice crieth*; an abrupt and imperfect speech, implying, "Methinks I hear a voice;" or, "A voice shall be heard;" *in the wilderness*—Which word signifies the place, either where the cry was made, or where the way was to be prepared, as it is expressed in the following clause, which seems to be added to explain this. Bishop Lowth understands it in this latter sense, and translates the words, *A voice crieth*

A. M. 3294. 5 And the glory of the LORD  
B. C. 710. shall be revealed, and all flesh  
shall see it together : for the mouth

Job xiv. 2 ; Psa. xc. 5 ; cii. 11 ;

*In the wilderness, prepare ye the way of Jehovah.* Which he thus interprets, "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, unpassable country. The idea is taken from the practice of the 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 called *stratores*." The bishop understands the prophet as referring to the return of the Jews from Babylon, which he has "no doubt was the first, though not the principal thing in his view." This deliverance, he says, "is considered 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 was 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." "Babylon," the bishop adds, "was separated from Judea by an immense tract of country, which was one continued desert ; that large part of Arabia, called very properly *Deserta*. This was the nearest way homeward 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 most obvious circumstance, by which the prophet could have opened his subject."

But though Bishop Lowth considers the prophet as first intending to comfort the Jews in their captivity, by predicting, in these words, that God would make the way plain for their return, yet he views him also as employing this deliverance out of Babylon, "as an image to shadow out a redemption of an infinitely higher and more important nature." "Obvious and plain," says he, "as I think this literal sense is, we have nevertheless the irrefragable authority of John the Baptist, and of Christ 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 deliver-

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of the LORD hath spoken it. A. M. 3294.  
B. C. 710. 6 The voice said, Cry. And he  
said, What shall I cry? ' All flesh is grass,

ciii. 15 ; James i. 10 ; 1 Pet. i. 24.

ance of the Jewish nation, effected by Cyrus, are, with good reason, and upon undoubted authority, to be understood of the redemption of mankind by Christ." This interpretation supposes the *wilderness* to be the place where the way was prepared, rather than the place where the cry was made, and, in the spiritual or mystical application now mentioned, that wilderness signifies "the Jewish Church, to which John was sent to announce the coming of Messiah, and which 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." It must be observed, however, that, according to the translation of this clause by the LXX., and the punctuation, as we have it in their copies, and as it is understood by all the evangelists, the voice cried in the desert. For they all read, *φωνη βοωντος εν τη ερημω, Ετοιμασατε, &c.* *The voice of one crying in the desert, Prepare ye, &c.* But, omitting the consideration of the pointing, we may allow, with some interpreters of the first authority, that "the words, *in the desert*, belong to both parts of the sentence. *The voice of one crying in the desert, Prepare ye in the desert the way of the Lord.* And the word *desert* may be understood both in a proper and mystical sense, for it is certain that John proclaimed this approach of the Messiah *in a desert*, in the *wilderness of Judea* ; and thence took occasion to consider that people, in which the kingdom of God was to be manifested under the figure of a desert, to be levelled before the face of Jesus Christ ; for the metaphorical expressions which follow refer to that great preparation of mind which is necessary for the reception of Christ : see Malachi iii. 1. That raising the low, that debasing the high, that refutation of all false and erroneous doctrine, and introduction of truth and righteousness, which was the consequence of the revelation of Christ." See Vitringa.

Verse 5. *And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed*—It was revealed in some sort when God brought his people out of Babylon : for that was a glorious work of God, in which he displayed his power, and love, and faithfulness in fulfilling his promises. But his glory was much more eminently revealed when Christ, *the Lord of glory*, was manifested in the flesh, and gave much clearer and fuller discoveries of God's glorious wisdom, holiness, goodness, and other divine perfections, than ever before had been imparted to mankind, or to his church. *And all flesh shall see it together*—All nations, Jews as well as Gentiles. *For the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it*—Though it may seem incredible, yet God is able to accomplish it.

Verses 6-8. *The voice said, Cry*—Rather, *A voice ;*

3

A. M. 3294. and all the goodness thereof is as  
B. C. 710. the flower of the field :

7 The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because <sup>s</sup> the Spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass.

8 The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but

<sup>r</sup> Psalm ciii. 16. — <sup>h</sup> John xii. 34; 1 Peter i. 25.  
<sup>s</sup> Or, O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, Chapter

for it is not the voice last mentioned, which cried in the wilderness, that is intended, but the voice of God, who (verse 1) said, *Comfort my people*. Having, with a view to comfort them, commissioned his prophet to foretel glorious and wonderful things, which he was determined to do for them, he here commands him to assure them of the certainty of these things, by representing the vast difference between the nature, word, and work of men, and those of God. All that men are or have, yea, their highest accomplishments, are but like the grass, or flower of the field, weak and vanishing, soon nipped and brought to nothing: but God's word is like himself, immutable and irresistible: and, therefore, as *the mouth of the Lord*, and not of man, had spoken this, as was said verse 5, so they ought not to doubt but it would be fulfilled in due time. The passage first refers to the deliverance from Babylon, and imports both that the power of man, if it should set itself to oppose that deliverance, was not to be feared, for it should be as grass before the word, that is, before the purpose and promise of the Lord; should soon wither and come to nothing; and if it should favour, and endeavour to promote the deliverance, it was not to be confided in, for it was still but *as grass*, compared with the Lord's word, the only firm foundation for men to build their hopes upon. The words are still more applicable to the salvation of the gospel, the salvation from the power of Satan, sin, and death: with respect either to the preventing or effecting this, the wisdom, or power, or merit of man, is but as grass, or a flower of the grass; weak, and frail, and fading, and neither to be trusted in nor feared. When God is about to work deliverance for his people, he will have them to be taken off from depending upon creatures which would fail their expectation; for he will not allow any creature to be a rival with him for the confidence and hope of his people. As it is his word only that shall stand for ever, so on that word only must our faith stand. St. Peter applies this passage to the salvation effected for God's spiritual Israel, and by *this word of our God which shall stand for ever*, he understands that word of the gospel which is preached to us, and by which we are regenerated and purified. See 1 Pet. i. 23-25. *The grass withereth, &c., because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it*—Rather, *the wind of the Lord*, as רוח יהוה is with equal propriety translated, and undoubtedly here signifies; which Bishop Lowth justly observes, "is a Hebraism, meaning no more than a strong wind;" adding, "It is well known, that a hot wind in the East at once destroys every green thing." See note on Ps. ciii. 16. *Surely, the peo-*

<sup>h</sup> the word of our God shall stand for ever. A. M. 3294.  
B. C. 710.

9 ¶ <sup>s</sup> O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain: <sup>6</sup> O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God!

xli. 27; lii. 7.—<sup>s</sup> Or, O thou that tellest good tidings to Jerusalem.

*ple is grass*—Or, *this people*, as יהוה may be properly rendered, namely, the Jews no less than the Gentiles. *But the word of our God shall stand for ever*—Whatsoever God hath said shall infallibly be verified, and come to pass. And particularly the glad tidings of salvation by Christ, published in the ministry of the gospel, and received by true faith, shall be confirmed and established, and be a solid foundation for the confidence and hope of the people of God to rest on in all ages.

Verse 9. *O Zion, thou bringest good tidings*—Of deliverance from the Babylonish captivity, to other cities, and parts of the country; and of redemption by Christ to other nations. Lowth, and many other interpreters, think the marginal reading is to be preferred, as giving a better sense, *O thou that bringest good tidings to Zion, &c.* According to which, Zion is not the deliverer, but the receiver of the tidings, as she is in the parallel place, chap. lii. 7. But the translation in our text agrees better with the Hebrew, in which the word for the bringer of the tidings, כבשרה, and the verb יערי, *get thee up*, are both in the feminine gender, and agree with Zion and Jerusalem, continually spoken of, as cities generally are, in that gender, but not with any prophet, apostle, or other messenger of God in the masculine gender. It is true, Bishop Lowth supplies a word to suit the text, as to this particular, and reads, *O daughter, that bringest good tidings*. But that seems to be taking a liberty with the text which necessity only could warrant, a necessity which certainly does not here exist. For the passage, as we have it rendered, makes good sense, representing Zion or Jerusalem, collectively considered, and including its inhabitants, as the publisher, and the cities of Judah as the hearers of the good tidings. The glad tidings of the coming of Christ into the world, and of the salvation of mankind through him, having been made known to Zion, or Jerusalem, were carried from thence, first to all the cities of Judah, and then to the most distant nations. *For out of Zion went forth the gospel law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem*: and the rod of the Messiah's strength, the gospel word, was sent forth out of Zion. See notes on chap. ii. 3; and Ps. cx. 2. *Get thee up upon the high mountain*—That thy voice may be better heard. *Lift up thy voice; be not afraid*—Lest thou shouldst be found a false witness, for the declaration shall certainly be verified; *say to the cities of Judah*—To all my people in the several places of their abode, whether cities or countries; *behold your God*—Take notice of God's appearance for your comfort and deliverance; and also that the Messiah, so long expected, is

A. M. 3294. 10 Behold the Lord God will come  
B. C. 710. <sup>7</sup> with strong *hand*, and <sup>1</sup> his arm shall rule for him: behold, <sup>k</sup> his reward *is* with him, and <sup>8</sup> his work before him.

11 He shall <sup>1</sup> feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry *them* in his bosom, and shall gently lead those <sup>9</sup> that are with young.

12 ¶ <sup>m</sup> Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of

<sup>7</sup> Or, *against the strong*.—<sup>i</sup> Chap. lix. 16.—<sup>k</sup> Chap. lxii. 11; Rev. xxii. 12.—<sup>9</sup> Or, *recompense for his work*, Chap. xlix. 4. <sup>1</sup> Chap. xlix. 10; Ezek. xxxiv. 23; xxxvii. 24; John x. 11; Heb. xiii. 20; 1 Pet. ii. 25; v. 4; Rev. vii. 17.

now at last exhibited, in and through whom God will be so present with you, that men may point at him, and say, *Behold, here he is!* See Hag. ii. 7; Zech. ix. 9; Mal. iii. 1; Acts xiii. 32, 33.

Verses 10, 11. *Behold, the Lord God will come with a strong hand*—With invincible strength, to deliver his people from their most powerful enemies; and his arm shall rule for him—His own power shall be sufficient, without any other help, to overcome all opposition. *His reward is with him*—He comes furnished with recompenses, as well of mercy and blessings for his friends and followers, as of justice and vengeance for his enemies: or, “the reward and the recompense which he bestows, and which he will pay to his faithful servants, he has ready at hand with him, and holds out before him to encourage those who trust in him, and wait for him; and his work before him—He is ready to execute what he hath undertaken; or, he carries on his work effectually; for that is said in Scripture to be before a man which is in his power. *He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, &c.*—He shall perform all the offices of a tender and faithful shepherd toward his people, conducting himself with great wisdom, condescension, and compassion to every one of them, according to their several capacities and infirmities. *And shall gently lead those that are with young*—Or, *those that give suck*, as the word עָלִית, may be rendered. Bishop Lowth translates the clause, *The nursing ewes shall he gently lead*; observing, that “it is a beautiful image, expressing, with the utmost propriety, as well as elegance, the tender attention of the shepherd to his flock.”

Verses 12–14. *Who hath measured the waters, &c.*—Who can do this but God? And this discourse on God's infinite power and wisdom is added, to give them the greater assurance, that he was able, as he had declared himself willing, to do those great and wonderful things which he had promised; and neither men nor false gods were able to hinder him. *Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, &c.*—Whom did God either need or take to advise him in any of his works, either of creation or the government of the world? Were they not all the effects of his own sole wisdom? Therefore, though all the nations of the world should conspire and contrive against

the earth in <sup>10</sup> a measure, and weighed <sup>A. M. 3294.</sup>  
the mountains in scales, and the hills <sup>B. C. 710.</sup>  
in a balance?

13 <sup>a</sup> Who hath directed the Spirit of the LORD, or, *being* <sup>11</sup> his counsellor, hath taught him?

14 With whom took he counsel, and *who* <sup>12</sup> instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and showed to him the way of <sup>13</sup> understanding?

15 Behold, the nations *are* as a drop of a

<sup>1</sup> Or, *that give suck*.—<sup>m</sup> Prov. xxx. 4.—<sup>10</sup> Heb. *a tierce*. <sup>a</sup> Job xxi. 22; xxxvi. 22; Romans xi. 34; 1 Corin. ii. 16. <sup>11</sup> Heb. *man of his counsel*.—<sup>12</sup> Heb. *made him understand*. <sup>13</sup> Heb. *understandings*?

him, and oppose this work of his, as indeed they will do, yet his own counsel shall confound all their devices, and he will carry on his work in spite of them. *Who taught him in the path of judgment*—How to conduct himself, and manage his affairs with good judgment and discretion? Bishop Lowth translates the verse, “Whom hath he consulted, that he should instruct him, and teach him the path of judgment; that he should impart to him science, and inform him in the way of understanding?” Thus the prophet, “in the most sublime manner, celebrates the divine majesty and greatness, but particularly his wisdom. Rapt into an ecstasy, after he had described the beginning and the nature of the new economy, he sees that there would be many men of worldly prudence, who would hesitate at the methods of the divine counsel, and that the pious themselves, considering the extent and firmness of the kingdom of Satan in the world, the obstinate prejudices of the Gentiles, and the power of idolatry, would have their fears and doubts of the effect and success of the kingdom of the Messiah; a spiritual kingdom, to be established without any external means, by the mere preaching of the word, and to oppose itself to whatever was *great or strong* among men. The prophet, therefore, recurs to these thoughts; teaching, *first*, that the divine counsel, though it might seem strange to carnal judgment, was yet founded in the sovereign and most perfect wisdom and knowledge of God, whereof the clearest proofs were discernible in the structure of this world; that God was wiser than men; that his counsel was maturely weighed; that it pertained to his wisdom and glory to establish and to promote his kingdom in the world, rather by this method than any other, that he might put to shame all carnal wisdom, both of the Jews and Gentiles; for that the *foolishness of God*, as it seems to carnal men, *is wiser than men*, and the *weakness of God stronger than men*, (1 Cor. i. 22.) &c., therefore he knew that this method of establishing his kingdom would have its certain effect; that this word, this faith, would overcome the world, and subvert idolatry.” See Vitringa and Dodd.

Verses 15–17. *Behold the nations, &c.*—As the drop of a bucket is as nothing when compared with the waters of the immense ocean, so all the nations

A. M. 3294. bucket, and are counted as the small  
B. C. 710.

dust of the balance : behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing.

16 And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt-offering.

17 All nations before him are as ° nothing ; and ° they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity.

18 ¶ To whom then will ye ° liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him?

19 ° The workman melteth a graven image, and the goldsmith spreadeth it over with gold, and casteth silver chains.

20 He that <sup>14</sup> is so empoveryished that he hath no oblation chooseth a tree that will not rot ; he seeketh unto him a cunning workman ° to prepare a graven image that shall not be moved.

<sup>10</sup> Dan. iv. 34. — <sup>11</sup> Psa. lxii. 9. — <sup>12</sup> Verse 25 ; Chap. xvi. 5 ; Acts xvii. 29. — <sup>13</sup> Chap. xli. 6 ; xlv. 12, &c. ; Jer. x. 3, &c. <sup>14</sup> Heb. is poor of oblation. — <sup>15</sup> Chap. xli. 7 ; Jer. x. 4.

of the world are as nothing when compared with God ; and are counted by him, and in comparison of him, as the small dust which accidentally cleaves to the balance, but makes no alteration of the weight. Behold, he taketh up the isles, &c.—Those numerous and vast countries, to which they went from Judea by sea, which are commonly called isles in the Scriptures. And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, &c.—Although he is pleased to accept poor and small sacrifices from his people, yet, if men were to offer a sacrifice suitable to his infinite excellency, the whole forest of Lebanon could not afford either a sufficient number of beasts to be sacrificed, or a sufficient quantity of wood to consume the sacrifice. All nations before him—In his eyes, or being set against him, as <sup>1771</sup> properly and usually signifies ; are as nothing—In his judgment ; or in comparison of him ; less than nothing—Less than a thing of naught, or of no account or worth.

Verse 18. To whom then will ye liken God?—This is a proper inference from the foregoing discourse of God's infinite greatness ; from whence he takes occasion to show both the folly of those that make mean and visible representations of God, and the utter inability of men or idols to give any opposition to God. And this discourse, concerning the madness of idolaters, prosecuted both here and in the following chapter, was designed by God as a necessary antidote, whereby the Jews might be preserved from the contagion of idolatry, to which God saw they now had strong inclinations, and would have many and great temptations while they were in captivity.

Verses 19, 20. The workman melteth a graven image—He melteth some base metal into a mould which giveth it the form of an image, which afterward is graven or carved to make it the more exact and pleasing likeness of some creature. Thus the image owes all its excellence to the earth for the matter of it, and to the art of man for the fashion

21 ' Have ye not known? have ye not heard? hath it not been told you from the beginning? have ye not understood from the foundations of the earth?

22 <sup>15</sup> It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers ; that ° stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in :

23 That bringeth the ° princes to nothing ; he maketh the judges of the earth as vanity.

24 Yea, they shall not be planted : yea, they shall not be sown : yea, their stock shall not take root in the earth : and he shall also blow upon them, and they shall wither, and the whirlwind shall take them away as stubble.

<sup>16</sup> Psalm xix. 1 ; Acts xiv. 17 ; Romans i. 19. — <sup>17</sup> Or, him that sitteth, &c. — <sup>18</sup> Job ix. 8 ; Psa. civ. 2 ; Chap. xlii. 5 ; xlv. 24 ; li. 13 ; Jer. x. 12. — <sup>19</sup> Job xii. 21 ; Psa. cvii. 40.

of it. The goldsmith spreadeth it over with gold—Beaten out into leaves or plates ; and casteth silver chains—For ornaments ; or rather, for use, to fasten it to a wall or pillar, lest it should fall down and be broken in pieces. Which is spoken by way of derision of such ridiculous deities as needed such supports. He that hath no oblation—That can hardly procure money to buy the meanest sacrifice ; chooseth a tree, &c.—He is so mad upon his idols, that he will find money to procure the choicest materials, and the best artist to make his idol ; to prepare a graven image, &c.—Which, after all this cost, cannot stir one step out of its place to give him any help.

Verses 21-24. Have ye not known—Jehovah to be the only true God, the Maker and Governor of the world, and all its inhabitants? How can ye be ignorant of so evident a truth? He addresses his speech to the idolatrous Gentiles ; from the beginning—Namely, of the world, as the next clause explains it : were not these infinite perfections of God manifestly discovered to all mankind, by the creation of the world? It is he that sitteth—As a judge or governor upon his throne ; upon, or rather, above, the circle of the earth—Far above this round earth, even in the highest heavens ; from whence he looketh down upon the earth, where men appear to him like grasshoppers. As here we have the circle of the earth, so elsewhere we read of the circle of heaven, Job xxii. 14, and of the circle of the deep, or sea, Prov. viii. 27, because the form of the heaven, and earth, and sea, is circular. Spreadeth them out as a tent—For the benefit of the earth and of mankind, that all parts might partake of their comfortable influences. That bringeth the princes to nothing—Who can, at his pleasure, destroy all the great potentates of the world. Yea, they—The princes and judges last mentioned ; shall not be planted, &c.—They shall take no root, for planting and sowing are in order to taking root.

A. M. 3294. 25 <sup>r</sup> To whom then will ye liken  
B. C. 710. me, or shall I be equal? saith the  
Holy One.

26 ¶ Lift up your eyes on high, and behold  
who hath created these *things*, that bringeth  
out their host by number: <sup>2</sup> he calleth them  
all by names, by the greatness of his might,  
for that *he is* strong in power; not one faileth.

27 Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest,  
O Israel, My way is hid from the LORD, and  
my judgment is passed over from my God?

28 Hast thou not known? hast thou not

<sup>r</sup> Verse 18; Deut. iv. 15, &c.—<sup>2</sup> Psa. cxlvii. 4.

They shall not continue and flourish, as they have  
vainly imagined, but shall be rooted up, and perish.

Verses 25, 26. *To whom then will ye liken me*—  
He repeats what he said verse 18, that he might  
oblige them to the more serious and frequent con-  
sideration of the absurdity of idolatry. *Lift up your  
eyes on high*—To the high and starry heaven, as ap-  
pears from the following words. *Who created these  
things*—Which you see on high? The host of hea-  
ven, as it follows. *That bringeth out their host*—  
That at first brought them out of nothing, and from day  
to day brings them forth, making them to rise and set  
in their appointed times; *by number*—As a general  
brings forth his army into the field, and there mus-  
ters them. *He calleth them all by names*—As a  
master calleth all the members of his family. *For  
that he is strong*—Which work is a certain and evi-  
dent proof of God's infinite power; *not one faileth*.  
—Either to appear when he calls them, or to do the  
work to which he sends them.

Verses 27, 28. *Why sayest thou, O Jacob*—The  
consolatory part of the prophet's discourse begins at  
this verse, wherein the foregoing doctrine and prophe-  
cy are applied to the comfort of the church, complain-  
ing, amid her various afflictions, that she had been  
neglected of the Lord; which complaint makes the  
basis of the consolation contained in this period.  
Why dost thou give way to such jealousies con-  
cerning thy God, of whose infinite power, and wis-  
dom, and goodness, there are such evident demon-  
strations? *My way is hid*—He takes no notice of  
my prayers, and tears, and sufferings, but suffers  
mine enemies to abuse me at their pleasure. This  
complaint is uttered in the name of the people, be-  
ing prophetically supposed to be in captivity. *My  
judgment is passed over from my God*—My cause.  
God has neglected to plead my cause, and to give  
judgment for me against mine enemies. *Hast thou  
not known?*—Art thou ignorant, wilt thou not con-  
sider; *that the everlasting God*—Who had no begin-  
ning of days, and will have no end of life; who was  
from eternity, and will be to eternity, and with whom  
therefore there is no deficiency, no decay; *the Lord*  
—Hebrew, *יהוה*, the self-existent Being; *the  
Creator of the ends of the earth*—That is, of the  
whole earth, to its utmost bounds, and of all that is  
in it; *fainteth not, neither is weary*—With the care

heard, *that* the everlasting God, the <sup>A. M. 3294</sup>  
LORD, the Creator of the ends of the <sup>B. C. 710.</sup>  
earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? <sup>a</sup> *there*  
is no searching of his understanding.

29 He giveth power to the faint: and to *them  
that have* no might he increaseth strength.

30 Even the youths shall faint and be weary,  
and the young men shall utterly fall:

31 But they that wait upon the LORD <sup>b</sup> shall  
<sup>16</sup> renew *their* strength; they shall mount up  
with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not  
be weary; *and* they shall walk, and not faint.

<sup>a</sup> Psa. cxlvii. 5; Rom. xi. 33.—<sup>b</sup> Psa. ciii. 5.—<sup>16</sup> Heb. change.

of his church, or of the world? He is not by age  
or labour become weak and unable to help his peo-  
ple, as men are wont to be; nor is the care of them  
any burden to him. *There is no searching of his  
understanding*—His providence comprehends all  
things, and nothing is exempted from it: and the  
counsels by which he governs all the world, and, in an  
especial manner, the affairs of his people, are far above  
the reach of any human understanding; and there-  
fore we act ignorantly and foolishly if we pass a rash  
judgment upon the ways of the infinitely wise God.

Verses 29-31. *He giveth power to the faint*—He  
hath strength enough, not only for himself, but for  
all, even the weakest of his creatures, whom he can  
easily strengthen to bear all their burdens, and to  
vanquish all their oppressors. The prophet seems  
to speak with an especial reference to those among  
God's people whose faith and hope were very low,  
which he would support, even until the time of their  
promised deliverance. *Even the youths shall faint*  
—Those that make the greatest boast of their  
strength, as young men are apt to do, shall find it  
fail them whenever God withdraws his support.  
*But they that wait upon the Lord*—That rely on him  
for strength to bear their burdens, and for deliver-  
ance from them in due time; *shall renew their  
strength*—Shall grow stronger and stronger in faith,  
patience, and fortitude, whereby they shall be more  
than conquerors over all their enemies and adversi-  
ties. *They shall mount up on wings as eagles*—  
Which, of all fowls, fly most strongly and swiftly,  
and rise highest in their flight, and out of the reach  
of all danger. *Instead of, They shall mount up,*  
&c., Bishop Lowth reads, *They shall put forth fresh  
feathers, like the moulting eagle*; observing, "It  
has been a common and popular opinion, that the  
eagle lives and retains his vigour 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 my youth  
like the eagle*, says the psalmist, on which place St.  
Ambrose notes, '*Aquila longam aetatem ducit, dum,  
retustis plumis fatiscientibus, nova pennarum suc-  
cessione juvenescit.*'" The eagle extends his age to  
a great length, while the old feathers failing, he grows  
young by a new succession of feathers. See note  
on Psa. ciii. 5.

## CHAPTER XLI.

In this and the five following chapters, God is introduced as pleading his own cause against the false gods of the heathen, and challenging the idols to show such instances of their power and goodness in protecting their votaries, as might be alleged in his behalf, with respect to his care and providence over his people. These instructions were very proper to confirm the Jews in their religion, and preserve them from being drawn aside to comply with the Babylonish idolatry. But they likewise contain plain predictions of the coming of the Messiah, and of the calling of the Gentiles and their turning from idols to serve the true and living God. In this chapter, God, by his prophet, (1.) Shows the folly of those that worshipped idols, 1-9. (2.) He encourages his faithful people to trust in him, with an assurance that he would take their part against their enemies, make them victorious over them, and bring about a happy change in their affairs, 10-20. (3.) He challenges the idols, that were rivals with him for men's adoration, to vie with him, either for knowledge or power: either to show things to come, or to do good or evil, 21-29.

A. M. 3294. **KEEP** <sup>a</sup> silence before me, O islands; and let the people renew their strength: let them come near; then let them speak: let us come near together to judgment.

2 Who raised up <sup>1</sup> the righteous man <sup>b</sup> from

<sup>a</sup> Zech. ii. 13.—<sup>b</sup> Heb. righteousness.—<sup>c</sup> Chap. xlv. 11.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER XLI.

Verse 1. *Keep, &c.*—“The prophet, having in view the subversion of idolatry, had, in the former chapter, from verse 18, argued against it, from the essence and nature of God, the supreme Creator and Ruler of the world, being such as not to be represented by any corporeal matter or figure. To this disputation he subjoined a consolation, directed to the people of God, from verse 27 to the end of the chapter. Therefore, after this consolatory parenthesis, he renews his disputation against idolaters, by an argument taken from God's certain foreknowledge, and foretelling of future events, from which he selects that remarkable one respecting Cyrus, as the deliverer of the people of God, and the destroyer of Babylon: an event utterly unknown to idols and idolaters, and therefore an astonishment to the nations; and yet an event which God so long time before exactly foretold in every circumstance by our prophet. He who can thus predict future events, the prophet urges, must be allowed to possess true divinity. He who cannot, has no claim to that honour. The prophet the rather makes use of this argument, because paganism so much gloried in its false prophecies and oracles. Here then is God exhibited, as if appearing in public, and preparing himself to dispute with idolaters, for his truth and glory; and therefore the islands and people, all the nations of the world, are summoned to plead their cause; and an awful silence is enjoined, according to the forms observed in courts of justice, for both in this and verse 21 the expressions and ideas are taken from those courts.” See Vitranga and Dodd. The phrase, *Let the people renew their strength*, signifies, “Let them prepare themselves, and come forth to the cause, furnished with all the strength of argument and reason they can collect; let them unite all their powers, and set their cause in the best light possible.”

Verses 2, 3. *Who raised up*—Into being and power? Was it not my work alone? *The righteous man*—Many expositors understand this of Abraham, who was a person eminently righteous, and was

the east, called him to his foot, <sup>a</sup> M. 3294. <sup>c</sup> gave the nations before him, and <sup>B. C. 710.</sup> made *him* rule over kings? He gave *them* as the dust to his sword, and as driven stubble to his bow.

<sup>c</sup> Gen. xiv. 14; Verse 25; Chap. xlv. 1.

called from the other side of the Euphrates, which lay eastward from Judea, and who performed the things here mentioned, partly in his own person, conquering five kings and their people with them, (Gen. xiv.,) and following God he knew not whither; and partly by his posterity, whose exploits may well be ascribed to him, not only because they came out of his loins, but also, and especially, because all their successes and victories were given to them for Abraham's sake, and by the virtue of God's covenant made with him. And this interpretation seems to receive some countenance from verses 5, 6, which agree well with the practice of the Canaanites and neighbouring nations; who, upon Israel's march toward them, were filled with great consternation, and used all possible diligence in seeking both to their idols and to men for help against them. To which may be added, that 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 idolatry, then prevailing, and threatening to overrun the whole face of the earth. But though the particulars here mentioned by the prophet are most, or all of them, applicable to Abraham, yet Lowth, Vitranga, and many other commentators of great authority, think that they more exactly belong to Cyrus, and that upon a comparison of them with what is asserted verse 25; chap. xlv. 1, 13; and xlv. 11, there can be no doubt that he is here meant. Cyrus might be called a *righteous man*, or, a *man of righteousness*, as the Hebrew rather means, because he was raised up in *righteousness*, as is said of him chap. xlv. 13, and was God's great instrument, to manifest his *faithfulness* in fulfilling his promise of delivering his people out of Babylon, and his *justice* in punishing the enemies and oppressors of his people, the Babylonians; upon which account the Medes, who served under Cyrus in his expedition, are called God's *sanctified ones*, chap. xiii. 3, 17. And all the other expressions here used are very applicable to

A. M. 3294. 3 He pursued them, *and* passed  
B. C. 710. <sup>2</sup> safely; *even* by the way *that* he  
had not gone with his feet.

4 <sup>d</sup> Who hath wrought and done *it*, calling  
the generations from the beginning? I the  
LORD, the <sup>e</sup> first, and with the last; I *am*  
he.

5 The isles saw *it*, and feared; the ends of  
the earth were afraid, drew near, and came.

6 <sup>f</sup> They helped every one his neighbour;  
and *every one* said to his brother, <sup>3</sup> Be of good  
courage.

7 <sup>g</sup> So the carpenter encouraged the <sup>4</sup> gold-

<sup>a</sup> Hebrew, *in peace*.—<sup>d</sup> Verse 26; Chapter xlv. 7; xlv. 10.  
<sup>e</sup> Chapter xliii. 10; xlv. 6; xlviii. 12; Rev. i. 17; xxii. 13.  
<sup>f</sup> Chap. xl. 19; xlv. 12.—<sup>3</sup> Heb. *Be strong*.—<sup>g</sup> Chap. xl. 19.  
<sup>4</sup> Or, *funder*.

him, and were verified in him. He came from the east, from Persia, which was directly eastward from Judea and from Babylon. He was *raised up* by God in an eminent and extraordinary manner, as is observed both by sacred and profane historians. To him also all the following particulars agree, as we shall see. And although these things were yet to come, yet the prophet speaks of them as if they were already past, a practice not unusual with the prophets. And as in the former chapter, (verse 27,) he speaks of God's people as if they were actually in captivity in Babylon, so here he speaks of them as if they were actually brought out of it by Cyrus. And by this instance he pleads his cause against the Gentiles and their idols; because this was an evident proof of God's almighty power, (as the prediction of it was of his infinite wisdom,) and of the vanity and weakness of idols, which eminently appeared in the destruction of the Babylonians, who were a people mad upon their idols, and yet were destroyed together with their idols, Jer. l. 38, and li. 47. *Called him to his foot*—To march after him, and under his banner against Babylon. Thus Barak's army is said to be at his feet, Judg. iv. 10. *Gave the nations before him, &c.*—Subdued nations and kings before him. *Gave them as the dust to his sword*—To be put to flight as easily as the dust is scattered by the wind. *He pursued them, and passed safely*—Went on in the pursuit with great ease, safety, and success; *even by the way that he had not gone*—By unknown paths; which is added as a further evidence of God's providential care of him. This was verified both in Abraham and in Cyrus.

Verses 4-6. *Who hath done it?*—Whose work was this but mine? *Calling the generations*—Calling them out of nothing; giving them breath and being; disposing and employing them as I see fit: *from the beginning*—All persons and generations of mankind from the beginning of the world. *I the Lord, the first, &c.*—Who was before all things, even from eternity, and shall be unto eternity: *the isles saw it, and feared*—Even remote countries discerned the mighty work of God in delivering his people, and

smith, *and* he that smootheth *with* A. M. 3294.  
the hammer <sup>5</sup> him that smote the B. C. 710.  
anvil, <sup>6</sup> saying, *It is* ready for the soldering;  
and he fastened it with nails, <sup>h</sup> *that* it should  
not be moved.

8 But thou, Israel, *art* my servant, Jacob  
whom I have <sup>i</sup> chosen, the seed of Abraham  
my <sup>k</sup> friend.

9 *Thou* whom I have taken from the ends  
of the earth, and called thee from the chief  
men thereof, and said unto thee, *Thou art* my  
servant; I have chosen thee, and not cast thee  
away.

<sup>5</sup> Or, *the smiting*.—<sup>6</sup> Or, *saying of the solder*, *It is good*.  
<sup>h</sup> Chapter xl. 20.—<sup>i</sup> Deuteron. vii. 6; x. 15; xiv. 2; Psalm  
cxxxv. 4; Chapter xliii. 1; xlv. 1.—<sup>k</sup> 2 Chronicles xx. 7;  
James ii. 23.

overthrowing their enemies in so wonderful a manner, and were afraid lest they should be involved in the same calamity. *The ends of the earth drew near and came*—They gathered themselves together to consult for their common safety, and to maintain the cause of their idols, which, by this instance, they perceived to be in great jeopardy. *They helped every one his neighbour*—They encouraged and assisted one another in their idolatrous practices. "Remote countries," says Lowth, "were astonished at the sudden rise of the conqueror Cyrus, and joined in an alliance to check his growing greatness, just as several artificers that are concerned in the trade of idol-making assist one another in carrying on their common interest, and stir up the zeal of others in defence of image-worship." see Acts xix. 25. Or, according to others, the prophet describes in these verses the vain and fruitless attempt of idolaters to hinder the effect of Cyrus's appearance, namely, the demolition of Babylon and its idols. "The passage may be also fitly applied to the heathen powers combining together to support idolatry, and suppress the Christian religion."

Verses 8-13. *But thou, Israel, art my servant*—Thus the Gentiles show themselves to be the servants of their idols, and own them for their gods: but thou art my people, and I am and will be thy God. *Jacob, whom I have chosen*—Out of the multitude of idolatrous nations, to be my peculiar people. *The seed of Abraham my friend*—With whom I made a strict league of perpetual friendship: see Gen. xii. 2, 3, and xv. 1, 8. "The expressions are very endearing: it is honourable to be God's *servant*, still more so to be his *chosen* servant, and to be descended from one to whom he vouchsafed the title of *friend*, as God did to Abraham, (2 Chron. xx. 7,) the greatest honour that any man is capable of: which glorious privilege Christ was pleased to communicate to his disciples, John xv. 13. *Thou whom I have taken, &c.*—Thou Israel, whom I took to myself, and brought hither in the loins of thy father Abraham, from a remote country, namely, from Chaldea; or, whom I brought out of Babylon into thine own land:

A. M. 3294. 10 ¶ <sup>1</sup> Fear thou not ; <sup>m</sup> for I am  
B. C. 710. with thee : be not dismayed ; for I  
am thy God : I will strengthen thee ; yea, I  
will help thee ; yea, I will uphold thee with  
the right hand of my righteousness.

11 Behold, all they that were incensed  
against thee shall be <sup>a</sup> ashamed and confound-  
ed : they shall be as nothing ; and <sup>7</sup> they that  
strive with thee shall perish.

12 Thou shalt seek them, and shalt not find  
them, *even* <sup>8</sup> them that contended with thee :  
<sup>9</sup> they that war against thee shall be as no-  
thing, and as a thing of naught.

13 For I the LORD thy God will hold thy  
right hand, saying unto thee, <sup>o</sup> Fear not ; I  
will help thee.

14 Fear not, thou worm Jacob, *and* ye <sup>10</sup> men  
of Israel ; I will help thee, saith the LORD,  
and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.

15 Behold, <sup>p</sup> I will make thee a new sharp thrash-

<sup>1</sup> Ver. 13, 14 ; Chap. xliii. 5.—<sup>m</sup> Deut. xxxi. 6, 8.—<sup>n</sup> Ex.  
xxiii. 22 ; Chap. xlv. 24 ; lx. 12 ; Zech. xii. 3.—<sup>7</sup> Heb. *the men*  
*of thy strife*.—<sup>8</sup> Heb. *the men of thy contention*.—<sup>9</sup> Heb. *the men*

ing instrument having <sup>11</sup> teeth : thou  
shalt thrash the mountains, and beat  
*them* small, and shalt make the hills as chaff.

16 Thou shalt <sup>a</sup> fan them, and the wind shall  
carry them away, and the whirlwind shall  
scatter them : and thou shalt rejoice in the  
LORD, *and* <sup>r</sup> shalt glory in the Holy One of  
Israel.

17 *When* the poor and needy seek water,  
and *there is none*, *and* their tongue faileth for  
thirst, I the LORD will hear them, I the God  
of Israel will not forsake them.

18 I will open <sup>a</sup> rivers in high places, and  
fountains in the midst of the valleys : I will  
make the <sup>t</sup> wilderness a pool of water, and the  
dry land springs of water.

19 I will plant in the wilderness the cedar,  
the shittah-tree, and the myrtle, and the oil-  
tree ; I will set in the desert the fir-tree, *and*  
the pine, and the box-tree together :

*of thy war*.—Verse 10.—<sup>10</sup> Or, *few men*.—<sup>p</sup> Mic. iv. 13 ;  
2 Cor. x. 4, 5.—<sup>11</sup> Heb. *mouths*.—<sup>a</sup> Jer. li. 2.—<sup>r</sup> Chap. xlv.  
25.—<sup>t</sup> Chap. xxxv. 6 ; xliii. 19 ; xlv. 3.—<sup>1</sup> Psa. cviii. 35.

which, though yet to come, he may speak of as of a  
thing past, according to the usual custom of the  
prophets when foretelling future events. But the  
former interpretation seems better to agree with the  
foregoing verse. *And called thee from the chief  
men thereof*—From the midst of many great and  
noble persons, among whom he lived in Chaldea.  
But the Hebrew, כְּאֲזִילֵיהָ, is rendered by Vitringa  
and Dr. Waterland, *from the sides thereof*, and by  
Bishop Lowth, *from the extremities thereof*, which  
is probably the prophet's meaning. *I have chosen,  
and not cast thee away*—Or, *and will not reject thee* :  
I have chosen thee and thy seed through all gene-  
rations. *They that were incensed against thee  
shall be confounded*—Both because their hopes and  
designs shall be utterly disappointed, and because the  
mischief which they contrived against thee shall  
fall on themselves. *They shall be as nothing*—Shall  
come to nothing, or perish. *Thou shalt not find  
them*—They shall be so totally consumed, that  
although thou search for them, thou shalt not be able  
to find them anywhere in the world. “The power-  
ful monarchies that have been incensed against the  
church, and have contended with her, have been  
put to shame, and brought to nothing : and this pre-  
diction hath already been fulfilled in the ruin of the  
Egyptian, Assyrian, Chaldean, Macedonian, and  
Roman empires, which we now may seek for in  
vain ; for no vestiges of the four former, and scarcely  
any of the last, can be found ; while the church still  
subsists ! In like manner all that now do, or hereafter  
shall contend with her, shall perish.”—Scott. *I the  
Lord will hold thy hand*—Or, *will strengthen it*, as  
כִּי־אֶסְמְךָ signifies : I will assist and enable thee to van-  
quish all thine enemies.

Verses 14–16. *Fear not, thou worm Jacob*—Who  
art weak in thyself, despised and trodden under foot  
by thy proud and potent enemies. *I will make thee  
a new sharp thrashing instrument*—Such as were  
usual in those times and places. *Thou shalt thrash  
the mountains and hills*—The great and lofty po-  
tentates of the world, which set themselves against  
thee : or, the greater or lesser kingdoms or countries  
which were enemies to God's truth and people ; so  
the phrase signifies, chap. ii. 14, and Psa. lxxii. 3.  
The expressions of this and the following verse  
allude to the custom of the eastern countries, of  
having their thrashing-floors upon the tops of hills  
and mountains. *Thou shalt fan them*—When thou  
hast beaten them as small as chaff ; *and the wind  
shall carry them away*—They shall no more molest  
thee ; they shall be scattered and lost. *And thou  
shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel*—For to him,  
and not to thyself, thou shalt ascribe thy victory over  
thine enemies.

Verses 17–20. *When the poor and needy seek wa-  
ter, &c.*—When my poor people are come to the  
greatest extremity of danger and misery, then will  
I appear for their relief. *I will open rivers in high  
places*—Upon the hills and mountains, where, by the  
course of nature, there are no rivers ; *and fountains  
in the midst of valleys*—Or, *in the valleys*, namely,  
in such of them as are not well watered. *I will  
make the wilderness a pool of water, &c.*—Those  
people who are like a dry and barren wilderness, I  
will abundantly water with my blessings, and make  
them fruitful : which may be understood either of  
the Jews, who were in a wilderness condition, till  
God brought them out of it ; or of the Gentiles con-  
verted to the true religion under the gospel. *I will*

A. M. 3294. B. C. 710. 20 <sup>a</sup> That they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of the LORD hath done this, and the Holy One of Israel hath created it.

21 ¶ <sup>12</sup> Produce your cause, saith the LORD; bring forth your strong reasons, saith the King of Jacob.

22 <sup>a</sup> Let them bring them forth, and show us what shall happen: let them show the former things, what they be, that we may <sup>13</sup> consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare us things for to come.

<sup>a</sup> Job. xii. 9.—<sup>12</sup> Heb. Cause to come near.—<sup>a</sup> Chap. xlv. 21. <sup>13</sup> Heb. set our hearts upon them.—<sup>1</sup> Chap. xlii. 9; xlv. 7; xlv. 3; John xiii. 19.—<sup>a</sup> Jer. x. 5.

plant in the wilderness the cedar, the myrtle, &c.—Trees which are both useful and pleasant to the eye, and affording a good shadow to the traveller. But what particular trees the Hebrew words here used signify is not certainly known. *That they may see*—Or, *that men may see*: that all that see this wonderful change may consider it, and acknowledge that the hand of the Lord hath done this—That it is the work of God. “The many wonderful steps by which the restoration of the Jewish nation shall be brought about, will convince all considering persons that it is the work of God; and his power will still more undeniably discover itself in the propagation of the gospel, and the enlightening of those who sit in darkness with the saving truth of it.”—Lowth.

Verses 21–24. *Produce your cause*—He renews his challenge to the idolaters to plead the cause of their idols, and give convincing proof of their divinity: see on verse 1. *Bring forth your strong reasons*—Hebrew, גוֹיֵשׁ עֲצוּמוֹתַיִם, which Bishop Lowth renders, “Produce these your mighty powers;” and Jerome, “Accedant idola vestra, quæ putatis esse fortissima,” let those of your idols, whom you think most powerful, approach. “I prefer this,” says the bishop, “to all other interpretations of this place. 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.” *Let them*—Either the idols, or the idolaters in the name and by the help of their idols; *show us what shall happen*—All future events, which he divides into two sorts in the following clause, the former and the latter. *Let them show the former things*—Let the idols, or you their worshippers, prove that they ever uttered any true oracles or prophecies relating to former times, and that the event hath exactly answered the prediction, and this will give credit to any predictions they shall deliver relating to things yet future. Or, by the former things, may be meant such things as should shortly come to pass, which might be better discerned than those things which were yet at a greater distance. So understood, he proposes the easiest part first. Let us

23 <sup>v</sup> Show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye <sup>a</sup> are gods: yea, <sup>a</sup> do good, or do evil, that we may be dismayed, and behold it together.

24 Behold, <sup>a</sup> ye are <sup>14</sup> of nothing, and your work <sup>15</sup> of naught: an abomination is he that chooseth you.

25 I have raised up one from the north, and he shall come: from the rising of the sun <sup>b</sup> shall he call upon my name: <sup>c</sup> and he shall come upon princes as upon mortar, and as the potter treadeth clay.

26 <sup>d</sup> Who hath declared from the beginning,

<sup>a</sup> Psa. cxv. 8; Chap. xlv. 9; 1 Cor. viii. 4.—<sup>14</sup> Or, worse than nothing.—<sup>15</sup> Or, worse than of a viper.—<sup>b</sup> Ezra i. 2. <sup>c</sup> Verse 2.—<sup>d</sup> Chap. xliii. 9.

try whether they can foretel those things which are even at the door, and, if so, we will try them further. Let them tell us what things shall happen, and in what order; which first and which last. *That we may consider them*—Hebrew, וְנִשְׁכַּח לִבְנוֹ, and we will set our heart to it. We will allow the argument its due weight, and either fairly answer it, or give up our cause against idols; and know—That we may know; the latter end of them—The consequence of them, as אַחֲרֵיהֶן may be rendered, whether the events answer to their predictions. Or declare us things for to come—Namely, after a long time. *That we may know that ye are gods*—That we may have, if not a certain proof, yet a probable argument of your deity. *Yea, do good or do evil*—Protect your worshippers, whom I intend to destroy, or destroy my people, whom I intend to save; that we may be dismayed, &c.—That I and my people may be astonished, and forced to acknowledge your godhead. *Behold, ye are of nothing*—You lately were nothing, without any being at all; and your work of naught—Your operations are like your beings; there is no reality in your beings, nor efficacy in your actions. *An abomination is he that chooseth you*—He that chooseth you for his gods is most abominable for his folly, as well as his wickedness.

Verse 25. *I have raised up, &c.*—You neither foreknow, nor can do any thing. But I do now foretel, and will certainly effect, a great revolution and change in the world, which you shall not be able to hinder; one from the north—Cyrus might be said to come from the north, because he was a Mede by his mother, as he was a Persian by his father; or because great part of his army was gathered out of Media, which was northward in reference to Judea, and because Darius the Mede was joined with him in this expedition. *From the rising, &c., shall he call upon my name*—Or proclaim my name, as the words may be rendered, which Cyrus did in express and emphatical terms, Ezra i. 1, 2. *He shall come upon princes as upon mortar*—Treading them down as easily as a man treadeth down mortar.

Verse 26. *Who hath declared from the beginning*—Which of your idols could foretel such things as

A. M. 3294. that we may know? and beforetime,  
B. C. 710. that we may say, *He is righteous?*  
yea, *there is none* that showeth, yea, *there is none* that declareth, yea, *there is none* that heareth your words.

27 \* The first <sup>f</sup> shall say to Zion, Behold, behold them: and I will give to Jerusalem one that bringeth good tidings.

\* Verse 4. —<sup>f</sup> Chap. xl. 9. —<sup>g</sup> Chap. lxiii. 5.

these from the beginning of the world unto this day? *And beforetime*—Before the things come to pass. *That we may say, He is righteous*—His cause is good; he is a God indeed. *Yea, there is none that showeth*—Hebrew, *surely*, there is none of your gods that hath done or can do this, and therefore their claim to divinity is false and foolish. *There is none that heareth your words*—Because you are dumb and cannot speak.

Verse 27. *The first shall say, &c.*—Hebrew, ראשון לציין, literally, *first, or the first to Zion*; which words some interpret thus: I, who am the first, (verse 4,) do and will foretel to my people things to come. *Behold, behold them*—I represent things future (namely, the rise of Cyrus, and the deliverance of my people from Babylon by him) as if they were present, and to be beheld with men's bodily eyes. Behold the wonderful works which God hath wrought for you: or, Behold my people returning to their ancient habitations. Bishop Lowth, who observes, "The verse is somewhat obscure by the transposition of the parts of the sentence," translates it thus: *I first to Zion, (gave the word,) Behold, they are here; And to Jerusalem I give the messenger of good tidings.* The sense of which he says

28 \* For I beheld, and *there* A. M. 3294. B. C. 710. was no man; even among them, and *there was* no counsellor, that, when I asked of them, could <sup>16</sup> answer a word.

29 <sup>h</sup> Behold, they *are* all vanity, their works *are* nothing: their molten images *are* wind and confusion.

<sup>16</sup> Heb. return.—<sup>h</sup> Verse 24.

is, "I first, by my prophets, give notice of these events, saying, Behold, they are at hand! I give to Jerusalem," &c.

Verses 28, 29. *For I beheld*—I looked to see if I could find any of them that could certainly foretel future events; and *there was no man*—Not any of the idols; for the word *man* is sometimes used by the Hebrews of brute creatures, and even of lifeless things. *There was no counsellor*—Though these idols were often consulted, yet none of them were able to give any solid or certain advice concerning future things. *Behold, they are all vanity*—This is the conclusion of the whole dispute, and the just sentence which God passes upon idols: they are vain things, and falsely called *gods*. *Their molten images are wind*—Empty and unsatisfying things, and which, like the wind, do quickly pass away and come to nothing; and *confusion*—Confused, useless things, like that rude heap in the beginning of God's creation, of which this word, תהו, is used, Gen. i. 2. He mentions *molten images* particularly, because their materials were most precious, and more cost and art were commonly bestowed upon them than upon others: but under these he comprehends all images whatsoever.

CHAPTER XLII.

The prophet having in the former chapter manifested the vanity of idols, by their ignorance of future things; and having given one eminent instance of God's certain foreknowledge of them, in the prediction of the destruction of Babylon, and the deliverance of the Jews out of it by Cyrus; now adds another more eminent and remote example of it, and foretels the coming of the Messiah, and several great effects or consequences thereof. This he rather does because the Messiah was the person by whom the idols were to be utterly abolished, as was foretold Isa. ii. 18, and as it happened accordingly. We have here, (1.) The Messiah exhibited as Jehovah's chosen servant, endowed with his Spirit, and qualified thereby for his work with great meekness, power, and courage, 1-4. (2.) His divine commission to his work most solemnly opened, 5-9. (3.) The joy and gratitude wherewith the tidings of this should be received, 10-12. (4.) The wonderful success of the gospel for the overthrow of Satan's kingdom, 13-17. (5.) The rejection and ruin of the Jews for their unbelief, 18-25.

A. M. 3294. BEHOLD \* my servant whom I  
B. C. 710. uphold; mine elect, in whom my

soul <sup>b</sup> delighteth; <sup>c</sup> I have put A. M. 3294. B. C. 710. my Spirit upon him: he shall

\* Chap. xliii. 10; xlix. 3, 6; lii. 13; liii. 11; Matt. xii. 18, 20; Phil. ii. 7.

<sup>b</sup> Matt. iii. 17; xvii. 5; Eph. i. 6.—<sup>c</sup> Chap. xi. 2; John iii. 34.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XLII.

Verse 1. *Behold my servant, &c.*—"The prophet, having opened his subject with the preparation for the return from the captivity at Babylon, and inti-

mated 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 predic-

A. M. 3294. bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.  
B. C. 710.

2 He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street.

3 A bruised reed shall he not break, and the <sup>1</sup> smoking flax shall he not <sup>2</sup> quench : he

<sup>1</sup> Or, dimly burning.—<sup>2</sup> Heb. quench it.

tion of future events, and in particular of that deliverance; he then went still further, and pointed out the instrument by which he should effect the redemption of his people from slavery, namely, a great conqueror, whom he would call forth from the north and the east, to execute his orders. He now proceeds to the great deliverance, and at once brings forth into full view the Messiah, without throwing any veil of allegory over the subject." For, though the person here spoken of has by some been supposed to be Cyrus, and by others Isaiah himself, and by others again the people of the Jews; yet we are directed by an infallible interpreter to understand the prophet as speaking of Christ. For to him St. Matthew has directly applied his words; nor, as Bishop Lowth has observed, can they, "with any justice or propriety, be applied to any other person or character whatever." This is so evident, that not only the generality of Christians, but the Chaldee paraphrast, and divers of the most learned Jews, understand the passage of the Messiah, and of him alone; and pass a very severe sentence upon their brethren that expound it of any other person, and affirm that they are smitten with blindness in this matter. Indeed, to him, and to him only, all the particulars here following do truly and evidently belong, as we shall see. *My servant*—Though he was the only Son of the Father, in a sense in which no creature, man or angel, was, is, or can be his son; see Heb. i. 2-5; yet, as Mediator, and with respect to his human nature, he sustained the character, and appeared in the form of a servant, learned obedience to his Father's will, practised it, and was continually employed in advancing the interests of his kingdom. *Whom I uphold*—Whom I assist, and enable to do and suffer all those things which belong to his office; *mine elect*—Chosen by me to this great work of mediation and redemption; *in whom my soul delighteth*—Or, as רצתה is often rendered, *is well pleased*, both for himself and for all his people, being fully satisfied with that sacrifice which he shall offer up to me: see Matt. iii. 17, and xvii. 5; 2 Pet. i. 17; John iii. 35. *I have put my Spirit upon him*—Not by, but without, *measure*, John iii. 34; by which he is furnished with that abundance and eminence of graces and gifts which are necessary for the discharge of his high and mighty undertaking. *He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles*—He shall publish or show (as the word ציף often signifies, and is translated Matt. xii. 18) the law, counsel, or will of God concerning man's salvation; and that not only to the Jews, to whom the knowledge of God's law had been hitherto in a great measure confined, but to the heathen nations also.

Verses 2, 3. *He shall not cry*—In a way of con-

shall bring forth judgment unto A. M. 3294.  
truth. B. C. 710.

4 He shall not fail nor be <sup>3</sup> discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: <sup>4</sup> and the isles shall wait for his law.

<sup>3</sup> Heb. broken.—<sup>4</sup> Gen. xlix. 10.

tention or ostentation. He shall neither erect nor govern his kingdom with violence or outward pomp and state, like worldly princes, but with meekness and humility. *He shall not lift up*—Namely, his voice; *nor cause it to be heard in the street*—As contentious and vain-glorious persons frequently do. "He shall instruct those that oppose themselves, with all meekness and gentleness; he shall patiently endure the contradictions of sinners against himself, and not vindicate himself against their calumnies in an angry or clamorous manner."—Lowth. *A bruised reed shall he not break*—He will not deal roughly or rigorously with those that come to him, but he will use all gentleness and kindness to them, bearing with their infirmities, cherishing and encouraging the smallest beginnings of grace, supporting and comforting such as are bowed down under the burden of their sins, and healing wounded consciences. *And the smoking flax shall he not quench*—That wick of a candle, which is almost extinct, he will not quench, but revive and kindle it again. *He shall bring forth judgment, &c.*—The law of God, or the doctrine of the gospel, which he will bring forth unto, with, or according to truth—That is, truly and faithfully. St. Matthew reads the clause, *Till he send forth judgment unto victory*, expressing not so much the words, as the sense, of the original, which seems to be, "till he make the cause of righteousness and truth completely victorious, and gloriously triumphant over all opposition."

Verse 4. *He shall not fail, nor be discouraged*—Though he be thus meek and gentle, yet he is also courageous and resolute, notwithstanding all the many and great difficulties and conflicts to which he will be exposed, and he will persevere till he have finished his work. *Till he have set judgment in the earth*—Till, by his holy life, his extreme sufferings, his many miracles, his resurrection from the dead, his visible ascension into heaven, and the wonderful effusion of his Holy Spirit, in extraordinary gifts and graces on his apostles and other servants, he shall fully evince the certain truth and infinite importance of his doctrine, and the divine original and authority of that holy religion which he came to establish: or, till he shall erect his kingdom in the world, or a church for himself among men, and, by the power of his gospel and grace, shall reform mankind, and fix such principles in their minds as will make them wise and holy, just and good. Lowth thinks this prophecy relates chiefly to the propagation of the gospel in the world by his apostles and other messengers; observing that Christ himself was *not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel*, and consequently could be a *light to the Gentiles* only as he commissioned others to preach the gospel to

A. M. 3294. B. C. 710. 5 ¶ Thus saith God the LORD,

° he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; † he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; ‡ he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein :

6 <sup>b</sup> I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thy hand, and will keep thee, <sup>i</sup> and give thee for a covenant of the people, for <sup>k</sup> a light of the Gentiles ;

7 <sup>l</sup> To open the blind eyes, to <sup>m</sup> bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in <sup>n</sup> darkness out of the prison-house.

8 I am the LORD: that is my name : and my

<sup>°</sup> Chap. xlv. 24 ; Zech. xii. 1.—<sup>†</sup> Psa. cxxxvi. 6.—<sup>‡</sup> Acts xvii. 25.—<sup>b</sup> Chap. xliii. 1.—<sup>i</sup> Chap. xlix. 8.—<sup>k</sup> Chap. xlix. 6 ; Luke ii. 32 ; Acts xiii. 47.—<sup>l</sup> Chap. xxxv. 5.

them : see Eph. ii. 17. And, taking the words in this comprehensive sense, they import, that our Saviour and his apostles would not be discouraged at the difficulties they were to meet with in the discharge of their office, but would still continue unwearied in their work, till, at last, they should surmount all opposition, plant judgment and truth in the earth, and make the remotest parts of the world own their dependance upon him as their Lord, and submit to his government. *And the isles*—Of the Gentiles, the countries remote from Judea, as the word often signifies ; *shall wait for his law*—Shall gladly receive his doctrine and commands from time to time.

Verses 5-7. *Thus saith God the Lord, &c.*—This large description of God's infinite power is here seasonably added, to give assurance of the certain accomplishment of these great and wonderful promises, which otherwise would seem incredible. *I the Lord have called thee in righteousness*—To declare my righteousness, as is said Rom. iii. 26 : or, my faithfulness, manifested in fulfilling my promises, long since made, and often renewed ; and *will hold thy hand*—Will give thee counsel and strength for thy great and mighty work. *And will keep thee*—That thou shalt not fail in, nor, by thine enemies, be hindered from, the accomplishment of thy work ; and *give thee for a covenant of the people*—To be the Angel of the covenant, Mal. iii. 1 ; or, the Mediator, in and by whom my covenant of grace is made and confirmed with mankind, even with all people who will accept of it. *For a light of the Gentiles*—To enlighten them with true and saving knowledge, and to direct them in the right way to true happiness, out of which they had miserably wandered. *To open the blind eyes*—The eyes of men's minds, blinded with long ignorance, deep prejudice, and inveterate error, and by the god of this world, 2 Cor. iv. 4. *And to bring out the prisoners, &c.*—Namely, sinners who are taken captive by the devil at his will, (2 Tim. ii. 26,) and enslaved by their own lusts, and who can only be made

° glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images. A. M. 3294. B. C. 710.

9 Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare : before they spring forth I tell you of them.

10 ¶ <sup>p</sup> Sing unto the LORD a new song, and his praise from the end of the earth, <sup>q</sup> ye that go down to the sea, and <sup>r</sup> all that is therein ; the isles, and the inhabitants thereof.

11 Let the wilderness and the cities thereof lift up *their voice*, the villages that Kedar doth inhabit : let the inhabitants of the rock sing, let them shout from the top of the mountains.

<sup>°</sup> Chap. lxi. 1 ; Luke iv. 18 ; 2 Tim. ii. 26 ; Heb. ii. 14, 15. <sup>a</sup> Chap. ix. 2.—<sup>b</sup> Chap. xlviii. 11.—<sup>p</sup> Psa. xxxiii. 3 ; xl. 3 ; xviii. 1.—<sup>q</sup> Psa. cvii. 23.—<sup>r</sup> Heb. the fulness thereof.

free by Christ, John viii. 32, 36 : compare Isa. lxi. 1, and Luke iv. 17-21.

Verses 8, 9. *I am the Lord*—Hebrew, *Jehovah* ; who have all being in and of myself, and give being to all my creatures. The everlasting, and unchangeable, and omnipotent God, who therefore both can and will fulfil all my promises. *That is my name*—Which I must own and justify to the world. He seems to allude to Exod. iii. 14, and vi. 3. *My glory will I not give to another*—I will not any longer suffer that honour and worship which are peculiar to me to be given to idols, as it hath been, but I will, by the Messiah and his gospel, abolish idolatry out of the world. *Behold, the former things are come to pass*—As all things which I have formerly promised or foretold, have exactly come to pass in their proper seasons, and not one of them has failed ; so you have great reason to believe that what I now promise, though it be new and strange to you, shall infallibly be accomplished. *Before they spring forth I tell you of them*—That when they come to pass you may know that I am God, and that this is my work.

Verses 10, 12. *Sing unto the Lord a new song*—Upon this new and great occasion, the salvation of the world by Christ. It is with peculiar propriety and elegance that the nations are here called upon and exhorted to praise and extol Jehovah, for the singular blessing conferred upon them by the gospel. *And his praise from the end of the earth*—All nations, from one end of the earth to another. *Ye that go down to the sea*—You that go by sea, carry these glad tidings from Judea, where Christ was born, and lived, and died, and published the gospel, unto the remotest parts of the earth. *Let the wilderness, &c.*—Those parts of the world which are now desolate and forsaken of God, and barren of all good fruits. *The villages that Kedar doth inhabit*—The Arabians, who were a heathen and barbarous people, and are put for all nations. *Let them shout from the top of the mountains*—Whose inhabitants are commonly more savage and ignorant than others.

A. M. 3294. 12 Let them give glory unto the  
B. C. 710. LORD, and declare his praise in the  
islands.

13 ¶ The LORD shall go forth as a mighty man, he shall stir up jealousy like a man of war: he shall cry, ' yea, roar; he shall <sup>5</sup> prevail against his enemies.

14 I have long time holden my peace; I have been still, and refrained myself: now will I cry like a travailing woman; I will destroy and <sup>6</sup> devour at once.

15 I will make waste mountains and hills, and dry up all their herbs; and I will make the rivers islands, and I will dry up the pools.

\* Chap. xxxi. 4.—<sup>5</sup> Or, behave himself mightily.—<sup>6</sup> Heb. swallow, or, sup up.—<sup>7</sup> Heb. into straightness.

Let them declare his praise in the islands—In the remotest parts of the world, as well as in Arabia, which was near to them.

Verses 13–15. *The Lord shall go forth*—Namely, to battle against his enemies. *He shall stir up jealousy*—His fierce indignation against the obstinate enemies of his Son and gospel. *He shall cry, yea, roar*—As a lion doth upon his prey, and as soldiers do when they begin the battle. *I have long time held my peace*—I have been long silent, and not interposed in behalf of my cause, but have suffered Satan and his servants to prevail in the world, to afflict my people, and hinder the entertainment of my doctrine and worship among mankind; and this my forbearance has increased the presumption of my enemies. *Now will I cry like a travailing woman*—Now I will no more contain myself than a woman in the pangs of travail can forbear crying out: but I will give vent to my just resentments for the injuries offered to myself and my oppressed people, by bringing some exemplary punishment upon their oppressors. *I will destroy and devour at once*—I will suddenly and utterly destroy the incorrigible enemies of my truth. When men's provocations come to a great height, God is represented in Scripture as if his patience were quite tired out, and he could no longer forbear punishing them: see Jer. xv. 6, and xlv. 22. *I will make waste mountains and hills*—He does not mean dry and barren ones, for these were waste already, but such as were clothed with grass and herbs. Which clause is to be understood metaphorically of God's destroying his most lofty and flourishing enemies, often compared in Scripture to mountains and hills. *I will dry up the pools*—Remove all the sources of their prosperity and comfort. "As God's mercy is represented by pouring water upon the dry ground, chap. xxxv. 6, and xlv. 3, so his wrath is described as if it were a consuming fire, parching up every thing, and reducing it to barrenness.

Verses 16, 17. *And I will bring the blind*—The ignorant Gentiles, represented as blind, verse 7, and

16 And I will bring the blind by a way <sup>A. M. 3294.</sup> that they knew not; I will lead <sup>B. C. 710.</sup> them in paths that they have not known; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things <sup>7</sup> straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them.

17 They shall be <sup>8</sup> turned back, they shall be greatly ashamed, that trust in graven images, that say to the molten images, Ye are our gods.

18 ¶ Hear, ye deaf; and look, ye blind, that ye may see.

19 <sup>9</sup> Who is blind, but my servant? or deaf, as my messenger that I sent? who is blind as he that is perfect, and blind as the LORD's servant?

\* Psa. xvii. 7; Chap. i. 29; xlv. 11; xlv. 16.—<sup>8</sup> Chap. xliii. 8; Ezek. xii. 2; John ix. 39, 41.

in many other parts of Scripture, and accounted blind by the Jews; by a way that they knew not—By the way of truth, which hitherto hath been hidden from them. *I will make darkness light before them, &c.*—I will enlighten their dark minds, rectify their perverse wills and affections, and direct them in the right way, until I have brought them, with safety and comfort, to the end of their journey. *They shall be turned back, &c.*—This may be understood, either, 1st, Of the converted Gentiles, turned back from their former sinful courses, and sincerely grieving, and being ashamed, that they should ever have been guilty of such folly and wickedness as to worship and trust in idols; or, 2d, Of those Gentiles who, when their brethren embraced the true religion, persisted obstinately in their idolatrous practices.

Verses 18–20. *Hear, ye deaf, &c.*—O you, whosoever you are, whether Jews or Gentiles, who shall resist this clear light, and obstinately continue in your former errors, attend diligently to my words, and consider these mighty works of God. *Who is blind but my servant?*—But no people under heaven are so blind as the Jews, who call themselves my servants and people, who will not receive their Messiah, though he be recommended to them with such evident and illustrious signs and miraculous works as force belief from the formerly unbelieving and idolatrous Gentiles. *Or deaf as my messenger that I sent*—Or rather, as Bishop Lowth renders it, *as he to whom I have sent my messengers*. Thus the Vulgate and Chaldee, "ut ad quem nuncios meos misi." *Who is blind as he that is perfect*—Or, perfectly instructed, as כִּשְׁלֵם may be rendered, who has all the means of knowledge and spiritual improvement. Perhaps the prophet may chiefly intend the priests and other teachers of the Jews, who, as they were appointed to instruct the people in the right way of worshipping and serving God, so they had peculiar advantages for knowing that way themselves, having the oracles of God in their hands, and much leisure for reading and considering them. Or

A. M. 3294. 20 Seeing many things, <sup>a</sup> but thou  
B. C. 710. observest not; opening the ears, but  
he heareth not.

21 The LORD is well pleased for his right-  
eousness' sake; he will magnify the law, and  
make <sup>b</sup> it honourable.

22 But this is a people robbed and spoiled;  
<sup>c</sup> they are all of them snared in holes, and they  
are hid in prison-houses; they are for a prey,  
and none delivereth; for <sup>d</sup> a spoil, and none  
saith, Restore.

23 Who among you will give ear to this?

<sup>a</sup> Rom. ii. 21.—<sup>b</sup> Or, him.—<sup>c</sup> Or, in snaring all the young  
men of them.

he may be understood as speaking sarcastically, and  
terming them *perfect*, or, *perfectly instructed*, because  
they pretended to greater knowledge and piety than  
others, to a more perfect acquaintance with, and  
conformity to, the divine will, proudly calling them-  
selves *rabbis* and *masters*, and despising the peo-  
ple as cursed and not knowing the law, John vii. 49;  
and deriding Christ for calling them *blind*, John ix.  
40. *And blind as the Lord's servant?*—Which  
title, as it was given to the Jewish people in the first  
clause of the verse, may be here given to the priests,  
because they were called and obliged to be the Lord's  
servants, in a special manner. *Seeing many things,  
but thou observest not*—Thou dost not seriously con-  
sider the plain word and wonderful works of God.

Verse 21. *The Lord is well pleased, &c.*—Al-  
though thou art a wicked people, that rebellest  
against the clearest light, and therefore God might  
justly destroy thee suddenly, yet he will patiently  
wait for thy repentance, that he may be gracious;  
and that not for thy sake, but for the glory of his  
own faithfulness, in fulfilling that covenant which  
he made with thy pious progenitors. *He will mag-  
nify the law*—He will maintain the honour of his  
law, and therefore is not forward to destroy you,  
who profess the true religion, lest his law should,  
upon that occasion, be exposed to contempt. Thus  
the verse may be interpreted according to the  
present translation. But it may be rendered dif-  
ferently, as it is by Vitringa and Dr. Waterland,  
thus: "The Lord took delight in him for his right-  
eousness' sake; he hath magnified him by his  
law, and made him honourable." God liberally  
provided for his people whatever was needful or  
useful, in order to their salvation and the stability  
of their state. "He had given them excellent  
laws; he had increased and honoured them; had  
made, and was willing to make them glorious  
among their neighbours. But they had been want-  
ing to themselves, had despised his laws, and incur-  
red his just vengeance."—Dodd.

Verses 22-24. *But this is a people robbed and  
spoiled*—Notwithstanding the great respect which  
God hath had, and still hath, for his people, it is evi-  
dent he hath severely scourged them for their sins.

who will hearken, and hear <sup>e</sup> for the  
time to come? A. M. 3294  
B. C. 710.

24 Who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel  
to the robbers? did not the LORD, he against  
whom we have sinned? for they would not  
walk in his ways, neither were they obedient  
unto his law.

25 Therefore he hath poured upon him the  
fury of his anger, and the strength of battle:  
<sup>f</sup> and it hath set him on fire round about, <sup>g</sup> yet  
he knew not; and it burned him, yet he laid  
it not to heart.

<sup>10</sup> Heb. a treading.—<sup>11</sup> Heb. for the after time?—<sup>2</sup> Kings  
xxv. 9.—<sup>3</sup> Hos. vii. 9.

*They are all of them snared in holes, &c.*—They  
have been taken in snares made by their own hands,  
and, by God's just judgment, delivered into the  
hands of their enemies, and by them cast into pits,  
or dungeons, and prisons. *And none saith, Restore*  
—None afforded them either pity or help in their  
extremities. *Who will give ear to this*—O that  
you would learn from your former and dear-bought  
experience to be wiser for the future, and not to  
provoke God to your own total and final ruin. *Who  
gave Jacob for a spoil? Did not the Lord?*—Do  
not flatter yourselves with a conceit of impunity,  
because you are a people whom God hath favoured  
with many and great privileges; for as God hath  
punished you formerly, be assured, if you continue  
to sin, he will punish you more and more. "It was  
reasonably to be expected that the Jews, blessed  
with such great privileges, would have been greatly  
honoured and respected; but, abusing those privi-  
leges, their case and situation have been, in various  
periods, what the prophet describes in these verses;  
broken, plundered, spoiled, despised by other na-  
tions, subject to the insolence of conquerors, shut up  
in prison, trod upon, abused and punished in such a  
manner as may justly raise the greatest commiseration.  
Their history, since the crucifixion of the Re-  
deemer, supplies us with one continued detail of their  
miseries and afflictions; yet, which is most astonish-  
ing, *who among them giveth ear? who heareth  
for the time to come?*—Who among them consi-  
dereth the cause of their sufferings, and becometh  
*obedient to the law of Christ?*"—Dodd.

Verse 25. *Therefore he hath poured upon him  
the fury, &c.*—Most grievous judgments. *It hath  
set him on fire round about*—This was literally ful-  
filled when the Chaldean army took their city, and  
burned both it and their temple. *Yet he knew it  
not*—Considered it not; they were secure and stu-  
pid under God's judgments; neither fearing them  
when threatened, nor truly sensible of God's hand in  
them, of the causes of God's displeasure, or of the  
means of cure. The reader will easily observe,  
that "the force and elegance of the metaphor in this  
verse are very great. Of all natural evils which af-  
fect the human mind, which arouse and awaken it,

none do so with greater quickness than fire, than a mighty flame encompassing a man on every side. No sleep, no lethargy is so great, which this will not shake off; and yet the stupor and insensibility of the Jews are here represented to be so great, that in the midst of the fire and flame, which they might

and ought to think kindled by God, they inquired not into the causes of this judgment. They knew them not, nor considered them; but, persisting in their impenitence and stupidity, applied not to God in faith and repentance, nor humbled themselves before him." See Vitringa.

CHAPTER XLIII.

After the threatenings recorded at the close of the foregoing chapter, God here revives his people with encouraging declarations and promises. (1.) As the Creator, Redeemer, and Lord of Israel, he engages to be present with them in their manifold afflictions, to support them under and deliver them out of them, and to protect and enlarge his church, 1-7. (2.) He challenges idolaters to produce among their gods any that could vie with him in knowledge and power, and appeals to his people as witnesses, 8-13. (3.) He encourages them to expect deliverance from Babylon, and a new state of things, from the consideration of what he did for their fathers when he brought them out of Egypt, 14-21. (4.) To humble and bring them to repentance, and thereby prepare them for the reception of such great mercies, they are reminded of, and reproved for, the sins whereby they had provoked God to send them into captivity, and to continue them so long therein, 22-28.

A. M. 3294. **BUT** now thus saith the LORD  
B. C. 710. <sup>a</sup> that created thee, O Jacob, <sup>b</sup> and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: <sup>c</sup> for I have redeemed thee, <sup>d</sup> I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine.

2 <sup>e</sup> When thou passest through the waters, <sup>f</sup> I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou <sup>g</sup> walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be

burned; neither shall the flame kin- A. M. 3294.  
dle upon thee. B. C. 710.

3 For I am the LORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: <sup>h</sup> I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee.

4 Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy <sup>i</sup> life.

<sup>a</sup> Ver. 7.—<sup>b</sup> Ver. 21; Chap. xlv. 2, 21, 24.—<sup>c</sup> Chap. xlv. 6.  
<sup>d</sup> Chap. xlii. 6; xlv. 4.—<sup>e</sup> Psa. lxxvi. 12; xci. 3, &c.

<sup>f</sup> Deut. xxxi. 6, 8.—<sup>g</sup> Dan. iii. 25, 27.—<sup>h</sup> Prov. xi. 8; xxi. 18.—<sup>i</sup> Or, person.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XLIII.

Verses 1, 2. *But now, thus saith the Lord*—But, notwithstanding thy gross insensibility under former judgments, for which I might justly send far heavier calamities upon thee, yet I will deal mercifully with thee. *That created thee, O Jacob, &c.*—Who made thee his people, and that in a manner as miraculous as if he had created thee a second time out of nothing; and therefore he will be gracious to his own workmanship. *Fear not; for I have redeemed thee*—From the Egyptians and divers other enemies; and therefore I will redeem thee again. *I have called thee by thy name, &c.*—The name of God's people, which was as proper and peculiar to them as the name of Israel. Or, "I have made a particular choice of thee for my peculiar people, and singled thee out from the rest of the world, and ever since have treated thee with uncommon instances of kindness and familiarity." *When thou passest through the waters, &c.*—"I will support and deliver thee when thou art in the greatest straits and difficulties. *To pass through fire and water* is a proverbial expression, to signify being exposed to all kinds of dangers." *Thou shalt not be burned, &c.*—Though I will chastise thee for thy

sins, yet I will not suffer thine enemies utterly to destroy thee.

Verses 3, 4. *I gave Egypt for thy ransom*—Some think this was fulfilled when God smote the firstborn and others in Egypt, and afterward drowned Pharaoh and his host in the Red sea, for the safety and benefit of his people. But it is more "commonly referred 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 neighbours the Sabceans, probably joined with them, under Tirhakah: see chap. xx., and xxxvii. 9. Or, as there are some reasonable objections to this opinion, perhaps it may mean, more generally, that God had often saved his people at the expense of other nations, whom he had, as it were, in their stead, given up to destruction."—Bishop Lowth. *Since thou wast precious, &c., thou hast been honourable*—That is, from the time that I chose thee for my precious and peculiar treasure and people, I have had a great esteem and affection for thee. Bishop Lowth translates the clause, *Because thou hast been precious in my sight, thou hast been*

A. M. 3294. 5 <sup>i</sup> Fear not : for I *am* with thee : I  
B. C. 710. will bring thy seed from the east, and  
gather thee from the west ;

6 I will say to the north, Give up ; and to the  
south, Keep not back : bring my sons from far,  
and my daughters from the ends of the earth ;

7 *Even* every one that is <sup>k</sup> called by my name :  
for <sup>l</sup> I have created him for my glory, <sup>m</sup> I have  
formed him ; yea, I have made him.

8 ¶ <sup>n</sup> Bring forth the blind people that have  
eyes, and the deaf that have ears.

<sup>i</sup> Chapter xli. 10, 14 ; xlv. 2 ; Jeremiah xxx. 10 ; xlv. 27.  
<sup>k</sup> Chap. lxiii. 19 ; James ii. 7.—<sup>l</sup> Psa. c. 3 ; Chap. xxix. 23 ;  
John iii. 3, 5 ; 2 Cor. v. 17 ; Eph. ii. 10.—<sup>m</sup> Verse 1.

*honoured, &c.* Vitringa thinks the prophet refers to the deliverance from Sennacherib, whereby God abundantly showed that the Jewish nation was *precious* and *honourable* in his sight ; and the *men*, in the last clause, refers to the Assyrians, and the *people* to the Chaldeans. The Assyrians suffered a fearful slaughter (chap. xxxvii. 36) for the sake of the Jews, and the empire of the Chaldees was to be overturned by the Medes and Persians to procure their deliverance. In both which instances God abundantly testified that his church was *precious*, and *honourable in his sight*, and *much beloved by him*.

Verses 5-7. *I will bring thy seed from the east, &c.*—Although the Jews, for their sins, shall be carried captives out of their own land northward and eastward into Babylon, and the adjacent countries ; and others of them shall flee southward and westward, and shall there pine away in their iniquities, as I have threatened ; yet I will bring back their posterity into Canaan, from all the places where they are dispersed. *I will say to the north, Give up*—Thou, who hast so long held my people in bondage, resign them to me, and permit them to return to their own land. He speaks to the countries by a *prosopopœia*. *Bring my sons from far*—Not only permit, but assist and further their return. *Every one that is called*—Rather, *every one is called*, or, *they are all called, by my name*—I own them for my people and children ; and, therefore, what kindness or cruelty you exercise toward them, I take it as done to myself. *I have created him for my glory*—And therefore I will glorify my power, and goodness, and faithfulness in delivering them. *I have formed him*—I have not only *created* them out of nothing, but I have also *formed* and *made* them my peculiar people. We must observe, however, that while Isaiah “ appears to speak of one thing only, two are understood : the less includes the greater. Speaking literally and properly of the collection of the dispersed church from Babylon,—a more noble collection, the spiritual one, of the converted Jews and Gentiles to the church of Christ, was in his view ; and this is described in expressions taken from the external collection of the church from Babylon, and the restoration of the republic under

9 Let all the nations be gathered to- A. M. 3294.  
gether, and let the people be assembled : B. C. 710.

<sup>o</sup> who among them can declare this, and show us former things ? let them bring forth their witnesses, that they may be justified : or let them hear, and say, *It is truth*.

10 <sup>p</sup> *Ye are my witnesses*, saith the LORD,  
<sup>q</sup> and my servant whom I have chosen : that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I *am* he : <sup>r</sup> before me there was <sup>2</sup> no God formed, neither shall there be after me.

<sup>n</sup> Chapter vi. 9 ; xlii. 19 ; Ezek. xii. 2.—<sup>o</sup> Chap. xli. 21, 26.  
<sup>p</sup> Chap. xlv. 8.—<sup>q</sup> Chap. xlii. 1 ; lv. 4.—<sup>r</sup> Chap. xli. 4 ;  
xlv. 6.—<sup>2</sup> Or, *nothing formed of God*.

the Maccabees ; exactly in the same manner as in chap. xi. 12, which should be compared with this place. The 7th verse plainly shows that the spiritual seed of Israel is spoken of. *Every one that is called by my name*, means, every one who is truly my son ; for to be *called by the name* of any one is to be his son.” See chap. xlv. 5, and Vitringa.

Verses 8-10. *Bring forth the blind people, &c.*—O ye idolatrous Gentiles, bring forth your false gods, which have eyes but see not, and ears but hear not. *Let the people be assembled*—To plead the cause of their idols with me. *Who among them can declare this*—This wonderful work of mine in bringing my people out of captivity. *And show us former things*—Such things as shall happen long before the return from the captivity, which yet your blind idols cannot foresee. See on chap. xli. 22. *Let them bring forth their witnesses*—Who can testify the truth of any such predictions of theirs, that they may be owned for true gods ; or if they can produce no evidence of any such thing, let them confess that what I say is truth, that I am the only true God. *Ye are my witnesses*—They can produce no witnesses for themselves ; but you, my people, are able to witness for me, that I have given you many plain demonstrations of my certain foreknowledge of future events. *And my servant whom I have chosen*—Either Isaiah and other prophets, the singular word being put collectively, or, the Messiah, as not only Christians, but the Chaldee paraphrast understands it ; who was thus described, (chap. xlii. 1,) and who is the most eminent witness in this cause ; and that on two accounts ; 1st, As he was the chief subject of prophecy, and the various particulars foretold concerning him came exactly to pass ; and, 2d, As many future things were predicted by him, of which we have many examples in the New Testament. *That I am he*—He whom I have affirmed myself to be, namely, the true God. *Before me there was no God formed*—The gods of the heathen neither had a being before me, nor shall continue after me. Wherein more is understood than is expressed ; that whereas Jehovah is God from everlasting to everlasting, these false pretenders to deity were but of yesterday, and should shortly be abolished. And withal he calls them *formed gods*, by way of contempt, and to show the

A. M. 3294. 11 I, even I, <sup>a</sup>am the LORD; and  
B. C. 710. besides me *there is* no saviour.

12 I have declared, and have saved, and I have showed, when *there was* no <sup>a</sup>strange god among you: <sup>a</sup>therefore ye *are* my witnesses, saith the LORD, that I *am* God.

13 <sup>a</sup>Yea, before the day *was*, I *am* he; and *there is* none that can deliver out of my hand: I will work, and who shall <sup>b</sup>let <sup>c</sup>it?

14 ¶ Thus saith the LORD, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; For your sake I have sent to Babylon, and have brought down all their

<sup>a</sup>Chap. xiv. 21; Hos. xiii. 4.—<sup>d</sup>Deut. xxxii. 16; Psa. lxxxv. 9.—<sup>e</sup>Chap. xiv. 8; Verse 10.—<sup>f</sup>Psa. xc. 2; John viii. 58.  
<sup>g</sup>Heb. *turn it back?*

ridiculousness of their pretensions to divinity, who are formed by the hands of men.

Verses 11–13. *Besides me there is no saviour*—None that can and does save his worshippers: wherein is implied, that the false gods were not only weak and unable to save those that trusted in them, but also were their destroyers, as being the great cause of their ruin. *I have declared, and have saved*—I first foretold your deliverance, and then effected it. *And I have showed, when there was no strange god, &c.*—Rather, *I made it known; nor was it any strange god.* So Bishop Lowth. This divine prescience and predicting of future events is thus repeatedly insisted upon, because it is the principal argument used here, and in chap. xli., to determine this controversy between Jehovah and idols. *Yea, before the day was*—Before all time: or, which is the same, from all eternity. *I am he*—I am God, and have proved myself to be so. *None can deliver out of my hands*—None of those that are called gods can save them whom I will destroy. Therefore they are impotent, and consequently no gods. *I will work, and who shall let it?*—Nor can they hinder me in any other work which I resolve to do.

Verse 14. *For your sake I have sent to Babylon*—I have sent Cyrus, and the Medes and Persians with him, to war against Babylon, to this very end, that he might deliver you out of captivity, and restore you to your land, according to my promise. *I have brought down*—From that height of power and glory to which they were advanced; *all their nobles*—Their princes and great commanders. Bishop Lowth prefers the reading of the margin, (the word בָּרָחִים properly signifying *bars*,) and renders the next clauses, *I will bring down all her strong bars, and the Chaldeans exulting in their ships.* On which he observes, “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. i., 194. We are not to wonder

<sup>a</sup>nobles, and the Chaldeans, whose cry <sup>a</sup>is in the ships. A. M. 3294. B. C. 710.

15 I *am* the LORD, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King.

16 Thus saith the LORD, which <sup>a</sup>maketh a way in the sea, and a <sup>a</sup>path in the mighty waters;

17 Which <sup>b</sup>bringeth forth the chariot and horse, the army and the power; they shall lie down together, they shall not rise: they are extinct, they are quenched as tow.

18 ¶ Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old.

<sup>g</sup>Job ix. 12; Chap. xiv. 27.—<sup>h</sup>Heb. *bars*.—<sup>i</sup>Exod. xiv. 16, 22; Psa. lxxvii. 19; Chap. li. 10.—<sup>j</sup>Josh. iii. 13, 16  
<sup>k</sup>Exod. xiv. 4–9, 25.—<sup>l</sup>Jer. xvi. 14; xxiii. 7.

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 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 rivers, by making cataracts in them, 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.—Strabo, lib. xvi. Alexander began to restore the navigation of the river by demolishing the cataracts upon the Tigris, as far up as Seleucia; but he did not live to finish his great designs: those upon the Euphrates still continued.”

Verses 16, 17. *Which maketh a way in the sea, &c.*—Who, as he formerly made a way for Israel through the Red sea, will, in a no less wonderful manner, remove all impediments out of the way of his people when they return from Babylon. *Which bringeth forth*—Or, rather, *who brought forth, the chariots, &c.*—That is, Pharaoh and his chariots, horses, and army. *They shall lie down, &c.* *They lay down together*—In the bottom of the sea, whence they never rose again to molest the Israelites. *They are quenched as tow*—As the wick of a candle is extinguished when it is put into water.

Verses 18, 19. *Remember ye not the former things*—But although your former deliverance out of Egypt was in itself a most glorious work, which you ought always to remember and consider; yet this other work, of your deliverance out of Babylon, and those blessings which shall follow upon it, and particularly that of sending the Messiah, shall be so transcendent a favour, that, in comparison thereof, all your former deliverances are scarcely worthy of your remembrance and consideration. See two parallel texts, Jer. xvi. 14, 15, and xxiii. 5–8. From which passages laid together it appears that this latter deliverance, compared with that out of Egypt, is not to be confined to their restoration from captivity, but to be extended to the consequences thereof, and especially to the redemption of the Messiah. Indeed, other-

A. M. 3294. 19 Behold, I will do a <sup>d</sup> new thing ;  
B. C. 710. now it shall spring forth ; shall ye  
not know it ? \* I will even make a way in  
the wilderness, and rivers in the desert.

20 The beast of the field shall honour me,  
the dragons and the <sup>5</sup>owls : <sup>6</sup> because ' I give  
waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the  
desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen.

21 \* This people have I formed for myself ;  
they shall show forth my praise.

22 ¶ But thou hast not called upon me, O  
Jacob ; but thou <sup>b</sup> hast been weary of me, O  
Israel.

<sup>d</sup> 2 Cor. v. 17 ; Rev. xxi. 5. — \* Exod. xvii. 6 ; Num. xx. 11 ;  
Deut. viii. 15 ; Psa. lxxviii. 16 ; Chap. xxxv. 6 ; xli. 18. — <sup>5</sup> Or,  
ostriches. — <sup>6</sup> Heb. daughters of the owl. — <sup>f</sup> Chapter xlviii. 21.  
Psa. cii. 18 ; Verses 1, 7 ; Luke i. 74, 75 ; Eph. i. 5, 6.

wise the deliverance from Egypt was more glorious  
and wonderful, in many respects, than that out of  
Babylon. *Behold, I will do a new thing*—Such a  
work as was never yet done in the world. *Now it  
shall spring forth*—The Scripture often speaks of  
things at a great distance of time, as if they were  
now at hand, to make us sensible of the inconsid-  
erableness of time and all temporal things, in com-  
parison of God and eternal things ; upon which  
account it is said, that a *thousand years are in God's  
sight but as one day*. *Shall ye not know it?*—Cer-  
tainly, you Jews shall know it by experience, and  
shall find I do not deceive you with vain hopes. *I will  
make a way in the wilderness, &c.*—I will give you  
direction and provision in the wilderness, where  
there is commonly no path, and where all necessities  
are wanting ; which, as it literally speaks of God's  
conducting them through the great desert which lay  
between Babylon and Judea, so it is mystically meant  
of those spiritual blessings which God, in and through  
Christ, would confer upon all his people, not the  
Jews only, but also the Gentiles, who, in prophetic  
language, are often compared to a wilderness.

Verse 20. *The beast of the field shall honour me*  
—Shall have cause, if they had abilities, to honour  
and praise me for their share in this mercy ; *the  
dragons, &c.*—Which live in dry and barren deserts.  
“The image,” says Bishop Lowth, “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 re-  
freshment which they receive from his so plentifully  
watering the sandy wastes of Arabia Deserta, for the  
benefit of his people passing through them.”

Verses 22-24. *But thou hast not called upon me*  
—Thou hast grossly neglected, or very negligently  
and hypocritically performed the duties of my wor-  
ship. *Thou hast been weary of me*—Thou hast not

23 <sup>1</sup> Thou hast not brought me the A. M. 3294  
small cattle of thy burnt-offerings ; B. C. 710.  
neither hast thou honoured me with thy sacri-  
fices. I have not caused thee to serve with an  
offering, nor wearied thee with incense.

24 Thou hast bought me no sweet cane with  
money, neither hast thou <sup>8</sup> filled me with the fat  
of thy sacrifices : but thou hast made me to  
serve with thy sins, thou hast <sup>h</sup> wearied me with  
thine iniquities.

25 I, even I, am he that <sup>1</sup> blotteth out thy  
transgressions <sup>m</sup> for mine own sake, <sup>n</sup> and will  
not remember thy sins.

<sup>b</sup> Malachi i. 13. — <sup>1</sup> Amos v. 25. — <sup>7</sup> Heb. lambs, or, kids.  
<sup>8</sup> Heb. made me drunk, or, abundantly moistened. — <sup>k</sup> Chap. i. 14 ;  
Mal. ii. 17. — <sup>l</sup> Chap. xlv. 22 ; xlviii. 9 ; Jer. l. 20 ; Acts iii.  
19. — <sup>m</sup> Ezek. xxxvi. 22. — <sup>n</sup> Chap. i. 18 ; Jer. xxxi. 34.

esteemed my service to be a privilege, as in truth it  
is, but as a burden and a bondage. “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 Jews  
were diligent in performing the external services of  
religion ; in offering prayers, incense, sacrifices, ob-  
lations ; 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.” *Nei-  
ther hast thou honoured me*—If thou didst not neg-  
lect sacrificing to me, thou didst perform that duty  
merely out of custom ; or didst dishonour me, and  
pollute thy sacrifices by thy wicked life. *I have not  
wearied thee*—Or, *Although I have not wearied thee,*  
&c. Although God had not laid such heavy burdens  
upon them, nor required such costly offerings, as  
might give them cause to be weary, nor such as  
idolaters did freely perform in the service of their  
idols. *Thou hast brought me no sweet cane*—This  
was used in the making of that precious ointment,  
(Exod. xxx. 34,) and for the incense, Exod. xxx. 7.  
See Jer. vi. 20. Thou hast been niggardly in my  
service, when thou hast spared for no cost in the  
service of thine idols. *Nor filled me, &c.*—Thou  
hast not multiplied thy thank-offerings and free-will-  
offerings, though I have given thee sufficient occa-  
sion to do so. *But thou hast made me serve, &c.*—  
Thou hast made me to bear the load and burden of  
thy sins.

Verse 25. *I, even I*—Whom thou hast thus despised,  
and wearied, and provoked to destroy thee ; *am  
he that blotteth out thy transgressions*—Out of my  
book, in which they were all written, to be read unto  
thee, and charged upon thee at a future day. Sins  
are often compared to debts, (Matt. vi. 12, &c.) writ-  
ten in the creditor's book, and crossed or blotted out  
when they are paid. *For mine own sake*—Being  
moved thereunto, not by thy merits, but by my own  
mere goodness and free mercy. *And will not re-*

A. M. 3294. 26 Put me in remembrance: let us  
B. C. 710. plead together: declare thou, that thou  
mayest be justified.

27 Thy first father hath sinned, and thy

<sup>9</sup> Heb. *interpreters*, Mal. ii. 7, 8.—<sup>o</sup> Chap. xlvii. 6; Lam. ii. 2, 6, 7.

*member thy sins*—So as to punish them, and destroy thee for them, as thou deservest.

Verse 26. *Put me in remembrance*—Of thy good deeds and merits. *Let us plead together*—I give thee free liberty to urge all thou canst in thy own behalf. *Declare thou, that thou mayest be justified*—Bring forward all thou canst, in order to thy justification, and declare on what ground thou expectest to be acquitted, and continued in my favour. But perhaps the words are not to be considered as spoken ironically, and intended as a rebuke to such as were proud and self-righteous; but are rather to be understood as a direction to penitent sinners, showing them how they might obtain the pardon offered in the preceding verse. Is God thus ready to pardon sin; and, when he pardons it, will he remember it no more? Let us then *put him in remembrance*, mention before him those sins which he forgives; for they must be *ever before us*, to humble us, even though he pardons them, Psa. li. 3. We must *put him in remembrance* of the promises he has made to the penitent, and of the satisfaction his Son has made for them. We must plead these with him when we implore a pardon, and declare these things, in order that we may be *justified freely by his grace*. This is the only way, and it is a sure way, to pardon and peace.

<sup>9</sup> teachers have transgressed against me. A. M. 3294.  
28 Therefore <sup>o</sup> I have profaned the <sup>B. C. 710.</sup>  
<sup>10</sup> princes of the sanctuary, <sup>p</sup> and have given  
Jacob to the curse, and Israel to reproaches.

<sup>10</sup> Or, *holy princes*.—<sup>p</sup> Psa. lxxix. 4; Jer. xxiv. 9; Dan. ix. 11; Zech. viii. 13.

Verses 27, 28. *Thy first father hath sinned*—Some think that Urijah, who was high-priest in the time of Ahaz, is here especially meant: see 2 Kings xvi. 10, 11. But it is more probable that the expression is put for their forefathers collectively; and so he tells them, that as they were sinners, so also were all their progenitors, yea, even the best of them. Thus Lowth: “Your ancestors, reckoning from Adam downward, have been sinners, and you have trod in their steps:” see Ezek. ii. 3, and xvi. 2, &c.; Ezra ix. 7. *And thy teachers have transgressed, &c.*—Your prophets, priests, and teachers, who ought to have been guides to you, and intercessors for you with God, have led you into sin and error, and therefore you have no reason to fancy yourselves innocent. *Therefore I have profaned the princes of the sanctuary*—The highest and best of your priests, whose persons were most sacred, and therefore were supposed, by themselves and others, to be the farthest from danger. As they had made themselves profane, so have I dealt with them as such, without any regard to the sacredness and dignity of their functions. *Have given Jacob to the curse, and Israel to reproaches*—Have exposed them to contempt and destruction, and made them a proverb of execration and reproach to all the neighbouring nations.

CHAPTER XLIV.

The prophet proceeds in this chapter, as in the last, to encourage God's people with promises of spiritual blessings to be conferred upon them, after their return from captivity, and especially in the days of the Messiah, 1-5. God solemnly avows his own absolute eternity, sole divinity, and infinite foreknowledge, 6-8. Exposes the vanity of idols, and the folly of those who first made and then worshipped them, 9-20. Charges his people to consider his relation to them, and what he had done, did, and would do for them, as an incitement to repentance and thanksgiving.

A. M. 3294. YET now hear, <sup>a</sup> O Jacob, my ser-  
B. C. 710. vant; and Israel, whom I have  
chosen:

2 Thus saith the LORD that made thee, <sup>b</sup> and

<sup>a</sup> Verse 21; Chap. xli. 8; xliiii. 1; Jer. xxx. 10; xlv. 27, 28.

formed thee from the womb, *which* <sup>A. M. 3294.</sup>  
will help thee; Fear not, O Jacob, <sup>B. C. 710.</sup>  
my servant; and thou, <sup>c</sup> Jesurun, whom I have  
chosen.

<sup>b</sup> Chap. xliiii. 1, 7.—<sup>c</sup> Deut. xxxii. 15.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XLIV.

Verses 1, 2. *Yet now hear, O Jacob*—Although I have chastised thee for thy sins, and had just cause utterly to destroy thee, yet in judgment I will remember mercy, and will still own thee for my servant and chosen people. *Thus saith the Lord, that formed thee from the womb*—“He speaks of the Jewish people under the character of a single per-

son; and as God sometimes designed certain persons for particular offices, from their birth, or conception, so he set apart the posterity of Abraham to be his people from the very original of the family;” and *formed* and fashioned them for himself, by laws, ordinances, teachers, promises, threatenings, corrections, and many other ways. *Jesurun* is another name for Jacob or Israel, given to them by Moses,

A. M. 3294. 3 For I will <sup>d</sup> pour water upon  
B. C. 710. him that is thirsty, and floods upon  
the dry ground: I will pour my Spirit  
upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine  
offspring:

4 And they shall spring up *as* among the  
grass, as willows by the water-courses.

5 One shall say, I *am* the LORD's; and an-  
other shall call *himself* by the name of Jacob;  
and another shall subscribe *with* his hand unto  
the LORD, and surname *himself* by the name  
of Israel.

6 Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel,  
and his Redeemer the LORD of hosts; <sup>e</sup> I *am*  
the first, and I *am* the last; and besides me  
*there is no God*.

7 And <sup>f</sup> who, as I, shall call, and shall de-  
clare it, and set it in order for me, since I ap-  
pointed the ancient people? and the things that

<sup>d</sup> Chapter xxxv. 7; Joel ii. 28; John vii. 39; Acts ii. 18.  
<sup>e</sup> Verse 24; Chap. xliii. 1, 14.—<sup>f</sup> Chap. xli. 4; xlviii. 12; Rev.  
i. 8, 17; xxii. 13.—<sup>g</sup> Chap. xli. 4, 22; xlv. 21.—<sup>h</sup> Chap. xli.  
22.—<sup>i</sup> Chap. xliii. 10, 12.

Deut. xxxii. 15, (where see the note,) and xxxiii.  
5, 26.

Verses 3-5. *I will pour water*—My Spirit, as it is  
expounded in the latter part of the verse, frequently  
compared to water in the Scriptures; *upon him that is  
thirsty*—That is destitute of it, and that sincerely and  
earnestly desires it; *and my blessing upon thine off-  
spring*—All the blessings of my covenant, especially  
those of a spiritual nature. This promise seems to  
have been made with a design to raise the minds and  
hearts of the Jews from carnal and worldly things,  
to which they were too much addicted, to spiritual  
and heavenly blessings, and thereby to prepare them  
for the reception of the gospel. *And they shall  
spring up, &c.*—They shall increase and flourish  
like grass, and those herbs and plants which grow  
up in the midst of it. *One shall say, I am the  
Lord's, &c.*—This verse seems to relate to the in-  
crease of the church by the accession of the Gen-  
tiles: as if he had said, The blessing of God upon the  
Jews shall be so remarkable that many of the Gentiles  
shall join themselves unto them, and accept Jehovah  
for their God, and own themselves for his people.

Verses 6-8. *Thus saith the Lord, &c.*—Here  
God renews his contest with idols, which he insists  
on so often, and so much, because his own people  
were exceeding prone to idolatry. *And who*—Which  
of all the heathen gods; *shall call, and shall declare  
it*—Shall, by his powerful call, cause a future event  
to be, and, by his infinite foreknowledge, declare  
that it shall be. *And set it in order for me*—Order-  
ly relate all future events in the same manner as  
they shall happen. *Since I appointed the ancient  
people*—Αφ' ἡ ἐποίησα ἀνθρώπων. *Since I first made  
man upon the earth: so the LXX. And the things*

are coming, and shall come, let them <sup>A. M. 3294.</sup>  
show unto them. <sup>B. C. 710.</sup>

8 Fear ye not, neither be afraid: <sup>h</sup> have not I  
told thee from that time, and have declared *it*?  
<sup>i</sup> *ye are even my witnesses*. Is there a God  
besides me? yea, <sup>k</sup> *there is no* <sup>l</sup> God; I know  
not *any*.

9 ¶ <sup>1</sup> They that make a graven image *are* all  
of them vanity; and their <sup>2</sup> delectable things  
shall not profit; and they *are* their own wit-  
nesses; <sup>m</sup> they see not, nor know, that they may  
be ashamed.

10 Who hath formed a god, or molten a graven  
image <sup>n</sup> *that is profitable for nothing*?

11 Behold, all his fellows shall be <sup>o</sup> ashamed:  
and the workmen, they *are* of men: let them  
all be gathered together, let them stand up;  
*yet they shall fear, and they shall be ashamed  
together*.

<sup>k</sup> Deut. iv. 35, 39; xxxii. 39; 1 Sam. ii. 2; 2 Sam. xxii. 32;  
Chap. xlv. 5.—<sup>l</sup> Heb. *rock*, Deut. xxxii. 4.—<sup>m</sup> Chap. xli. 24,  
29.—<sup>n</sup> Heb. *desirable*.—<sup>o</sup> Psa. cxv. 4.—<sup>p</sup> Jer. x. 5; Hab. ii.  
18.—<sup>q</sup> Psa. xxvii. 7; Chap. i. 29; xlii. 17; xlv. 16.

*that are coming, &c.*—Such things as are near at  
hand, and such as are to come hereafter. *Have not  
I told thee?*—Thee, O Israel, whom he bids not to  
fear. The sense is, I call you Israelites to bear me  
witness, whether I have not, from time to time, ac-  
quainted you with things to come; *from that time*  
—When I appointed the ancient people, (verse 7,)  
from the first ages of the world. *And have declared  
it*—Have published it to the world in my sacred  
records. *Ye are even my witnesses*—Both of my  
predictions, and of the exact agreeableness of events  
to them.

Verses 9-11. *They that make a graven image  
are vanity*—Hereby discover themselves to be vain,  
empty, and foolish men. *And their delectable things  
shall not profit*—Their idols, in which they take so  
much pleasure. *They are their own witnesses*—  
They that make them are witnesses against them-  
selves and against their idols, because they know  
they are not gods, but the work of their own hands.  
*They see not, nor know*—Have neither sense nor  
understanding, therefore they have just cause to be  
ashamed of their folly in worshipping such senseless  
things. *Who hath formed a god, &c.*—What man  
in his wits would do it? *Behold, all his fellows  
shall be ashamed*—The workmen who, in this work,  
are partners with him, by whose cost and command  
the work is done; or those who any way assist in  
this work, and join with him in worshipping the  
image which he makes. *They are of men*—They  
are of mankind, and therefore cannot possibly make  
a god. *They shall be ashamed together*—Though  
all combine together, they shall be filled with fear  
and confusion when God shall plead his cause  
against them.

A. M. 3294. 12 <sup>p</sup>The smith <sup>3</sup>with the tongs both  
B. C. 710. worketh in the coals, and fashioneth it  
with hammers, and worketh it with the strength  
of his arms: yea, he is hungry, and his strength  
faileth: he drinketh no water, and is faint.

13 The carpenter stretcheth out *his* rule; he  
marketh it out with a line; he fitteth it with  
planes, and he marketh it out with the com-  
pass, and maketh it after the figure of a man,  
according to the beauty of a man; that it may  
remain in the house.

14 He heweth him down cedars, and taketh  
the cypress and the oak, which he <sup>4</sup>strengtheneth  
for himself among the trees of the  
forest: he planteth an ash, and the rain doth  
nourish *it*.

15 Then shall it be for a man to burn: for  
he will take thereof, and warm himself; yea,  
he kindleth *it*, and baketh bread; yea, he  
maketh a god, and worshippeth *it*; he maketh  
it a graven image, and falleth down thereto.

16 He burneth part thereof in the fire; with  
part thereof he eateth flesh; he roasteth roast,

<sup>p</sup> Chap. xl. 19; xli. 6; Jer. x. 3, &c.—<sup>3</sup> Or, with an axe.  
<sup>4</sup> Or, taketh courage.—<sup>1</sup> Chap. xlv. 20.—<sup>2</sup> Thess. ii. 11.  
<sup>5</sup> Heb. daubed.

Verses 12-17. *The smith, &c.*—"The sacred writers," says Bishop Lowth, "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 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. xiii. 11-19, and xv. 7, &c.; Baruk, chap. 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."

"I was of old the trunk of a fig-tree, a useless block; when the carpenter, uncertain whether to make a bench or a Priapus, chose that I should be a god."—*Hor.*, lib. i. sat. 8. *He maketh it after the figure of a man, &c.*—In the same comely shape and proportions which are in a living man; that it may remain in the house—In the dwelling-house of him that made it. *He heweth him down cedars and the oak*—Which afford the best and most durable timber; which he strengtheneth for himself—He plants,

and is satisfied: yea, he warmeth <sup>A. M. 3294.</sup>  
*himself*, and saith, Aha, I am warm, <sup>B. C. 710.</sup>  
I have seen the fire:

17 And the residue thereof he maketh a god,  
*even* his graven image: he falleth down unto  
it, and worshippeth *it*, and prayeth unto it, and  
saith, Deliver me; for thou *art* my god.

18 <sup>6</sup>They have not known, nor understood:  
for <sup>7</sup>he hath <sup>8</sup>shut their eyes, that they cannot  
see; and their hearts, that they cannot un-  
derstand.

19 And none <sup>6</sup>considereth <sup>6</sup>in his heart,  
neither *is there* knowledge nor understanding  
to say, I have burned part of it in the fire;  
yea, also I have baked bread upon the coals  
thereof; I have roasted flesh, and eaten *it*:  
and shall I make the residue thereof an abo-  
mination? shall I fall down to <sup>7</sup>the stock of a  
tree?

20 He feedeth on ashes: 'a deceived heart  
hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver  
his soul, nor say, *Is there* not a lie in my right  
hand?

<sup>6</sup> Hebrew, setteth to his heart.—<sup>7</sup> Chapter xlvi. 8.—<sup>8</sup> He-  
brew, that which comes of a tree.—<sup>1</sup> Hosea iv. 12; Romans i.  
21; 2 Thess. ii. 11.

and with care and diligence improves those trees,  
that he or his posterity may thence have materials  
for their images, and those things which belong to  
them. *He maketh an image, and falleth down  
thereto*—Having related the practices of idolaters,  
he now discovers the vanity and folly of them, that  
they make their fire and their god of the same ma-  
terials, distinguished only by the art of man, and  
roast their meat with the article which they worship.

Verses 18-20. *They have not known, &c.*—They  
want common discretion, and have not the under-  
standing of a rational being in them. For what an  
absurdity is it for a man to dress his meat and make  
his god with the same piece of wood! Or to think  
that a log of timber hath any more divinity in it than  
it had before, because of the form man can give it,  
or any thing he can do to it! "When," says Minu-  
tius Felix, "does it become a god! Behold, it is  
cast, fashioned, and carved! It is not yet a god. It  
is soldered, put together, and set up. Neither is it  
yet a god. Behold, it is adorned, consecrated, and  
prayed to! Then at length it is a god when men  
have chosen and dedicated it." *He hath shut their  
eyes*—God hath. Not as if God made men wicked;  
he only permits them so to be, and orders and over-  
rules their wickedness to his own glorious ends.  
*And none considereth in his heart*—By which the  
prophet implies, that the true cause of this, as well  
as of other absurd and brutish practices of sinners,  
is the neglect of serious and impartial consideration.  
*He feedeth on ashes*—An unprofitable and pernicious

A. M. 3294. 21 ¶ Remember these, O Jacob and B. C. 710. Israel; for <sup>a</sup> thou art my servant: I have formed thee; thou art my servant: O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me.

22 <sup>a</sup> I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for <sup>b</sup> I have redeemed thee.

23 <sup>a</sup> Sing, O ye heavens; for the LORD hath done *it*: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for the LORD hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel.

24 Thus saith the LORD <sup>a</sup> thy Redeemer, and <sup>b</sup> he that formed thee from the womb, I am the

<sup>a</sup> Verses 1, 2.—<sup>c</sup> Chap. xliii. 25.—<sup>d</sup> Chap. xliii. 1; xlviii. 20; 1 Cor. vi. 20; 1 Pet. i. 18, 19.—<sup>e</sup> Psa. lxix. 34; xevi. 11, 12; Chapter xlii. 10; xlix. 13; Jer. li. 48; Revelation xviii. 20. <sup>f</sup> Chap. xliii. 14; Verse 6.

food, and no less unsatisfying and mischievous is the worship of idols. *A deceived heart*—A mind corrupted and deceived by deep prejudice, gross error, and especially by his own lusts; *hath turned him aside*—From the way of truth, from the knowledge and worship of the true God, unto this irrational and foolish idolatry; *that he cannot deliver his soul*—From this error, and the vengeance that will follow upon it; *nor say, Is there not a lie, &c.*—Is not this idol which I honour and trust to a mere fiction and delusion which will deceive me?

Verses 21-23. *Remember these*—These things, the deep ignorance and stupidity of idolaters. *O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten*—I will not forget nor forsake thee; therefore thou shalt have no need of idols. *I have blotted out as a cloud, &c.*—As the sun arising disperses the clouds, and causes them to vanish and disappear, so have I, arising for thy salvation, with the light and influence of my grace, scattered and removed thy transgressions, that there is no remnant or appearance of them left: a beautiful and expressive metaphor. *Return unto me*—From thine idolatry, and other sinful practices. *For I have redeemed thee*—Therefore thou art mine, and obliged to return and adhere to me. *Sing, O ye heavens, &c.*—“The prophet here, by an elegant apostrophe, calls upon all creatures to glorify God for his singular blessing to his people in delivering them from their captivity in Babylon; which also has a further respect to the great and spiritual deliverance of mankind by the Messiah;” a mercy so transcendent, that, as he intimates, it is sufficient, were it possible, to make even the stones break forth in praises to God.

Verses 24-27. *I am the Lord that maketh all things*—And therefore I can save thee without the help of any other gods, or any creature; *that frustrateth the tokens of the liars*—Of the magicians and astrologers, who were numerous and greatly esteemed in Babylon, and who had foretold the long continuance and prosperity of the Chaldean empire.

LORD that maketh all things; <sup>a</sup> that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; <sup>b</sup> that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself:

25 That <sup>d</sup> frustrateth the tokens <sup>e</sup> of the liars, and maketh diviners mad; that turneth wise men backward, <sup>f</sup> and maketh their knowledge foolish;

26 <sup>a</sup> That confirmeth the word of his servant, and performeth the counsel of his messengers; that saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited; and to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be built, and I will raise up the <sup>b</sup> decayed places thereof:

27 <sup>b</sup> That saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers:

<sup>b</sup> Chap. xliii. 1.—<sup>c</sup> Job ix. 8; Psa. civ. 2; Chap. xl. 22; xlii. 5; xlv. 12; li. 13.—<sup>d</sup> Chap. xlvii. 13.—<sup>e</sup> Jer. i. 36. <sup>f</sup> 1 Cor. i. 20.—<sup>g</sup> Zech. i. 6.—<sup>h</sup> Heb. wastes.—<sup>i</sup> Jer. l. 38; li. 32, 36.

*And maketh the diviners mad*—With grief for the disappointment of their predictions, and their disgrace which followed it. *That turneth wise men backward*—Stopping their way, and blasting their designs. *That confirmeth the word of his servants*—The prophets, as appears from the next clause, namely, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and others, whom God sent to foretel the destruction of Babylon, and the redemption of his people. The connection of this with verse 25, is, As God discovers the folly and madness of such false prophets, so he punctually fulfils the predictions of his own prophets. *That saith to the deep, Be dry*—That with a word can dry up the sea and rivers, and remove all impediments. “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. *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*, Jer. l. 38; li. 36. It is proper here to give some account of the method by which the stratagem of Cyrus was effected. The Euphrates, in the middle of 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 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, (Hebrew, נהר אגם, *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 latter lake, laid the channel, where it ran through the city, almost dry; so that his army entered it both above

A. M. 3294. 28 That saith of Cyrus, *He*  
B. C. 710. *is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jeru-*

saalem, 'Thou shalt be built; and A. M. 3294.  
to the temple, Thy foundation shall B. C. 710.  
be laid.

<sup>1</sup>2 Chron. xxxvi. 22, 23;

Ezra i. 1; Chap. xlv. 13.

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 afterward, the waters spread over the whole country below, and reduced it into a morass, in which the river is lost."—Bishop Lowth.

Verse 28. *That saith of Cyrus*—Whom God here mentions by his proper name, two hundred years before he was born, that this might be an undeniable evidence of the exactness of God's foreknowledge, and a convincing argument to conclude this dispute between God and idols. *He is my shepherd*—Him will I set up to be the shepherd of my people, to

rescue them from wolves or tyrants, to gather them together, to rule them gently, and to provide comfortably for them. Xenophon tells us, that Cyrus used to compare kings in general, and himself in particular, to a shepherd.—*Cyropæd.*, lib. 8. *And shall perform all my pleasure*—All that I command him to do, especially to give leave and order for the rebuilding of the city and temple of Jerusalem, as it here follows. This prophecy, which thus speaks of Cyrus by name, as foreknown and appointed by the divine counsel for the performance of the great work designed by providence, is one of the most remarkable contained in Scripture, of the same kind with that I Kings xiii. 1, 2.

## CHAPTER XLV.

*In pursuance of the subject of the preceding chapter, we have here the commission which God would give Cyrus, and the success wherewith he would bless his arms, 1-4. The proof God would hereby give of his eternal power and godhead, and his universal incontestable sovereignty, 5-7. A prayer for the hastening of this deliverance, 8. A check to those who murmured against the appointments and dispensations of God, 9, 10. Encouragement given to those who trusted in God, and continued instant in prayer, 11-15. Idols and their worshippers shall be destroyed, and God alone exalted, 16-21. Both Jews and Gentiles are called to renounce their idolatries and turn to Jehovah, who reveals himself as a just God and a Saviour, engaging that all mankind shall bow to him, and that in him Israel shall be justified and shall glory, 22-25.*

A. M. 3294. **THUS** saith the LORD to his anoint-  
B. C. 710. ed, to Cyrus, whose <sup>a</sup> right hand I  
<sup>1</sup> have holden, <sup>b</sup> to subdue nations before him;

and I will loose the loins of kings, to A. M. 3294.  
open before him the two-leaved gates, B. C. 710.  
and the gates shall not be shut;

<sup>a</sup> Chap. xli. 13.—<sup>1</sup> Or, strengthened.

<sup>b</sup> Chap. xli. 2; Dan. v. 30.

### NOTES ON CHAPTER XLV.

Verse 1. *Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, &c.*—Cyrus is called the Lord's anointed, a title usually given to the kings of the Jews, who were God's immediate deputies, not because material oil had been poured upon him when he was made king, as was the case with most of them, but because he was raised up, and ordained by the divine counsel, to perform God's good pleasure, and furnished for that purpose with the necessary endowments; among which must be reckoned "his singular justice, his reverence toward the divine nature, his prudence, fortitude, and distinguished clemency and humanity:" to all which, and many other of his excellent qualities, his historian, Xenophon, bears testimony. *Whose right hand I have holden*—Or strengthened, as 'הוֹזֵקֶתִי may be properly rendered; whom I will powerfully assist, teaching his hands to war, as the phrase is Ps. xviii. 34, supporting and directing his right hand, and enabling him to surmount all difficulties, and to overcome all opposition.

*To subdue nations before him*—The nations conquered by him, according to Xenophon, were "the Syrians, Assyrians, Arabians, Cappadocians, the Phrygians, Lydians, Carians, Phœnicians, Babylonians. He moreover reigned over the Bactrians, Indians, Cilicians, the Saccæ, Paphlagonians, and Mariandyni." All these kingdoms he acknowledges, in his decree for the restoration of the Jews, to have been given him by Jehovah, the God of heaven, Ezra i. 2. *And I will loose the loins of kings*—I will weaken them, and render them unprepared and unable to oppose Cyrus. "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." *To open before him the two-leaved gates*—"The gates of Babylon, within the city, leading from the streets to the river, were providentially left

A. M. 3294. 2 I will go before thee, ° and make  
B. C. 710.

the crooked places straight: <sup>d</sup> I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron:

3 And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, ° that thou mayest know that I, the LORD, which <sup>f</sup> call thee by thy name, *am* the God of Israel.

4 For <sup>e</sup> Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy

<sup>c</sup> Chap. xl. 4.—<sup>d</sup> Psa. cvii. 16.—<sup>e</sup> Chap. xli. 23.—<sup>f</sup> Exod. xxxiii. 12, 17; Chapter xliii. 1; xlix. 1.—<sup>g</sup> Chapter xlv. 1. <sup>h</sup> 1 Thess. iv. 5.

open in the night when Cyrus's forces entered the city through the channel of the river, in the general disorder occasioned by the great feast which was then celebrated: otherwise, says Herodotus, 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 two parties of Medes and Persians rushed in, got possession of the palace, and slew the king." See Xenoph. *Cyrop.*, vii. p. 528; and Bishop Lowth.

Verses 2, 3. *I will go before thee*—To remove all obstructions, and prepare the way for thee. "The divine protection which attended Cyrus, and rendered his expedition against Babylon easy and prosperous, is finely expressed by this highly poetical image of God's going before him, and making the mountains level." *I will break in pieces the gates of brass*—I will destroy all that oppose thee, and carry thee through the greatest difficulties. "Abydenus says that the wall of Babylon had brazen gates. And Herodotus 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." *And I will give thee the treasures of darkness*—Treasures that have been stored up, and long kept in dark and secret places, as well in Babylon (Jer. l. 37; and li. 13) as in other countries which Cyrus conquered, and from which, as Pliny and others relate, he took infinite treasures. "Sardes and Babylon," as we learn from Xenophon, "when taken by Cyrus, were the wealthiest cities in the world. Cressus, 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. The gold and silver estimated by weight, according to the account given by Pliny, amount to 126,224,000 pounds sterling."—Bishop Lowth. *That thou mayest know that I am the God of Israel*—That I, Jehovah, who have so

name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast <sup>b</sup> not known me.

5 ¶ I <sup>i</sup> *am* the LORD, and <sup>k</sup> *there is* none else, *there is* no God besides me: <sup>l</sup> I girded thee, though thou hast not known me:

6 <sup>m</sup> That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that *there is* none besides me. *I am* the LORD, and *there is* none else.

7 I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and <sup>n</sup> create evil: I the LORD do all these *things*.

<sup>1</sup> Deut. iv. 35, 39; xxxii. 39; Chap. xlv. 8; xlv. 9.—<sup>k</sup> Ver. 14, 18, 21, 22.—<sup>l</sup> Psa. xviii. 32, 39.—<sup>m</sup> Psa. cii. 15; Chap. xxxvii. 20; Mal. i. 11.—<sup>n</sup> Amos iii. 6.

highly favoured thee, and have mentioned thy name so long beforehand, as the peculiar instrument of my providence, am the true God, and that Israel is my people. If this prophecy was shown to Cyrus, as Josephus says it was, *Antiq.*, lib. ii. cap. 2, (see note on Ezra i. 1.) it is very reasonable to suppose, when he found his own name mentioned in it, and his achievements described so long before, he must thereby be brought to know and acknowledge the God of Israel to be the only living and true God.

Verses 4-6. *For Jacob my servant's sake, &c.*—The prophet here gives us the reasons why God showed such favour to a prince, who had been addicted to the superstition of his country, and ignorant of the true God, that he prospered all his undertakings, and gave success to all his endeavours. It was, 1st, For Israel's sake: For *Israel, mine elect, I have even called thee, &c.*—I have called thee to this honour, and that by name; not for thy own sake, but for Israel's sake: therefore, neither despise them, though a poor and despised people, nor be puffed up in a great opinion of thyself. *I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me*—I knew and called thee, when thou didst neither know nor think of me; nay, when thou hadst no being. *I girded thee, &c.*—I made thee strong and active, and fitted and disposed thee for these great and warlike enterprises. It was, 2d, For the sake of all nations; that they might be convinced of the true divinity and almighty power of the God of Israel. *That they may know from the rising of the sun, &c., that I am the Lord, &c.*—That all nations may know it by my foretelling these things so long before, and by the wonderful success that I shall give thee, and by my overruling thy heart and counsels, to the deliverance of my people. Or, as Lowth explains it, "My interposing so visibly in behalf of my own people, and returning their captivity by such unexpected means, will convince the heathen part of the world that I am the only true God."

Verse 7. *I form the light, and create darkness, &c.*—All men's comforts and calamities come from my hand. "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, coeternal, and independent

A. M. 3294. 8 ° Drop down, ye heavens, from  
B. C. 710.

above, and let the skies pour down righteousness: let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation, and let righteousness spring up together; I the LORD have created it.

9 Wo unto him that striveth with <sup>p</sup> his Maker! Let the potsherd *strive* with the potsherds of the earth. <sup>q</sup> Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou? or thy work, He hath no hands?

10 Wo unto him that saith unto *his* father,

° Psa. lxxvii. 3; lxxxv. 11.—<sup>p</sup> Chap. lxiv. 8.—<sup>q</sup> Chap. xxix. 16; Jer. xviii. 6; Rom. ix. 20.—<sup>r</sup> Jer. xxxi. 9.

cause, 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 probably 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 there is no power, either of light or darkness, of good or evil, of happiness or misery, independent of the one supreme God, infinite in power and in goodness.—Bishop Lowth.

Verse 8. *Drop down, ye heavens, from above, &c.*—It appears from the last clause of this verse, that these are the words of Jehovah himself, commanding blessings to descend upon his people, and exhorting his people willingly and gratefully to receive them, and to walk worthy of them. The passage is strongly figurative, and Vitringa is of opinion, that it “refers primarily to the blessings consequent upon the deliverance from the Babylonish captivity; but secondarily, and in its more complete sense, to that righteousness and salvation liberally imparted to man by the grace of the Messiah.” The words may be thus paraphrased: Let the heavens drop down, or, they shall drop down, as it were, from above, &c. God’s righteous and gracious acts, done for his people, and his blessings conferred upon them, shall be as many and illustrious as if he rained them down from heaven. But let the earth open itself, both to receive those refreshing and fertilizing showers, and to bring forth those fruits which they might be reasonably expected to produce. *And let them*—The heavens and the earth conspiring together; *bring forth salvation*—The redemption and deliverance of God’s people from Babylon, by Cyrus, and from ignorance and error, sin and death, by the

What begettest thou? or to the wo- A. M. 3294.  
man, What hast thou brought forth? B. C. 710.

11 Thus saith the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker, Ask me of things to come concerning <sup>r</sup> my sons, and concerning <sup>s</sup> the work of my hands command ye me.

12 <sup>t</sup> I have made the earth, and <sup>u</sup> created man upon it: I, *even* my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and <sup>x</sup> all their host have I commanded.

13 <sup>y</sup> I have raised him up in righteousness,

\* Isa. xxix. 23.—<sup>t</sup> Chap. xlii. 5; Jer. xxvii. 5.—<sup>u</sup> Gen. i. 26.  
<sup>x</sup> Gen. ii. 1.—<sup>y</sup> Chap. xli. 2.

Messiah. *And let righteousness spring up together*—Together with salvation. Let the holiness of my people bear some proportion to their privileges and advantages, and the great things I have done for them. *I the Lord have created it*—I am the author, both of the salvation and of the righteousness which springs up together with it.

Verses 9, 10. *Wo unto him that striveth, &c.*—Bishop Lowth renders this verse, “Wo unto him that contendeth with the power that formed him, the potsherd with the moulder of the clay! Shall the clay say to the potter, What makest thou? And to the workman, Thou hast no hands.” “The prophet,” he thinks, “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, Rom. ix. 20, 21.”

Verses 11–13. *Thus saith the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker*—Israel’s Maker. A preface this which always ushers in some gracious promise: see chap. xliii. 1, 3, 14; and xlv. 6; and xlvi. 17. *Ask me of things to come, &c.*—The words thus rendered contain a concession, and the sense of them may be this: although the potter doth not give an account to the clay, nor parents to their children, yet I will so far condescend to you as to be at your command in this matter, to give you an account of those great actions of mine for which you quarrel with me. Many interpreters, however, prefer rendering the words interrogatively, thus: *Do you, or will you, ask, or question me, of things to come concerning my sons? and concerning the work of my hands will you command me?* As if he had said, Will you not allow me the liberty which yourselves take, of disposing of my own children and works as I see fit? Must I give you an account of these matters? Which he does in the words following. *I have made the earth, and created man, &c.*—The earth and its inhabitants are wholly and solely my creatures, and therefore are absolutely at my disposal. *I have raised him up*—Namely, Cyrus, named before,

A. M. 3294. and I will <sup>2</sup>direct all his ways: he shall <sup>2</sup>build my city, and he shall let go my captives, <sup>a</sup>not for price nor reward, saith the LORD of hosts.

14 Thus saith the LORD, <sup>b</sup>The labour of Egypt, and merchandise of Ethiopia and of the Sabeans, men of stature, shall come over unto thee, and they shall be thine: they shall come after thee; <sup>c</sup>in chains they shall come over, and they shall fall down unto thee, they shall make supplication unto thee, *saying*, <sup>d</sup>Surely

<sup>a</sup> Or, *make straight*.—<sup>2</sup> Chronicles xxxvi. 22; Ezra i. 1; Chap. xlv. 28.—<sup>3</sup> Chap. lii. 3; Romans iii. 24.—<sup>b</sup> Psalm lxxviii. 31; lxxii. 10; Chapter xlix. 23; lx. 9, 14, 16;

verse 1; *in righteousness*—Not in a way of absolute sovereignty, as I might have done, but most justly to punish the oppressors of my people, to plead the cause of the oppressed, and to manifest my righteousness, truth, and goodness. *And I will direct his ways*—Will guide and assist him in all his marches, wars, and battles, crowning all his undertakings with success. *He shall let go my captives, not for price, &c.*—That is, freely, without requiring any ransom for them, as is usual in such cases. Such an exact prediction of events, which depended on the mind and will of Cyrus, is mentioned here as an infallible evidence of the certainty of God's foreknowledge, and of his being the only true God, because idols could discover no such things.

Verse 14. *Thus saith the Lord, &c.*—Here the prophet turns to Jerusalem, or to the company of returning exiles, and relates some joyful consequence of the deliverance foretold, which probably chiefly respects the future admission of the Gentiles into the church of God. *The labour of Egypt*—The wealth gotten by their labour; *and merchandise of Ethiopia*—The gains of their merchandise; *and of the Sabeans, men of stature*—A tall and strong people; *shall come over unto thee*—O my city, or church. The sense is, Jerusalem shall not only be rebuilt, but the wealth and glory of other countries shall be brought to it again, as in former times. "The words," says Lowth, "may be supposed, in some degree, verified in Cyrus's devoting the tribute coming out of those rich provinces of Egypt, Ethiopia, and Seba, to the building and service of the temple." To which may be added, that "some of the succeeding Persian monarchs settled revenues upon the temple for the offering of sacrifices for themselves and their families, Ezra vi. 10. And the same was done, in after times, by Alexander the Great, and several of the Syrian and Egyptian kings, 2 Maccab. iii. 2, 3, and v. 16." But "the place is principally meant of the flourishing state of the church, (often described under the figure of a city,) when the Gentile world should come into it, bring in their riches to the support of it, and submit themselves to its government, as being the only seat and temple of truth." *In chains they shall come over*—Subdued by the rod of the

God is in thee; and <sup>e</sup>there is none else, *there is no God.* A. M. 3294 B. C. 710.

15 Verily thou art a God <sup>f</sup>that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour.

16 They shall be ashamed, and also confounded, all of them: they shall go to confusion together *that are* <sup>g</sup>makers of idols.

17 <sup>h</sup>But Israel shall be saved in the LORD with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end.

Zech. viii. 22.—<sup>c</sup> Psalm cxlix. 8.—<sup>d</sup> 1 Corinthians xiv. 25. <sup>e</sup> Verse 5.—<sup>f</sup> Psa. xlv. 24; Chap. viii. 17; lvii. 17.—<sup>g</sup> Chap. xlv. 11.—<sup>h</sup> Chap. xxvi. 4; Verse 20; Rom. xi. 26.

Messiah's strength, (Psa. cx. 2,) the power of his word, and led captive thereby: they shall confess themselves to be conquered, and shall willingly submit themselves to thee. The subjection of the Gentiles to God's church is often expressed in Scripture by such metaphors as this; as Psa. xlv. 5; and cxlix. 8; and lxviii. 18, compared with Eph. iv. 8. *They shall make supplication unto thee*—To obtain thy favour and society; *saying, Surely God is in thee*—Or, *with thee*. We plainly discern that God is on thy side, or in the midst of thee; and therefore we desire to join ourselves with thee; *and there is none else*—We are now convinced that Jehovah, thy God, is the only true God, and that idols are vain and empty nothings.

Verse 15. *Verily, &c.*—These are the words of the prophet, drawn from him by the consideration of the great and various works and dispensations of God toward his church, and in the world; *thou art a God that hidest thyself*—Namely, from thy people for a season: thy counsels are deep and incomprehensible, and thy ways past finding out; *O God of Israel, the Saviour*—Who, though thou conceal the grounds and reasons of thy dispensations, and often deferrest to help thy people in the time of distress, yet art still carrying on their deliverance, and the destruction of their enemies, although in a mysterious way. And therefore it is meet that we should patiently wait for the accomplishment of these glorious things here promised us.

Verses 16, 17. *They*—The idolatrous Gentiles, as it is explained in the end of the verse, opposed to Israel in the beginning of the next verse, *shall be ashamed, &c.*—Hebrew, בושו וגם נכלמו כלם, *They are ashamed, they are even confounded, all of them*; that is, after the completion of this prophecy. *They shall go*—Hebrew, הלכו, *they go, to confusion together, the makers of idols*—Both the artificers, and the masters that set them on work, and consequently all their worshippers. "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 (verse 17) with the salvation of Israel, not from temporal cap-

A. M. 3294. 18 For thus saith the LORD <sup>i</sup> that  
B. C. 710. created the heavens; God himself that  
formed the earth and made it; he hath estab-  
lished it, he created it not in vain, he formed it  
to be inhabited: <sup>1</sup> *I am* the LORD; and *there*  
*is none else.*

19 I have not spoken in <sup>1</sup> secret, in a dark  
place of the earth: I said not unto the seed of  
Jacob, Seek ye me in vain: <sup>m</sup> I the LORD speak  
righteousness, I declare things that are right.

20 ¶ Assemble yourselves and come; draw  
near together, ye *that are* escaped of the  
nations: <sup>n</sup> they have no knowledge that set

<sup>1</sup> Chapter xlii. 5.—<sup>k</sup> Verse 5.—<sup>l</sup> Deut. xxx. 11; Chapter  
xlviii. 16.—<sup>m</sup> Psa. xix. 8; cxix. 137.—<sup>n</sup> Chap. xlv. 17, 19;  
xlv. 7; xlviii. 7; Rom. i. 22.

tivity, but the *eternal* salvation by the Messiah,  
strongly marked by the repetition and augmentation  
of the phrase, ער עלמי ער, *usque ad secula eterni-*  
*tatis, to the ages of eternity.*—Bishop Lowth.

Verse 18. *Thus saith the Lord*—Hebrew, *Jehovah*;  
*that created the heavens, &c.*—This descrip-  
tion of God is here added, 1st, To detect the vanity  
of idols, by asserting that none was to be owned as  
the true God, besides that one Jehovah who made  
the heavens and the earth, and the inhabitants there-  
of. 2d, To demonstrate God's sufficiency to fulfil  
all these glorious promises made to his church, be-  
cause he created the world, and upholds it by the  
word of his power. And, 3d, To manifest his good-  
ness to mankind, inasmuch as he did not create the  
earth in vain, but for the use and comfort of men,  
that it might be a fit habitation for them: whence it  
was easy to infer that he would much more be gra-  
cious to his own people.

Verse 19. *I have not spoken in secret, in a dark  
place, &c.*—This is declared in opposition to the  
manner in which the heathen oracles gave their  
answers; which were generally delivered not only  
darkly and doubtfully, but from obscure cells and  
caverns of the earth: such was the seat of the Cu-  
mean Sibyl:

“Excisum Euboicæ latus ingens rupis in antrum.”

“A spacious cave within its farthest part  
Was hew'd, and fashion'd by laborious art:  
Through the hill's hollow sides—”

VIRG. ÆN., vi. 42.

Such was that of the famous oracle at Delphi: of  
which, says Strabo, lib. ix., “The oracle is said to  
be, αντρον κοilon μετα βαθους, η μαλα ευνοστομον, a hol-  
low cavern of considerable depth, with an opening  
not very wide.” And Diodorus, giving an account  
of the same oracle, says, “There was in that place  
a great chasm, or cleft, in the earth; in which very  
place is situated what is called *Adytum*,” that is, the  
cavern, or hidden part of the temple. Jehovah, on  
the contrary, delivered his oracles to Israel publicly  
and plainly. *I said not to the seed of Jacob, Seek*

up the wood of their graven image, A. M. 3294.  
and pray unto a god *that* cannot <sup>B. C. 710.</sup>  
save.

21 Tell ye, and bring *them* near; yea, let  
them take counsel together: <sup>o</sup> who hath declared  
this from ancient time? *who* hath told it from  
that time? *have* not I the LORD? <sup>p</sup> and *there*  
*is no God else besides me*; a just God and a  
Saviour; *there is none besides me.*

22 ¶ <sup>q</sup> Look unto me, and be ye saved, all  
the ends of the earth: for *I am* God, and *there*  
*is none else.*

23 <sup>r</sup> I have sworn by myself, the word is gone

<sup>o</sup> Chap. xlii. 22; xliiii. 9; xlv. 7; xlv. 10; xlviii. 14.—<sup>p</sup> Ver.  
5, 14, 18; Chap. xlv. 8; xlv. 9; xlviii. 3.—<sup>q</sup> Psa. xxii. 27;  
lxv. 5.—<sup>r</sup> Gen. xxii. 16; Heb. vi. 13.

*ye me in vain*—Serve and worship me for naught.  
As I appointed them work, so from time to time I  
have given them abundant recompense. *I Jehovah*  
*speak righteousness, &c.*—That which I promise is  
true, and that which I command is just and good.  
I require nothing of my people but what is right-  
eous in itself, and for their real advantage: whereas  
the idols, or their priests rather, command their  
worshippers to do many sinful and shameful things,  
even in their worship, as is most notorious. Bishop  
Lowth renders this clause, *I am Jehovah, who speak  
truth, who give direct answers*; observing, “This  
also is said in opposition to the false and ambiguous  
answers given by the heathen oracles; of which  
there are many noted examples.”

Verses 20-22. *Draw near together*—To attend to  
what I have said, and am now about to say again,  
concerning the vanity of your idols; *ye that are es-*  
*caped of the nations*—Ye that survive those many  
and great destructions which I am bringing upon  
heathen nations for their abominable idolatries and  
other wickedness. Let those dreadful judgments  
upon others, and God's great mercy in sparing you,  
awaken you to a more impartial and serious consi-  
deration of this subject, and induce you to renounce  
those idols which have now manifested their in-  
ability to afford any help to those who serve and  
trust in them. *They have no knowledge, &c.*—  
See on chap. xlv. 9, 17, 18. *Let them take counsel  
together*—To maintain the cause of their idols.  
See on chap. xli. 22; and xliii. 9; and xlv. 7.  
*Look unto me, &c., all ye ends of the earth*—  
Upon these considerations I call upon all people,  
from one end of the earth to the other, to cast  
away their idols, and to turn their eyes and hearts  
to me, expecting salvation from me, and from me  
only; and they shall not be disappointed. And  
this is not only an exhortation to the Gentiles to  
turn from idols to God, but a prediction that they  
shall turn to him, and look unto Christ, who is  
and will be the *author of eternal salvation to all  
that obey him*, whether Jews or Gentiles, which  
is confirmed by the following verse.

Verse 23. *I have sworn by myself*—Which is the

A. M. 3294. out of my mouth *in* righteousness, and  
B. C. 710.

shall not return, That unto me every

<sup>a</sup> knee shall bow, <sup>c</sup> every tongue shall swear.

24 <sup>3</sup> Surely, shall *one* say, In the LORD have  
I <sup>u</sup> righteousness<sup>4</sup> and strength: *even* to him

<sup>a</sup> Romans xiv. 11; Philippians ii. 10.—<sup>c</sup> Genesis xxxi. 53; Deuteronomy vi. 13; Psalm lxiii. 11; Chapter lxv. 16.  
<sup>3</sup> Or, *Surely he shall say of me, In the LORD is all righteous-*

highest and most solemn oath possible, Heb. vi. 13; and therefore signifies that the matter, thus confirmed, is of extraordinary importance. *The word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness*—It is what I will faithfully perform. *And shall not return*—Namely, *unto me void*, or without effect, as this phrase is more fully delivered, chap. lv. 11. It is a metaphor taken from ambassadors, who sometimes return to their princes without any success in their business. *That unto me every knee shall bow*—Not only the Jews, but all nations shall worship me, and submit to my laws: which is signified by the bowing of the knee, a posture of reverence and subjection, and by one eminent part of God's worship, swearing by his name. *Surely shall one say*—Or, *shall he say*, each or every one of these, who, he now declared, should bow their knees to God, &c. *In the Lord*—Hebrew, *Jehovah*. By, or from God alone, or the Messiah, who is the true Jehovah as well as man; *have I righteousness*—*To justify me from all things, from which I could not be justified by the law of Moses*. See Acts xiii. 39. This plainly points us to the Messiah, whose very name is the *Lord our righteousness*, Jer. xxiii. 6; and whose great business it was to bring in everlasting righteousness, Dan. ix. 24; and *who of God is made*

shall *men* come; and <sup>2</sup> all that are A. M. 3294.  
incensed against him shall be B. C. 710.  
ashamed.

25 <sup>7</sup> In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel  
be justified, and <sup>2</sup> shall glory.

*ness and strength*.—<sup>a</sup> Jeremiah xxiii. 5; 1 Corinthians i. 30.  
<sup>4</sup> Hebrew, *righteousnesses*.—<sup>c</sup> Chapter xli. 11.—<sup>7</sup> Verse 17.  
<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. i. 31.

*unto us righteousness*, 1 Cor. i. 30. *And strength*—Support and assistance to bear all my burdens, overcome all my enemies, and perform all my duties. The sense is, The Gentiles shall expect and obtain from Christ both justification, or forgiveness of sins by his blood, and sanctification by his Spirit. *Even to him shall men come*—The Gentiles shall come to Christ, either, 1st, By constraint, or necessity, to be judged by him at the last day: or, 2d, Willingly by prayer to seek, and by faith to receive, righteousness and strength from him. *Coming to Christ* is put for *believing on him*, Matt. xi. 28; John v. 50, and vi. 35-37, and elsewhere. *And, or, but, all that are incensed against him*—All his implacable enemies shall be brought to shame and punishment.

Verse 25. *In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel*—All Israelites indeed, whether Jews or Gentiles; all believers, who are frequently called God's Israel in Scripture; *be justified*—Acquitted, both from real guilt before God, and from all false aspersions before the world; for this justification of the true Israel is opposed to their enemies being *ashamed*, verse 24; which seems to be intended of their public shame and confusion before God and men. *And shall glory*—They shall not only receive him, but they shall rejoice and triumph in him as their God and portion.

## CHAPTER XLVI.

In this chapter we have, (1.) A prediction of the overthrow of the Babylonish idolatry, 1, 2. (2.) An address to the people of God, assuring them of his kind regard to them, and of the constancy of that regard, 3, 4. (3.) The vanity of idols shown from the manner of making them, and their inability to move, to give their worshippers any answer, or afford them any help, 5-7. (4.) An exhortation to the Jews to consider this, and still to adhere to their own God, remembering the undeniable proofs he had given of his true and sole divinity, from his illustrious works in former times; and his predictions of events, certainly fulfilled, or soon to be fulfilled, 8-11. (5.) The unbelievers and stout-hearted are addressed, who doubted the completion of these predictions and promises, 12, 13.

A. M. 3294. BEL <sup>a</sup> boweth down. Nebo stoop-  
B. C. 710. eth, their idols were upon the  
beasts, and upon the cattle: your carriages

<sup>a</sup> Chap. xxi. 9; Jer. l. 2; li. 44.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER XLVI.

Verses 1, 2. *Bel*—The chief idol of the Babylonians, called by profane historians Jupiter Belus; *boweth down*—As the Babylonians used to bow down to him to worship him, so now he bows down, and submits himself to the victorious Persians. *Nebo*

were heavy loaden; <sup>b</sup> they are a bur- A. M. 3294.  
den to the weary beast. B. C. 710.

2 They stoop, they bow down together;

<sup>b</sup> Jer. x. 5.

*stoopeth*—Another of their famous idols, probably a deified prophet, the word signifying to deliver oracles, or to prophesy. The names of these idols were included in the names of several of their princes, as *Bel*, in *Belshazzar*; *Nebo*, in *Nabonassar*; *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Nebuzar-adan*. *Their idols were upon*

A. M. 3294. they could not deliver the burden,  
B. C. 710. ° but <sup>1</sup> themselves are gone into captivity.

3 ¶ Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, <sup>d</sup> which are borne *by me* from the belly, which are carried from the womb :

4 And *even to your* old age ° I *am* he ; and *even to hoar hairs* <sup>f</sup> will I carry *you* : I have made, and I will bear ; even I will carry, and will deliver *you*.

5 ¶ ° To whom will ye liken me, and make me equal, and compare me, that we may be like ?

6 <sup>h</sup> They lavish gold out of the bag, and weigh silver in the balance, *and* hire a gold-

° Jer. xlviii. 7.—<sup>1</sup> Heb. *their soul*.—<sup>d</sup> Exod. xix. 4 ; Deut. i. 31 ; xxxii. 11 ; Psa. lxxi. 6 ; Chap. lxxiii. 9.—° Psa. cii. 27 ; Malachi iii. 6.—<sup>f</sup> Psalm xlviii. 14 ; lxxi. 18.—° Chapter xl. 18, 25.

*their beasts*—Were taken and broken, and the materials of them, which were gold, and silver, and brass, were carried upon beasts into Persia. *Your carriages*—O ye Persians, to whom he suddenly turns his speech, *were heavily laden*—With these useless gods, which were so far from being able to come forward to the help of their worshippers, that they could not move themselves, but must be dragged on carriages by cattle. *They bow down together*—The Babylonians and their idols, neither of them being able to help the other. *They could not deliver the burden*—The Babylonians could not deliver their idols, which he now had called a burden ; *but themselves are gone into captivity*—They as well as their idols.

Verses 3, 4. *Hearken, &c.*, all the remnant of the house of Israel—All that remain of the twelve tribes. He terms them a *remnant*, either because the ten tribes were already carried into captivity by Shalmaneser, or because he addresses that remnant of the two tribes, which he foresaw would return from Babylon ; *which are borne by me, &c.*—Whom I have nourished and cared for from time to time, ever since you were a people, and came out of Egypt, and that as affectionately and tenderly as parents bring up their own children. *Even to hoar hairs will I carry you*—That kindness which I have shown you, and that care which I have taken of you, I will continue to you to the end, never forsaking you, unless you wilfully and obstinately cast me off ; which the Jews did when their Messiah came. *I have made you, and will carry, and deliver you*—You are my workmanship, both as you are men, and as you are my peculiar people ; and therefore I will preserve and deliver you. The reader will observe, that the prophet here “very ingeniously, and with great force, contrasts the power of God, and his tender goodness effectually exerted toward his people, with the inability of the false gods of the

smith ; and he maketh it a god : A. M. 3294.  
they fall down, yea, they worship. B. C. 710.

7 <sup>i</sup> They bear him upon the shoulder, they carry him, and set him in his place, and he standeth ; from his place shall he not remove : yea, <sup>k</sup> one shall cry unto him, yet can he not answer, nor save him out of his trouble.

8 Remember this, and show yourselves men : <sup>l</sup> bring *it* again to mind, O ye transgressors.

9 <sup>m</sup> Remember the former things of old : for I *am* God, <sup>n</sup> *there is* none else ; I *am* God, and *there is* none like me,

10 ° Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times *the things* that are not *yet* done, saying, <sup>p</sup> My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure :

<sup>h</sup> Chap. xl. 19 ; xli. 6 ; xlv. 12, 19 ; Jer. x. 3.—<sup>i</sup> Jer. x. 5. <sup>k</sup> Chap. xlv. 20.—<sup>l</sup> Chap. xlv. 19 ; xlvii. 7.—<sup>m</sup> Deut. xxxii. 7.—<sup>n</sup> Chap. xlv. 5, 21.—<sup>o</sup> Chap. xlv. 21.—<sup>p</sup> Psa. xxxiii. 11 ; Prov. xix. 21 ; xxi. 30 ; Acts v. 39 ; Heb. vi. 17.

heathen : he, like an indulgent father, had carried his people in his arms, ‘as a man carrieth his son,’ Deut. i. 31 ; he had protected them and delivered them in their distresses ; whereas the idols of the heathen were forced to be carried about themselves, and removed from place to place, with a great labour and fatigue to their worshippers ; nor could they answer, or deliver their votaries, when they cried unto them.” See Num. xi. 12.

Verses 5-8. *To whom will you liken me, &c.*—If you be tempted at any time to exchange me for an idol, do me and yourselves the right seriously to consider, whether you can find another god, who will be more able and more ready to do you good than I have been. *They lavish gold &c., and he maketh it a god*—Let us suppose a god made with the greatest cost and art. *They bear him upon the shoulder*—From that place where he is made, unto that place where they intend to set him up. *From his place shall he not remove*—Or, rather, *he cannot remove*. He cannot stir, either hand or foot, to help his people. *Remember this*—Consider these things which I now speak, O ye Israelites ; *and show yourselves men*—Act like reasonable creatures, and be not so brutish as to worship your own works : be so wise and courageous as to withstand all solicitations to idolatry. *Bring it again to mind, O ye transgressors*—Think of this again and again, O ye who have been guilty of this foolish sin, and who, therefore, are obliged to take the better heed, lest you should relapse into it again.

Verses 9-11. *Remember the former things*—What I have done for you and in the world, my evident predictions of future things, justified by the event ; and those other miraculous works, whereby I have abundantly proved my divinity. *Declaring the end from the beginning*—Foretelling from the beginning of the world, or from the beginning of your nation, those future events which should hap-

A. M. 3294. B. C. 710. 11 Calling a ravenous bird <sup>a</sup> from the east, <sup>2</sup> the man <sup>r</sup> that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, <sup>s</sup> I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it.

12 ¶ Hearken unto me, ye <sup>t</sup> stout-heart-

<sup>a</sup> Chap. xli. 2, 25.—<sup>s</sup> Heb. *the man of my counsel*.—<sup>r</sup> Chap. xli. 28; xlv. 13.—<sup>t</sup> Num. xxiii. 19.

pen in succeeding ages, even to the end of the world, or to the end of your commonwealth; for such predictions we find delivered by Moses, the first founder of their state. *My counsel shall stand*—As I will not, so no other power can, disappoint my purposes and predictions. This is another argument urged for the divinity of the God of Israel, namely, his foreknowledge and prediction of future events, of which the prophet subjoins a particular instance in the next words. *Calling a ravenous bird, or eagle, from the east*—From Persia, as Isa. xli. 2. “There can be no doubt that Cyrus is here meant. Kings and princes are often compared in Scripture to eagles, Jer. xlix. 22; Ezek. xvii. 3. But it has been thought that there is a peculiar propriety in this application to Cyrus, as the eagle well denotes the magnanimity, the quickness of judgment, the celerity in all his expeditions and motions, for which Cyrus was so remarkable. We are also told by Plutarch, that Cyrus had an aquiline nose; and Xenophon expressly relates, that his standard was a golden eagle; which yet continues, says he, to be the standard of the Persian kings.”—Vitrina.

Verses 12, 13. *Hearken unto me, ye stout-hearted*—“God had addressed those kindly who had suffered themselves, through imprudence, to be seduced

ed, <sup>u</sup> that are far from righteousness. A. M. 3294. B. C. 710.

13 <sup>v</sup> I bring near my righteousness; it shall not be far off, and my salvation <sup>w</sup> shall not tarry: and I will place <sup>z</sup> salvation in Zion for Israel my glory.

<sup>v</sup> Psa. lxxvi. 5.—<sup>w</sup> Rom. x. 3.—<sup>x</sup> Chap. li. 5; Rom. i. 17; iii. 21.—<sup>y</sup> Hab. ii. 3.—<sup>z</sup> Chap. lxvii. 11.

from the right way, and whose conversion might more reasonably be expected; but he speaks more severely to the hypocrites, the incredulous, the fierce and proud in heart, who obstinately doubted the completion of his excellent promises: ‘O you, says he, who are yourselves far from faith, truth, integrity, and all true piety, but full of deceit, hypocrisy, incredulity, and who complain that my salvation is far off, and call my fidelity in question, hearken to me, and know that my righteousness, or justification, is not far off, but near at hand, and shortly to be revealed.’” *I bring near my righteousness*—Though you are unrighteous, I will show myself a righteous and faithful God, making good my promise of delivering you out of Babylon after seventy years. *It shall not be far off*—Namely, my work of saving you from captivity. *I will place salvation in Zion*—I will bring my people from Babylon to Zion, and there I will save them from all their enemies; *for Israel my glory*—In whom I will again glory, as my people, and the illustrious monuments of my wisdom, power, truth, and goodness; whom I will make a great and glorious people, though now they are mean and contemptible, and among whom I will once more settle my glorious presence and ordinances.

CHAPTER XLVII.

The prophet had intimated the destruction of the Babylonish empire in a few words at the beginning of the last chapter; and he here foretels it more plainly, and denounces it as a just judgment upon the Babylonians for their cruelty toward God's people, 1-6. Their pride and carnal security, 7-9. Their confidence in themselves and contempt of God, 10. Their magic arts, their enchantments and sorceries, which should be so far from affording them any help or support, that they should hasten their ruin, 11-15.

A. M. 3294. B. C. 710. COME <sup>a</sup> down, and <sup>b</sup> sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon, sit on the ground: there is no throne, O daughter

<sup>a</sup> Jer. xlvi. 18.—<sup>b</sup> Chap. iii. 26.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XLVII.

Verses 1, 2. *Come down*—From thy throne; and *sit in the dust*—As a mourner for thy approaching calamities; *O virgin daughter of Babylon*—Thou that art tender and delicate like a virgin. *Sit on the ground*—In a condition the most abject and degraded. *There is no throne*—Namely, for thee.

of the Chaldeans: for thou shalt no more be called tender and delicate. A. M. 3294. B. C. 710.

2 <sup>c</sup> Take the millstones and grind meal:

<sup>c</sup> Exod. xi. 5; Judg. xvi. 21; Matt. xxiv. 41.

Imperial power is taken from thee, and translated to the Persians. *Thou shalt no more be called tender*—Thou shalt be reduced to the greatest hardships and miseries. *Take the millstones*—Thou shalt be subjected to the basest kind of slavery, which grinding at the mill was esteemed; for that work was most generally performed by slaves. The reader

A. M. 3294. uncover thy locks, make bare the leg,  
B. C. 710.

uncover the thigh, pass over the rivers.

3<sup>d</sup> Thy nakedness shall be uncovered, yea, thy shame shall be seen : ° I will take vengeance, and I will not meet *thee* as a man.

4 *As for* † our Redeemer, the LORD of hosts is his name, the Holy One of Israel.

5 Sit thou ‡ silent, and get thee into dark-

<sup>d</sup> Chapter iii. 17; xx. 4; Jeremiah xiii. 22, 26; Nah. iii. 5. <sup>e</sup> Romans xii. 19.—† Chapter xliii. 3, 14; Jeremiah l. 34. <sup>‡</sup> 1 Sam. ii. 9.

will observe, "they used hand-mills: water-mills were not invented till a little before the time of Augustus Cesar: wind-mills long after. It was not only the work of slaves to grind corn, but the hardest work; and often inflicted upon them as a severe punishment. And in the East it was the work of female slaves, Exod. xi. 5, and xii. 29; (in the version of the LXX. ;) Matt. xxiv. 41. And it is the same to this day. 'Women alone,' says Shaw, p. 297, 'are employed to grind their corn.' 'They are the female slaves,' says Sir. J. Chardin, 'that are generally employed in the East at those hand-mills: it is extremely laborious, and esteemed the lowest employment in the house.'"—Bishop Lowth. *Uncover thy locks*—Take off the ornaments wherewith such women as were of good quality used to cover and dress their heads. These are predictions of what they should be forced to do or suffer. *Make bare the leg, &c.*—Gird up thy garments close and short about thee, that thou mayest be fit for travelling on foot, and for passing over those rivers through which thou wilt be constrained to wade in the way to the land of thy captivity.

Verse 3. *Thy nakedness shall be uncovered*—Either for want of raiment to cover it, or rather, by thine enemies in the way of scorn and contumely. *I will take vengeance*—Upon thee, for thy many and great injuries done to my people. *I will not meet thee as a man*—But like an Almighty God, whose power thou canst not resist. I will not treat thee with moderation and gentleness, as those men who have not quite put off humanity use to do, but like a lion, to tear thee to pieces: see Hos. v. 14; and xiii. 7, 8. Thou shalt feel the most dreadful effects of my anger, and I will show no humanity or pity toward thee. The original expression, לֹא אֶפְגַּע אִתְּךָ, is peculiar, and is literally, *I will not meet a man*, which may be an inverted sentence put for, *a man shall not meet me*, that is, no man shall prevent or hinder the effects of my wrath. Bishop Lowth renders it, "Neither will I suffer a man to intercede with me."

Verse 4. *As for our Redeemer, &c.*—The words, *as for*, not being in the Hebrew text, Bishop Lowth translates this verse, "Our Avenger, Jehovah God of hosts, the Holy One of Israel, is his name." And he observes, "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; after which, the former subject and

ness, O daughter of the Chaldeans: A. M. 3294.  
<sup>b</sup> for thou shalt no more be called, The B. C. 710.  
lady of kingdoms.

6<sup>i</sup> I was wroth with my people, † I have polluted mine inheritance, and given them into thy hand: thou didst show them no mercy; † upon the ancient hast thou very heavily laid thy yoke.

<sup>b</sup> Verse 7; Chap. xiii. 19; Dan. ii. 37.—<sup>1</sup>2 Sam. xxiv. 14; 2 Chron. xxviii. 9; Zech. i. 15.—<sup>†</sup> Chap. xliii. 28.—<sup>1</sup> Deut. xxviii. 50.

style are resumed." The passage seems to be inserted in the midst of this prophecy against Babylon, as Jacob inserts a like passage in the midst of his blessings and prophecies concerning his sons, Gen. xlix. 18. It gives the reason why the judgment, here denounced, should be certainly inflicted, because he who had undertaken it was the *Lord of hosts*, and therefore able to effect it; and the *Holy One*, and the *Redeemer of Israel*, whom the Babylonians had cruelly oppressed, whose quarrel God would avenge upon them, and whom he had determined and promised to deliver out of their hands. If the words be considered as a pathological exclamation, or acclamation of God's people, they thereby ascribe to God, as their God and Redeemer, this wonderful work of breaking the staff of their oppressors: and they make their boast of, and celebrate him for, this glorious deliverance.

Verses 5, 6. *Sit thou silent*—Through grief and shame, and as mourners used to do, Job ii. 13. *Cease thy vaunting and insolent speeches. And get thee into darkness*—Thou shalt go into an obscure, disconsolate, and calamitous condition. *Thou shalt no more be the lady of kingdoms*—The chief and glory of all kingdoms; the most large, potent, and glorious empire of the world, as thou hast been. *I was wroth with my people*—"The metaphor in this verse," says Vitringa, "is taken from a father, who, being angry with his children, delivers them up to chastisement; but his anger soon subsiding, and his affection reviving, he turns his indignation against those who had so executed his commands, as to punish immoderately and severely." *I have polluted mine inheritance*—I cast them away as an unclean thing; I stained their glory; I removed them from the place of my presence and worship; I banished them into a polluted land, among unclean persons, by whom they were many ways defiled. *And given them into thy hand*—To punish them. *Thou didst show them no mercy*—Thou hast exceeded the bounds of thy commission, and, instead of that compassion which humanity teaches men to show to such as are in misery, thou didst exercise toward them the greatest cruelty. *Upon the ancient*—The old and feeble, whose venerable gray hairs should have been their sufficient protection; *hast thou very heavily laid thy yoke*—Not considering that, besides the calamity of being made captives, they were afflicted with the miseries of old age, and therefore required both thy pity and reverence. It

A. M. 3294. 7 And thou saidst, I shall be <sup>a</sup> a lady for ever : so that thou didst not <sup>b</sup> lay these things to thy heart, <sup>c</sup> neither didst remember the latter end of it.

8 Therefore hear now this, *thou that art given to pleasures, that dwellest carelessly, that sayest in thy heart, I am, and none else beside me ; I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children :*

9 But <sup>d</sup> these two things shall come to thee

<sup>a</sup> Verse 5 ; Rev. xviii. 7.—<sup>b</sup> Chapter xlvi. 8.—<sup>c</sup> Deut. xxxii. 29.—<sup>d</sup> Verse 10 ; Zeph. ii. 15.—<sup>e</sup> Rev. xviii. 7. <sup>f</sup> Chap. li. 19.

is justly observed here by Bishop Lowth, that " 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 divine vengeance has ordained him, he will become himself the object of it : see chap. x. 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."

Verses 7, 8. *Thou sayest, I shall be a lady for ever*—I shall always be the chief city and mistress of the world, and shall never know any change of condition in this respect. If we consider that the city of Babylon had no less than one hundred gates made of solid brass ; that its walls were two hundred feet high, and fifty broad, according to the lowest account given of them by historians, and, according to some, three hundred and fifty feet in height, and eighty-seven in thickness, so that six chariots could go abreast upon them ; that it was defended by the river Euphrates, and supplied with provisions for many years ; it might well be deemed impregnable : and " such a city as this might, with less vanity than any other, boast that she should continue for ever, if any thing human could continue for ever."—Bishop Newton. *Thou didst not lay these things to thy heart*—Thy cruel usage of my people, and the heavy judgments which thou hadst reason to expect for them. *Neither didst thou remember the latter end*—Thou wast so puffed up with pride, and so infatuated with ease and pleasure, that thou didst not consider the instability of all worldly power and greatness, and what might and was likely to befall thee afterward. *Therefore hear, thou that dwellest carelessly*—And layest nothing to heart ; *that sayest, I am, and none else beside me*—I am independent, self-sufficient, and unchangeable, and there is none, no people, state, or kingdom, that is not either subject, or far inferior to me in power and glory. I

<sup>e</sup> in a moment in one day, the loss of children, and widowhood : they shall come upon thee in their perfection, <sup>f</sup> for the multitude of thy sorceries, and for the great abundance of thine enchantments.

10 For thou <sup>g</sup> hast trusted in thy wickedness : <sup>h</sup> thou hast said, None seeth me. Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath <sup>i</sup> perverted thee ; <sup>j</sup> and thou hast said in thy heart, I am, and none else besides me.

<sup>g</sup> 1 Thess. v. 3.—<sup>h</sup> Nah. iii. 4.—<sup>i</sup> Psa. lii. 7.—<sup>j</sup> Chap. xxix. 15 ; Ezek. viii. 12 ; ix. 9.—<sup>k</sup> Or, *caused thee to turn away.*—<sup>l</sup> Verse 8.

*shall not sit as a widow*—In solitude and sorrow : I shall not lose that wealth and dignity to which I am wedded. The kingdom shall never want a monarch to espouse and protect it, and be a husband to the state. *Neither shall I know the loss of children*—The diminution of the number of my people. I shall never want either a king or people to defend me from all dangers.

Verse 9. *These two things shall come to thee*—The very two things that thou didst set at defiance ; *loss of children and widowhood*—Both thy princes and thy people shall be cut off, so that thou shalt be no more a government, and no more a nation. *They shall come in their perfection*—In the highest degree : thy king and kingdom shall be utterly and irretrievably destroyed. This prophecy was twice fulfilled ; " having been accomplished the very night that Babylon was taken, when the Persians slew the king himself and a great number of the Babylonians : it was fulfilled a second time, when that city was besieged by Darius. Being determined to hold out to the last extremity, they took all their women, and each man choosing one of them, whom he liked best, out of his own family, they strangled all the rest, that unnecessary mouths might not consume their provision. By means of this shocking expedient they sustained a siege and all the efforts of Darius for twenty months, and the city was at last taken by stratagem. As soon as Darius made himself master of the place, he ordered three thousand of the principal men to be crucified ; and thus this prophecy was signally fulfilled, both by the hands of the Babylonians themselves, and by the cruelties exercised upon them by their conquerors."—Bishop Newton. *For the multitude of thy sorceries*—For thy superstitious and magical practices, which were very frequent in Babylon, as we see below, (verses 12, 13,) and as has been observed before. Hebrew, *in the multitude, &c.*, or, as Dr. Waterland renders it, " Notwithstanding the multitude of thy sorceries, and the force of thy enchantments ;" notwithstanding all thy diabolical artifices, whereby thou thinkest to foresee all dangers, and to secure thyself from them.

Verses 10, 11. *For thou hast trusted in thy wickedness*—Thou hast thought that thy cunning and policy would still preserve thee ; *and hast said, None seeth me*—My counsels are so deeply and

A. M. 3294. 11 Therefore shall evil come upon  
B. C. 710. thee; thou shalt not know <sup>2</sup> from  
whence it riseth: and mischief shall fall  
upon thee; thou shalt not be able to  
<sup>3</sup> put it off: and <sup>4</sup> desolation shall come  
upon thee suddenly, *which* thou shalt not  
know.

12 ¶ Stand now with thine enchantments,  
and with the multitude of thy sorceries, where-  
in thou hast laboured from thy youth; if so  
be thou shalt be able to profit, if so be thou  
mayest prevail.

13 <sup>a</sup> Thou art wearied in the multitude of

<sup>a</sup> Heb. *the morning thereof*.—<sup>b</sup> Heb. *expiate*.—<sup>1</sup> Thes-  
salonians v. 3.—<sup>2</sup> Chapter lvii. 10.—<sup>3</sup> Chapter xlv. 25;  
Dan. ii. 2.

craftily laid, and my designs so secretly carried on,  
that none can discover them or prevent their execu-  
tion. And thou hast supposed that God himself  
either did not regard thee, or would not call thee to  
an account for thy wicked conduct. *Thy wisdom  
and thy knowledge*—Thy skill in the arts of human  
policy, or thy pretended foreknowledge of future  
events by astrology; *hath perverted thee*—Hath  
misled thee into the way of transgression and per-  
dition; *and thou hast said, I am, &c.*—This is re-  
peated from verse 8, to signify thy intolerable ar-  
rogance and self-confidence. *Therefore shall evil  
come upon thee*—Which thou shalt neither have  
time nor means to provide against or to prepare for;  
*thou shalt not know from whence it riseth*—Or,  
rather, *when it shall come*; Hebrew, שחרה, *the  
morning of it*, the day, or time, of its approach.  
With all thy skill in astrology and fortune-telling,  
thou shalt neither be able to foresee the evil that is  
coming upon thee, nor to prevent it. This inter-  
pretation agrees with the history, Babylon being  
surprised by Cyrus when they were in a state of the  
greatest security, as is manifest both from the Scrip-  
tures and from other authentic records: see Jer. li.  
31; Dan. v. *And desolation shall come upon thee  
suddenly*—As a thief in the night; *which thou shalt  
not know*—Or, *when thou shalt not know*. Thou  
shalt not apprehend thy danger till it be too late.  
Fair warning was indeed given them, by this and  
other prophets of the Lord, of this desolation; but  
they slighted that notice, and would give no credit  
to it; and therefore justly was it so ordered, that  
they should have no other warning of it, but that  
partly through their own security, and partly through  
the swiftness and subtlety of the enemy, when it  
came it should be a perfect surprise to them.

thy counsels. Let now <sup>b</sup> the <sup>4</sup> astro- A. M. 3294.  
logers, the star-gazers, <sup>5</sup> the monthly B. C. 710.  
prognosticators, stand up, and save thee from  
*these things* that shall come upon thee.

14 Behold, they shall be <sup>c</sup> as stubble; the  
fire shall burn them; they shall not deliver  
<sup>6</sup> themselves from the power of the flame:  
*there shall not be a coal to warm at, nor fire  
to sit before it.*

15 Thus shall they be unto thee with whom  
thou hast laboured, *even* <sup>d</sup> thy merchants from  
thy youth: they shall wander every one to  
his quarter; none shall save thee.

<sup>a</sup> Heb. *viewers of the heavens*.—<sup>b</sup> Heb. *that give knowledge con-  
cerning the months*.—<sup>c</sup> Nah. i. 10; Mal. iv. 1.—<sup>6</sup> Heb. *their  
souls*.—<sup>d</sup> Rev. xviii. 11.

Verse 12-15. *Stand now with thine enchantments*—  
Persist in these practices. *Wherein thou hast la-  
boured from thy youth*—From the beginning of thy  
kingdom. For the Chaldeans in all ages were  
famous, or rather infamous, for the study and prac-  
tice of these arts. *Thou art wearied in thy coun-  
sels*—Thou hast spent thy time and strength in going  
from one to another, in trying all manner of experi-  
ments, and all to no purpose. *Let now the astrolo-  
gers, &c., stand up*—To succour thee, or to inquire  
for thee. *Behold, they shall be as stubble*—They  
shall have no more power to withstand the calami-  
ties coming upon them than stubble has to resist the  
violence of the fire. *They shall not deliver them-  
selves from the flame*—And much less thee. *There  
shall not be a coal to warm at, &c.*—They shall be  
totally consumed, and all the comfort which thou  
didst expect from them shall utterly vanish. *Thus  
shall they be unto thee*—Such comfortless and help-  
less creatures, namely, thy sorcerers, astrologers,  
&c.; *with whom thou hast laboured*—Upon whom  
thou hast spent thy time, pains, and money; *even  
thy merchants*—Or *negotiators*, as Bishop Lowth  
translates סחרין, with whom thou hast had so much  
intercourse, and so many dealings. *They shall  
wander every one to his quarter*—Or, as some inter-  
pret the meaning, “They shall wander by whatso-  
ever ways they can to the extreme boundaries of  
thy empire, to save themselves from the general  
calamity.” *None shall save thee*—From thy im-  
pending ruin, but all shall leave thee to perish with-  
out help, and without hope. Observe, reader, they,  
and only they, are safe and happy, who, by faith  
and prayer, deal with one that will always be a pre-  
sent help in time of trouble to those that flee to him  
for refuge, and trust in him.

## CHAPTER XLVIII.

According to Vitringa, the fourth discourse of the fourth part of this prophecy is contained in this chapter. In which we have, (1.) A solemn address to the Jews, reproving them for their hypocrisy, obstinacy, and especially their idolatry, notwithstanding the many convincing proofs God had given them of his true and sole divinity, 1-8. (2.) An assurance that their deliverance would be wrought purely for the sake of God's own name, and not for any merit of theirs, 9-11. (3.) An encouragement given them to depend purely on God's power and promise for their deliverance, showing that his prediction concerning the raising up of Cyrus, and many others, had been declared clearly and publicly, 12-16. (4.) He removes from himself the charge of those evils which had happened to the nation, as they might have enjoyed his favour, and the blessings consequent thereon, if they had conducted themselves otherwise, 17-19. (5.) Proclaims their release from Babylon, and enjoins them to declare everywhere the blessing of it, and the singular care of Providence over them in their return, 20, 21. (6.) No peace to the wicked, 22.

A. M. 3296. B. C. 708. **H**EAR ye this, O house of Jacob, which are called by the name of Israel, and <sup>a</sup> are come forth out of the waters of Judah, <sup>b</sup> which swear by the name of the LORD, and make mention of the God of Israel, <sup>c</sup> but not in truth, nor in righteousness.

2 For they call themselves <sup>d</sup> of the holy city, and <sup>e</sup> stay themselves upon the God of Israel; The LORD of hosts is his name.

3 <sup>f</sup> I have declared the former things from the beginning; and they went forth out of

my mouth, and I showed them; I <sup>g</sup> did them suddenly, <sup>h</sup> and they came to pass.

4 Because I knew that thou *art* <sup>i</sup> obstinate, and <sup>j</sup> thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass;

5 <sup>k</sup> I have even from the beginning declared it to thee; before it came to pass I showed it thee: lest thou shouldest say, Mine idol hath done them; and my graven image, and my molten image, hath commanded them.

<sup>a</sup> Psa. lxxviii. 26.—<sup>b</sup> Deut. vi. 13; Chap. lxx. 16; Zeph. i. 5. <sup>c</sup> Jer. iv. 2; v. 2.—<sup>d</sup> Chap. lii. 1.—<sup>e</sup> Mic. iii. 11; Rom. ii. 17.

<sup>f</sup> Chap. xli. 22; xlii. 9; xliii. 9; xlii. 7, 8; xlv. 21; xlv. 9, 10.—<sup>g</sup> Joshua xxi. 45.—<sup>h</sup> Heb. *hard*.—<sup>i</sup> Exod. xxxii. 9; Deut. xxxi. 27.—<sup>j</sup> Verse 3.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER XLVIII.

Verses 1, 2. *Hear ye this, O house of Jacob*—For your conviction and humiliation; that, acknowledging God to be just, and even merciful, in what he has brought upon you, you may give glory to him, and take shame to yourselves; *which are called by the name of Israel*—Who are Israelites in name, but not in truth; *and are come out of the waters of Judah*—From the lineage of your progenitor, Judah, as waters flow from a fountain; *which swear by the name of the Lord*—Who profess the true religion, one act thereof being put for all; that own him to be the true God and your God, and give glory to him as the righteous judge of all. Or, *that swear to the name of the Lord*, as the words may be rendered; that take an oath of allegiance to him as your king, and join yourselves to him in covenant. *And make mention of the God of Israel*—In your prayers and praises, who often speak of, seem to glory in, and call yourselves by his name; *but not in truth nor in righteousness*—Which are the two chief ingredients of a lawful oath, and of a sincere profession of religion. Observe, reader, our religious professions avail nothing unless they be made in truth and righteousness. If we be not sincere in them, we do but take the name of the Lord our God in vain. *For*—Or, as the Hebrew particle often signifies, *Though, they call themselves the holy city*—Though they glory in this, that they are citizens of Jerusalem, a city sanctified by God himself to be the only place of his true worship and gracious presence, which, as it was a great privilege, so it laid a great obligation upon them to walk more

holily than they did. *And stay themselves upon the God of Israel*—Not by a true and well-grounded faith, but by a vain and presumptuous confidence, flattering themselves, as that people commonly did, that they should enjoy peace and safety, notwithstanding all their wickedness, because they were the Lord's people, and had his temple and ordinances among them; which disposition the prophets frequently notice, and sharply censure in them.

Verses 3-5. *I have declared*—That is, *predicted; the former things*—Those things which are already come to pass. These, opposed to *new things*, (verse 6,) seem to intend the events foretold by Isaiah in the former part of this book, relating to the two confederate kings of Syria and Israel, (chap. vii.,) and to Sennacherib, (chap. x.,) as the *new things*, and *things to come*, (chap. xli. 22,) respect the Babylonian captivity, and their return from thence, as figures of gospel times. *They went forth out of my mouth, and I did them suddenly*—What my mouth foretold my hand effected, even when there was no likelihood of such events taking place, whereby I gave you full proof of my Godhead. *Because I knew that thou art obstinate*—Therefore I gave thee the more and clearer demonstrations of my nature and providence, because I knew thou wast an unbelieving and perverse nation, that would not easily nor willingly be convinced. *And thy neck an iron sinew*—Which would not bow down to receive my yoke. It is a metaphor taken from untamed and stubborn oxen. The sense is, I considered that thou wast unteachable and incorrigible. *And thy brow brass*—That thou wast impudent and insolent. *Before it came to pass*

A. M. 3296. 6 Thou hast heard, see all this; B. C. 708. and will not ye declare *it*? I have showed thee new things from this time, even hidden things, and thou didst not know them.

7 They are created now, and not from the beginning; even before the day when thou heardest them not; lest thou shouldest say, Behold, I knew them.

8 Yea, thou heardest not; yea, thou knewest not; yea, from that time *that* thine ear was not opened: for I knew that thou wouldest deal very

<sup>k</sup> Psa. lviii. 3.—<sup>l</sup> Psa. lxxix. 9; cvi. 8; Ch. xliii. 25; Ver. 11; Ezek. xx. 9, 14, 22, 44.—<sup>m</sup> Psa. lxxviii. 38.—<sup>n</sup> Psa. lxvii. 10.

*I showed it thee, lest, &c.*—I foretold these things, that it might be evident that they were the effects of my counsel, and not of thine idols. "God ordained a succession of prophets to foretel the most remarkable events which should happen to the Jews, on purpose to prevent their ascribing them to their idols, which their infidelity and obstinacy might have prompted them to do."—Lowth.

Verses 6-8. *Thou hast heard, see all this*—As thou hast heard all these things, from time to time, seriously consider them. *And will not ye declare it*—I call you to witness: must you not be forced to acknowledge the truth of what I say? *I have showed thee new things from this time*—And I have now given thee new predictions of secret things, such as till this time were wholly unknown to thee, concerning thy deliverance out of Babylon by Cyrus. *They are created now*—Revealed to thee by me; brought to light, as things are by creation. The idea is elegant; for what is revealed exists by the word that proceeds from the mouth of God, which is the character of creation. *And not from the beginning*—Hebrew, מִכֵּן לֹא, *not from thence*, not from these ancient times when other things were revealed to thee. *Even before the day*—Hebrew, *and, or, before this day*. *This day* answers to *now* in the first clause, and seems to be added as an exposition of it; *when thou heardest them not*—Hebrew, *And thou didst not hear them*, namely, before this time in which God hath revealed them to thee by my ministry. *Lest thou shouldest say, Behold, I knew them*—Either by thine own sagacity, or by the help of thine idols. *Yea, thou knewest not*—The same thing is repeated, because this was so illustrious a proof of the infinite power and providence of God, and so clear and full a discovery of the vanity of idols. *Yea, from that time*—Hebrew, *from then*, as in the foregoing verse; *thine ear was not opened*—That is, thou didst not hear; I did not reveal these things unto thee: for so this phrase of *opening the ear* is understood, 1 Sam. ix. 15. *For I knew that thou wouldest deal treacherously*—I knew all these cautions were necessary to cure thine infidelity. *And wast called*—Namely, justly and truly; *a transgressor from the womb*—Thou wast indeed such from thy very origin as a people. The contents of

treacherously, and wast called <sup>k</sup> a A. M. 3296. transgressor from the womb. B. C. 708.

9 ¶ <sup>l</sup> For my name's sake <sup>m</sup> will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off.

10 Behold, <sup>n</sup> I have refined thee, but not <sup>2</sup> with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.

11 <sup>p</sup> For mine own sake, *even* for mine own sake, will I do *it*: for <sup>q</sup> how should *my name* be polluted? and <sup>r</sup> I will not give my glory unto another.

<sup>a</sup> Or, *for silver*; Ezek. xxii. 20, 21, 22.—<sup>p</sup> Ver. 9.—<sup>q</sup> Deut. xxxii. 26, 27; Ezek. xx. 9.—<sup>r</sup> Chap. xlii. 8.

this verse, therefore, are not only to be considered as a confirmation of what was said in the preceding verse, namely, that the Jews had no knowledge of these *new things*, (as they are called verse 6,) before the revelation of them made by Isaiah; but as "containing a conviction of the inconsideration, incredulity, and prejudices of the Jewish people; who, notwithstanding the prophecies so clearly fulfilled among them, had neither duly attended to them, nor become obedient to God, which he observes was nothing strange, since, from the first time of their adoption as a people, from their deliverance out of Egypt, which was, as it were, their birth, they had been full of perfidy and transgression." See Vi-tringa.

Verses 9-11. *For my name's sake will I defer mine anger*—Although thou dost justly deserve my hottest anger and most dreadful judgments, which also, if thou repentest not, I will in due time inflict, yet at present I will spare thee, and deliver thee out of captivity, not for thy sake, but merely for my own sake, and for the vindication of my name, that I may be praised for my power, faithfulness, and goodness. *Behold, I have refined thee*—Although I will not cut thee off, yet I will put thee into the furnace, not to consume, but to purify thee, and purge away thy dross. *Not with silver*—Not with such a furious heat, nor for so long a time, as is required to melt down silver; I will not deal so rigorously with thee, for then I should wholly consume thee. In judgment I will remember mercy. It must be observed, that silver is the most difficult to be refined, and requires a hotter and clearer fire than gold and other metals. *I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction*—I have taken this method to purge thee from thy dross, and render thee a chosen people to myself. *For mine own sake will I do it*—Namely, this great work of delivering my people out of Babylon. *For how should my name be polluted*—If I should not deliver my people, my name would be profaned and blasphemed, as if I were either impotent, or implacable to them. *I will not give my glory unto another*—I will not give any colour to idolaters, to ascribe the divine nature and properties to idols, as they would do if I did not rescue my people out of their hands, in spite of their idols.

A. M. 3296. 12 ¶ Hearken unto me, O Jacob  
B. C. 708. and Israel, my called; *I am* he; *I am* the 'first, I also *am* the last.

13 <sup>a</sup> My hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth, and <sup>b</sup> my right hand hath spanned the heavens: *when* <sup>c</sup> I call unto them, they stand up together.

14 <sup>d</sup> All ye, assemble yourselves and hear; which among them hath declared these *things*? <sup>e</sup> The LORD hath loved him: <sup>f</sup> he will do his pleasure on Babylon, and his arm *shall be on* the Chaldeans.

15 *I, even I*, have spoken, yea, <sup>g</sup> I have called

<sup>a</sup> Deut. xxxii. 39.—<sup>b</sup> Chap. xli. 4; xlv. 6; Rev. i. 17; xxii. 13.—<sup>c</sup> Psa. ci. 25.—<sup>d</sup> Or, the palm of my right hand hath spread out.—<sup>e</sup> Chap. xl. 26.—<sup>f</sup> Chap. xli. 22; xliii. 9; xlv. 7; xlv. 20, 21.

Verses 12, 13. *Hearken unto me, Israel, my called*—Whom I have called out of the world to be my peculiar people, to serve, and glorify, and enjoy me; and therefore you, of all others, have least cause to forsake me, or to follow after idols. *My right hand hath spanned, or doth span, the heavens*—Or, hath meted them out with a span, as the phrase is, Isa. xl. 12; hath stretched them out by an exact measure, as the workman sometimes metes out his work by spans. See also the margin. *When I call them, they stand up together*—“Nothing can give us a more sublime idea of God than this passage. The idea is taken from servants, who, at the voice of their masters, instantly rise up, and stand ready to execute their commands. The whole creation, at the call of God, arises with prompt obedience, and is ready to execute his sovereign will.”—Dodd.

Verses 14, 15. *All ye assemble yourselves and hear*—Ye Jews, to whom he addressed his speech, (verse 12.) and to whom he continues to speak; *which among them hath declared these things*—Which of the gods, whom any of you have served, or do now serve? The prophet gives a general challenge to the idols and their worshippers, to bring proof that ever such a remarkable turn of providence as that of the Jews' restoration was foretold by any of the heathen oracles. *The Lord hath loved him*—Namely, Cyrus; that is, he hath done him this favour, this honour, to make him an instrument of the redemption of his people, and therein a type of the great Redeemer, God's beloved Son. *He will do his pleasure on Babylon*—Cyrus shall execute what the Lord hath appointed for the destruction of Babylon, and the deliverance of God's people. *And his arm shall be on the Chaldeans*—He shall smite and subdue them. *I, even I, have spoken, &c.*—Both the prediction and the execution of this great work are to be ascribed to me only. The idols had no hand therein. *He shall make his way prosperous*—I will give him good success in his undertaking.

Verse 16. *Come ye near unto me, &c.*—That you may the better hear me. Here, as in verse 14, Jacob and Israel are summoned to hearken to the prophet

him: I have brought him, and he shall make his way prosperous. A. M. 3296. B. C. 708.

16 ¶ Come ye near unto me, hear ye this; <sup>a</sup> I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, there *am* I: and now <sup>b</sup> the Lord God, and his Spirit, hath sent me.

17 Thus saith <sup>c</sup> the LORD, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: *I am* the LORD thy God which teacheth thee to profit, <sup>d</sup> which leadeth thee by the way *that* thou shouldest go.

18 <sup>e</sup> O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! <sup>f</sup> then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea:

<sup>a</sup> Chap. xlv. 1.—<sup>b</sup> Chap. xlv. 28.—<sup>c</sup> Chap. xlv. 1, 2. <sup>d</sup> Chap. xlv. 19.—<sup>e</sup> Chap. lxi. 1; Zech. ii. 8, 9, 11.—<sup>f</sup> Chap. xliii. 14; xlv. 6, 24; Verse 20.—<sup>g</sup> Psa. xxxii. 8.—<sup>h</sup> Deut. xxxii. 29; Psa. lxxxi. 13.—<sup>i</sup> Psa. cxix. 165.

speaking in God's name, and as a type of the great prophet, by whom God has in these *last days spoken unto us*. *I have not spoken in secret*—I have not suppressed, concealed, or kept back the counsel and word of God, or any part thereof, but have declared it openly and publicly. See note on chap. xlv. 19, where these very words are spoken by God in his own name, as they are here by the prophet in God's name. *From the beginning*—From the first time that I began to prophesy until now: or, if the prophet be considered as uttering God's words, the meaning is, From the beginning of my taking you to be my people, and revealing my mind to you. *From the time that it was, there am, or rather, was, I*—These words also, as well as the former, are the words either, 1st, Of the prophet; and so the sense is, From the time that I was first called to be a prophet, I have been there, that is, I have diligently pursued my prophetic function; I have hearkened, from time to time, to hear what God would speak to me, that I might impart it to you: or, 2d, Of God; and then the sense may be this: From the time that I first foretold it, I was there to take care to effect what I predicted. *And now*—This is opposed to the foregoing words, *from the beginning; the Lord God and his Spirit*—God, by his Spirit, or God, even the Spirit, namely, the Holy Ghost, to whom the sending and inspiring of God's prophets is ascribed, 2 Pet. i. 21; *hath sent me*—Namely, the prophet, who yet was a type of Christ, and so this may have a respect to him also.

Verses 17–19. *I am the Lord, which teacheth thee to profit*—Who from time to time has made known to thee all necessary and useful doctrines, which, if observed by thee, would have been infinitely profitable to thee, both for this life and that to come; so that it is not my fault, but thine own, if thou dost not profit: *which leadeth thee, &c.*—Who acquainteth thee with thy duty in all the concerns of thy life, so that thou canst not pretend ignorance. *O that thou hadst hearkened, &c.*—This failure hath not been on my part, but on thine: I gave thee my counsels and commands, but thou hast neglected and disobeyed

A. M. 3296. 19 <sup>i</sup> Thy seed also had been as the  
B. C. 708. sand, and the offspring of thy bow-  
els like the gravel thereof; his name should  
not have been cut off nor destroyed from before  
me.

20 ¶ <sup>k</sup> Go ye forth of Babylon, flee ye from  
the Chaldeans, with a voice of singing declare  
ye, tell this, utter it *even* to the end of the earth;

<sup>i</sup> Gen. xxii. 17; Hos. i. 10.—<sup>k</sup> Chap. lii. 11; Jer. l. 8; li. 6,  
45; Zech. ii. 6, 7; Rev. xviii. 4.

them, and that to thy own great disadvantage. Concerning such wishes as these, when ascribed to God, see note on Deut. v. 29, and xxxii. 29, and especially on Ps. lxxxii. 13. *Then had thy peace been as a river*—Which runs pleasantly, strongly, plentifully, and constantly. Thou shouldst have enjoyed a series of mercies, one continually following another, as the waters of a river, which always last, and not like the waters of a land-flood, which are soon gone; and *thy righteousness*—The fruit of thy righteousness, thy peace and prosperity; as *the waves of the sea*—Numberless and abundant. Or the meaning may be, Thou wouldest have been as remarkable for virtue and holiness as for peace and happiness. *Thy seed also had been as the sand*—Namely, for multitude, according to my promise made to Abraham; whereas now, for thy sins, I have greatly diminished thy numbers by invasions, captivities, and other judgments. *His name*—The name of thy seed, or offspring, mentioned in the former clauses; *should not have been cut off*—As now it hath been in a great measure, namely, from the land of Israel, which is either desolate, or inhabited by strangers; *nor destroyed from before me*—Or, *out of my sight*, from the place of my special presence and residence.

Verses 20, 21. *Go ye forth of Babylon*—The imperative is here, as it is very frequently, put for the future, *ye shall go forth*, &c. For the words do not so much contain a command as a promise. This form of speaking, however, may be rather used to intimate, that it was their duty to go forth, as well as God's promise to carry them forth. *Flee ye from the Chaldeans*—Not silently and sorrowfully, but *with a voice of singing*—With joy, and songs of praise to the Lord. *Declare ye, &c., even to the end of the earth*—Publish God's wonderful works on your behalf to all nations. A figure this of the publishing of the gospel to all the world. *And they thirsted not, &c.*—This is part of the matter which the Jews are here commanded to declare to all people, as they had opportunity, namely, that God took the same care of them in their return from Babylon to Canaan, which was through many dry and desolate places, as he did of their forefathers, in their march from Egypt to Canaan. *They thirsted not, &c.*—That is, *They shall not thirst*. He speaks of things to come, as if they were already present or past, as the prophets commonly did. *He caused the waters to flow out of the rock, &c.*—“If this prophecy,” says Kimchi, “relate to the return from the

say ye, The LORD hath redeemed A. M. 3296.  
his servant Jacob. B. C. 708.

21 And they <sup>m</sup> thirsted not *when* he led them through the deserts: he <sup>n</sup> caused the waters to flow out of the rock for them: he clave the rock also, and the waters gushed out.

22 ° *There is no peace*, saith the LORD, unto the wicked.

<sup>m</sup> Exod. xix. 4, 5, 6; Chap. xlv. 22, 23.—<sup>n</sup> Chap. xli. 17, 18.  
° Ex. xvii. 6; Num. xx. 11; Psa. cv. 41.—° Ch. lvii. 21.

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.” On this strange observation of the learned rabbi, Bishop Lowth remarks as follows: “It is really much to be wondered, that one of the most learned and judicious 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 parabolic 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 briars and brambles, the acacia and the myrtle sprang up under their feet, according to God's promises, chap. xli. 19, and lv. 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.”

Verse 22. *There is no peace unto the wicked*—God having, in the foregoing verses, foretold that blessed deliverance which he would give to his servant Jacob, (verse 20,) here adds an explication and limitation of the blessing, and declares that wicked men should not enjoy the benefit of this mercy. And by the *wicked*, he means the unbelieving and ungodly Jews; of whom these very words are used again, (chap. lvii. 21,) and for whom such a denunciation was very proper and necessary, because they were exceeding prone to cry, *Peace, Peace*, to themselves, when there was no solid ground of peace. This, therefore, was a very seasonable caution to the Jews in Babylon, to take heed to themselves, and prepare for this mercy. For those of them who should either wickedly tarry in Babylon

when God invited and required them to go out of it, and return to their own land; or who should continue in wickedness when they had returned, should not enjoy the tranquillity and comfort which they promised themselves. "There is no peace," says Vitringa, "no serenity of mind and conscience; more desirable than all blessings, superior to all conception; there is no durable prosperity on earth, no eternal salvation or hope of salvation to hypocrites,

and unbelievers, and profane persons; to despisers of God and his prophetic word; to those who honour him with their lips, but in mind and affection are alienated and removed to a great distance from him, remaining in a state of impenitence. But why? Because they have no part in the righteousness and favour of God, which is not obtained without faith, reverence for the divine word, and an humble obedience to the divine commands."

## CHAPTER XLIX.

*The fifth, last, and most excellent part of Isaiah's prophecies, according to Vitringa, begins here, and is divided into five discourses; the first of which is contained in this chapter, and the three first verses of the next; the second in the remaining part of that chapter and chapter li.; the third in chapters lii.-lx.; the fourth in lxi., lxii.; the fifth in chapters lxiii.-lxvi. In this chapter we have, (1.) An address of the Messiah to the Gentiles, calling upon them to attend, and declaring his solemn appointment to, and qualification for, the mediatorial office, 1-3. (2.) A complaint of the small success of his ministry among the Jews, and of his being constituted the Teacher and Saviour of the Gentiles, 4-6. (3.) An address of God the Father to Christ, comforting him in his state of humiliation, with assurances of the glory that should follow in the great success of the gospel among the Gentiles, and the happy, flourishing state of the church, 7-12. (4.) Heaven and earth exhorted to break forth into exultation and praise on that account, 13. (5.) The Jewish Church in a state of great despondency, but comforted with promises of a numerous accession of Gentiles, and great enlargement and prosperity, 14-23. (6.) A ratification of the prophecy of the release of the Jews from Babylon, as the figure and type of all these blessings, 24-26.*

A. M. 3299. **L**ISTEN, "O isles, unto me; and  
B. C. 706. hearken, ye people, from far;  
b The LORD hath called me from the womb;  
from the bowels of my mother hath he made  
mention of my name;

2 And he hath made c my mouth A. M. 3299.  
like a sharp sword; d in the shadow B. C. 706.  
of his hand hath he hid me, and made me  
e a polished shaft; in his quiver hath he hid  
me;

a Chap. xli. 1.—b Verse 5; Jer. i. 5; Matt. i. 20, 21; Luke i. 15, 31; John x. 36; Gal. i. 15.

c Chapter xi. 4; li. 16; Hos. vi. 5; Heb. iv. 12; Rev. i. 16.  
d Chap. li. 16.—e Psa. xlv. 5.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER XLIX.

Verse 1. *Listen, O isles, &c.*—"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 were exhibited in general terms, at the beginning of chap. xlii., 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."—Bishop Lowth. *By the isles* here, and *the people from far*, the Gentiles are meant, who are frequently addressed by the appellation of *isles*, and who, in general, lived in countries far remote from Judea, now the only place of God's special presence and worship. The person who addresses them is the Messiah, as evidently appears from verse 6, and several other pas-

sages of this chapter. If the character here exhibited can, in any sense, as some think it may, belong to the prophet, "yet, in some parts," as Bishop Lowth justly observes, "it must belong exclusively to Christ; and in all parts to him in a much fuller and more proper sense." God having, in the last words of the preceding chapter, intimated by his prophet, that many of the Jews, notwithstanding the glorious deliverance from Babylon vouchsafed them, would be wicked, and foreknowing that he would cast them off for their wickedness, the Messiah here addresses his speech to the Gentiles, and invites them to hearken to those counsels and doctrines which he foresaw the Jews would reject. *The Lord hath called me from the womb*—This, or the like expression, is used of Jeremiah, chap. i. 5, and of Paul, Gal. i. 15; but it was far more eminently true of Christ, who, as he was chosen to this great office of redemption from eternity, so he was separated and called to it before he was born, being both conceived and sanctified by the Holy Ghost in his mother's womb, and sent into the world upon this errand.

Verses 2, 3. *He hath made my mouth like a sharp sword*—As he hath made me the great Teacher of his church and of the world, so he hath assisted me by his Spirit, and made my word or doctrine quick

A. M. 3296. B. C. 708. 19 Thy seed also had been as the sand, and the offspring of thy bowels like the gravel thereof; his name should not have been cut off nor destroyed from before me.

20 ¶ Go ye forth of Babylon, flee ye from the Chaldeans, with a voice of singing declare ye, tell this, utter it even to the end of the earth;

Gen. xxii. 17; Hos. i. 10.—Chap. lii. 11; Jer. l. 8; li. 45; Zech. ii. 6, 7; Rev. xviii. 4.

them, and that to thy own great disadvantage concerning such wishes as these, when ascribee see note on Deut. v. 29, and xxxii. 29, and on Psa. lxxxi. 13. Then had thy pear river—Which runs pleasantly, strong, and constantly. Thou shouldst have of mercies, one continually following waters of a river, which always waters of a land-flood, which thy righteousness—The fruit of thy peace and prosperity; Numberless and abundant. Thou wouldest have been as for holiness as for peace, also had been as the name according to my promise, and now, for thy sake, as the name of Isaac is given to his posterity. His so here the name of Israel may have been given to Christ, not only because he measure of his loins, but also, because he was either in manner, prevailed with God, as that name signified; of whom Jacob, who was first called Israel, the head, is sometimes given to his body, the church, as I Cor. xii. 12, so it is not strange if, on the contrary, the name of Israel, which properly belongs to the church, be given to Christ, the head of it. The words, however, may be rendered, Thou art my servant, unto, in, or for Israel, that is, to bring them back unto me, from whom they have revolted; or Israel is he in whom I will be glorified by thee.

Verse 4. Then I said—By way of objection; I have laboured in vain—Lord, thou sayest thou wilt be glorified by my ministry; but I find it otherwise. I have spent my strength for naught—Without any considerable fruit of my word and works. "The words," says Vitringa, "contain the complaint of the Son of God, concerning the small fruit of his mission to the Jews, and the small hope of establishing and successfully propagating his kingdom among them; like that which is attributed to the same great Teacher and his apostles, chap. liii. 1. But at the same time he supports himself with the hope, that he should obtain a glorious and abundant fruit of his divine mission in the world; for that his judgment, or right, was with God, and the reward of his work laid up with him; who would take good care, according to his wisdom and justice, that the proper

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The Lord's kindness

3298. 7 Thus saith the Lord  
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*It is said to the Gentiles  
to despise of  
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ISAIAH

*The Lord's kindness*

round  
ather  
I  
I  
and from the west; and these from the east.

ears, The place is too strait for me: A. M. 3298.  
give place to me that I may dwell. B. C. 706.

21 Then shalt thou say in thy heart, Who  
hath begotten me these, seeing I have lost my  
children, and am desolate, a captive, and re-  
vowing to and fro? and who hath brought up  
? Behold, I was left alone; these, where  
ey been?

Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will  
hand to the Gentiles, and set up my  
the people: and they shall bring thy  
arms, and thy daughters shall be  
shoulders.

Or,  
11; Verse 2.

13 Sing, O heavens, and  
earth: and break forth into  
songs: for the Lord hath  
and will have mercy upon  
14 But Zion said,  
we and my Lord.

12, &c.—Chap. lx. 4; lxvi. 20.  
6. bosom.

of truth, and therefore n.  
Christ, by whom it was literally  
omplished. The words, *That thou  
my salvation*, mean, that the Messiah  
be the revealer, procurer, and giver of eternal  
salvation to the believing Gentiles.

Verse 7. *To him whom man despiseth*—To Christ,  
to whom, in the days of his flesh, this description  
most truly and fully agreed, being the same in effect  
with that chap. liii. 3, for men, both Jews and Gen-  
tiles, among whom he lived, did *despise him* from  
their hearts; and *the nation*, of which he was a  
member, *abhorred* both his person and his doctrine;  
and he was so far from being a temporal monarch  
that he came in the form of a servant, and was a  
*servant of rulers*, professing subjection, and paying  
tribute unto Cesar, and being treated by the rulers,  
both of the Jews and Romans, like a servant, being  
despitefully used and crucified, which was then a  
kind of punishment inflicted only on slaves or ser-  
vants. *Kings shall see*—Though for a time thou  
shalt be despised, yet after a while thou shalt be ad-  
vanced to such glory, that kings shall look upon thee  
with reverence: *and arise*—From their seats to  
worship thee. *Because the Lord that is faithful*—  
Because God shall make good his promises to thee.  
*And he shall choose thee*—And although thou shalt  
be rejected by thine own people, yet God will man-  
ifest to the world that thou, and thou only, art the  
person whom he hath chosen to be the Redeemer  
of mankind. The words imply the wonderful pro-  
gress of the gospel from small beginnings; and  
show that the Author of it, from being the contempt  
of the great men of the world, should come to be  
the object of their adoration.

Verse 8. *Thus saith the Lord*—God the Father  
unto Christ; *In an acceptable time*—Hebrew בְּצֵן  
רָצוֹן, *in the season of acceptance*, as Bishop Lowth  
renders it, or, *in a time of good-will*, according to  
others: in that time when God shall, in a special  
manner, manifest his good-will to the sons of men;  
in the day of his grace and man's salvation, that is,  
in the time of the gospel, which was, and is, the  
time of God's peculiar *good-will toward men*, Luke  
ii. 14. In the days of thy flesh, when thou shalt

*In*  
death, ye  
to give a blessed  
thee with glory and  
*vation*—In the time which  
effecting man's redemption; *have I*  
*I help, thee*—Namely, upon earth, till thy work  
finished; and *preserve thee*—Unto that eternal  
dom and glory which is prepared for thee. *To be*  
*give thee for a covenant of the people*—To be the  
Mediator and Surety of that covenant which is made  
between me and all my people, that is, all penitent  
and believing persons, whether Jews or Gentiles.  
*To establish the earth*—To settle the church upon  
firm foundations, and compose the great differences  
in the world between God and man, Jews and Gen-  
tiles, Eph. ii. 13-16; as also to establish truth and  
righteousness upon earth, and subdue those lusts  
and passions which are the great disturbers of hu-  
man society: to do which things was the great  
design of God in sending his Son into the world.  
*To cause to inherit desolate heritages*—That deso-  
late places may be repaired and possessed: or to  
bring the heathen, who are in a desolate and forlorn  
condition, to be Christ's inheritance, according to  
Psalm ii. 8.

Verses 9-11. *That thou mayest say*—Namely,  
with power and effect, as when God said, *Let there  
be light; to the prisoners*—To the Gentiles, who are  
fast bound by the cords of their sins, and taken cap-  
tive by the devil at his will. *Go forth*—Come forth  
to the light, receive divine illumination. *They shall  
feed, &c.*—They shall have abundant provision in  
all places, yea, even in those which commonly are  
unfruitful, as are both common roads and high  
grounds. *They shall not hunger, &c.*—They shall  
be supplied with all good and necessary things, and  
preserved from all evil occurrences and annoyances,  
as the Israelites were in the wilderness, by the man-  
na and other provision afforded them, and the pillar  
of the cloud and fire, a token of the divine presence  
and protection. *For he that hath mercy on them  
shall lead them*—God, who hath magnified his mercy

A. M. 3298. 12 Behold, <sup>a</sup> these shall come from  
B. C. 706. far; and lo, these from the north  
and from the west; and these from the land of  
Sinim.

13 ¶ Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O  
earth; and break forth into singing, O moun-  
tains: for the LORD hath comforted his people,  
and will have mercy upon his afflicted.

14 <sup>a</sup> But Zion said, The LORD hath forsaken  
me, and my Lord hath forgotten me.

<sup>a</sup> Chapter xliii. 5, 6.—<sup>γ</sup> Chapter xlv. 23.—<sup>z</sup> Chapter xl. 17.  
<sup>a</sup> Psa. ciii. 13; Mal. iii. 17; Matt. vii. 11.

to them, will conduct them with safety and comfort.  
*And I will make all mountains a way*—I will re-  
move all hinderances, and prepare the way for them,  
by levelling high grounds, and raising the low.

Verses 12, 13. *Behold, these shall come from far*  
—My people shall be gathered from the most remote  
parts of the earth. He speaks here, and in many  
other places, of the conversion of the Gentiles, with  
allusion to that work of gathering and bringing  
back the Jews from all parts where they were dis-  
persed, into their own land. *And these from the  
land of Sinim*—Either of the Sinites, as they are  
called, Gen. x. 17, who dwelt about the wilderness;  
or of Sin, a famous city of Egypt, which may be put  
for all Egypt, and that for all southern parts. And  
so he here mentions the several quarters of the  
world where the generality of the Jews were dis-  
persed; *the north*, which is everywhere named as  
the chief place of their banishment and dispersion,  
as Jer. xvi. 15; and xxxi. 8, and elsewhere; *the  
west*, the western countries and islands; and *the  
south*. *Sing, O heavens, &c.*—See note on chap.  
xlv. 23. *For the Lord hath comforted his people*  
—God hath now sent the long-desired consolation  
of Israel.

Verse 14. *But Zion said, &c.*—This is an objec-  
tion against all these glorious predictions and prom-  
ises. How can these things be true when the condition  
of God's church is now so sad and desperate? Most  
commentators understand by *Zion* here, the Jewish  
Church, and suppose that the complaint which she  
is here represented as uttering, refers either to her  
desolate state when in Babylon, or to the time of  
her long dispersion and desolation in the days of the  
Messiah. But Vitringa is of opinion that the Chris-  
tian Church is rather intended, and that the time  
referred to is that of her cruel persecution under the  
Romans. Be it which it may, God here declares  
that he will show her mercy, and destroy her mighty  
oppressors, verses 24–26.

Verses 15, 16. *Can a woman forget her sucking  
child*—God is often represented as bearing a fatherly  
affection toward his people, but here the comparison  
is raised higher, and he speaks of himself as having  
a tenderness for them, similar to that which a mother  
hath toward the fruit of her womb. "The image is  
common and frequent; yet it is wrought up with so  
much grace, embellished with so much elegance,

15 <sup>a</sup> Can a woman forget her suck- A. M. 3298.  
ing child, <sup>γ</sup> that she should not have B. C. 706.  
compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they  
may forget, <sup>b</sup> yet will I not forget thee.

16 Behold, <sup>c</sup> I have graven thee upon the palms  
of *my hands*; thy walls *are* continually before  
me.

17 Thy children shall make haste; <sup>d</sup> thy de-  
stroyers and they that made thee waste shall go  
forth of thee.

<sup>γ</sup> Heb. from having compassion.—<sup>b</sup> Rom. xi. 29.—<sup>c</sup> Exod.  
xiii. 9; Cant. viii. 6.—<sup>d</sup> Verse 19.

and expressed in such pathetic terms, that nothing  
can exceed it in beauty and force; nothing can con-  
vey a stronger idea of the maternal, the more than  
maternal regard, which God hath for his people." *Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee*—  
The turn in this clause is more expressive than a  
volume. As if he had said, Earthly parents some-  
times are so unnatural and monstrous; but do not  
entertain such unworthy thoughts of me. *Behold,  
I have graven thee upon the palms, &c.*—Mine eye  
and heart are constantly upon thee. "This is cer-  
tainly an allusion," says Bishop Lowth, "to some  
practice, common among the Jews at that time, of  
making marks on their hands or arms by punctures  
on the skin, rendered indelible by fire or staining,  
with some sort of sign, or representation of the city  
or temple, to show their affection and zeal for it. It  
is well known that the pilgrims at the holy sepulchre  
get themselves marked in this manner with what are  
called the ensigns of Jerusalem. Maundrell, p. 75;  
where he tells us how it is performed: and this art  
is practised by travelling Jews all over the world at  
this day." See also Vitringa and Michaelis's notes.  
Or the allusion may be merely to the common prac-  
tice of men, who use to put signs upon their hands  
or fingers, of such things as they especially wish to  
remember. *Thy walls are continually before me*  
—The ruins and desolations of my church are al-  
ways in my thoughts, nor shall I forget or neglect  
to repair them, and grant her deliverance from her  
enemies, and protection at the proper time.

Verse 17. *Thy children*—Or, as some, with equal  
propriety, render בניך, *thy builders*; which render-  
ing is favoured by the next clause, where the *de-  
stroyers* are opposed to them, but the following verse  
favours the former interpretation: the sense, how-  
ever, is the same, for the church's children are her  
builders; *shall make haste*—To repair thy ruins  
and desolations, and build thee up. *Thy destroyers,  
&c., shall go forth of thee*—Shall be separated and  
driven from thee, and so shall neither hinder nor  
annoy thee. But this rendering, *shall go forth of  
thee*, says Bishop Lowth, "is very flat, after their  
zeal had been expressed by their being her *build-  
ers*: and as the opposition is kept up in one part of  
the sentence, one has reason to expect it in the  
other." He, therefore, renders יצאו מנך, *shall pro-  
ceed, spring, or issue, from thee*; namely, as thy

A. M. 3298. 18 ¶ <sup>o</sup> Lift up thine eyes round  
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about, and behold: all these gather themselves together, and come to thee. As I live, saith the LORD, thou shalt surely clothe thee with them all, <sup>1</sup> as with an ornament, and bind them on thee, as a bride doeth.

19 For thy waste and thy desolate places, and the land of thy destruction, <sup>2</sup> shall even now be too narrow by reason of the inhabitants, and they that swallowed thee up shall be far away.

20 <sup>3</sup> The children which thou shalt have, <sup>4</sup> after thou hast lost the other, shall say again in thine

<sup>o</sup> Chap. lx. 4.—<sup>1</sup> Prov. xvii. 6.—<sup>2</sup> Chap. liv. 1, 2; Zech. ii. 4; x. 10.—<sup>3</sup> Chap. lx. 4.

children, and reads the whole verse thus: *They that destroy thee shall soon become thy builders; and they that laid thee waste shall become thine offspring: the accession of the Gentiles to the church of God being properly considered as an addition made to the number of the family and children of Zion.*

Verse 18. *Lift up thine eyes round about*—And behold numbers flocking unto thee from all quarters. *All these shall gather themselves unto thee, &c.*—Namely, the Gentiles. Thy church, O Zion, shall not only be restored and established, but vastly enlarged and adorned by an accession of converts from various nations; and come unto thee—To receive instruction from thee, and to be incorporated with thee into one and the same church. *Thou shalt clothe thee with them, &c.*—Instead of being a disgrace, or a snare and occasion of sin to thee, (as the Gentiles formerly were, when they mixed themselves with the Jews,) they shall be an honour and ornament, in respect of those excellent gifts and graces wherewith they shall enrich and adorn thy community. The addition of such numbers to the church shall complete her clothing, and make her appear comely and considerable. *And bind them on thee as a bride doth*—The LXX. read, *περιθησεις αυτες ως κοσμον νυμφη*, *Thou shalt put them on thee as a bride her attire*; supplying, as Bishop Lowth thinks, a word that appears to be wanting to complete the sense. “Zion clothes herself with her children as a bride clothes herself—with what? with some other thing, certainly;” namely, her ornaments, jewels, or rich dress.

Verses 19–21. *For thy waste and desolate places, &c.*—He alludes to the land of Judea lying waste during the Babylonish captivity. Thus the church of God was in a waste, desolate, and barren state, till the coming of the Messiah, the introduction of the gospel, and the conversion of the Gentiles; and the land of thy destruction—Or, thy land of destruction. He still alludes to Judea, thus characterized, because it was devoted, and should be exposed to destruction, first by the Chaldeans, and again by the Romans, a lively emblem of the ruined state of

ears, The place is too strait for me: A. M. 3298. give place to me that I may dwell. B. C. 706.

21 Then shalt thou say in thy heart, Who hath begotten me these, seeing I have lost my children, and am desolate, a captive, and removing to and fro? and who hath brought up these? Behold, I was left alone; these, where had they been?

22 <sup>5</sup> Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will lift up my hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people: and they shall bring thy sons in their <sup>6</sup> arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders.

<sup>5</sup> Matt. iii. 9; Rom. xi. 11, 12, &c.—<sup>6</sup> Chap. lx. 4; lxvi. 20. <sup>o</sup> Heb. bosom.

their church; *shall even now be too narrow*—To contain the multitude of converts that shall be made. The middle wall of partition that separated the Jews from the Gentiles shall be broken down, and the pale of the church shall be enlarged. *The children which thou shalt have, &c.*—Hebrew, בני שכליך, *The children of thy orbity, or, barren and childless state.* Those children which thou shalt have when thou art past the ordinary age and state of child-bearing, as Sarah in her old age was made the mother of a most numerous posterity; to which he seems to allude: those children which shall be begotten to thee by the gospel when thou shalt be deprived of thine own natural children, or when thou shalt become barren as to the conversion of natural Jews; when the generality of the Jews shall cut themselves off from God and his true church, by their apostacy from him, and by their unbelief and rejection of their Messiah; *shall say again*—Or rather, *shall yet say*, though for the present it be far otherwise, *The place is too strait for me, &c.*—This is figuratively spoken, merely to signify the great enlargement of the church by the accession of the Gentiles. See chap. liv. 1. *Then shalt thou say in thy heart*—Not without admiration, *Who hath begotten me these*—Whence, or by whom, have I this numerous issue? *Seeing I have lost my children*—Seeing it is not long since that I was in a manner childless? *And am desolate*—Without a husband, being forsaken of God, who formerly owned himself for my husband, chap. liv. 5; Jer. xxxi. 32; *a captive, and removing to and fro*—In an unsettled condition, and not likely to bear and bring up children for God or myself. *Who hath brought up these?*—The same thing is repeated in these words to express the miraculousness of this work, and the great surprise of the Jews at it: which shows that he speaks of the conversion of the Gentiles.

Verses 22, 23. *I will lift up my hand to the Gentiles*—I will call them to me; and set up my standard to the people—As generals do, to gather their forces together. *And they shall bring thy sons*—Those who shall be thine by adoption, who

A. M. 3298. 23 <sup>1</sup> And kings shall be thy <sup>9</sup> nursing  
B. C. 706. fathers, and their <sup>10</sup> queens thy nursing  
mothers: they shall bow down to thee with  
*their face toward the earth*, and <sup>m</sup> lick up the  
dust of thy feet; and thou shalt know that I *am*  
the LORD: for <sup>n</sup> they shall not be ashamed that  
wait for me.

24 ¶ <sup>o</sup> Shall the prey be taken from the  
mighty, or <sup>11</sup> the lawful captive delivered?

25 But thus saith the LORD, Even the <sup>12</sup> cap-

<sup>1</sup> Psa. lxxii. 11; Verse 7; Chap. lii. 15; ix. 16.—<sup>9</sup> Heb. nourishes.—<sup>10</sup> Heb. princesses.—<sup>m</sup> Psa. lxxii. 9; Mic. vii. 17. <sup>n</sup> Psa. xxxiv. 22; Rom. v. 5; ix. 33; x. 11.

shall own God for their Father, and Jerusalem for their mother; *in their arms*—With great care and tenderness, as nurses carry young infants: the sense is, Even the heathen shall contribute to the increase and preservation of those children which shall be begotten to thee. *And thy daughters shall be carried, &c.*—As sick or infirm persons used to be carried. *And kings shall be thy nursing fathers*—Kings and queens shall have a sincere affection and tender regard unto thee and thy children. Which was in some sort fulfilled by Cyrus, Ahasuerus, and some few others of the Persian kings or queens; but much more truly and fully by those many kings and emperors of the Gentile world who, after the time of Christ, did both themselves embrace the true religion, and also provide for the reception and establishment of it in their dominions. *They shall bow down to thee, &c.*—They shall highly reverence and honour thee, and shall most humbly and readily submit themselves unto thee. This was not verified in any of the Persian kings, but only in those kings or emperors who were converted to the Christian faith and church. *And lick up the dust of thy feet*—These expressions are borrowed from the manners of the eastern people in their prostrations and adorations, who bowed so low as to touch and kiss the ground. *For they shall not be ashamed that wait for me*—Their expectations shall not be disappointed, but abundantly satisfied.

Verses 24–26. *Shall the prey be taken from the mighty*—Here an objection is started against the forementioned promises, probably, 1st, Against the promise of the release of the Jews from their captivity in Babylon, suggesting that it was a thing not to be expected: for, verse 24, they were a prey in the hands of the mighty, of such as were then the greatest potentates of the earth; and, therefore, it was not likely they should be rescued by force; yet that was not all, they were *lawful captives*. By the law of God, having offended, they were justly delivered into captivity. And by the law of nations,

tives of the mighty shall be taken away, A. M. 3298.  
and the prey of the terrible shall be B. C. 706.  
delivered: for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children.

26 And I will <sup>p</sup> feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh; and they shall be drunken with their own <sup>q</sup> blood, as with <sup>13</sup> sweet wine: and all flesh <sup>r</sup> shall know that I the LORD *am* thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.

<sup>o</sup> Matt. xii. 39; Luke xi. 21, 22.—<sup>11</sup> Heb. the captivity of the just.—<sup>12</sup> Heb. captivity.—<sup>p</sup> Chap. ix. 20.—<sup>q</sup> Rev. xiv. 20; xvi. 6.—<sup>13</sup> Or, new wine.—Psa. ix. 16; Chap. ix. 16.

being taken in war, they were justly detained in captivity till they should be ransomed or exchanged. So here was a double, or rather, treble impediment to their deliverance; the great power of the enemy, which kept them in bondage, and the justice of God, and the usage of nations, which pleaded against them. And yet their deliverance, however improbable, was effected by the mercy and power of God. But this passage, as appears from the context, has a further reference: it respects the deliverance of God's church and people from their spiritual as well as temporal enemies. "God had promised very great and excellent things to his church; but to a person seriously considering the state thereof, and comparing it with the power of his enemies, and particularly its chief enemy, Satan, who held the nations in the darkness of ignorance and superstition, a doubt would naturally arise, whether it could possibly be that this prey, so long possessed by Satan, could be rescued from him, so that he might be driven from his strong fort, and the rulers of the world, held in subjection by him, might be delivered from their servitude. Isaiah resolves this doubt of the church, and teaches that it should certainly come to pass that Satan, this mighty one, should be driven from his fort, his captives delivered, (verse 25,) and the adversaries of the church perish by their mutual slaughter of each other." Thus Vitranga, who observes that verse 26, *I will feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh, &c.*, is to be "understood metaphorically, and refers to the intestine wars, by which princes and people, armed to their mutual destruction, plunge their destroying swords in each other's bowels, and, as it were, feed upon each other's flesh and blood." See chap. ix. 20; Zech. xi. 9; Rev. xvi. 6. *They shall be drunken with their own blood as with new wine*—I will make thine enemies destroy one another, and that greedily, and with delight. This prophecy was remarkably fulfilled in the time of the Roman emperor, Dioclesian, to which it is thought by some particularly to refer.

## CHAPTER L.

(1.) In the first three verses of this chapter, which seem to be connected with the preceding, God shows the Jews that they are justly charged with bringing all their troubles upon themselves by their sins, and that they were not to be imputed to any unkindness or weakness in God, it being evident that he was both able and willing to help them, if they had been in a fit state to receive his help. (2.) The Messiah relates, that he was appointed and qualified by God for the important office of preaching the gospel, &c. (3.) That he had shown the greatest readiness to undertake, and the greatest diligence to fulfil this office, as well as the greatest patience and constancy, amidst contumelies and injuries brought upon him, 5, 6. (4.) He shows that the ground of his constancy was his confidence in the divine assistance and approbation, amidst the calumnies and contradictions of his enemies, 7-9. (5.) He graciously addresses those who fear the Lord, and exhorts them to trust in him, in their greatest difficulties and troubles. (6.) Foretels to his adversaries destruction to arise from those very things whereby they sought salvation, 11.

A. M. 3298. B. C. 706. **THUS** saith the LORD, Where is <sup>a</sup> the bill of your mother's divorcement, whom I have put away? or which of my <sup>b</sup> creditors is it to whom I have sold you? Behold, for your iniquities <sup>c</sup> have you sold yourselves, and for your transgressions is your mother put away.

2 Wherefore, when I came, was there no man? <sup>d</sup> when I called, was there none to an-

<sup>a</sup> Deut. xxiv. 1; Jer. iii. 8; Hos. ii. 2.—<sup>b</sup> 2 Kings iv. 1; Matt. xviii. 25.—<sup>c</sup> Chap. lii. 8.—<sup>d</sup> Prov. i. 24; Chap. lxxv. 12; lxxvi. 4; Jer. vii. 13; xxxv. 15.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER L.

Verse 1. *Thus saith the Lord*—God having, by his prophet, in the last three verses of the preceding chapter, comforted his people with an assurance of their deliverance from the tyrannical power of their enemies, here vindicates his justice in suffering them to be exposed thereto, showing that they were the causes of their own calamities. *Where is the bill of your mother's divorcement?*—God had espoused the Jewish Church, the mother of the individuals of that people, to himself, in a kind of matrimonial covenant, frequently mentioned or alluded to by the prophets; but he seemed to divorce or cast them off when he sent them to Babylon, and afterward did wholly reject the generality of that nation from being his people, and took the Gentiles in their stead; which great and wonderful change was foretold in the Old Testament, (as has been already often observed, and will be again,) and was accomplished in the New. And because God foresaw that this strange dispensation would provoke the Jews to murmur and quarrel with him for casting them off without sufficient cause, as indeed they were always prone to accuse him, and vindicate themselves, he bids them produce their bill of divorce. For those husbands who put away their wives out of levity or passion were obliged to give them a bill of divorce, which vindicated the wives' innocence, and declared that the husband's will and pleasure was the cause of their dismissal. Now, says God, produce your bill of divorce, to show that I have put you away of my own mere will, and on a slight occasion, and that you did not first forsake me and go after other gods, and by that spiritual adultery violate the marriage covenant into which I had taken you. *Or which of my creditors is it to whom I have sold you*—Have I any creditors to whom I was obliged or

swer? <sup>e</sup> Is my hand shortened at all, A. M. 3298. B. C. 706. that it cannot redeem? or have I no power to deliver? behold, <sup>f</sup> at my rebuke I <sup>g</sup> dry up the sea, I make the <sup>h</sup> rivers a wilderness: <sup>i</sup> their fish stinketh, because *there is* no water, and dieth for thirst.

3 <sup>k</sup> I clothe the heavens with blackness, <sup>l</sup> and I make sackcloth their covering.

<sup>e</sup> Numbers xi. 23; Chap. lix. 1.—<sup>f</sup> Psa. cvi. 9; Nah. i. 4. <sup>g</sup> Exodus xiv. 21.—<sup>h</sup> Joshua iii. 16.—<sup>i</sup> Exodus vii. 18, 21. <sup>k</sup> Exod. x. 21.—<sup>l</sup> Rev. vi. 12.

willing to sell you for the payment of a debt? Parents, oppressed with debt, often sold their children, which, according to the law of Moses, they might do, till the year of release, Exod. xxi. 7. See also 2 Kings iv. 1; Matt. xviii. 25. But neither of these cases, says God, can be mine; I am not governed by any such motives, nor am I urged by any such necessity. *Behold, for your iniquities have you sold yourselves*—Your captivity and your afflictions are to be imputed to yourselves, and to your own folly and wickedness.

Verses 2, 3. *Wherefore, &c.*—The general accusation, delivered in the last words, he now proves by particular instances: *When I came was there no man*—How comes it to pass, that, when I sent to you by my servants the prophets, there was no man that regarded my message and offer of grace, and complied with my will? Whereby he implies that the generality of the Jews were guilty of gross infidelity and obstinate disobedience, and therefore might justly be rejected. *When I called* them to repentance and reformation, *there was none to come*—None to come at my call, or to obey my commands. *Is my hand shortened at all, &c.*—What is the reason of this contempt and rebellion? Is it because you expect no good from me, but think I am either unwilling or unable to save you? *Behold, at my rebuke I dry up the sea*—At my word or command I can not only check its proud waves, but make its channel dry. Here, for a proof of his power, God appeals to the miracles he wrought in Egypt, at the Red sea, and at Jordan. *I make the rivers a wilderness*—As dry and fit for travelling over as a wilderness. *I clothe the heavens with blackness*—Or, *I will, or can clothe, &c.* What I once did in Egypt when I drew thick curtains before all the heavenly lights, and caused an unparalleled and amazing

A. M. 3298. 4 ¶ <sup>m</sup> The Lord God hath given  
B. C. 706.

me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to *him that is* <sup>n</sup> weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned.

5 ¶ The Lord God <sup>o</sup> hath opened mine ear, and I was not <sup>p</sup> rebellious, neither turned away back.

6 ¶ I gave my back to the smiters, and <sup>r</sup> my

<sup>m</sup> Exodus i. 11.—<sup>n</sup> Matthew xi. 28.—<sup>o</sup> Psalm xl. 6, 7, 8.—<sup>p</sup> Matthew xxvi. 39; John xiv. 31; Philippians ii. 8; Hebrews x. 5.—<sup>q</sup> Matthew xxvii. 67; xxvii. 26; John

darkness to take place for three successive days, to the great terror of my enemies, so I can and will do still, when it is necessary to save my people. And therefore you have no reason to distrust me. *And I make sackcloth their covering*—I cover them with clouds as black as sackcloth.

Verse 4. *The Lord God hath given me, &c.*—The second discourse of the fifth part of Isaiah's prophecies, according to Vitringa, begins here, and is continued to the seventeenth verse of the following chapter. God having, in the preceding paragraph, asserted his own power; to manifest the unreasonableness of the infidelity of the Jews, and that it was without all excuse, he proceeds to show what excellent and powerful means he used to bring them to repentance and salvation. This and the following passages may be, in some sort, understood of the Prophet Isaiah, but they are far more evidently and eminently verified in Christ, and indeed seem to be meant directly of him. To understand them in this light seems to suit best with the context, for, according to this exposition, the same person speaks here, who is the chief subject of the preceding chapter, and who has spoken in the foregoing verses of this chapter. There, indeed, he speaks as God, but here as man, being both God and man, as is abundantly evident from many passages, both of the Old and New Testaments. *By the tongue of the learned* is meant, an ability of speaking plainly, convincingly, persuasively, and in all points, so as becomes a person taught of God, and filled with all divine and heavenly wisdom and knowledge. *That I should know how to speak, &c., to him that is weary*—That is, burdened with the sense of his sin and misery, in which case a word of comfort is most seasonable and acceptable. This was the principal design of Christ's ministry, namely, to give rest and comfort to the weary and heavy laden, according to what is said Matt. xi. 28. And all the doctrines, reproofs, and threatenings of Christ were directed to this end, to prepare men for receiving comfort and salvation. *He wakeneth, namely, me, or mine ear, morning by morning*—From time to time, and continually. *He wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned*—Either, first, as learned men, or teachers, use to awaken their scholars to hear and learn of them from time to time: or, rather, second, as those that are, or de-

checks to them that plucked off the A. M. 3298.  
hair: I hid not my face from shame B. C. 706.  
and spitting.

7 ¶ For the Lord God will help me: therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have <sup>s</sup> I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed.

8 <sup>t</sup> *He is* near that justifieth me: who will contend with me? let us stand together: who is <sup>u</sup> mine adversary? let him come near to me.

xviii. 22.—<sup>v</sup> Lamentations iii. 30.—<sup>w</sup> Ezekiel iii. 8, 9.  
<sup>x</sup> Romans viii. 32, 33, 34.—<sup>y</sup> Hebrew, *the master of my cause.*

sire to be, learned, use to hear with all possible attention and diligence.

Verses 5, 6. *The Lord hath opened mine ear*—Hath given me a power and will to hear and receive his commands. *And I was not rebellious*—I readily did and suffered what he required of me. *Neither turned away back*—From hearing or obeying his will, how difficult or dangerous soever the work might be to which he called me. He seems to allude to some of the former prophets, who had shrunk back, and for a time refused such work as God called them to, as Moses, Exod. iii. 11; Jonah, chap. i. 3, and others. *I gave my back to the smiters*—I patiently yielded up myself to the will of those who smote me: I was willing, not only to do, but to suffer the will of God, and the injuries of men: *and my checks to them that plucked off the hair*—Which was a contumely or punishment sometimes inflicted on malefactors, Neh. xiii. 25. *I hid not my face from shame*—From any manner of reproachful usage, but did knowingly and willingly submit myself thereunto; *and spitting*—Spitting in a man's face was used in token of contempt and detestation. All these things were literally fulfilled in Christ, as is expressly affirmed in the gospels; but we read of no such things concerning Isaiah, and therefore it is most safe and reasonable to understand this passage of Christ, and the rather, because it is not usual with the prophets to commend themselves so highly as the prophet here commends the person of whom he speaks.

Verses 7-9. *For, or rather, but, the Lord God will help me*—Though as man I am weak, yet God will strengthen me to go through my great and hard work. *Therefore shall I not be confounded*—Therefore I assure myself of success in my undertaking, and of victory over all my enemies. *I have set my face like a flint*—I have hardened myself with resolution and courage against all opposition. See the like phrase, Ezek. iii. 8, 9, which Bishop Lowth translates as follows: "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." The expression, however, sometimes signifies *obstinacy and impudence*, as Jer. v. 3; Zech. vii. 12; but here a settled and immoveable purpose to persevere in well-doing

A. M. 3298. 9 Behold, the Lord God will help  
B. C. 706. me; who *is* he *that* shall condemn  
me? <sup>a</sup> lo, they all shall wax old as a garment;  
<sup>z</sup> the moth shall eat them up.

10 ¶ Who *is* among you that feareth the  
LORD, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that  
<sup>v</sup> walketh *in* darkness, and hath no light? <sup>z</sup> let

<sup>a</sup> Job xiii. 28; Psa. cii. 26; Chap. li. 6.—<sup>z</sup> Chap. li. 8.  
<sup>v</sup> Psa. xxiii. 4.

*He is near that justifieth me*—Though God seems to be at a distance, and to hide his face from me; yet he is, in truth, at my right hand, ready to help me, and will publicly acquit me from all the calumnies of mine adversaries; will clear up my righteousness, and show, by many and mighty signs and wonders, that I lived and died his faithful servant. *Who is mine adversary?* *Let him come near to me*—I challenge all my accusers to stand and appear before the Judge, and to produce all their charges against me: for I am conscious of mine own innocence, and I know that God will give sentence for me. *Who is he that shall condemn me?*—That dare attempt, or can justly do it? *Lo, they all*—Mine accusers and enemies; *shall wax old as a garment*—Shall pine away in their iniquity: *the moth shall eat them up*—They shall be cut off and consumed, by a secret curse and judgment of God, compared to a moth, Hos. v. 12.

Verses 10, 11. *Who is among you that feareth the Lord?*—He now turns his speech from the unbelieving and rebellious Jews, to those of them who were, or should be, pious. *That obeyeth the voice of his servant*—Of the same person of whom he has hitherto spoken, of Christ, who is called God's *servant* by way of eminence, and to intimate that, though he was God, yet he would *take upon himself the form of a servant*. It is hereby signified, that the grace of God, and the encouragement and comfort here following, belong to none but those that believe in and obey this great prophet of the church; which was also declared by Moses, Deut. xviii. 15, compared with Acts iii. 22, 23. *That walketh in darkness*—Not in sin, which is often called darkness,

him trust in the name of the LORD, A. M. 3298.  
and stay upon his God. B. C. 706.

11 Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass *yourselves* about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks *that* ye have kindled. <sup>a</sup> This shall ye have of my hand; ye shall lie down <sup>b</sup> in sorrow.

<sup>a</sup> 2 Chron. xx. 20; Psalm xx. 7.—<sup>b</sup> John ix. 19.—<sup>b</sup> Psalm xvi. 4.

but in misery, which the word also frequently signifies; that lives in a disconsolate and calamitous condition. *And hath no light*—No comfort nor prospect of deliverance. *Let him trust in the name of the Lord, &c.*—Let him fix his faith and hope in the amiable nature and infinite perfections, and especially in the mercy and faithfulness of *the Lord*, declared in his word, and in his interest in God, who, by the mediation of this his servant, is reconciled to him, and made *his God*. *Behold, all ye that kindle a fire*—That you may enjoy the light and comfort of it; you that reject the light which God hath set up, and seek for comfort and safety in your own inventions: which was the common error of the Jews in all ages, and especially in the days of the Messiah, when they refused him, and that way of salvation which he appointed, and rested on their own traditions and devices, *going about to establish their own righteousness, and not submitting themselves unto the righteousness of God*. *That compass yourselves with sparks*—Of your own kindling. Dr. Waterland and Bishop Lowth translate this latter clause, “who place, or heap the fuel around.” *Walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled*—Use your utmost endeavours to get comfort from these devices. *This shall ye have of my hand, &c.*—This shall be the fruit of all, through my just judgment, that, instead of that comfort and security which you expect by these means, you shall receive nothing but vexation and misery, which shall pursue you both living and dying; for the word שָׁכַב, here rendered *lie down*, is frequently used for *dying*, as Gen. xlvii. 30; Job xxi. 26, and elsewhere.

## CHAPTER LI.

We have in this chapter the second section of the second discourse of the fifth part of this book, containing an assurance, (1.) That God, who raised his church from nothing, will take care for her subsistence and comfort, 1–3. (2.) That the righteousness and salvation designed for her, and offered in the gospel, are very near and sure, 4–6. (3.) That the persecutors of the church are weak and dying creatures, 7, 8. (4.) That the same almighty power, which wrought miracles for her on former occasions, is still engaged for her deliverance and protection, 9–11. (5.) That God himself, the maker of the world, had undertaken both to comfort his people under, and deliver them out of their distress, 12–16. (6.) That, however deplorable her case was, that of her persecutors should soon be worse, 17–23.

A. M. 3298. B. C. 706. **HEARKEN** <sup>a</sup> to me, <sup>b</sup> ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the LORD: look unto the rock *whence* ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit *whence* ye are digged.

2 <sup>c</sup> Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah *that* bare you: <sup>d</sup> for I called him alone, and <sup>e</sup> blessed him, and increased him.

3 For the LORD <sup>f</sup> shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert <sup>g</sup> like

<sup>a</sup> Verse 7.—<sup>b</sup> Rom. ix. 30, 31, 32.—<sup>c</sup> Rom. iv. 1, 16; Heb. xi. 11, 12.—<sup>d</sup> Gen. xii. 1, 2.—<sup>e</sup> Gen. xxiv. 1, 35.—<sup>f</sup> Psa. cii. 13; Chap. xl. 1; lii. 9; Verse 12.

#### NOTES ON CHAPTER LI.

Verses 1, 2. *Hearken unto me, &c.*—Here again he addresses his discourse to the believing and godly Jews, whom he describes as *following after righteousness*—That is, earnestly desiring and diligently pursuing the justification of their persons, the sanctification of their nature, and practical obedience to God's law; for which blessings they *sought the Lord*—That is, sought an acquaintance and reconciliation with him, the manifestation of his favour, and the communication of his Spirit. These, his true people, he exhorts to *look unto the rock whence they were hewn, &c.*—To consider the state of Abraham and Sarah before God gave them Isaac, from whom Jacob and all his posterity sprang. He compares the bodies of Abraham and Sarah unto a rock, or pit, or quarry, out of which stones are hewn or dug; thereby implying, that God, in some sort, actually did that which John the Baptist said he was able to do, (Matt. iii. 9,) even of *stones to raise up children unto Abraham*; it being then as impossible, by the course of nature, for Abraham and Sarah, in such an advanced age as they then were, to have a child, as it is to hew one out of a rock, or dig one out of a pit. *For I called him alone*—Hebrew, *אחד*, *one*; that is, when he was but one single person, without child or family, I called him from his country and kindred to follow me to an unknown land, where I promised that I would multiply him exceedingly. *And I blessed him, and increased him*—Namely, into a vast multitude, when his condition was desperate in the eye of reason. And therefore God can as easily deliver and raise his church when they are in the most forlorn condition, and seem to be consumed, dead, and buried, so that nothing but dry bones remain of them, as is declared at large, Ezek. chap. xxxvii.

Verse 3. *For, &c.*—The prophet, in these words, seems to be giving a reason why they should look unto, or consider, that famous example of Abraham and Sarah; namely, because they should find the like wonder wrought on their behalf. Or the meaning may be, *therefore*, for the sake of Abraham and of that covenant which God made with him, and by which he promised to bless him and his seed for ever; *the Lord shall comfort Zion*—His church, frequently, as we have seen, called by that name. *He will*

the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody.

4 ¶ Hearken unto me, my people; and give ear unto me, O my nation: <sup>b</sup> for a law shall proceed from me, and I will make my judgment to rest <sup>i</sup> for a light of the people.

5 <sup>k</sup> My righteousness *is* near; my salvation is gone forth, <sup>l</sup> and mine arms shall judge the people; <sup>m</sup> the isles shall wait upon me, and <sup>n</sup> on mine arm shall they trust.

<sup>a</sup> Gen. xiii. 10; Joel ii. 3.—<sup>b</sup> Chap. ii. 3; xlii. 4.—<sup>c</sup> Chap. xlii. 6.—<sup>d</sup> Chap. xlvi. 13; lvi. 1; Rom. i. 16, 17.—<sup>e</sup> Psa. lxxii. 4; xcvi. 9.—<sup>f</sup> Chap. ix. 9.—<sup>g</sup> Rom. i. 16.

*make her wilderness like Eden*—Although she may be waste and desolate like a wilderness or desert for a time, yet she shall be restored and made as pleasant and flourishing as the garden of Eden was. The expressions are figurative, and, according to Vitringa, "in their primary sense, refer to the state of Zion after their restoration from Babylon; in their secondary and spiritual sense, to the redemption of the church by the Messiah, and the consequent blessings of grace." See chap. xlix. 19, and lii. 9.

Verses 4, 5. *Hearken unto me, my people*—Ye Jews, whom I chose to be my peculiar people, do not reject my counsel, which, I have told you, even the Gentiles will receive, nor forsake the mercies of which even they will partake. *For a law shall proceed from me*—A new law, even the doctrine of the gospel. *I will make my judgment to rest for a light*—Judgment is here the same thing with law in the former clause, the word of God, or the evangelical doctrine, of which he saith, that *he will make it to rest*, that is, settle and establish it; whereby he may possibly intimate the stability and perpetuity of this light in the church, that it shall not be like the light of the Mosaic dispensation, which was only to shine for a season, namely, *until the time of reformation*, (Heb. ix. 10,) when all those dark shadows were to vanish and give place to the Sun of righteousness, and to that kingdom and state that should never be moved. See Dan. ii. 44; Heb. xii. 26–28. *Of the people*—Hebrew, *עַמִּי*, *the peoples*, not only you Jews, but people of all sorts and nations, who shall receive and walk in it. *My righteousness is near*—My salvation, the redemption of all my people, Jews and Gentiles, which is the effect of my righteousness, of my justice, faithfulness, or mercy, which are all called by the name of righteousness in the Scriptures, and all contributed to the work of man's redemption. *My salvation is gone forth*—Shall shortly go forth; my eternal purpose of saving my people shall speedily be fulfilled; *and mine arm*, my power, *shall judge the people*—Either, 1st, Shall destroy those who obstruct or oppose this work: or, rather, 2d, Shall subdue the Gentiles to my authority, and rule them by my Word and Spirit. *The isles*—The remote countries of the Gentiles; *shall wait upon me*—Shall expect this salvation from me, and from me only.

A. M. 3298. B. C. 706. 6 ° Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner: but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished.

7 ¶ Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings.

8 For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool; but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation.

9 ¶ Awake, awake, put on strength, O

° Chap. xl. 26.—Psa. cii. 26; Matt. xxiv. 35; 2 Pet. iii. 10, 12.—Chapter l. 9.—Verse 1.—Psa. xxxvii. 31. † Matt. x. 29; Acts v. 41.—Chapter l. 9.—Psa. xlv. 23; Chap. lii. 1.—Psa. xciii. 1; Rev. xi. 17.

Verse 6. *Lift up your eyes to the heavens*—Look up to the visible heavens above, which have continued hitherto, and seem likely to continue; and *look upon the earth beneath*—Which seems as firmly established as if it would endure for ever. *The heavens shall vanish away like smoke*—Which soon spends itself and disappears; and *the earth shall wax old, &c.*—Shall decay and perish, like a worn-out garment. *And they that dwell therein shall die in like manner*—Shall be dissolved, as the heaven and earth shall be, 2 Pet. iii. 11. *But my salvation shall be for ever, &c.*—As it shall spread through all the nations of the earth, so it shall last through all the ages of the world, and, in its consequences, to all eternity.

Verses 7, 8. *Hearken, ye that know righteousness*—Who not only understand, but love and practise it; whose persons are justified, whose nature is renewed, and whose lives are subject to my laws. These seem to be distinguished from those who are spoken of (verse 1) as following after righteousness. These had attained what the others were only in pursuit of. *The people in whose heart is my law*—Who are here opposed to the carnal Jews, that had the law written only on tables of stone. Compare 2 Cor. iii. 3; Heb. viii. 10. *Fear ye not the reproach of men*—The censures of your carnal countrymen, who load their believing and godly brethren with a world of reproaches; but let not these things discourage you: *for the moth shall eat them up, &c.*—Those that reproach you shall be easily and soon destroyed, and so God will avenge your cause upon them, and deliver you from their injurious treatment; and *the worm shall eat them like wool*—Like a woollen garment, which is sooner corrupted by moths, or such creatures, than linen.

Verses 9-11. *Awake, awake, &c.*—The prophet,

arm of the LORD; awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Art thou not it that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the dragon?

10 Art thou not it which hath dried the sea, the waters of the great deep; that hath made the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over?

11 Therefore the redeemed of the LORD shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head; they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away.

12 ¶ I, even I, am he that comforteth you: who art thou, that thou shouldst be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man which shall be made as grass;

z Psa. xlv. 1.—Job xxvi. 12.—Psa. lxxxvii. 4; lxxxix. 10. c Psa. lxxiv. 13, 14; Chap. xxvii. 1; Ezek. xxix. 3.—d Exod. xiv. 21; Chap. xliii. 16.—e Chap. xxxv. 10.—f Verses 3, 4; 2 Cor. i. 3.—g Psa. cxviii. 6.—h Chap. xl. 6; 1 Pet. i. 24.

by an elegant figure, addresses himself to God, to stir up and exert his power in behalf of his oppressed people, as he did in former times, when he delivered them out of the Egyptian bondage. *Awake, as in the ancient days*—That is, act for us now as thou didst for our fathers formerly: repeat the wonders they have told us of. *Art thou not it that cut Rahab*—Egypt, so called, here and elsewhere, for its pride or strength. *And wounded the dragon*—Pharaoh, the Leviathan, as he is called, Psa. lxxiv. 13, 14. *Art thou not it that dried the sea*—Art thou not the same God, and as potent now as thou wast then? *That made the depths a way for the ransomed, &c.*—For thy people, whom thou didst redeem and bring out of Egypt? Let thine arm be stretched out in our behalf; for it has done great things formerly in defence of the same cause, and we are sure it is neither shortened nor weakened. *Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return, &c.*—These words express the persuasion of the prophet, that as the Lord did these great things formerly, so he would certainly do the like again. See note on chap. xxxv. 10.

Verses 12, 13. *I, even I, am he that comforteth you*—"They prayed," says Henry, "for the operations of his power: he answers them with the consolations of his grace; which may well be accepted as an equivalent. *I, even I*, he says, will do it: he had ordered his ministers to do it, chap. xl. 1; but, because they cannot reach the heart, he takes the work into his own hands; he will do it himself. And those whom he comforts, are comforted indeed." *Who art thou, that thou shouldst be afraid, &c.*—How unreasonable and distrustful art thou, O my church, how unlike to thyself! How unsuitable are these despondences to thy professions and obligations! *Afraid of a man that shall die, &c.*—Of a

A. M. 3298. 13 And forgettest the LORD thy Ma-  
B. C. 706. ker, <sup>1</sup> that hath stretched forth the hea-  
vens, and laid the foundations of the earth;  
and hast feared continually every day because  
of the fury of the oppressor, as if he <sup>1</sup> were ready  
to destroy? <sup>k</sup> and where *is* the fury of the op-  
pressor?

14 The captive exile hasteneth that he may  
be loosed, <sup>1</sup> and that he should not die in the  
pit, nor that his bread should fail.

15 But *I am* the LORD thy God, that <sup>m</sup> divided

<sup>1</sup> Job ix. 8; Psa. civ. 2; Chap. xl. 22; xlii. 5; xliv. 24.  
<sup>k</sup> Or, *made himself ready.*—<sup>1</sup> Job xx. 7.—<sup>1</sup> Zech. ix. 11.  
<sup>m</sup> Psa. lxxiv. 13; Job xxvi. 12; Jer. xxxi. 35.—<sup>n</sup> Deut. xviii.  
18; Chap. lix. 21; John iii. 34.

weak, mortal, and perishing creature. *And forgettest the Lord thy Maker*—Dost not consider the infinite power of that God who made thee, and who will plead thy cause; *that hath stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth*—And therefore hath all the hosts and all the powers of both at his command and disposal. *And hast feared continually every day*—Hast been in a state of continual alarm and disquietude; *because of the fury of the oppressor*—It is true there is an oppressor, and he is furious, designing, it may be, to do thee a mischief, and therefore it will be thy wisdom to be on thy guard against him: but thou art afraid of him, *as if he were ready to destroy*—As if it were in his power to destroy thee in a moment, and he were just now going to effect his purpose, and there were no possibility of preventing it. *And where is the fury of the oppressor?*—What is become of the power and rage of the Babylonians? Are they not vanished away? Are they not broken, and thou delivered? He speaks of the thing as already done, because it should certainly and suddenly be done.

Verses 14–16. *The captive exile hasteneth that he may be loosed*—From his captivity, and may return to his own country from which he is banished. *And that he should not die in the pit*—Die a prisoner, through the inconveniences and hardships of his confinement; *nor that his bread should fail*—The bread or provision allowed to keep him alive in prison. The general sense of the verse is, God is not slack, as you think, but makes haste to fulfil his promise, and rescue his captive and oppressed people from all their oppressions and miseries. *And I have put my words in thy mouth*—These great and glorious promises, which are in thy mouth, are not the vain words of man, a weak, inconstant, and unfaithful creature, but the words of the almighty, unchangeable, and faithful God; and therefore they shall be infallibly accomplished. This is spoken by God to his church and people, whom he addresses, both in the foregoing and following verses. For God's word is frequently said to be *put into the mouths*, not only of the prophets, but also of the people, as chap. lix. 21; Deut. xxx. 14. *And have covered thee,*

the sea, whose waves roared: The LORD of hosts *is* his name. A. M. 3298.  
B. C. 706.

16 And <sup>a</sup> I have put my words in thy mouth, and <sup>o</sup> have covered thee in the shadow of my hand, <sup>p</sup> that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth, and say unto Zion, Thou *art* my people.

17 ¶ <sup>q</sup> Awake, awake, stand up, O Jerusalem, which <sup>r</sup> hast drunk at the hand of the LORD the cup of his fury; <sup>s</sup> thou hast drunken the dregs of the cup of trembling, and wrung *them out*.

<sup>o</sup> Chap. xlix. 2.—<sup>p</sup> Chap. lxxv. 17; lxxvi. 22.—<sup>q</sup> Chap. lii. 1.—<sup>r</sup> Job xxi. 20; Jer. xxv. 15, 16.—<sup>s</sup> Deut. xxviii. 28, 34; Psa. lx. 3; lxxv. 8; Ezek. xxxiii. 32, 34; Zech. xii. 2; Rev. xiv. 10.

&c.—Have protected thee by my almighty power. *That I may plant the heavens*—Bishop Lowth reads, *To stretch out the heavens: and lay the foundations of the earth*—I have given thee, O my church, these promises, and this protection in all thy calamities, to assure thee of my care and kindness to thee, and that I will reform thee in a most glorious manner, and bring thee unto that perfect and blessed estate which is reserved for the days of the Messiah, which, in the language of Scripture, is termed the *making of new heavens and a new earth*, chap. lxxv. 17; and lxxvi. 22. *And say unto Zion, Thou art my people*—That I may own thee for my people, in a more illustrious manner than I have done.

Verse 17. *Awake, awake*—God having awoke and arisen for the comfort of his people, here calls on them to awake, as afterward, chap. lii. 1. This is a call to awake, not so much out of the sleep of sin, though that also was necessary, in order to their being ready for deliverance, as out of the stupor of despondency and despair. Hebrew, *רוּסוּתְּךָ*, *rouse up thyself*; come out of that forlorn and disconsolate condition in which thou hast so long been. When the Jews were in captivity they were so overwhelmed with the sense of their troubles that they had no heart left to mind any thing that tended to their comfort or relief; and therefore when the deliverance came, they are said (Psa. cxxxvi. 1) to be *like them that dream*. The address may be applied to the Jerusalem, or Jewish Church, which was in the apostles' time, which is said to be *in bondage with her children*, (Gal. iv. 25,) and to have been under the power of a *spirit of slumber*, Rom. xi. 8. They are called to awake and mind the things that belonged to their everlasting peace, and then the cup of trembling should be taken out of their hands, peace should be spoken to them, and they should triumph over Satan, who had blinded their eyes, and brought stupor insensibly upon them. *Stand up*—Upon thy feet, O thou who hast been thrown to the ground. *Who hast drunk, &c., the cup of his fury*—Who hast been sorely afflicted; *the dregs of the cup of trembling*—Which strikes him that drinks it with a deadly horror; *and wrung them out*—Drunk every drop of it.

A. M. 3298. B. C. 706. 18 *There is none to guide her* among all the sons *whom* she hath brought forth; neither *is there any* that taketh her by the hand of all the sons *that* she hath brought up.

19 <sup>1</sup> These two *things* <sup>2</sup> are come unto thee; who shall be sorry for thee? desolation, and <sup>3</sup> destruction, and the famine, and the sword: <sup>4</sup> by whom shall I comfort thee?

20 <sup>5</sup> Thy sons have fainted, they lie at the head of all the streets, as a wild bull in a net: they are full of the fury of the LORD, the rebuke of thy God.

<sup>1</sup> Chapter xlvii. 9.—<sup>2</sup> Heb. *happened*.—<sup>3</sup> Hebrew, *breaking*.  
<sup>4</sup> Amos vii. 2.—<sup>5</sup> Lam. ii. 11, 12.

Verses 18-20. *There is none to guide her, &c.*—When thou wast drunk with this cup, and couldest not direct or support thy steps, neither thy princes, nor prophets, nor priests, were able or willing to lead or uphold thee. *These two things are come upon thee*—Those here following, which, although they be expressed in four words, yet may be fitly reduced to two things, namely, desolation by famine, and destruction by the sword. *Who shall be sorry for thee*—Who is there left to take pity on thee, since thy children are all in as miserable a condition as thyself? See verses 18 and 20. *By whom shall I comfort thee*—What human means of comfort is there left for thee?

*Thy sons have fainted*—They are so far from being able to comfort thee, as was said verse 18, that they themselves faint away for want of comfort, and through famine. *They lie at the head of all the streets*—Dead by famine, or the sword of the enemy; *as a wild bull in a net*—Those of them who are not slain are struggling for life. *They are full of the fury of the Lord*—“The bold image of the cup of God’s wrath,” says Bishop Lowth, “often employed by the sacred writers, is nowhere handled with greater force and sublimity than in this passage. 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 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 him-

21 ¶ Therefore hear now this, thou afflicted, and drunken, <sup>7</sup> but not with wine:

22 Thus saith thy Lord the LORD, and thy God <sup>8</sup> that pleadeth the cause of his people, Behold, I have taken out of thy hand the cup of trembling, *even* the dregs of the cup of my fury; thou shalt no more drink it again:

23 But <sup>9</sup> I will put it into the hand of them that afflict thee; <sup>10</sup> which have said to thy soul, Bow down, that we may go over: and thou hast laid thy body as the ground, and as the street, to them that went over.

<sup>7</sup> Verse 17; Lam. iii. 15.—<sup>8</sup> Jer. i. 34.—<sup>9</sup> Jer. xxv. 17; xxvi. 28; Zech. xii. 2.—<sup>10</sup> Psa. lxxvi. 11, 12.

self. This is poetry of the first order, sublimity of the highest proof.”

Verses 21-23. *Hear, thou drunken, but not with wine*—But with the cup of God’s fury, mentioned verse 17. *Thus saith the Lord*—That is, *Jehovah*; he that is able to help thee, and hath wherewithal to relieve thee; *thy Lord*—That hath an incontestable right to thee, and will not alienate it; *thy God*—In covenant with thee, and that hath undertaken to make thee happy; *that pleadeth the cause of his people*—As their patron and protector, who, though he hath been angry with, and hath chastised thee, is now reconciled to thee, and will maintain thy cause against all thine enemies. *I have taken out of thy hand the cup of trembling*—The bitter, intoxicating cup of my wrath; *thou shalt no more drink it again*—No more lie under such judgments after thy prosperity in the latter days, chap. lii. 1. *But I will put it into the hand of them that afflict thee*—Compare chap. xlix. 26; Jer. xxv. 29; Rev. xviii. 6. *Which have said to thy soul, Bow down, &c.*—Lie down upon the ground, that we may trample upon thee. “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. See Josh. x. 24; Judg. i. 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 his back, on which he set his foot, in order to mount his chariot or horse, whenever he had occasion.”—Bishop Lowth.

## CHAPTER LII.

*The former part of this chapter is connected with the latter part of the preceding, the deliverance of the Jews from Babylon being the subject of it, as emblematical of our redemption by Christ, and of the erection and salvation of the gospel church. (1.) The prophet addresses Zion in her state of bondage and oppression, and encourages her to expect and prepare for deliverance, which he promises her in the name of the Lord, 1-6. (2.) He shows the great joy and exultation which the first tidings of it would produce in the church and all its members, 7-10. (3.) He exhorts all the people of God to avail*

themselves of the opportunity offered them, and readily to exchange bondage for liberty, and to conduct themselves in a manner suitable thereto, 11, 12. (4.) The Messiah is introduced, and exhibited in his humiliation and exaltation, and the subsequent enlargement and glory of his kingdom, 13-15.

A. M. 3298. B. C. 706. **A**WAKE, <sup>a</sup>awake, put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, <sup>b</sup>the holy city: for <sup>c</sup>henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised <sup>d</sup>and the unclean.

2 <sup>e</sup>Shake thyself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem: <sup>f</sup>loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion.

3 For thus saith the LORD, <sup>g</sup>Ye have sold yourselves for naught; and ye shall be redeemed without money.

4 For thus saith the Lord God, My people went down aforetime into <sup>h</sup>Egypt to sojourn

<sup>a</sup> Chap. li. 9, 17.—<sup>b</sup> Neh. xi. 1; Chapter xlviii. 2; Matthew iv. 5; Rev. xxi. 2.—<sup>c</sup> Chap. xxxv. 8; lx. 21; Nah. i. 15. <sup>d</sup> Rev. xxi. 27.—<sup>e</sup> Chapter iii. 26; li. 23.—<sup>f</sup> Zech. ii. 7.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER LII.

Verses 1-3. *Awake, awake, put on strength*—God orders his church to do that which she entreated him to do, chap. li. 9. And because his word is with power, and what he commands he in certain cases effects, this is a prediction and promise what he should do, that she should *awake or arise* out of her low estate, and be strong and courageous. *Put on thy beautiful garments*—Thy sorrows shall be ended, and thou shalt be advanced in a glorious condition. *O Zion*—O my church, very frequently called by the name of Zion or Jerusalem. *There shall no more come unto thee*—To molest, or associate themselves with, and thereby to defile and corrupt thee; *the uncircumcised and unclean*—Heathen and infidels, nor any others who are unholy. Whereby he intimates, that there should be a greater reformation and more purity in the church than formerly there had been, which was eminently accomplished in the church and kingdom of Christ. *Shake thyself from the dust*—In which thou hast lain as a prisoner, or sat as a mourner. *Arise, and sit down*—Upon thy throne. *Or sit up*, as the word עָשָׂה is rendered, Gen. xxvii. 19. *Loose thyself, &c.*—The yoke of thy captivity shall be taken off from thee. *Ye have sold yourselves*—By your sins, into the hands of your enemies; *for naught*—Without any price or valuable consideration paid by them, either to you or to your lord and owner. *And ye shall be redeemed without money*—Without paying any ransom.

Verses 4-6. *My people went down into Egypt*—Where they had protection and sustenance, and therefore owed subjection to the king of Egypt. And yet when he oppressed them I punished him severely, and delivered them out of his hands. *And the Assyrian oppressed them*—The king of Babylon, who is called the *king of Assyria*, (2 Kings xxiii.

there; and the Assyrian oppressed them without cause. A. M. 3298. B. C. 706.

5 Now therefore, what have I here, saith the LORD, that my people is taken away for naught? they that rule over them make them to howl, saith the LORD; and my name continually every day is <sup>i</sup>blasphemed.

6 Therefore my people shall know my name: therefore *they shall know* in that day that I *am* he that doth speak: behold, *it is I*.

7 ¶ <sup>k</sup>How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, <sup>l</sup>Thy God reigneth!

<sup>g</sup> Psa. xlv. 12; Chap. xlv. 13; Jer. xv. 13.—<sup>h</sup> Gen. xlv. 6; Acts vii. 14.—<sup>i</sup> Ezekiel xxxvi. 20, 23; Romans ii. 24. <sup>k</sup> Nah. i. 15; Rom. x. 15.—<sup>l</sup> Psa. xciii. 1; xcvi. 10; xcvii. 1.

29.) as also the Persian emperor is called, (Ezra vi. 22,) because it was one and the same empire which was possessed, first by the *Assyrians*, then by the *Babylonians*, and afterward by the *Persians*. *Without cause*—Without any real ground or colour, by mere force invading their land, and carrying them away into captivity. *Now therefore what have I here*—Why (speaking after the manner of men) do I sit still here, and not go to Babylon to punish the Babylonians, and to deliver my people? Or, What honour have I by suffering this injury to be done to my people? *That my people is taken away for naught*—Were carried away captive by the Babylonians, without any provocation or pretence of right? *They that rule over them make them to howl*—By their tyrannical and unmerciful usage of them; *and my name continually is blasphemed*—The Babylonians blaspheme me, as if I wanted either power or goodwill to save my people out of their hands. *Therefore my people shall know my name*—They shall have sensible experience of my infinite power and goodness in fighting for them. *They shall know in that day*—When I shall redeem them; which work was begun by the return of the Jews from Babylon, and afterward carried on, and at last perfected, by the coming of the Messiah; *that I am he that doth speak*—That these promises are not the words of a weak, or fickle, or deceitful man, but of him who is omnipotent, unchangeable, and a covenant-keeping God.

Verse 7. *How beautiful*—How exceeding precious and acceptable; *upon the mountains*—Of Judea, to which these glad tidings were brought; *are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings*—Tidings, first, Of the release of the Jews from captivity in Babylon; and, secondly, Of the redemption and salvation of mankind by the Messiah. Thus most commenta-

A. M. 3298. 8 Thy watchmen shall lift up the  
B. C. 706. voice; with the voice together shall  
they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when  
the LORD shall bring again Zion.

9 ¶ Break forth into joy, sing together, ye  
waste places of Jerusalem: <sup>m</sup> for the LORD  
hath comforted his people, <sup>n</sup> he hath redeemed  
Jerusalem.

<sup>m</sup> Chapter li. 3. — Chapter xlviii. 20. — <sup>o</sup> Psalm xcvi. 2, 3.  
<sup>p</sup> Luke iii. 6.

tors interpret the prophet's words. They are "a poetical description," says Lowth, "of the messenger who first brought the good news of Cyrus's decree for the people to return home, whom the watchmen, mentioned verse 8, are supposed to descry afar off from the tops of the mountains, making all possible haste to publish this happy news: a signal instance of God's overruling providence, of the peculiar care he hath for his church. But this text is very fitly applied by St. Paul to the first preachers of the gospel, (Rom. x. 15,) the very words importing good tidings of that peace and salvation whereby the kingdom of God was erected among men." Indeed, true *peace* and *salvation* were procured for mankind, and are conferred upon them, only by Christ. And in his days, or from the time of his manifestation in the flesh, and entering upon his public ministry, God discovered and exercised his dominion over the world far more eminently than he ever had done from the beginning of the world until that time. Accordingly, we may observe, those Psalms wherein we find that expression, *The Lord reigneth*, are by the generality of interpreters, both Jewish and Christian, expounded of the times of the Messiah; the declaration being, in effect, the same that John the Baptist, the messenger of Christ, and that Christ himself published, when they testified, *The kingdom of heaven is at hand*.

Verse 8. *Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice*—Partly to give notice to all people of these glad tidings, and partly by way of exultation, to sing forth the praises of God for this glorious season and exercise of mercy. If we consider this passage as referring to the deliverance from Babylon, by the watchmen here, we must understand those prophets who prophesied at or after the time of that deliverance, such as Haggai and Zechariah: but if the good tidings be interpreted of the publication of peace and salvation by the gospel, then by the *watchmen* its ministers are meant, and especially the apostles and evangelists, and other first messengers of Christ. *For they shall see eye to eye*—Those prophets that shall witness the release of the Jews from captivity shall see an exact agreement and correspondence between the prophecy and the event whereby it is accomplished, between the promise and the performance. It may still be affirmed with more propriety, that the preachers of the gospel saw *eye to eye* when the Messiah was *manifested in the flesh, and they saw his glory, the glory of the only begot-*

10 ° The LORD hath made bare his <sup>A. M. 3298.</sup>  
holy arm in the eyes of all the na- <sup>B. C. 706.</sup>  
tions: and <sup>p</sup> all the ends of the earth shall see  
the salvation of our God.

11 ¶ <sup>q</sup> Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from  
thence, touch no unclean *thing*; go ye out of  
the midst of her; <sup>r</sup> be ye clean, that bear the  
vessels of the LORD.

<sup>q</sup> Chap. xlviii. 20; Jer. l. 8; li. 6, 45; Zech. ii. 6, 7; 2 Cor. vi. 17; Rev. xviii. 4. — <sup>r</sup> Lev. xxii. 2.

*ten of the Father, full of grace and truth*, John i. 14; *when they saw with their eyes, looked upon, and their hands handled the word of life; when the life was manifested, and they saw it and bore witness, and could show unto others that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto men*, 1 John i. 2. And being eye and ear witnesses of the words and works of Christ, their testimony became more certain and more valuable. Add to this, that true gospel ministers in general, and even ordinary Christians, who receive the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, (Eph. i. 17,) have a more distinct and clear view of the grace of God in Christ than the Old Testament saints could have. *When the Lord shall bring again Zion*—When God shall complete the work of bringing his church out of captivity, which was begun at the return out of Babylon, and perfected by Christ's coming into the world. Bishop Lowth, however, reads the clause, *When Jehovah returneth to Zion*; a translation which the Hebrew text will certainly bear. Thus the Chaldee: *When he shall bring back his presence to Zion*. "God is considered as having deserted his people during their captivity; and, at the restoration, as returning himself with them to Zion, his former habitation." But in a much higher degree was God present in his church, when he was *manifested in the flesh*, and they could call him, *Immanuel, God with us*.

Verses 9, 10. *Break forth into joy*—Break forth in joyful praises; *ye waste places of Jerusalem*—That is, all parts of Jerusalem, for it was all in ruins, and all parts of Judea, which lay desolate and waste during the captivity: an emblem of the desolate and barren state of the church when the Lord, for her sins, withdraws his presence from her. *For the Lord hath comforted his people, &c.*—They shall be restored to their former prosperity, and in the days of the Messiah to a far greater degree of holiness and happiness than the church of God ever before possessed. *The Lord hath made bare his holy arm*—Hath discovered and put forth his great power, which, for a long time, did not appear to be exerted in behalf of his people. *And all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God*—All nations of the world shall, with astonishment, behold the wonderful work of God; first, in bringing his people out of Babylon; and afterward, in their redemption by Christ.

Verses 11, 12. *Depart ye, go ye out from thence*—Out of Babylon into your own land, that there I

A. M. 3298. 12 For <sup>a</sup> ye shall not go out with  
B. C. 706. haste, nor go by flight: <sup>c</sup> for the  
LORD will go before you; <sup>d</sup> and the God of  
Israel will <sup>e</sup> be your rereward.  
13 ¶ Behold, <sup>f</sup> my servant shall <sup>g</sup> deal pru-

<sup>a</sup> Exod. xii. 33, 39.—<sup>b</sup> Mic. ii. 13.—<sup>c</sup> Num. x. 25; Chap. lviii. 8; Exod. xiv. 19.—<sup>d</sup> Heb. gather you up.

may meet with you, and bless you, and perform those further and greater things for you which I have promised to do there. And this invitation was the more necessary, because God foresaw that a great number of the Jews would, upon worldly considerations, continue in those foreign countries in which they were settled, and would be very backward to return to the Holy Land. *Touch no unclean thing*—Carry not along with you any of their superstitions or idolatries. *Be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord*—And especially you priests and Levites, who minister in holy things, and carry the holy vessels of the temple, keep yourselves from all pollution. *Ye shall not go out by flight*—But securely, and in triumph, being conducted by your great captain, the Lord of hosts. *The God of Israel will be your rereward*—So that none shall be able either to oppose you in your march, or to fall upon you in the rear.

Verse 13. *Behold, my servant, &c.*—This is the beginning of a new prophecy, continued from hence to the end of the next chapter, which, as has been justly observed by many, both ancient and modern interpreters, should have begun here. “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: the deliverance of the Jews from the captivity of Babylon, the deliverance of the Gentiles from their miserable state of ignorance and idolatry, and 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. 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. 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

dently, <sup>h</sup> ye shall be exalted and ex- A. M. 3298.  
tolled, and be very high. B. C. 706.

14 As many were astonished at thee; (his  
<sup>i</sup> visage was so marred more than any man,  
and his form more than the sons of men:)

<sup>h</sup> Chap. xlii. 1.—<sup>i</sup> Or, prosper, Chap. liii. 10; Jer. xxiii. 5.  
<sup>j</sup> Phil. ii. 9.—<sup>k</sup> Psa. xxii. 6, 7; Chap. liii. 2, 3.

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 been frequently thrown in. But here Babylon is at once dropped, and hardly ever comes in sight again. 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. l. 5, 6,) and obviates the offence which would be occasioned by it, by declaring the important and necessary cause of it, and foreshowing the glory which should follow it.”—Bishop Lowth. *My servant*—That it is Christ who is here spoken of, is so evident, that the Chaldee paraphrast, and other ancient, and some later Hebrew doctors, understand it directly of him, and that divers Jews have been convinced and converted to the Christian faith by the evidence of this prophecy. *Shall deal prudently*—Shall manage the affairs of his kingdom with admirable wisdom. Or, *shall prosper*, as it is in the margin; and as the word שָׁכַל, here used, is frequently rendered: which also agrees best with the following clause. And this intimation concerning the future prosperity and advancement of the Messiah, is fitly put, in the first place, to prevent those scandals which otherwise might arise from the succeeding passages, which describe his state of humiliation and deep affliction. *Shall be exalted, and extolled, and be very high*—Here are three words signifying the same thing, to express the height and glory of his exaltation.

Verses 14, 15. *As many were astonished at thee*—At thee, O my servant: were struck with wonder at his glorious endowments, at the excellence and power of his doctrine, and his miraculous works, or rather, at his humiliation. *His visage was so marred, &c.*—Christ, in respect of his birth, breeding, manner of life, and outward condition in the world, was obscure and contemptible, and therefore said to be a *worm*, and *no man*, a *reproach of men*, and *despised of the people*, Psa. xxii. 6, being exposed to all manner of affronts, indignities, and contumelies, from day to day. His countenance also was so marred with frequent watchings, fastings, and troubles, that he was thought to be nearly fifty

A. M. 3298. 15 <sup>a</sup> So shall he sprinkle many na-  
B. C. 706. tions; <sup>b</sup> the kings shall shut their  
mouths at him: for *that* <sup>c</sup> which had not been

told them shall they see; and *that* <sup>a</sup> which they had not heard shall they  
A. M. 3298. B. C. 706.  
consider.

<sup>a</sup> Ezek. xxxvi. 25; Acts ii. 33; Heb. ix. 13, 14.—<sup>b</sup> Chap. xlix.

7, 23.—<sup>c</sup> Chap. lv. 5; Rom. xv. 21; xvi. 25, 26; Eph. iii. 5, 9.

years old when he was but thirty, John viii. 57, and was further disfigured when he was buffeted, smitten on the cheek, spit upon, and crowned with thorns, and met with other cruel and spiteful usages. So, &c.—His exaltation shall be answerable to his humiliation; *shall he sprinkle many nations*—1st, With his blood, which is called *the blood of sprinkling*, Heb. xii. 24, that is, he shall justify them by his blood, as it follows, chap. liii. 11, which act is frequently expressed by *washing*, as Psa. li. 2, 7; Ezek. xvi. 9; Rev. i. 5. Or, 2d, With his *word or doctrine*; which, being often compared to rain, or water, as chap. lv. 10, 11; Psa. lxxii. 6, may be said to be *sprinkled*, as it is said to be *dropped*, Deut. xxxii. 2; Ezek. xx. 46, and xxi. 2. This sense seems to be favoured by the following words: or, 3d, With his *Spirit*, represented under the emblem

of the sprinkling of water, Ezek. xxxvi. 25–27; and frequently compared to water in the Scriptures, and, in the days of the Messiah, to be poured out on all flesh, Joel ii. 28; and particularly promised to such as should *thirst* for it, and believe in Christ, John vii. 37, 38; Rev. xxi. 6, and xxii. 17. *Kings shall shut their mouths at him*—Shall be silent before him, out of profound humility, reverence, and admiration of his wisdom, and an eager desire to hear and receive counsels and oracles from his mouth; *for that which had not been told them shall they see*—They shall hear from his mouth many excellent doctrines, which will be new and strange to them. And particularly that comfortable doctrine of the salvation of the Gentiles, which was not only new to them, but strange and incredible to the Jews themselves.

CHAPTER LIII.

*The two great things which the Spirit of Christ, in the Old Testament prophets, testified beforehand, were the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow, 1 Pet. i. 11; and that which Christ himself, when he expounded Moses and all the prophets, showed to be the drift and scope of them all, was that Christ ought to suffer, and then to enter into his glory, Luke xxiv. 26, 27. But nowhere, in all the Old Testament, are these two so plainly and fully prophesied of as here in this chapter, out of which divers passages are quoted and applied to Christ in the New Testament. We have here, (1.) The reproach of Christ's sufferings, the meanness of his appearance, the greatness of his griefs and troubles, and the prejudice thence conceived against him, 1–4. (2.) The distinguished honour of his sufferings—that he suffered for the sins of others, not for his own, 4–6, 8, 9, 11, 12; that he bore his sufferings with perfect, invincible, and exemplary patience, 7; that, in making atonement for our sins, he obeyed and honoured his Father, 6, 10; and that his sufferings issued in his own high exaltation, and the eternal redemption of innumerable multitudes of mankind, 8, 10–12.*

A. M. 3298. WHO <sup>a</sup> hath believed our <sup>1</sup> report? <sup>2</sup>  
B. C. 706. and to whom is <sup>b</sup> the arm of  
the LORD revealed?

tender plant, and as a root out of a <sup>a</sup> dry ground: <sup>d</sup> he hath no form nor  
A. M. 3298. B. C. 706.  
comeliness; and when we shall see him, *there*  
is no beauty that we should desire him.

2 For <sup>c</sup> he shall grow up before him as a

<sup>a</sup> John xii. 38; Romans x. 16.—<sup>1</sup> Or, *doctrine*.—<sup>2</sup> Hebrew, *hearing*.

<sup>b</sup> Chap. li. 9; Rom. i. 16; 1 Cor. i. 18.—<sup>c</sup> Chap. xi. 1.  
<sup>d</sup> Chap. lii. 14; Mark ix. 12.

NOTES ON CHAPTER LIII.

Verse 1. *Who hath believed our report?*—The prophet having, in the last three verses of the former chapter, made a general report concerning the great and wonderful humiliation and exaltation of the Messiah, of which he intended to discourse more largely in this chapter, thought fit, before he descended to particulars, to use this preface. *Who*, not only of the Gentiles, but even of the Jews, *will believe the truth of what I have said, and must further say? Few or none.* The generality of them will never receive, nor believe in, such a Messiah as this. Thus this place is expounded by Christ himself, John xii. 38, and by St. Paul, Rom. x. 16. And this premonition was highly

necessary, both to caution the Jews that they should not stumble at this stone, and to instruct the Gentiles that they should not be surprised nor seduced with their example. *And to whom*—Hebrew, *על כפי, because, or, in behalf of whom*, namely, to deliver them from the guilt and dominion of their sins, and other spiritual enemies; *is the arm*—That is, the power; *of the Lord revealed?*—This is only revealed, or displayed, for the deliverance of those who, with a lively and divine faith, *believe the report*: for the gospel is *the power of God unto salvation only to him that believeth*, Rom. i. 16.

Verses 2, 3. *For he shall grow up, &c.*—And the reason why the Jews will generally reject

A. M. 3298. 3 ° He is despised and rejected of  
B. C. 706.

men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

4 ¶ Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

5 But he was wounded for our transgres-

• Psa. xxii. 6; Chap. xlix. 7.—<sup>f</sup> Heb. iv. 15.—<sup>3</sup> Or, he hid as it were his face from us.—<sup>4</sup> Heb. as a hiding of faces from him, or, from us.—<sup>5</sup> John i. 10, 11.—<sup>h</sup> Matt. viii. 17; Heb. ix. 28; 1 Pet. ii. 24.

their Messiah is, because he shall not come into the world with secular pomp, but *he shall grow up, (or, spring up, out of the ground,) before him,* (before the unbelieving Jews, of whom he spake, verse 1, and that in the singular number, as here, who were witnesses of his mean original; and therefore despised him,) *as a tender plant,* (small and inconsiderable,) *and as a root, or branch,* grows out of a dry, barren ground, whose productions are generally poor and contemptible. *He hath no form, &c.*—His bodily presence and condition in the world shall be mean and despicable. *And when we see him, there is no beauty, &c.*—*When we,* that is, our people, the Jewish nation, shall look upon him, expecting to find incomparable beauty and majesty in his countenance and demeanour, we shall be altogether disappointed, and shall meet with nothing desirable in him. This the prophet speaks in the persons of the carnal and unbelieving Jews. There was a great deal of true beauty in him, the beauty of holiness, and the beauty of goodness, enough to render him *the desire of all nations*; but the far greater part of those among whom he lived and conversed saw none of this beauty; for it was spiritually discerned. Observe, reader, carnal minds see no excellence in the Lord Jesus; nothing that should induce them to desire an acquaintance with, or interest in him. Nay, he is not only not desired, but he is *despised and rejected*—As one unworthy of the company and conversation of all men; despised as a *mean man*, rejected as a *bad man*, a deceiver of the people, an impostor, a blasphemer, an associate of Satan. He was *the stone which the builders refused*; they would not have him to reign over them. *A man of sorrows*—Whose whole life was filled with, and, in a manner, made up of, a succession of sorrows and sufferings; *and acquainted with grief*—Who had constant experience of, and familiar converse with, grievous afflictions. *And we hid, &c.*—We scorned to look upon him; or we looked another way, and his sufferings were nothing to us; though *never sorrow was like unto his sorrows*.

Verses 4, 5. *Surely he hath borne our griefs*—Whereas it may seem an incredible thing, that so excellent and glorious, and so innocent and holy a person should meet with this usage, it must be known that his griefs and miseries were not laid upon him

sions, *he was bruised for our iniquities*; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

6 <sup>1</sup> All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD <sup>7</sup> hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted,

<sup>6</sup> Or, *tormented*.—<sup>1</sup> Rom. iv. 25; 1 Cor. xv. 3; 1 Pet. iii. 18.—<sup>2</sup> 1 Peter ii. 24.—<sup>3</sup> Heb. *bruise*.—<sup>4</sup> Psalm cxix. 176; 1 Pet. ii. 25.—<sup>7</sup> Heb. *hath made the iniquities of us all to meet on him*.

for his own sake, but wholly for the sake of sinful men, in whose stead he stood, and for whose sins he suffered: *yet we did esteem him*—Yet our people, the Jews, were so far from giving him the glory and praise of such astonishing condescension and compassion, that they made a most perverse construction of it; and so great was their prejudice against him, that they believed he was thus disgraced and punished, and, at last, put to death, by the just judgment of God, for his blasphemy and other manifold acts of wickedness. *But, &c.*—This was a most false and unrighteous sentence. *He was wounded*—Which word comprehends all his pains and punishments, and his death among the rest; *for our transgressions*—The prophet does not say *by*, but *for* them, or, *because of* them, namely, for the guilt of our sins, which he had voluntarily taken upon himself, and for the expiation of our sins, which was hereby purchased. *The chastisement of our peace*—Those punishments by which our peace, our reconciliation to God, was to be purchased, were laid upon him, by God's justice, with his own consent. *With his stripes we are healed*—By his sufferings we are saved from our sins, and from the dreadful effects thereof.

Verse 6. *All we*—All mankind; *like sheep*—Which are exceedingly apt to go astray, and lose themselves; *have gone astray*—From God, and from the way of truth and duty; of wisdom, piety, and virtue; of holiness and happiness. *We have turned every one to his own way*—In general, to the way of sin, which may well be called a man's own way, because sin is natural to us, inherent in us, born with us; and, in particular, to those several paths which several men choose, according to their different opinions and circumstances. *And the Lord hath laid*—Hebrew, *hath made to meet on him*, as all the rivers meet in the sea. *The iniquity of us all*—Not properly, for he knew no sin; but the punishment of iniquity, as the word *יָצַו* is frequently used. That which was due for all the sins of all mankind, which must needs be so heavy a load, that if he had not been God as well as man he must have sunk under the burden.

Verse 7. *He was oppressed*—By the intolerable weight of his sufferings, and he was afflicted—By the most pungent pain and sorrow. Or, as the Hebrew *גָּשׁוּ הָיָה עֲנִיָּה*, is rendered by Bishop Lowth

A. M. 3298. yet <sup>a</sup> he opened not his mouth: <sup>a</sup> he  
B. C. 706. is brought as a lamb to the slaughter,  
and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so  
he opened not his mouth.

8 <sup>b</sup> He was taken from prison and from judg-  
ment: and who shall declare his generation?

<sup>a</sup> Matt. xxvi. 63; xxvii. 12, 14; Mark xiv. 61; xv. 5; 1 Pet. ii. 23.—<sup>b</sup> Acts viii. 32.—<sup>c</sup> Or, he was taken away by distress and judgment; but, &c.

and others, *It was exacted, and he answered, or, was made answerable.* God's justice required satisfaction from us for our sins, which, alas! we were incapable of making, and he answered the demand; that is, became our surety, or undertook to pay our debt, or suffer the penalty of the law in our stead. *Yet he opened not his mouth*—He neither murmured against God for giving him up to suffer for other men's sins, nor reviled men for punishing him without cause, nor used apologies or endeavours to save his own life; but willingly and quietly accepted the punishment of our iniquity, manifesting, through the whole scene of his unparalleled sufferings, the most exemplary patience and meekness, and the most ready and cheerful compliance with his heavenly Father's will.

Verse 8. *He was taken from prison and from judgment*—As we do not find that imprisonment was any part of Christ's sufferings, the marginal reading seems to be preferable here. *He was taken away by distress and judgment*; that is, he was taken out of this life by oppression, violence, and a pretence of justice: or, as Bishop Lowth has it, *By an oppressive judgment he was taken off.* In Acts viii. 33, where we find this passage quoted, the reading of the LXX. is followed exactly, *Ἐν τῇ ταπεινώσει ἡ κρίσις αὐτοῦ προήθη, In his humiliation his judgment was taken away*; that is, in his state of humiliation he had no justice shown him; to take away a person's judgment, being a proverbial phrase for oppressing him. Or, as Dr. Doddridge explains it, "Jesus appeared in so humble a form, that, though Pilate was convinced of his innocence, he seemed a person of so little importance that it would not be worth while to hazard any thing to preserve him." They who prefer the translation given in our text, as Beza and many other commentators do, think the words refer to Christ's being taken, by his resurrection, from his confinement in the grave, (which they suppose to be here called a prison, as it is termed a house, Job xxx. 23, and a pit, Psalm lxix. 15.) and from the judgment, or sentence, which had been executed upon him: "agreeable to which Mr. L'Enfant renders it, *His condemnation was taken away by his very abasement*; that is, his stooping to death gave occasion to his triumph." *And who shall declare his generation*—"This is one of the many passages of the Old Testament prophecies," says Dr. Doddridge, "in which it is not so difficult to find a sense fairly applicable to Christ, as to know which to prefer of several that are so. Many ancient, as well as modern writers, have referred it to the mys-

for <sup>c</sup> he was cut off out of the land of A. M. 3298.  
the living: for the transgression of <sup>c</sup> B. C. 706.  
my people <sup>d</sup> was he stricken.

9 <sup>e</sup> And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his <sup>f</sup> death; because he had done no violence, neither was any <sup>g</sup> deceit in his mouth.

<sup>c</sup> Daniel ix. 26.—<sup>d</sup> Hebrew, was the stroke upon him. <sup>e</sup> Matt. xxvii. 57, 58, 60.—<sup>f</sup> Heb. deaths.—<sup>g</sup> 1 Pet. ii. 22; 1 John iii. 5.

tery of his Deity," his eternal generation, "or his incarnation," his miraculous conception. "But Calvin and Beza say, this was owing to their ignorance of the Hebrew, the word דור not admitting such a sense; and it is certain it very ill suits the connection with the following clause." Some understand it as referring to his not having any witnesses to appear for him and give an account of his life and character. This interpretation is preferred by Bishop Lowth, who therefore renders the clause, *And his manner of life who would declare?* Others again, among whom are Calvin and Beza, think it is as if the prophet had said, "Who can declare how long he shall live and reign, or count the numerous offspring that shall descend from him?" But, "not to say that this idea is much more clearly expressed by the prophet, verse 10, which, on this interpretation, is a tautology," it does not appear that דור, generation, and זרע, seed, are ever used as synonymous terms. The former of these words, in the Hebrew, signifies the same with a generation of men, in English, who are contemporaries; (see Gen. vii. 1; Judg. ii. 10; Psa. xc. 10, and cix. 13;) and yevea, in the LXX., by which it is here rendered, has most frequently this sense. "Therefore, I suppose," says Dr. Doddridge, "with Dr. Hammond, the sense to be, 'Who can describe the obstinate infidelity and barbarous injustice of that generation of men, among whom he appeared, and from whom he suffered such things?'" *For he was cut off*—Namely, by a violent death; *out of the land of the living*—By the wicked hands of those whom he came to save: see Acts ii. 23. *For the transgression*—Or, as some render, כפשת עמי, *By the transgression of my people was he stricken*—Hebrew, נגע לכו, *the stroke was on him*; that is, he was stricken, was crucified and slain, by or through the wickedness of the Jews. The former, however, is doubtless the sense intended, for, as the angel testified to Daniel, (chap. ix. 24, 26,) the Messiah was to be cut off, not for himself, but for the sins and salvation of mankind. And this, though asserted verses 4-6, is here repeated as a doctrine that cannot be too frequently inculcated, or too much regarded; and to prevent men's mistakes about, or stumbling at, the humiliation of Christ, as though he had suffered and died for his own sins.

Verse 9. *And he made his grave with the wicked*—And although he did not die for his own sins, but only for those of mankind, yet he was willing to die like a malefactor, or like a sinner, as all other men are, and to be put into a grave as they use to be;

A. M. 3298. 10 ¶ Yet it pleased the LORD to  
B. C. 706.

bruise him; he hath put *him* to grief:  
11 when thou shalt make his soul <sup>r</sup>an offering  
for sin, he shall see *his seed*, <sup>s</sup>he shall prolong  
*his days*, and <sup>t</sup>the pleasure of the LORD shall  
prosper in his hand.

11 He shall see of the travail of his soul, *and*  
shall be satisfied: <sup>u</sup>by his knowledge shall <sup>x</sup>my

<sup>11</sup> Or, *when his soul shall make an offering.*—<sup>r</sup> 2 Cor. v. 21; 1 Pet. ii. 24.—<sup>s</sup> Rom. vi. 9.—<sup>t</sup> Eph. i. 5, 9; 2 Thess. i. 11. <sup>u</sup> John xvii. 3; 2 Pet. i. 3.—<sup>x</sup> 1 John ii. 1.—<sup>y</sup> Chap. xlii. 1; xlix. 3.

which was a further degree of his humiliation. He saith, *he made his grave*, because this was Christ's own act, and he willingly yielded up himself to death and burial. And that which follows, *with the wicked*, does not denote the sameness of place, as if he should be buried in the same grave with other malefactors, but the sameness of condition. But the words may be rendered, *A grave was appointed for him with the wicked; but he was with the rich at his death.* Or, as Bishop Lowth reads it, *His grave was appointed with the wicked; but with the rich man was his tomb.* See his notes. "As our Lord was crucified between two thieves, it was doubtless intended he should be buried with them. 'Thus his grave was appointed with the wicked;' but Joseph of Arimathea came and asked for his body, and Pilate, convinced that he had committed no crime, readily granted Joseph's request. Thus 'he was with the rich at his death,' that is, till his resurrection: and this took place contrary to the intention of his enemies, *because he had done no violence, &c.*, for otherwise Joseph would scarcely have requested Pilate, and probably Pilate would not have consented, to deliver up the body of a crucified malefactor."—Scott. But this latter clause may be connected with the following verse, and rendered, *Although he had done no violence, &c., yet it pleased the Lord, &c.* In this light it is considered by Bishop Lowth and many others.

Verses 10, 11. *It pleased the Lord to bruise him*—Although he was perfectly innocent, it pleased God, for other just and wise reasons, to expose him to sufferings and death. *He hath put him to grief*—His God and Father *spared him not*, though he was his only and beloved Son, but *delivered him up for us all*, to ignominy and torture, *delivered him by his determinate counsel and foreknowledge*, (Acts ii. 23,) into the power of those whose wicked hands he knew would execute upon him every species of cruelty and barbarity. *When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin*—When thou, O God, shalt have made thy Son a sacrifice, by giving him up to death for the atonement of men's sins. His *soul* is here put for his life, or for himself, or his whole human nature, which was sacrificed, his soul being oppressed with a sense of the wrath of God due to our sins, his body crucified, and his soul and body separated by death. Or, the words, אָשַׁם אֶת־נַפְשׁוֹ אֶת־נַפְשׁוֹ, may be rendered, *when, or, if his soul shall*

righteous <sup>y</sup> servant <sup>z</sup> justify many; A. M. 3298.  
<sup>a</sup> for he shall bear their iniquities. B. C. 706.

12 <sup>b</sup>Therefore will I divide him *a portion*  
with the great, <sup>c</sup>and he shall divide the spoil  
with the strong; because he hath poured out  
his soul unto death: and he was <sup>d</sup>numbered with  
the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many,  
and <sup>e</sup>made intercession for the transgressors.

<sup>a</sup> Rom. v. 18, 19.—<sup>b</sup> Verses 4, 5.—<sup>c</sup> Psa. ii. 8; Phil. ii. 9.—<sup>d</sup> Colossians ii. 15.—<sup>e</sup> Mark xv. 28; Luke xxii. 37. <sup>f</sup> Luke xxiii. 34; Rom. viii. 34; Heb. vii. 25; ix. 24; 1 John ii. 1.

*make an offering for sin*, or, *a propitiatory sacrifice*: whereby it may be implied, that he did not lay down his life by compulsion, but willingly. *He shall see his seed*—His death shall be glorious to himself and highly beneficial to others, for he shall have a numerous seed of believers, reconciled to God, and saved by his death. *He shall prolong his days*—He shall be raised to immortal life, and live and reign with God for ever. *The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand*—God's gracious decree, for the salvation of mankind, shall be effectually carried on by his ministry and mediation. *He shall see of the travail of his soul*—He shall enjoy the comfortable and blessed fruit of all his hard labours and grievous sufferings: *and shall be satisfied*—He shall esteem his own and his Father's glory, and the salvation of his people, an abundant recompense. *By his knowledge*—By the knowledge of, or an acquaintance with himself, that knowledge which is accompanied with faith, love, and obedience to him; *shall my righteous servant justify many*—Shall acquit them that believe in and obey him from the guilt of all their sins, and save them from the dreadful consequences thereof. *Justification* is here, as in most other places of the Scriptures, one or two excepted, opposed to *condemnation*: and Christ is said to justify sinners, because he does it meritoriously, procuring justification for us by his sacrifice; as God the Father is commonly said to justify authoritatively, because he accepted the price paid by Christ for that blessing, and the pronouncing of the sentence of absolution is referred to him in the gospel dispensation. *For he shall bear their iniquities*—For he shall satisfy the justice and law of God for them, by bearing the punishment due to their sins; and therefore, on the principles of reason and justice, they must be acquitted, otherwise the same debt would be twice required and paid.

Verse 12. *Therefore will I*—Namely, God the Father; *divide him a portion*—This word *portion* (though there is nothing for it in the Hebrew) is properly supplied out of the next clause, where a word, which answers to it, rendered *the spoil*, is expressed; *with the great*—Or, *among the great*; such as the great and mighty potentates of the world use to have after a short combat and a glorious victory. Though he be a very mean and obscure person, as to his outward condition in the world, yet he shall attain to a greater pitch of glory than the

greatest monarchs enjoy. *He shall divide the spoil with the strong*—The same thing repeated in other words. The sense of both clauses is, I will give him great and happy success in his undertaking: he shall conquer all his enemies, and *lead captivity captive*; and he shall set up and establish his kingdom among and over all the kingdoms of the world: see Eph. i. 20, &c.; and Phil. ii. 8, 9. *Because he hath poured out his soul unto death*—Because he willingly laid down his life in obedience to God's command, and in order to the redemption of mankind. *And*

*he was numbered with the transgressors*—He was willing, for God's glory, and for man's salvation, to be reproached and punished, like a malefactor, in the same manner and place with them, and between two of them, Mark xv. 27, 28. *And made intercession for the transgressors*—He prayed upon earth for all sinners, and particularly for those that crucified him, and in heaven he still intercedes for them, by a legal demand of those good things which he purchased by the sacrifice of himself, which, though past, he continually represents to his Father as if it were present.

CHAPTER LIV.

*The great mystery of the obedience and passion of the Messiah having been set forth in the last chapter, the fruits and consequences of that obedience and passion, with respect to the church, are related in this, for the comfort of true believers. It was there promised him that he should see his seed, and justify many, and that the pleasure of the Lord should prosper in his hand; and here testimony is borne to the accomplishment of these promises. It is here represented, (1.) That though the beginnings of the Christian Church were small, yet it should be greatly enlarged by the accession of many of the Gentiles to it, who had been wholly destitute of church privileges, 1-5. (2.) That though sometimes God might seem to withdraw from her, and suspend the tokens of his favour, yet he would return in mercy, and would not be wroth or contend with her any more, 6-10. (3.) That though for a while she was in sorrow, and under oppression, yet she should at length be advanced to greater honour and splendour than ever, 11, 12. (4.) That knowledge, righteousness, and peace should flourish and prevail, 13, 14. (5.) That all attempts against the church should be baffled, and she should be preserved from the malice of her enemies, 14-17.*

A. M. 3298. B. C. 706. **SING**, \*O barren, thou *that* didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou *that* didst not travail with child: for <sup>b</sup> more *are* the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the LORD.

\* Zeph. iii. 14; Gal. iv. 27.—<sup>b</sup> 1 Sam. ii. 5.

NOTES ON CHAPTER LIV.

Verse 1. *Sing, O barren*—The prophet, having largely discoursed of the sufferings of Christ, and of the blessed fruits thereof, among which one particularly promised was, that he should have a numerous seed that should believe on him; and here, foreseeing the accomplishment of this glorious promise, he breaks forth into this song of triumph, addressing his speech to the church, or spouse of God, or Christ, as is manifest from the following words, and especially from verse 5, and from Gal. iv. 27, where it is so expounded. Some, indeed, understand this chapter of the flourishing condition of the Jewish Church and state after their return from Babylon; but the magnificent promises here following do so vastly exceed their condition at that time, that it must necessarily be referred to the times of the gospel, in which all that is here said was, or will be, remarkably fulfilled. And therefore, as the foregoing chapter directly and literally speaks of Christ, so doth this of the church of Christ, or of the kingdom of the Messiah, of whom the ancient Hebrew doctors understood it. Now this church, consisting at first of the Jews, and afterward of the Gentiles, incorporated with them into the same body, he calls *barren*,

2 \* Enlarge the place of thy tent, A. M. 3298. and let them stretch forth the curtains B. C. 706. of thy habitations; spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes; 3 For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; <sup>d</sup> and thy seed shall

<sup>c</sup> Chap. xlix. 19, 20.—<sup>d</sup> Chap. lv. 5; lxi. 9.

because she had been so, comparatively speaking, before and until the coming of Christ; few sincere converts having been brought forth to God by her ministry, either of Jewish or Gentile race. *For more are the children of the desolate, &c.*—The Gentile world, or the church of the Gentiles, which in the times of the Old Testament was desolate, having neither husband nor children, doth now, under the gospel, bring forth unto God a far more numerous progeny than the church of the Jews, which had been married to God for many ages, until, by her apostasy from him, and from her Messiah, she provoked him to put her away.

Verses 2, 3. *Enlarge the place of thy tent*—That it may be capable of receiving the Gentiles, who shall flock to thee in great numbers, and desire to associate themselves with thee. *And let them*—Those to whom that work belongs; *stretch forth the curtains, &c.*—The meaning is, the curtains must and shall be stretched out. *Spare not*—Fear not lest thou shouldst prepare more room than will be occupied; for very large accessions are to be expected. *And strengthen thy stakes*—That they may be able to support the great weight which the tent, thus enlarged, shall be upon them. *For thou*

A. E. 3298. inherit the Gentiles, and make the  
B. C. 706. desolate cities to be inhabited.

4 ¶ Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more.

5 \* For thy Maker *is* thy husband; The LORD of hosts *is* his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel: † The God of the whole earth shall he be called.

6 For the LORD <sup>b</sup> hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a

\* Jer. iii. 14.—† Luke i. 32.—‡ Zech. xiv. 9; Rom. iii. 29.  
§ Chap. lxii. 4.—¶ Psa. xxx. 5; Chap. xxvi. 20; lx. 10; 2 Cor.

*shalt break forth, &c.*—Thou shalt bring forth a multitude of children; for the word פָּרַץ, here rendered *break forth*, is commonly used of any great and extraordinary propagation of living creatures, whether beasts or men; *on the right hand and on the left*—On every side, in all parts of the world. Or, thy children shall be so numerous that they can no longer be contained within narrow bounds. *And thy seed*—Thy spiritual seed, the members of the New Testament church, and especially the apostles and other ministers of Christ; *shall inherit the Gentiles*—Shall bring the Gentile world to the obedience of the faith; *and make the desolate cities to be inhabited*—Shall cause those cities and countries which, in a spiritual sense, were desolate, being destitute of all good, to be filled with members of the church.

Verses 4, 5. *Thou shalt not be ashamed*—As formerly, of the straitness of thy borders, and the fewness of thy children. *Thou shalt forget the reproach of thy youth*—Thy barrenness in former times: so great shall be thy fertility and felicity, that it shall cause thee to forget thy former unfruitfulness and misery. *And shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood*—That time and state when thou wast like a widow, disconsolate and desolate, deprived or forsaken of her husband, and having few or no children. *For thy Maker*—He who made thee out of nothing, and therefore can fulfil all these promises, how improbable soever their fulfilment may appear; *is thy husband*—Will own thee for his spouse, and give thee proof of his conjugal affection. *The Lord of hosts*—Who hath the sovereign command of all men and creatures, and therefore can subdue the Gentiles to thee, and can make thee to increase and multiply in so prodigious a measure, even in thy old age, notwithstanding thy barrenness in the days of thy youth, of which he speaks in the foregoing verse. *The God of the whole earth shall he be called*—The God and Father of all nations. Whereas formerly he was called the God of Israel only, and the Gentiles had no special relation to him, the time is now coming when he shall be called the

wife of youth, when thou wast re- A. M. 3298.  
fused, saith thy God. B. C. 706.

7 <sup>i</sup> For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee.

8 In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; <sup>k</sup> but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer.

9 For this *is as* the waters of <sup>l</sup>Noah unto me: for *as* I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee.

iv. 17.—<sup>k</sup> Chap. lv. 3; Jer. xxxi. 3.—<sup>l</sup> Gen. viii. 21; ix. 11; Chap. lv. 11; Jer. xxxi. 35, 36.

God of the Gentiles also, having admitted them into the same covenant relation to himself with the Jews, and the partition wall between Jews and Gentiles being broken down. See Zech. xiv. 9; Rom. iii. 29; Eph. ii. 11–16.

Verses 6–8. *For the Lord hath called thee*—To return and come again to him; *as a woman forsaken*—When thou wast like a woman forsaken by her husband, who had given her a bill of divorce; *and grieved in spirit*—For the loss of her husband's favour and society, and for the reproach attending it; *and a wife of youth*—As affectionately as a husband recalleth his wife whom he married in her and his own youth, whom, though he might on some provocation put away, yet he soon repents of doing it, and his affection for her reviving, he invites her to return to him; *when thou wast refused*—Though for a time thou wast refused and rejected by him; *saith thy God*—Jehovah, who will again show himself to be thy God, and will renew his covenant with thee. *For a small moment*—For the space of some few years, as seventy years in Babylon, and some such intervals, which may well be called a *small moment*, in comparison of God's *everlasting kindness*, mentioned in the next verse: *have I forsaken thee*—Withdrawn my favour and help from thee, and left thee in thine enemies' hands. *But with great mercies*—Such as are very precious, and of long continuance; *will I gather thee*—From all the places where thou art dispersed, from all parts of the world. *In a little wrath I hid my face from thee*—I removed the means and pledges of my presence and kindness; *but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy, &c.*—With kindness to thee, and thy seed, through all succeeding generations, in time, and to all eternity.

Verses 9, 10. *For this is as the waters of Noah*—This covenant of grace and peace made with thee shall be as certain and perpetual as that which I made with Noah, that there should never be another flood of waters to drown the world. *So have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee*—Name-

A. M. 3298. 10 For <sup>m</sup> the mountains shall de-  
B. C. 706. part, and the hills be removed; <sup>n</sup> but  
my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither  
shall the covenant of my peace be removed,  
saith the LORD that hath mercy on thee.

11 ¶ O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and  
not comforted! behold, I will lay thy stones with  
with ° fair colours, and lay thy foundations with  
sapphires.

12 And I will make thy windows of  
agate, and thy gates of carbuncles, and

<sup>m</sup> Psa. xlvi. 2; Chap. li. 6; Matt. v. 18.—<sup>n</sup> Psa. lxxxix. 33, 34.  
° 1 Chron. xxix. 2; Rev. xxi. 18, &c.

ly, so as I have been, or so as to forsake thee utterly.  
*For the mountains shall depart, &c.*—The mount-  
ains and hills shall sooner depart from their places  
than my kindness shall depart from thee. Nay, the  
time will come when all the mountains shall de-  
part, and all the hills be removed, and even the  
whole earth, and all the works that are therein, shall  
be burned up, but then the covenant of peace between  
God and his church shall continue in the everlasting  
happiness of all the true and spiritual members of  
it. God will not cast off the Christian Church, as  
he cast off the Church of the Jews; the new cove-  
nant being established upon better and surer pro-  
mises than the old; see Heb. viii. 6, 7. *Saith the  
Lord that hath mercy on thee*—Who acts thus to-  
ward thee, not for thy merits, but through his own  
grace and mercy.

Verses 11, 12. *O thou afflicted, &c.*—O thou, my  
church, which hast been in a most afflicted and com-  
fortless condition; behold, I will lay thy stones with  
*fair colours, &c.*—I will make thee exceedingly  
beautiful and pure, stable and glorious. For, as  
Bishop Lowth justly observes, “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 in-  
tended 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, (Tob.  
xiii. 16, 17.) 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.’” It must be well observed, however, that  
it is not any external pomp or worldly glory that is  
intended to be set forth in these verses, as is evident  
from many parts of Scripture, which assure us that  
Christ’s kingdom is of another nature, and that the  
outward condition of God’s church is, and, for the  
most part, will be, mean and afflicted in this world:  
but it is of a spiritual beauty and glory that these  
things are spoken, consisting in a plentiful effusion  
of excellent gifts, graces, and comforts upon the  
church, which, however, will be followed with eter-

all thy borders of pleasant stones. A. M. 3298.

13 And all thy children shall be <sup>p</sup> taught of the LORD; and <sup>q</sup> great shall be  
B. C. 706. the peace of thy children.

14 In righteousness shalt thou be established:  
thou shalt be far from oppression; for thou shalt  
not fear: and from terror; for it shall not come  
near thee.

15 ¶ Behold, they shall surely gather together,  
but not by me; whosoever shall gather together  
against thee shall fall for thy sake.

<sup>p</sup> Chap. xi. 9; Jer. xxxi. 34; John vi. 45; 1 Cor. ii. 10; 1 Thess.  
iv. 9; 1 John ii. 20.—<sup>q</sup> Psa. cxix. 165.

nal glory in heaven. We have a similar description  
of the church’s glory Rev. xxi. 11, &c. *I will  
make thy windows of agates*—Hebrew, כרכר, “lapis  
pretiosus quasi scintillans dictus,” says Buxtorf; a  
precious stone, so called from its sparkling. One  
kind of these stones, according to Pliny, was trans-  
parent like glass. But some render the word  
*crystal*; and the LXX., and some others of the an-  
cients, translate it *jasper*. The truth is, the proper  
signification of the Hebrew names of precious stones  
is not perfectly known to the Jews themselves. It  
may suffice us to know that this was some very  
clear, transparent, and probably sparkling precious  
stone. *And all thy borders*—The utmost parts or  
walls, of pleasant stones. The church is here evi-  
dently compared to a building, whose foundation,  
pavement, gates, and windows are all named.

Verses 13, 14. *All thy children shall be taught of  
the Lord*—The church’s children, being born of  
God, shall be taught of God, and that not only out-  
wardly, by his word, but inwardly, by his Spirit.  
Our Lord, who quotes this passage, John vi. 45, ap-  
plies it to gospel grace, and represents it as having  
its accomplishment in all those that are brought  
savingly to believe in him. *And great shall be the  
peace of thy children*—1st, Inward peace, arising  
from clear discoveries of God’s love, and his recon-  
ciliation to us, and wrought by the Spirit of adop-  
tion, which is more abundantly given to believers  
under the gospel than under the law. 2d, Outward  
peace, safety, and happiness, which is more fully  
promised in the following verses, and which God,  
when he sees fit, will confer upon his church. *In  
righteousness shalt thou be established*—This king-  
dom shall be set up and established, not by injustice,  
fraud, or tyranny, as other kingdoms frequently are,  
but upon a righteous foundation, and by the exer-  
cise of righteousness and holiness, which is the  
glory and felicity of any society. *Thou shalt be  
far from oppression*—Either by thine own govern-  
ors, or by foreign powers. Those that have op-  
pressed thee shall be removed; those that would  
oppress thee shall be restrained; and therefore thou  
*shalt not fear*—Thou shalt neither have any just  
cause of fear, nor be given up to the torment of fear  
without cause.

Verses 15-17. *Behold, they shall gather together*—

A. M. 3298. 16 Behold, I have created the smith  
B. C. 706. that bloweth the coals in the fire, and  
that bringeth forth an instrument for his work ;  
and I have created the waster to destroy.

17 No weapon that is formed against thee

† Chap. xlv.

It is true, some will combine, and make an attempt against thee. *But not by me*—As they will do this without any such commission from me as Sennacherib and Nebuchadnezzar had, so they shall not have my help in it, without which all their endeavours will be in vain. *Whosoever shall gather together*—To fight against, or persecute thee; *shall fall for thy sake*—Through that respect and love which I bear to thee. Or, *before thee*, as the Hebrew may be rendered, so as thine eyes shall behold it.

*Behold, I have created the smith, &c.*—Both the smith that makes warlike instruments, and the soldier that uses them, are my creatures, and totally

shall prosper; and every tongue *that* A. M. 3298.  
shall rise against thee in judgment B. C. 706.  
thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of  
the servants of the LORD, † and their righteousness is of me, saith the LORD.

24, 25.

at my command, and therefore they cannot hurt you without my leave. *I have created the waster, &c.*—To destroy only whom and when I please. *No weapon formed against thee shall prosper*—As they cannot do any thing against thee without my leave, so I assure thee I will not suffer them really to injure thee; *and every tongue, &c., shall thou condemn*—And I will deliver thee, not only from the fury of war, but also from the strife of tongues. *This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord*—This blessed condition is the portion allotted them by me. *And their righteousness*—The reward of their righteousness; *is of me*—I give it, and I will continue it to them.

## CHAPTER LV.

*The prophet having discoursed largely of the humiliation and sufferings, and of the exaltation and glory of Christ, chap. liii., and of the great enlargement of his church, through the accession of the Gentiles to it; here, (1.) Gives a general invitation, in the name of Jehovah, to all descriptions of persons, however unworthy, to come and partake of gospel blessings, 1. (2.) He enforces the invitation by powerful arguments, 2-4. (3.) Promises that this invitation would be attended with success among the Gentiles, 5. (4.) Exhorts to repentance and reformation, giving assurance of mercy and forgiveness thereupon, 6-9. (5.) All this is ratified, and the efficacy of God's word is asserted, 10, 11. (6.) The joy and exultation attending the exodus out of Egypt, or the deliverance of the Jewish captives from Babylon, are alluded to, as emblematical of the still greater gladness and felicity manifested by the first converts to Christianity, 12, 13.*

A. M. 3298. HO, † every one that thirsteth, come  
B. C. 706. ye to the waters, and he that  
hath no money; † come ye, buy, and eat; yea,  
come, buy wine and milk without money and  
without price.

† John iv. 14; vii. 37; Rev. xxi. 6; xxii. 17.

### NOTES ON CHAPTER LV.

**Verse 1.** *Ho, every one*—Not only Jews, but Gentiles; *that thirsteth*—For the grace of God, and the blessings of the gospel; that desires them sincerely and earnestly, is active and diligent in the pursuit of them, and cannot be satisfied without enjoying them; *come ye to the waters*—Where you may drink and be refreshed: come and partake of the graces and comforts of God's Spirit, frequently compared to water in the Scriptures, and here designed by the other metaphorical expressions which occur in the next clause. *And he that hath no money*—Even those who are most poor in the world, and those who are most worthless and wicked, if they do but thirst, shall be welcome. *Come ye, buy and eat*—

2 Wherefore do ye † spend money for A. M. 3298.  
*that which is not bread?* and your B. C. 706.  
labour for *that which* satisfieth not? hearken  
diligently unto me, and eat ye *that which is*  
good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.

† Matt. xiii. 41, 46; Rev. iii. 18.—† Heb. weigh.

That is, come and receive that which is freely offered to you, and which you shall as freely partake of, and enjoy as your own, as if you had bought and paid the full price for it. *Buy wine and milk*—Here put for all sorts of provisions, which are also to be understood of spiritual and gospel blessings, as is evident from the following words: as if he had said, These blessings shall not only refresh you, as water refreshes the thirsty, but they shall cheer you like wine, and nourish you like milk.

**Verses 2, 3.** *Wherefore do ye spend money*—All your time, and strength, and cost; *for that which is not bread*—For those things which can never nourish or satisfy you, such as worldly goods or pleasures. *Hearken diligently unto me*—Unto my doctrine and

A. M. 3298. 3 Incline your ear, and ° come  
B. C. 706. unto me: hear, and your soul shall  
live; <sup>d</sup> and I will make an everlasting cove-  
nant with you, *even* the ° sure mercies of  
David.

4 Behold, I have given him *for* <sup>f</sup> a witness  
to the people, <sup>g</sup> a leader and commander to the  
people.

5 <sup>h</sup> Behold, thou shalt call a nation *that* thou  
knowest not, <sup>i</sup> and nations *that* knew not thee

<sup>c</sup> Matt. xi. 28.—<sup>d</sup> Chap. liv. 8; lxi. 8; Jer. xxxii. 40.  
<sup>e</sup> 2 Sam. vii. 8; Psa. lxxxix. 28; Acts xiii. 34.—<sup>f</sup> John xviii.  
37; Rev. i. 5.—<sup>g</sup> Jer. xxx. 9; Ezek. xxxiv. 23; Hos. iii. 5;  
Dan. ix. 25.—<sup>h</sup> Chap. lii. 15; Eph. ii. 11, 12.—<sup>i</sup> Chap. lx. 5.

counsel; and eat *ye that which is good*—And not  
such things as, though they be called and seem to be  
good, yet really are evil and most pernicious to men.  
*And let your soul delight itself, &c.*—In this pleasant  
food of gospel enjoyments. *Hear, and your soul  
shall live*—Hearken attentively and obediently to  
my counsels, and your immortal souls shall not only  
be saved from perishing eternally, but shall be eter-  
nally blessed and happy. *And I will make an ever-  
lasting covenant with you*—That everlasting cove-  
nant of grace and peace which I made with Abra-  
ham and his seed. *The sure mercies of David*—  
Even that covenant which was made first with  
Abraham, and then with David, concerning those  
glorious and sure blessings which I have promised  
to my people; one, and the chief, of which was the  
giving Christ to die for their sins. David here seems  
to be put for Christ the son of David.

Verses 4, 5. *Behold, I have given him*—I have  
already appointed, and will, in due time, actually  
give the David last mentioned, even Christ, *for a  
witness*—To declare the will of God concerning the  
duty and salvation of men; to bear witness to the  
truth, John xviii. 37; to confirm God's promises,  
and, among others, those which respect the calling  
of the Gentiles; to be a witness of both parts of that  
covenant made between God and men; *to the people*  
—Not only to my people of Israel, but to all people,  
Gentiles no less than Jews, as is evident from the  
following verse, from chap. xlix. 6, and divers other  
places; *a leader and commander to the people*—A  
sovereign prince, to give them laws and exact their  
obedience, and in case thereof to give them protec-  
tion and rewards. *Behold thou*—O Messiah, of  
whom he spake verse 4, and to whom he now sud-  
denly turns his speech; *shalt call*—Namely, to thy-  
self, and to the knowledge of thy truth, and thereby  
unto an acquaintance and fellowship with God; *a  
nation that thou knowest not*—Or, rather, *didst not  
know*, namely, with that special knowledge which  
implies approbation. *And nations that knew not  
thee*—That had but little knowledge of the living  
and true God, and no knowledge of the Messiah;  
*shall run unto thee*—Upon thy call, shall readily and  
speedily come to thee, to receive instructions from  
thee, and to follow thee whithersoever thou shalt

shall run unto thee, because of the A. M. 3298.  
LORD thy God, and for the Holy One B. C. 706.  
of Israel; <sup>k</sup> for he hath glorified thee.

6 ¶ <sup>l</sup> Seek ye the LORD while he may be  
found, call ye upon him while he is near:

7 <sup>m</sup> Let the wicked forsake his way, and <sup>n</sup> the  
unrighteous man <sup>o</sup> his thoughts: and let him  
return unto the LORD, ° and he will have mercy  
upon him; and to our God, for <sup>p</sup> he will abun-  
dantly pardon.

<sup>k</sup> Chap. lx. 9; Acts iii. 13.—<sup>l</sup> Psa. xxxii. 6; Matt. v. 25; xxv.  
11; John vii. 34; viii. 21; 2 Cor. vi. 1, 2; Heb. iii. 13.—<sup>m</sup> Ch.  
i. 16.—<sup>n</sup> Heb. *the man of iniquity*.—<sup>o</sup> Zech. viii. 17.—<sup>p</sup> Psa.  
cxxx. 7; Jer. iii. 12.—<sup>q</sup> Heb. *he will multiply to pardon*.

lead them; *because of the Lord thy God*—Because  
the Lord shall, by many evident and unquestionable  
tokens, manifest himself to be thy God, and thee to  
be his Son and faithful servant. *And for the Holy  
One of Israel*—Because the God of Israel, the only  
true God, will highly honour thee by his singular  
presence with thee; by his almighty power accom-  
panying thy word, and making it effectual for the  
conversion of an innumerable company, both of  
Jews and Gentiles; and by confirming thy word  
with illustrious signs and miracles, and particularly  
by thy resurrection and glorious ascension. These,  
and other similar considerations, were the arguments  
which convinced the Gentiles that Christ was the  
true Messiah, and that the religion which he taught  
was the true religion.

Verses 6, 7. *Seek ye the Lord, &c.*—Having dis-  
coursed of the office and work of Christ, and showed  
that he should call people and nations to himself and  
to God, the prophet now endeavours to persuade the  
people to hearken to his call, and to *seek the Lord*;  
that is, to labour to get the knowledge of God's will,  
and to obtain his grace and favour, neither of which  
could be obtained save in and through Christ. And  
this exhortation is general, like that verse 1, intend-  
ed for all nations, both Jews and Gentiles, implying  
that both of them had lost the favour and knowledge  
of God, and were gone astray from him. *While he  
may be found*—In this day of grace, while he offers  
mercy and reconciliation, which he will not always  
do: see Prov. i. 24, &c.; Luke xix. 44; 2 Cor. vi. 2.  
*Call upon him while he is near*—Near to you by his  
gracious presence and his offers in his ordinances,  
and ready and desirous to receive you to mercy upon  
the following conditions. *Let the wicked*—Any  
wicked man, either Jew or Gentile; *forsake his way*  
—His evil or wicked way; his sinful course or man-  
ner of life; called *his way*, as being natural, cus-  
tomary, and dear to him, and in opposition to God's  
good way. *Let him cease to do evil*, Isa. i. 16. Ob-  
serve well, reader, men's seeking God in the use of  
outward means, and even the calling upon him in  
prayer, will do them no fasting good, unless this be  
attended with the reformation of their lives; *and  
the unrighteous man his thoughts*—The sinful de-  
sires, intentions, and purposes of his mind. Thus

A. M. 3298. 8 ¶ For my thoughts *are* not your  
B. C. 706. thoughts, neither *are* your ways my  
ways, saith the LORD.

9 ¶ For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

10 For *as* the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater :

11 ¶ So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth : it shall not return unto me void,

¶ 2 Sam. vii. 19.—¶ Psa. ciii. 11.—¶ Deut. xxxii. 2.—¶ Ch. liv. 9.—¶ Chap. xxxv. 10; liv. 13, 14.—¶ Psa. xcvi. 12;

he strikes at the root of all sinful actions, and shows that the heart must be changed as well as the outward conduct. *And let him return unto the Lord*—As he departed from God by sin, so let him return to him by sincere repentance and faith, productive of new obedience. By this he signifies, that a mere abstinence from wicked courses is not sufficient, without the exercise of the contrary graces and virtues. *And to our God*—To the God of Israel, who is, and has shown himself to be, a most merciful and gracious God; *for he will abundantly pardon*—He uses so many words and arguments to encourage and lead them to repentance, because the persons here principally addressed had been guilty of idolatry, apostacy, and many other acts of gross wickedness, which he knew, when they came to themselves, and to have a serious sense of their sins, and of the just and holy nature and law of God, would be an insupportable burden to their awakened consciences, and would make them ready to conclude that God would not pardon such horrible delinquencies; in consequence of which they would rather be driven from God, than induced to draw near to him.

Verse 8. *For my thoughts are not your thoughts, &c.*—My disposition and way differ vastly from yours. If any man injure you, especially if he do it greatly and frequently, you are slow and backward to forgive him. But I am ready to forgive all true penitents, how many, and great, and numberless soever their sins be; and my promises of mercy and pardon shall be infallibly made good to them: and therefore you need not fear to come to me, or question but you shall find mercy and acceptance with me.

Verses 10, 11. *For as the rain cometh down*—To water and refresh the earth, and render it fruitful; *and the snow from heaven*—Which, in its season, contributes to the fertility of the earth, as well as the rain; *and returneth not thither*—Namely, without effect, or immediately: it is not drawn up again as soon as it comes down, but abides for a convenient time upon the earth, until it do that work for which it is sent. *That it may give seed and*

but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper *in the thing* whereto I sent it.

12 ¶ For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall *break forth* before you into singing, and *all* the trees of the field shall clap *their* hands.

13 ¶ Instead of *the* thorn shall come up the fir-tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle-tree: and it shall be to the LORD *for* a name, for an everlasting sign *that* shall not be cut off.

xcviii. 8; Chap. xiv. 8; xxxv. 1, 2; xlii. 11.—¶ 1 Chron. xvi. 33.—¶ Chap. xli. 19.—¶ Mic. vii. 4.—¶ Jer. xiii. 11.

*bread, &c.*—That it may bring forth store of bread-corn, both for men's present supplies, and for seed for the next year. *So shall my word be*—My promises concerning the pardon of the greatest sinners, and the redemption and salvation of mankind. *It shall not return unto me void*—Without success. It is an allusion to an ambassador who returns without despatching the business for which he was sent. *It shall accomplish that which I please*—It shall have the desired effect; *and it shall prosper, &c.*—It shall certainly be fulfilled in the manner before expressed.

Verses 12, 13 *For, or therefore, you shall go out with joy*—Ye shall be released from your bondage, because God hath promised, and will effect it. He alludes to their going out of Egypt, or to their release from Babylon, which deliverances were emblematical of the redemption of mankind, by Christ, from the power of sin and Satan. *And be led forth*—Or *led onward*, as Bishop Lowth renders תובילן, be conducted by the gracious and powerful presence of God, as the Israelites were in the wilderness; *in peace*—Safely and triumphantly, without fear of being retaken and brought back into slavery by your enemies. *The mountains and the hills shall break forth, &c.*—There shall be a great and general rejoicing at your deliverance. For “these are highly poetical images, to express a happy state, attended with joy and exultation.” *Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree*—“These likewise 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.’”—Bishop Lowth. In other words, The church shall be delivered from pernicious men and things, and replenished with sincere and serious believers, and with all sorts of divine graces and blessings. *And it shall be to the Lord for a*

name—This wonderful change shall bring much honour to that God by whom it is wrought. *For an everlasting sign*—For a monument, or evident and glorious token of God's infinite power, faithfulness,

and love to his people, unto all succeeding generations; *that shall not be cut off*—Which shall never be abolished, but shall always live and flourish in the minds and mouths of men.

## CHAPTER LVI.

The former part of this chapter seems to be closely connected with the preceding. After the exceeding great and precious promises of gospel grace there contained, typified by temporal deliverances, the prophet here, in the name of God, (1.) Gives a solemn charge to Jews and Gentiles to make conscience of their duty to God and man, as they hoped to have the benefit of these promises, 1, 2. (2.) Encourages strangers of the Gentiles to unite themselves to the Jewish, or, rather, to the Christian Church, by assuring them that they should receive the blessings of the covenant of grace, 3-8. (3.) Exhibits a high charge against the rulers of the church, as ignorant, unfaithful, covetous, luxurious, and profane: and calls their enemies to come together, and destroy them, 9-12.

A. M. 3299. B. C. 706. **THUS** saith the LORD, Keep ye <sup>1</sup> judgment, and do justice: <sup>a</sup> for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed.

<sup>2</sup> Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; <sup>b</sup> that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil.

Or, equity.—<sup>a</sup> Chap. xlvi. 13; Matt. iii. 2; iv. 17; Rom. iii. 11, 12.—<sup>b</sup> Chap. lviii. 13.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER LVI.

Verse 1. *Thus saith the Lord*—This verse, and the rest of this chapter, until verse 9, seems to belong to the foregoing prophecy. From the consideration of God's promises there made to the believing Jews and Gentiles, he here urges them to perform their duty to him. *Keep ye judgment and do justice*—This phrase elsewhere generally signifies the duties which one man owes to another; but here it seems rather to signify the duties which men owe to God, as it is explained in the following verses. Accordingly, it might with propriety have been rendered, *practise righteousness*. *For my salvation is near to come*—That eminent salvation by the Messiah, so largely promised and insisted upon in the foregoing chapters. The Scriptures, it must be observed, often speak of things that are at a great distance as if they were present or at hand, Hab. ii. 3; James v. 8, 9; Rev. xxii. 20. *And my righteousness to be revealed*—What in the former clause he called *salvation*, he here calls *righteousness*, as being an evident demonstration of God's righteousness, both in the fulfilment of his promises, and in the punishment of sin, as also in the salvation of sinners, upon just and honourable terms.

Verse 2. *Blessed is the man*—Any, or every man, not only Jews but Gentiles, or *strangers*, as it is explained in the following verses. *That doeth this*—That practiseth the judgment and justice, or the righteousness, mentioned verse 1. *That layeth hold on it*—Or, *that holdeth it fast*, as *כה יחזיק* may be rendered; that is, resolute and constant in so doing;

<sup>3</sup> ¶ Neither let <sup>c</sup> the son of the A. M. 3299. B. C. 706. stranger, that hath joined himself to the LORD, speak, saying, The LORD hath utterly separated me from his people: neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I am a dry tree.

<sup>4</sup> For thus saith the LORD unto the eunuchs that keep my sabbaths, and choose *the things* that please me, and take hold of my covenant;

<sup>c</sup> Deut. xxiii. 1, 2, 3; Acts viii. 27; x. 1, 2, 34; xvii. 4; xviii. 7; 1 Pet. i. 1.

that not only begins well, but perseveres in well-doing: *that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it*—That doth not profane or defile the sabbath, either by forbidden practices, or by the neglect of commanded duties. The sabbath seems to be here put, as sacrifice is elsewhere, for the whole worship of God. *And keepeth his hand from doing any evil*—That conscientiously abstains from all evil and immoral works.

Verses 3-5. *Neither let the son of the stranger*—The Gentile, who by birth is a stranger to God, and to the commonwealth of Israel. *That hath joined himself to the Lord*—That hath turned from dumb idols to the living God, and to true religion; *speak, saying, The Lord hath separated me, &c.*—For such shall be as acceptable to me as the Israelites themselves, and the partition wall between Jews and Gentiles shall be taken down, and repentance and remission of sins shall be preached and offered to men of all nations. *Neither let the eunuch say*—Who is here joined with the stranger, because he was forbidden to *enter into the congregation of the Lord*, Deut. xxiii. 1. Under these two instances he understands all those, who, either by birth, or by any ceremonial pollution, were excluded from church privileges, and so he throws open the door to all true believers. *Behold, I am a dry tree*—A fruitless tree, accursed by God with the curse of barrenness. *For thus saith the Lord unto the eunuchs, &c.*—That observe my commands, not by custom, or through force or fear, but by free choice, with love to them, and delight in them. *And take hold of my covenant*

A. M. 3298. 5 Even unto them will I give in  
B. C. 706. <sup>d</sup> my house, and within my walls, a  
place <sup>e</sup> and a name better than of sons and of  
daughters: I will give them an everlasting  
name, that shall not be cut off.

6 Also the sons of the stranger, that join  
themselves to the LORD, to serve him, and to  
love the name of the LORD, to be his servants,  
every one that keepeth the sabbath from pol-  
luting it, and taketh hold of my covenant;

7 Even them will I <sup>f</sup> bring to my holy moun-

<sup>d</sup> 1 Tim. iii. 15.—<sup>e</sup> John i. 12; 1 John iii. 1.—<sup>f</sup> Chap. ii. 2;  
1 Pet. i. 1, 2.—<sup>g</sup> Rom. xii. 1; Heb. xiii. 15; 1 Pet. ii. 5.  
<sup>h</sup> Matt. xxi. 13; Mark xi. 17; Luke xix. 46.

—That steadfastly keep the conditions of my cove-  
nant. *Even unto them will I give in my house,*  
&c.—In my temple, an emblem of the Christian  
church; *a place, &c., better than of sons and daugh-  
ters*—A far greater blessing and honour than that of  
having a posterity, even my favour, and my Spirit,  
and eternal felicity.

Verses 6, 7. *The sons of the stranger that join  
themselves to the Lord*—That with purpose of heart  
cleave unto him, as is said Acts xi. 23. *To love the  
Lord, to be his servants*—To serve him out of love to  
him and to his worship. *Them will I bring to my  
holy mountain*—To my house which stood upon  
mount Zion, including mount Moriah; *and make  
them joyful*—By accepting their services, and com-  
forting their hearts with the sense of my love; *in  
my house of prayer*—In my temple, in and toward  
which prayers are daily made unto me. *Their sar-  
rifices shall be accepted upon mine altar*—They shall  
have as free access to my house and altar as the  
Jews themselves, and their services shall be as ac-  
ceptable to me. Evangelical worship is here de-  
scribed under such expressions as agreed to the wor-  
ship of God which was then in use. *My house  
shall be called a house of prayer for all people*—  
Jews and Gentiles shall have equal freedom to my  
house, and shall there call upon my name. “The  
temple was originally designed for strangers as well  
as Jews, as a place to offer up their prayers to the  
Divine Majesty; which is sufficiently plain from the  
prayer of Solomon, at the dedication of it, though  
the number of proselytes was small till the time of  
the second temple. But there can be no doubt that  
this verse alludes particularly to the conversion of  
the Gentiles. This truth could not be told the Jew-  
ish people otherwise than by using terms taken from  
rites familiar to them, unless the nature of the Chris-  
tian dispensation had been previously explained; a  
matter evidently unfit for their information, when  
they were yet to live so long under the Jewish law.  
For though the prophets speak of the little value of  
their regard to the ceremonial law, they easily make  
themselves understood, that they mean, when it was  
observed without the moral law; which they de-  
scribe in the purity and perfection of the gospel.  
So admirable was this conduct, that while it hid the

tain, and make them joyful in my A. M. 3298.  
house of prayer: <sup>g</sup> their burnt-offerings B. C. 706.  
and their sacrifices *shall be accepted upon  
mine altar*; for <sup>h</sup> my house shall be called a  
house of prayer <sup>i</sup> for all people.

8 The LORD God <sup>k</sup> which gathereth the out-  
casts of Israel saith, <sup>l</sup> Yet will I gather *others*  
to him, <sup>m</sup> besides those that are gathered unto  
him.

9 ¶ <sup>n</sup> All ye beasts of the field, come to de-  
vour; *yea*, all ye beasts in the forest.

<sup>k</sup> Mal. i. 11.—<sup>l</sup> Psa. cxlvii. 2; Chap. xi. 12.—<sup>m</sup> John x.  
16; Eph. i. 10; ii. 14, 15, 16.—<sup>n</sup> Heb. to his gathered.  
<sup>o</sup> Jer. xii. 9.

future dispensation it prepared men for it.”—Bishop  
Warburton’s *Div. Leg.* Upon the whole, the reader  
may observe, “that the principal scope of this para-  
graph is to teach that all the privileges of the cove-  
nant of grace should be common to all, without dis-  
tinction of nation, state, or condition; that God would  
distribute to all believers, according to the measure of  
their grace, equal gifts, as our Lord hath taught in  
the parable of the labourers in the vineyard, Matt.  
xx.”

Verse 8. *The Lord which gathereth the outcasts*  
—Who will gather to himself, and bring into their  
own land, those poor Israelites which are or shall be  
cast out of it, and dispersed in divers parts of the  
world; *saith, Yet will I gather others to him*—As  
there are some few Gentiles whom I have made pro-  
selytes and added to the Jewish Church, so I will  
make another and far more comprehensive gather-  
ing of the Gentiles, whom I will bring into the same  
church with the Jews, making both Jews and Gen-  
tiles one flock under one shepherd.

Verse 9. *All ye beasts of the field, come to devour*  
—“Here,” says Bishop Lowth, “manifestly begins  
a new section. The prophet, in the foregoing chap-  
ters, having comforted the faithful with many great  
promises of God’s favour to be extended to them, in  
the restoration of their ruined state, and of the en-  
largement 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 teach-  
ers, of the idolaters and hypocrites, who would still  
draw his judgments upon the nation; probably hav-  
ing in view the destruction of their city and polity  
by the Chaldeans, and perhaps by the Romans.”  
Vitranga, however, thinks the enemies of the Christian  
Church may be here pointed out, such as the Goths,  
Vandals, Turks, and others, who committed great  
devastations upon it after it declined from the first  
faith, and became extremely corrupt; as is particu-  
larly specified in the next verses. It seems very evi-  
dent that this is a prediction, either of Israel’s de-  
struction, or that of the fallen Christian Church, by  
their cruel enemies, who are often represented in  
Scripture under the emblem of ravenous beasts.

A. M. 3298. 10 His watchmen are <sup>a</sup> blind: they  
B. C. 706. are all ignorant, <sup>o</sup> they are all dumb  
dogs, they cannot bark; <sup>3</sup> sleeping, lying down,  
loving to slumber.

11 Yea, they are <sup>4</sup> greedy <sup>p</sup> dogs which <sup>5</sup> can<sup>q</sup>  
never have enough, and they are shepherds

<sup>a</sup> Matt. xv. 14; xxiii. 16.—<sup>o</sup> Phil. iii. 2.—<sup>3</sup> Or, *dreaming*,  
or, *talking in their sleep*.—<sup>4</sup> Heb. *strong of appetite*.—<sup>p</sup> Mic.  
iii. 11.

Thus Jeremiah, chap. xii. 7-9, *I have forsaken my house, I have deserted my heritage; I have given the dearly beloved of my soul into the hand of her enemies. Come ye, assemble all the beasts of the field, come to devour.*

Verse 10. *His—Israel's, watchmen are blind—*The priests, prophets, and other teachers; he mentions only the teachers, because ignorance was most shameful in them; but hereby he supposes the gross ignorance of the people. *They are all ignorant—*Of God's word and will, and of their own and the people's duty, and of the true Messiah, and the nature of his kingdom. *They cannot bark—*They are also slothful and negligent in instructing the people, and do not faithfully reprove them for their sins, nor warn them of their dangers, nor endeavour to keep them from errors and corruptions in doctrine, worship, and conversation, as they ought to do: *sleeping, lying down, &c.—*Minding their own ease and safety more than the people's benefit.

that cannot understand: they all look A. M. 3298.  
to their own way, every one for his B. C. 706.  
gain, from his quarter.

12 Come ye, *say they*, I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink; <sup>r</sup> and to-morrow shall be as this day, *and much more abundant.*

<sup>a</sup> Hebrew, *know not to be satisfied*.—<sup>q</sup> Ezekiel xxxiv. 2, 3.  
<sup>r</sup> Psa. x. 6; Prov. xxiii. 35; Chap. xxiii. 13; Luke xii. 19;  
1 Cor. xv. 32.

Verse 11. *Yea, they are greedy dogs—*Insatiably covetous: *shepherds that cannot understand—*Hebrew, *that know not to understand*; that do not care, or love, or desire either to understand the word of God themselves, or to make the people understand it. *They all look to their own way—*They regard neither God's glory nor the people's good, but only the satisfaction of their own base desires. *Every one for his gain from his quarter—*In their several places and stations, as they have opportunity.

Verse 12. *Come ye, say they—*Unto their brethren, fellow-priests, or other jolly companions. *We will fill ourselves—*We will drink, not only to delight, but even to drunkenness, as the word signifies. *And to-morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant—*Which shows their dreadful security and contempt of God, and of his judgments, and their abandoning of all care of their own or the people's souls.

CHAPTER LVII.

In this chapter we have, (1,) A charge exhibited against the Jews, and probably also against apostate Christians, for their general unconcern at the death of the righteous, who were removed to heaven from the impending calamities, 1, 2; and for their divination, whoredom, profane derision of God and his people, hypocrisy, falsehood, treachery, and propensity to idolatries, and their alliances with heathen neighbours, 3-12. (2,) An intimation of God's gracious purposes to pity their forlorn case, return their captivity, and re-establish their prosperity; but never to give peace to the wicked, 13-21.

A. M. 3298. THE righteous perisheth, and no  
B. C. 706. man layeth it to heart: and  
<sup>1</sup> merciful <sup>a</sup> men are taken away, <sup>b</sup> none

<sup>1</sup> Heb. *men of kindness, or, godliness*.—<sup>a</sup> Psa. xii. 1; Mic. vii. 2.

NOTES ON CHAPTER LVII.

Verses 1, 2. These two verses "contain a kind of prelude to the distressful scene which is opened immediately after: for the prophet, designing to describe the melancholy state of the *adulterous church*, to be chastised by the severe judgments of God, beholds, as it were in an ecstasy, the few pious and good men yet remaining in the church gradually falling off, and taken away, either by an immature or violent death: while there were but few who laid this matter to heart, and observed it as a presage of the judgment threatening the church. This stupidity he sadly deplores; immediately subjoining, how-

considering that the righteous is A. M. 3298.  
taken away <sup>2</sup> from the evil to B. C. 706.  
*come.*

<sup>b</sup> 1 Kings xiv. 13; 2 Kings xxii. 20.—<sup>3</sup> Or, *from that which is evil.*

ever, an alleviation, to show that this complaint pertained not to the deceased, as having attained a happier lot, and as blessed in this respect, that they were taken away from the evils and calamities of their times."—Vitringa. The following short paraphrase on the words will render their sense more apparent. *The righteous perisheth—*Just and holy men, who are the pillars of the place and state in which they live. *And no man layeth it to heart—*Few or none of the people are duly affected with this severe stroke and sign of God's displeasure. Thus he shows that the corruption was general in the people no less than in the priests. *And merciful*

A. M. 3298. 2 He shall <sup>3</sup> enter into peace: they  
B. C. 706. shall rest in <sup>e</sup> their beds, *each one*  
walking <sup>4</sup> in his uprightness.

3 ¶ But draw near hither, <sup>4</sup> ye sons of the sorceress, the seed of the adulterer and the whore.

4 Against whom do ye sport yourselves? Against whom make ye a wide mouth, and draw out the tongue? *are ye not children of transgression, a seed of falsehood;*

5 Inflaming yourselves <sup>5</sup> with idols <sup>6</sup> under every

<sup>3</sup> Or, *go in peace*, Luke ii. 29.—<sup>c</sup> 2 Chron. xvi. 14.—<sup>4</sup> Or, *before him*.—<sup>d</sup> Matt. xvi. 4.—<sup>e</sup> Or, *among the oaks*, Chap. i. 29.  
<sup>6</sup> 2 Kings xvi. 4; xvii. 10; Jer. ii. 20.

*men*—Hebrew, אַנְשֵׁי חַסְדִּים, *men of benignity*, or *beneficence*, the same whom he before called *righteous*: those whose practice it was, not only to exercise piety and justice, but also mercy and kindness; *none considering*—None reflecting within himself, and laying it to heart; *that the righteous is taken away from the evil*—That dreadful calamities are coming on the church and nation, and that the righteous are taken away before they come. *He shall enter into peace*—The righteous man shall be received into rest and safety, where he shall be out of the reach of the approaching miseries. *They*—The merciful men; *shall rest in their beds*—In their graves, not unfitly called their *beds*, or sleeping-places, death being commonly called *sleep* in Scripture; *each one walking in his uprightness*—That walked, that is, lived, in a sincere and faithful discharge of his duties to God and men. Vitringa thinks “the completion of this prophecy is to be sought in the latter end of the ninth, and in the following centuries; when the papal power greatly prevailed, and the corruption of the church was as great as the persecutions and troubles of the pious were many.”

Verses 3, 4. *But draw near hither, &c.*—“The prophet proceeds to exhibit the church, totally corrupt as it was, the good men being extinct or dispersed; so that they who remained of the pure seed of the church lay hid in solitary places, while the body of the church appeared like a dead carcass; not the true, but the idolatrous church.” Thus Vitringa, who understands this paragraph as describing the state of the church in the dark ages of popery. It seems, however, by many of the expressions which the prophet uses, that he is rather giving a description of the corrupt state of the Jewish Church, before the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans. *Draw near hither*—To God’s tribunal, to receive your sentence; *ye sons of the sorceress*—Not by propagation, but by imitation, those being frequently called men’s sons that follow their example: *the seed of the adulterer, &c.*—Not the genuine children of Abraham, as you pretend and boast yourselves to be; your dispositions being far more suitable to a spurious brood than to Abraham’s seed. *Against whom do you sport yourselves?*—Consider who it is that you mock and scoff at when you deride God’s prophets, (see chap. xxviii. 14, 22,) and know that it

green tree, <sup>f</sup> slaying the children in the  
valleys under the clefts of the rocks? A. M. 3299.  
B. C. 706.

6 Among the smooth stones of the stream is thy portion; they, they *are thy lot*: even to them hast thou poured a drink-offering, thou hast offered a meat-offering. Should I receive comfort in these?

7 <sup>g</sup> Upon a lofty and high mountain hast thou set <sup>h</sup> thy bed: even thither wentest thou up to offer sacrifice.

<sup>f</sup> Lev. xviii. 21; xx. 2; 2 Kings xvi. 3; xxiii. 10; Jer. vii. 31; Ezek. xvi. 20; xx. 26.—<sup>g</sup> Ezek. xvi. 16, 25.—<sup>h</sup> Ezek. xxiii. 41.

is not so much men that you insult, as God, whose cause they plead, and in whose name they speak. *Are ye not a seed of falsehood*—A generation of liars, whose practices contradict your professions, who deal deceitfully both with God and man?

Verses 5, 6. *Inflaming yourselves with idols*—Hebrew, הִנְחַמְתֶּם, *being inflamed*, or *growing hot*, after idols, as Dr. Waterland renders it. Lusting after them, and *mad upon them*, as the phrase is, Jer. l. 38. Fervent, both in making and in worshipping them, as was observed chap. xlv. 12. *Under every green tree*—Wherever you see an idol erected, which was commonly done in groves, or under great and shady trees, which defended the worshippers from the heat of the sun, and were supposed to strike them with a kind of sacred awe and reverence. *Slaying the children*—In the way of sacrifice to your idols, after the manner of the barbarous heathen; *in the valleys*—Or, beside the brooks which run in the valleys; which was most commodious for such bloody work. He seems to allude to the valley of Hinnom, in which these cruelties were practised, Jer. vii. 31. *Under the clefts of the rocks*—Which they choose for shade, or those dark vaults in rocks, which were convenient for idolatrous uses. *Among the smooth stones, &c., is thy portion*—Thou hast chosen for thy portion those idols, which were either made of those smooth stones, or were worshipped by the sides of brooks or rivers, where such smooth stones commonly lie. *They are thy lot*—Thou hast forsaken me, and chosen idols. *Thou hast offered a meat-offering*—For the devil is God’s ape, and idolaters use the same rites and offerings in the worship of idols, which God prescribed in his own worship. *Should I receive comfort in these*—Should I be pleased with such a people, and with such actions? “The Jews were extremely addicted to the practice of many superstitious and idolatrous rites, which the prophet here inveighs against. Of the worship of huge stones consecrated, there are many testimonies of the ancients. They were called *βαυλοὶ* and *βαυλῖα*, probably from the stone which Jacob erected at Beth-el, pouring oil upon the top of it. The practice was very common in different ages and places.”—Bishop Lowth, who mentions divers instances of this foolish superstition.

Verses 7, 8. *Upon a lofty and high mountain*—In

A. M. 3298. 8 Behind the doors also and the posts  
B. C. 706. hast thou set up thy remembrance: for  
thou hast discovered *thyself to another* than  
me, and art gone up; thou hast enlarged thy  
bed, and <sup>6</sup> made thee a covenant with them;  
<sup>1</sup> thou lovedst their bed <sup>7</sup> where thou sawest it.

9 And <sup>8</sup> thou <sup>k</sup> wentest to the king with ointment, and didst increase thy perfumes, and didst send thy messengers far off, and didst debase *thyself even unto hell*.

<sup>6</sup> Or, *heaved it for thyself larger than theirs.*—<sup>1</sup> Ezek. xvi. 26, 28; xxiii. 2-20.—<sup>7</sup> Or, *thou providest room.*—<sup>8</sup> Or, *thou respectest the king.*

high places, which were much used for religious worship, both by the Israelites and heathen: *hast thou set thy bed*—Thine altar, as appears from the sacrifice mentioned in the next clause, where thou didst commit spiritual whoredom with idols. *Behind the doors also and the posts*—Behind the posts of the doors of thy house; *hast thou set up thy remembrance*—That is, the images of their tutelary gods, or some monuments or tokens, placed there as memorials of them, in direct opposition to the law of God, which commanded them to write upon the door-posts of their houses, and upon their gates, the words of his law, Deut. vi. 9, and xi. 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, Deut. xxvii. 15. *For thou hast discovered thyself, &c.*—“The prophet describes their idolatry under the metaphor of a woman’s being false to her husband’s bed, verse 3. So he tells them that they had committed spiritual adultery, when they went up to the high places to sacrifice, verse 7. That they had multiplied their idolatries, as an unchaste woman does her lovers; that they had broken their covenant with God, whom they had acknowledged to be their lord and husband, and made a new contract with idols to serve them.”—Lowth. *Thou lovedst their bed where thou sawest it*—No sooner didst thou see the heathen idols, but thou wast enamoured with them, and didst fall down and worship them, like a lewd woman, who is inflamed with lust toward almost every man she sees.

Verse 9. *Thou wentest to the king, &c.*—That is, the king of Assyria or Egypt, to whom the Israelites were very prone to seek, and trust, and send presents. Hosea reproaches the Israelites for the same practice: *They make a covenant with Assyria, and oil is carried into Egypt*, Hosea xii. 1. Thus the prophet passes from their idolatry to another sin, even to their carnal confidence in heathen princes, for which they are often severely reprovèd. These two sins indeed were commonly joined together; for they easily received idolatry from those kings whose help they desired. *With ointment*—With precious ointment, particularly with balm, which was of great price, was a commodity peculiar to those

10 Thou art wearied in the greatness of thy way; <sup>1</sup> yet saidst thou not, There is no hope: thou hast found the <sup>9</sup> life of thy hand; therefore thou wast not grieved.

11 And <sup>m</sup> of whom hast thou been afraid or feared, that thou hast lied, and hast not remembered me, nor laid *it* to thy heart? <sup>n</sup> have not I held my peace even of old, and thou fearest me not?

<sup>k</sup> Chap. xxx. 6; Ezek. xvi. 33; xxiii. 16; Hos. vii. 11; xii. 1.—<sup>l</sup> Jer. ii. 25.—<sup>9</sup> Or, *living.*—<sup>m</sup> Chapter li. 12, 13. <sup>n</sup> Psa. l. 21.

parts, and sometimes sent as a present, Gen. xliiii. 11. *And didst increase thy perfumes*—Didst send great quantities thereof to them, to procure their aid. *Didst send thy messengers far off*—Into Assyria, which was far from Judea, or into Egypt. *And didst debase thyself, &c.*—Thou wast willing to submit to the basest terms to procure their aid. “It is well known, that in all parts of the East, whoever visits a great person must carry him a present. ‘It is accounted uncivil,’ says Maundrell, 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.’”—Bishop Lowth. According to the interpretation of this part of the prophecy, adopted by Vitringa, *the king*, in this verse, must mean the head of mystical Babylon, the pope, to whom indeed the particulars here very aptly pertain, as they who are acquainted with the history of that antichristian ruler will easily discern. See Revelation xviii. 13.

Verse 10. *Thou art wearied with the greatness of thy way*—Thou hast not eased, or relieved, but only tired thyself with all thy tedious journeys and laborious endeavours. *Yet sayest thou not, There is no hope*—And yet thou didst not perceive that thy labour was lost, and that thy case was not mended, but made more desperate by these practices. *Thou hast found the life of thy hand*—Thou hast sometimes found success in these ways; or, thou falsely supposest that thy hand is strengthened thereby. *Therefore thou wast not grieved*—Therefore thou didst not repent of thy sin and folly herein, but didst persist and applaud thyself in such courses.

Verses 11-14. *Of whom hast thou been afraid, &c.*—And what, or who are they, the fear of whom drives thee to these wicked and desperate practices? Are they not weak and mortal creatures, such as wholly depend upon me, and can do nothing without me? The fear of my displeasure ought, in all reason, to outweigh all thy other fears and apprehensions, and deter thee from breaking that covenant whereby thou art engaged to me. *That thou hast lied*—That thou hast dealt thus perfidiously with me, and sought for such foreign assistances contrary to my command. *And hast not remembered me*—

A. M. 3298. 12 I will declare thy righteousness, B. C. 706. and thy works; for they shall not profit thee.

13 ¶ When thou criest, let thy companies deliver thee; but the wind shall carry them all away; vanity shall take them: but he that putteth his trust in me shall possess the land, and shall inherit my holy mountain;

14 And shall say, ° Cast ye up, cast ye up, prepare the way, take up the stumbling-block out of the way of my people.

15 For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, ° whose name is Holy; ° I

° Chap. xl. 3; lxii. 10.—° Job vi. 10; Luke i. 49.—° Psa. lxxviii. 4; Zech. ii. 13.—° Psa. xxxiv. 18; li. 17; cxxxviii. 6; Chap. lxvi. 2.—° Psa. cxlvii. 3; Chap. lxi. 1.

Hast forgotten all those great things which I have done for thee, and all those promises which I have made to thee. *Nor laid it to thy heart*—Or, *nor set me upon thy heart*: hast not seriously and affectionately considered what I am, how all-sufficient, faithful, and gracious: for then thou wouldest not have distrusted or disobeyed me. *Have I not held my peace, &c.*—The Bishops' Bible, published under Queen Elizabeth, translates the clause thus: *Is it not because I held my peace, and that of a long time, therefore thou fearest me not?* Sinners take encouragement to continue in sin, from God's patience and long-suffering. *I will declare thy righteousness*—I will no longer be silent, but "will show thee thy deserts, and give thee a view of thy deeds, which then will appear quite of another sort than what thy own self-conceit makes thee believe them to be." *For they shall not profit thee*—These actions shall be of no real advantage, but quite the contrary. *When thou criest*—Namely, unto me for deliverance; *let thy companies deliver thee*—Expect it, not from me, whom thou hast forsaken and despised, but from those foreign troops, to which thou hast sought and trusted for succour. *But the wind shall carry them all away*—They shall be so far from saving thee, that they shall not be able to deliver themselves; but shall be carried away suddenly and violently by the blast of mine anger. *Vanity shall take them*—Their endeavours to help thee shall be vain and fruitless. *But he that putteth his trust in me*—Those that still depend upon me, and make use of none of those indirect means to preserve themselves; *shall possess the land*—Shall be preserved in, or restored to, their own land, or shall have temporal blessings as far as will be good for them; *and shall inherit my holy mountain*—Shall enjoy my favour and presence in my temple: shall be blessed with the privileges of the church on earth, and brought at length to the joys of heaven. *And shall say*—Hebrew, *and he shall say*: or, *and one shall say*: God shall raise up one who shall say, with authority and efficacy, *Cast ye up, &c.*—Make causeways, where it is needful, for the safe and easy passage of

dwelt in the high and holy place, A. M. 3298. B. C. 706. ° with him also *that is* of a contrite and humble spirit, ° to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

16 ° For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth: for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls ° which I have made.

17 For the iniquity of ° his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him: ° I hid me, and was wroth, ° and he went on ° frowardly in the way of his heart.

° Psa. lxxxv. 5; ciii. 9; Mic. vii. 18.—° Num. xvi. 22; Job xxxiv. 14; Heb. xii. 9.—° Jer. vi. 13.—° Chap. viii. 17; xlv. 15.—° Chap. ix. 13.—° Heb. turning away.

my people, and remove all things which may hinder them in their return.

Verses 15, 16. *For thus saith the high and lofty One*—The omnipotent and supreme Ruler of the universe; *that inhabiteth eternity*—Who is from everlasting to everlasting, without beginning of days, or end of life, or change of time; *who only hath immortality*, hath it of himself, and that constantly; *who inhabiteth it*, and cannot be dispossessed of it; *whose name is Holy*—Who is perfectly and essentially holy in his nature, his works, his words, and his ways; and therefore both can and will deliver his church and people, as he has promised to do. *I dwell in the high and holy place; with him also, &c.*—Although my throne is in the highest heavens, where nothing impure can have place, yet I do not disdain graciously to visit, and familiarly converse with, those sinners of mankind, whose spirits are broken by affliction, and humbled under a sense of their sins, for which they were afflicted; which doubtless was the case with many of the Jews in the Babylonish captivity: whom, therefore, he here implies, that God would pity and deliver out of their distresses, as also all others in similar circumstances. *To revive the spirit of the humble*—To support and comfort them amidst their afflictions and troubles, of whatever kind. *For I will not contend for ever*—I will not proceed to the utmost severity with sinful men. *For the spirit should fail before me*—For then their spirits would sink and die under my stroke, and I should do nothing else but destroy the work of my own hands: therefore I consider their infirmity, and spare them. See Psa. lxxviii. 38, 39; and ciii. 9–14; which passages Bishop Lowth thinks contain the best and easiest explication of this clause.

Verse 17. *For the iniquity of his covetousness*—The covetousness of the Jewish people, (here addressed as one man,) who were eminently guilty of this sin before the Babylonish captivity, as is expressly affirmed, Jer. vi. 13; and viii. 10; and they were still more addicted to it in the time of Christ, and previous to the destruction of their city by the

A. M. 3293. 18 I have seen his ways, and <sup>a</sup> will  
B. C. 706. heal him : I will lead him also,  
and restore comforts unto him and to <sup>b</sup> his  
mourners.

19 I create <sup>c</sup> the fruit of the lips ; Peace, peace  
<sup>d</sup> to him that is far off, and to him that is near,

<sup>a</sup> Jer. iii. 22.—<sup>b</sup> Ch. lxi. 2.—<sup>c</sup> Heb. xiii. 15.—<sup>d</sup> Acts ii. 39 ;

Romans ; Christ himself testifying, that the greatest professors of sanctity among them *devoured widows' houses, and, for a pretence, made long prayers*. But this sin is not mentioned exclusively of others, but so as to comprehend all those sins for which God *was wroth, and smote them* : covetousness, however, joined with a froward going on in the way of their own hearts, has been the characteristic sin of that people, in all ages, since the overturning of their commonwealth by the Romans. If Vitringa's exposition of this chapter be adopted, this verse must be understood of the avarice of the Church of Rome, manifested by her enormous exactions, and her infamous traffic in indulgences, dispensations, and a variety of equally abominable practices, which, for many ages, have disgraced that church in the view of all intelligent and pious Christians. *I hid me, and was wroth*—I withdrew my favour and help from him, and left him in great calamities. *And he went on frowardly*—Yet he was not reformed by corrections, but in his distresses trespassed more and more, and obstinately persisted in those sinful courses which were most pleasing to the lusts of his own corrupt heart.

Verse 18. *I have seen his ways*—I have taken notice of those evil ways in which he seems resolved to walk, and that he is neither reformed by mercies nor judgments ; *and will heal him*—Or rather, *yet I will heal him* : although I might justly destroy him, and leave him to perish in his own ways, yet, of my mere mercy, and for my own name's sake, I will pity this people, turn them from their sins, and bring them out of their troubles. Which promise was partly fulfilled when God restored them from Babylon, and will be more perfectly and evidently accomplished, when he shall convert them to the Christian faith in the latter days. *And restore comforts unto him*—Comforts as great as his troubles had been ; *and*—Or rather, *to wit ; to his mourners*—To those who are humbled under God's hand, and

saith the LORD ; and I will heal him. A. M. 3298  
20 <sup>e</sup> But the wicked *are like the* <sup>f</sup>  
B. C. 706. troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters  
cast up mire and dirt.

21 <sup>g</sup> *There is* no peace, saith my God, to the  
wicked.

Eph. ii. 17.—<sup>e</sup> Job xv. 20 ; Prov. iv. 16.—<sup>f</sup> Chap. xlvi. 22.

*that mourn in Zion* for their own and other people's sins, chap. lxi. 2, 3 ; and Ezek. ix. 4 ; and for the calamities of God's church and people, chap. lxi. 10. The mourners here spoken of, Vitringa thinks, mean those true penitents, who lamented the scandals and offences of professing Christians in their times, under whom they grievously suffered, such as the Waldenses, the Lollards, and others who, by the mercy of God, were rescued from the errors and corruptions of the fallen church, when the light of the Reformation began to dawn.

Verses 19-21. *I create*—I will, by my almighty power, in a wonderful manner produce ; *the fruit of the lips*—Praise and thanksgiving, termed the fruit of the lips, Hos. xiv. 2 ; Heb. xiii. 15. God creates this fruit of the lips, by giving new subjects and causes of thanksgiving, by his mercies conferred on those among his people, who acknowledge and bewail their transgressions, and return to him. *Peace, peace, &c.*—Here we have the great subject of thanksgiving, reconciliation with God, pardon and peace 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, Eph. ii. 13, 17. See also Acts ii. 39. The doubling of the word signifies the certainty and excellence of this peace. But though this peace be freely offered to all without exception, yet all will not partake of it, for *the wicked are like the troubled sea, &c.*—Their minds are restless, being perpetually hurried with their own lusts and passions, and with guilt, and the dread of divine vengeance. *There is no peace to the wicked*—Though they may have as great a share of outward prosperity as the best men have, yet they have no share in this inward, spiritual, and everlasting peace. The forty-eighth chapter ends with the same declaration ; to express the exclusion of the impenitent and unbelieving from the benefit of the foregoing promises.

## CHAPTER LVIII.

The prophet, having, in the preceding chapter, marked and censured divers miscarriages and corrupt practices of the apostate church, whether Jewish or Christian, is here commanded of God to proceed on the same subject, and still more fully to set their sins in order before them, 1. He therefore, (1.) *Expostulates with them, in the name of God, on their hypocrisy, self-righteousness, and pride in their religious exercises, and especially in their fasting, 2, 3. (2.) Charges them with having unholy and malicious ends in view in that duty, and making it a cloak for their wickedness, 4, 5. (3.) He instructs them how to keep fasts aright, 6, 7. (4.) Makes great and precious promises to those who should so keep them, 8-12. (5.) Makes the like promises to those who should sanctify the sabbath aright, 13, 14.*

A. M. 3298. **C**RY <sup>1</sup> aloud, spare not, lift up thy  
B. C. 706. voice like a trumpet, and show  
my people their transgression, and the house of  
Jacob their sins.

2 Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of their God: they ask of me the ordinances of justice: they take delight in approaching to God.

3 <sup>a</sup> Wherefore have we fasted, *say they*, and thou seest not? *wherefore* have we <sup>b</sup> afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge? Be-

<sup>1</sup> Heb. *with the throat*.—<sup>a</sup> Mal. iii. 14.—<sup>b</sup> Lev. xvi. 29, 31; xxiii. 27.—<sup>2</sup> Or, *things wherewith ye grieve others*.—<sup>3</sup> Heb. *griefs*.—<sup>c</sup> 1 Kings xxi. 9, 12.

NOTES ON CHAPTER LVIII.

Verse 1. *Cry aloud*—Be faithful, plain, and earnest in thy addresses, remonstrances, reproofs, and exhortations to and among my people; and *spare not*—Forbear not to speak whatsoever I command thee for their conviction and reformation. *Lift up thy voice like a trumpet*—Be not afraid to exert thy voice and spend thy strength in this work. Give an alarm which all may hear. *Show my people their transgressions*—Set their sins, all their sins, before them, in a true point of view, and with all their aggravations, especially the iniquities of their holy things, and the hypocrisy of their religious services, (verse 2,) that they may be brought to true repentance for them.

Verse 2. *Yet they seek me daily*—They cover all their wickedness with a profession of religion, from time to time resorting to my house, pretending to ask counsel of me, and to desire and seek my favour and blessing. *And delight to know my ways*—That is, either, 1st, They seem to delight to know them, men being often said in Scripture to be or do that which they seem or profess to be or do: or, 2d, They really delight; for there are many men who take some pleasure in knowing God's will and word, and yet do not conform their lives to them. *As a nation that did righteousness*—As if they really were a righteous people; and *forsook not the ordinance, &c.*—As if they were not guilty of any apostasy from God, or neglect of, or disobedience to, his precepts. *They ask of me the ordinances of justice*—As if they desired and resolved to observe them. *They delight*—In appearance or reality; *in approaching unto God*—In coming to my temple to pray to me, receive instruction, or offer sacrifices.

Verse 3. *Wherefore have we fasted, &c.*—They complain of hard usage from God; that although they prayed, and fasted, and observed the rest of his ordinances, all which are comprehended under the title of *fasting*, all their labour was lost, and God neither delivered nor regarded them. *Wherefore have we afflicted our soul*—Defrauded our appetites with fasting, of which this phrase is used, Lev. xvi. 29, and xxiii. 27, 29. *Behold, in the day of your fast*—In those solemn days of fasting which I have

hold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your labours.<sup>3</sup> A. M. 3298. B. C. 706.

4 ° Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness: <sup>4</sup> ye shall not fast as *ye do this day*, to make your voice to be heard on high.

5 Is it <sup>d</sup> such a fast that I have chosen? ° <sup>a</sup> <sup>5</sup> day for a man to afflict his soul? *is it* to bow down his head as a bulrush, and <sup>f</sup> to spread sackcloth and ashes *under him*? wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the LORD?

<sup>4</sup> Or, *ye fast not as this day*.—<sup>d</sup> Zech. vii. 5.—<sup>e</sup> Lev. xvi. 29.—<sup>5</sup> Or, *to afflict his soul for a day*.—<sup>f</sup> Esth. iv. 3; Job ii. 8; Dan. ix. 3; Jonah iii. 6.

appointed; or, in those times when I have called you, by the course of my providence, and counsels of my prophets, unto fasting, and *weeping, and mourning*, chap. xxii. 12; *ye find pleasure, and exact, &c.*—Or, as the words may be more significantly rendered, *You find wherewithal to please yourselves, and are rigorous in grieving, or burdening, others*: that is, You gratify your own passions, especially your covetousness, and you oppress the poor, and so are defective in the duties of justice and charity. By *labours* may be meant money gotten by labour, and lent to others, either for their need or the lender's advantage. For labour is often put for the fruit of labour, as Deut. xxviii. 33; Isa. xlv. 14. But the Hebrew here, צַעֲרֵי, is literally, *your griefs*, namely, the things which cause *griefs*, which are grievous and burdensome to others, as either, 1st, Hard service required of servants above their strength, or beyond the time limited by God for their service, of which see Jer. xxxiv. 13-16: or, 2d, Debts, which they required, either with usury or with rigour and cruelty, when the general law of charity, or God's particular law, enjoined the release, or, at least, the forbearance of them. See Neh. v. 1, 2.

Verses 4, 5. *Behold, ye fast for strife*—Your fasting days, wherein you ought, in a special manner, to implore the mercy of God, and to show compassion to men, you employ in injuring or quarrelling with your brethren, your servants, or debtors, or in contriving mischief against them. Or the meaning is, that "their fasting increased their self-preference, and excited them to fierce controversies or bitter resentments." *And to smite with the fist of wickedness*—It was "the cloak of, and commutation for, their exactions and oppressions of the poor, whom they most unjustly smote and abused for not complying in every thing with their inclinations."—Scott. *Ye shall not fast as ye do this day*—Such a fast as this I cannot accept of as an act of worship, or bless as a means of grace. *To make your voice to be heard on high*—In strife and debate, or by way of ostentation. *Is it such a fast that I have chosen?*—That is, which I approve of, accept, or delight in, because we delight in what we freely choose. A

A. M. 3298. 6 *Is not this the fast that I have*  
B. C. 706. chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, <sup>6</sup> to undo <sup>6</sup> the heavy burdens, and <sup>b</sup> to let the <sup>7</sup> oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?

<sup>6</sup> Neh. v. 10, 12.—<sup>6</sup> Heb. *the bundles of the yoke.*—<sup>b</sup> Jer. xxxiv. 9.—<sup>7</sup> Heb. *broken.*

*day for a man to afflict his soul*—To keep himself low, or to chastise himself by depriving his body of food, as a means to produce inward sorrow for sin, and true humiliation of soul before God. The prophet seems to have delivered this discourse upon, or to have intended it for, some extraordinary day of humiliation, when it was usual for the prophets to give public exhortations to the people. *Is it to bow down his head as a bulrush?*—Here the prophet notices those external gestures, postures, and signs of penitence, which the Jews of his time, and in after ages, (Matt. vi. 16,) joined with their hypocritical fasts. *And to spread sackcloth and ashes under him*—The Jews, to express their sorrow, made use of sackcloth and ashes two ways: 1st, Sometimes by putting sackcloth upon their bodies, as 1 Kings xxi. 27; Psa. lxxix. 11; and casting ashes upon their heads, 2 Sam. xiii. 19: and, 2d, By spreading sackcloth under them, and lying down upon ashes, Esther iv. 3; Job ii. 8. The intent of putting on sackcloth was to afflict the body by its displeasing harshness, and the ashes were meant to represent their own vileness, as being but dust and ashes; and their lying on them to signify that they abhorred and were ashamed of themselves. *Will thou call this a fast?*—Canst thou, upon rational grounds, believe or suppose it to be so? Surely it has nothing in it but the lifeless form, empty shadow, or dumb signs of a fast: nothing of deep humiliation appearing in it, or real reformation proceeding from it. Not that the prophet blames them for afflicting themselves by these external rites, for these are elsewhere commanded of God; but that which he condemns is their hypocrisy in separating true humiliation from them, and contenting themselves with using these signs, while they stopped short of the thing signified by them. *And an acceptable day to the Lord*—A day that God will approve of. Hebrew, *יוֹם רְצוֹן*, *A day of acceptance*, or that will turn to a good account on your behalf.

Verse 6. *Is not this the fast that I have chosen?*—Or approve, as before, verse 5. Or ought not such a fast to be accompanied with such things as these? He now proceeds to show the concomitants of a true fast; namely, to exercise works of justice and charity. *To loose the bands of wickedness*—Namely, the cruel obligations of usury and oppression. *To undo the heavy burdens*—Hebrew, *the bundles of the yoke*, as in the margin; by which may possibly be intended *bundles of writings, acknowledgments, bonds, mortgages, &c.*, which the usurers had lying by them. The former are thought to relate to unjust and unlawful obligations, extorted by force or fear, which the prophet would have cancelled: this

7 *Is it not* <sup>i</sup> to deal thy bread to the <sup>A. M. 3298.</sup>  
<sup>B. C. 706.</sup> hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are <sup>8</sup> cast out to thy house? <sup>k</sup> when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from <sup>l</sup> thine own flesh?

<sup>i</sup> Ezek. xviii. 7, 16; Matt. xxv. 35.—<sup>8</sup> Or, *afflicted.*—<sup>k</sup> Job xxxi. 19.—<sup>l</sup> Gen. xxix. 14; Neh. v. 5.

latter, to just debts contracted through poverty and necessity, the rigour whereof he would have abated. *And to let the oppressed go free*—Those grieved or vexed, whether by the gripping of usury or the bonds of slavery, accompanied with cruel usage; or those confined or shut up in prisons; *and that ye break every yoke*—Namely, which is grievous; that you free your dependants and servants, and all that are under your power, from all sorts of vexations and oppressions.

Verse 7. *Is it not*—Namely, the fast that pleases me. Having shown the evil they were to abstain from in order to keep an acceptable fast, namely, every species of cruelty, he here proceeds to speak of the duty that was required, namely, the exercise of every kind of mercy, as a necessary fruit of true repentance, Dan. iv. 27; Luke xix. 8. For there are two parts of righteousness toward our neighbour; one, to do wrong to no man; the other, to do good to all: which two must always go together, and never be separated from each other, especially in acts and seasons of humiliation. And, as under the evils here mentioned are comprehended all other evils whatsoever, all which men must abstain from if they would give evidence of true humiliation and godly sorrow, so in the duties here spoken of are comprised all the duties, to the practice of which they ought to apply themselves as the effects of true repentance. *To deal*—The word פָּרַס properly signifies *to divide*, or to break into parts; *thy bread to the hungry*—Bread is here put for all things necessary for the support of human life, any or every kind of food. *And that thou bring the poor*—Those that are not only needy, as to their present condition, but helpless, and utterly unable to support themselves; *that are cast out*—Forced from their dwellings, deprived of house and harbour by the injustice of the powerful, or by persecution for conscience' sake, and who are thereby become wanderers, and have no abiding place; *to thy house*—That thou be hospitable, and make thy house a shelter to them, or provide lodging for them. *When thou seest the naked*—Those that either have no clothes, or are so poorly clothed that their clothing is not sufficient to preserve them from perishing by cold; *that thou cover him*—That thou give them raiment suited to these wants, James ii. 15, 16. *And that thou hide not thyself*—That thou not only seek no occasion to excuse thyself, but that, out of compassion, thou apply thyself heartily and speedily to his relief; that thou be not like the priest and Levite, but like the good Samaritan, Luke x. 31–35. *From thine own flesh*—Some restrain this to our own kindred, but this would confine our charity within too narrow a compass, inasmuch as

A. M. 3298. 8 ¶ <sup>m</sup> Then shall thy light break  
B. C. 706. forth as the morning, and thy health  
shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteous-  
ness shall go before thee; <sup>n</sup> the glory of the  
LORD <sup>o</sup> shall be thy rereward.

9 Then shalt thou call, and the LORD shall  
answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here  
I am. If thou take away from the midst of  
thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger,  
and <sup>o</sup> speaking vanity;

10 And if thou draw out thy soul to the

<sup>m</sup> Job xi. 17.—<sup>n</sup> Exod. xiv. 19; Chap. lii. 12.—<sup>o</sup> Heb. shall  
gather thee up.

often, nay, perhaps most commonly, the necessities  
of others are greater than those of our own rela-  
tions; neither is it congruous, that the other words  
here should be taken in the greatest latitude, and  
this alone be confined within such narrow limits.  
Our Saviour teaches us to consider every man as our  
neighbour. And surely we can look on no man but  
there we contemplate our *own flesh*; and therefore  
it is barbarous, not only to tear, but not to love and  
succour him. Therefore feed him as thou wouldst  
feed thyself, or be fed; shelter him as thou wouldst  
shelter thyself, or be sheltered; clothe him as thou  
wouldst clothe thyself, or be clothed, if in any of  
these respects thou wert in his circumstances.

Verse 8. *Then shall thy light*—Matter or cause  
of rejoicing, *break forth as the morning*—Arise as  
certainly and speedily as in the morning the light  
arises out of darkness. It shall not only *appear*, but  
*break*, or dart itself forth, notwithstanding all ob-  
structions, as the sun breaks and pierces through a  
cloud. So ready is God to help his people when  
they are truly humbled! Thus quickly and clearly  
does salvation break forth upon them! *And thy  
health shall spring forth speedily*—The recovery of  
thy former prosperous condition. Another meta-  
phor to express the same thing. *And thy righteous-  
ness shall go before thee*—To prepare thy way to  
safety and happiness; ensuring to thee, O my  
church, the peculiar direction and care of thy God,  
and the favour and approbation of wise and good  
men; see Rom. xiv. 17, 18. Or manifold blessings  
shall be bestowed upon thee, upon all occasions, as  
the reward of thy righteousness. *The glory of the  
Lord shall be thy rereward*—The glorious presence,  
power, and providence of God shall protect and se-  
cure thee. Thus the angel of his presence secured  
the Israelites when they came up out of Egypt. Or,  
the meaning may be, A glorious state shall succeed  
this thy present calamitous condition.

Ver. 9, 10. *Then shalt thou call, &c.*—They made  
great complaint, verse 3, that God took no notice of  
their services, which complaint he seems now to re-  
fer to, as if he had said, These conditions being ob-  
served, call upon me, and thou shalt see I will re-  
gard, Psa. xxxiv. 15. *The Lord shall answer*—He  
will give an effectual demonstration that he hears  
thee. *He shall say, Here I am*—A phrase that sig-

hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; A. M. 3298.  
then shall thy light rise in obscurity, B. C. 706.  
and thy darkness be as the noon-day:

11 And the LORD shall guide thee continu-  
ally, and satisfy thy soul in <sup>10</sup> drought, and  
make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a  
watered garden, and like a spring of water,  
whose waters <sup>11</sup> fail not.

12 And they that shall be of thee <sup>p</sup> shall  
build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up  
the foundations of many generations; and thou

<sup>o</sup> Psa. xii. 2.—<sup>10</sup> Heb. droughts.—<sup>11</sup> Heb. lie, or, deceive.  
<sup>p</sup> Chap. lxi. 4.

nifies a person to be ready at hand to help. *If thou  
take away from the midst of thee*—From among you;  
*the yoke*—All those pressures and grievances before  
mentioned. *The putting forth of the finger*—  
Done by way of scoff, or disdainful insulting; and  
*speaking vanity*—Any kind of evil words. Bishop  
Lowth renders it, “The pointing of the finger, and  
the injurious speech.” *If thou draw out*—Open, as  
when we open a store to satisfy the wants of the  
needy; *thy soul to the hungry*—Thy affection, that is,  
thy pity and compassion, to those in want of the ne-  
cessaries of life; and *satisfy the afflicted soul*—With  
a real, substantial benefit, not contenting thyself with  
giving him merely kind words. For here the pro-  
phet expresses the work that is to be done, as in the  
former clause the affection wherewith it is to be  
done; otherwise it would only be what the Apostle  
James reproves, chap. ii. 15, 16. *Then shall thy  
light rise in obscurity*—See on verse 8; and *thy  
darkness be as the noon-day*—In the very darkness  
of the affliction itself, thou shalt have comfort, Psa.  
cxii. 4. There it shall be as the morning, still in-  
creasing, here as the noon-day, in its zenith, and  
height of perfection.

Verses 11, 12. *And the Lord shall guide thee*—  
Namely, as a shepherd leads his sheep. He adds  
*continually*, to show that his conduct and blessing  
should not be momentary, or of a short continuance,  
but all along as it was to Israel in the wilderness.  
*And satisfy thy soul in drought*—Thou shalt have  
plenty, when others are in scarcity. *And make fat  
thy bones*—This may be spoken in opposition to the  
sad effects of famine, whereby the *flesh is consumed  
away, that it cannot be seen, and the bones that were  
not seen, stick out. Thou shalt be like a garden*—  
If thou relieve the poor, thou shalt never be poor,  
but as a well-watered garden, always flourishing.  
*Like a spring, whose waters fail not*—Hebrew, *de-  
ceive not*, a metaphor which further signifies also the  
continuance of this flourishing state, that it should  
not be like a land-flood, or brooks, that are soon dried  
up with drought. Thou shalt be fed with a spring  
of blessings, that will never fail. *And they of thee*  
—A remnant of thee, or rather, thy posterity, *shall  
build the old waste places*—The places which have  
long lain waste. Bishop Lowth renders it, *The an-  
cient ruins*. If understood of the Jews returned

A. M. 3298. shalt be called, The repairer of the  
B. C. 706. breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in.

13 ¶ If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, *from* doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine

¶ Chap. lvi. 2.—Job xxii. 26.

from Babylon, the meaning is, that they should rebuild Jerusalem and the temple, with the other cities and towns of Judea. *The foundations of many generations*—Either the foundations that were laid many generations ago, or that should continue for many generations yet to come. *And thou shalt be called*—That is, deservedly, and to thine honour, *the repairer of the breach*—Or, *breaches*; for the word is put here collectively for those breaches which God's judgments had made among them, by suffering their enemies to demolish their cities and towns, and to destroy their state. *The restorer of paths*—Those paths that led from city to city, which, being now laid desolate and uninhabited, were grown over with grass and weeds; *to dwell in*—These accommodations being recovered, their ancient cities might be fit to be reinhabited. According to Vitrina, who considers the whole of this and the preceding verse as being metaphorical, the meaning is, "That from the city of God, (the spiritual Jerusalem,) flourishing in the manner above described, should go forth, those who should renew and restore the churches long laid waste, as immersed in thick darkness and superstition, and governed by faithless pastors, and so unworthy the name of the churches of God; and who should collect together, erect, and build anew the foundations of those churches; that is, the heads of Christian doctrine delivered by the prophets and apostles, which, though they had retained them in the confession of their faith, they had mixed with heterogeneous doctrines; so that they might be esteemed as wholly subverted and overthrown."

Verse 13. *If thou turn away*—If thou take no unnecessary journeys, nor do any servile works on the sabbath day; or, metaphorically, if thou keep thy mind and affections disengaged, and free from secular cares and concerns, and restrain thyself from whatever might profane it; *from doing thy pleasure*

own pleasure, nor speaking *thine own* words: A. M. 3298. B. C. 706.

14 ¶ Then shalt thou delight thyself in the LORD; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: ' for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.

¶ Deut. xxxii. 13; xxxiii. 29.—¶ Chap. i. 20; xl. 5; Micah iv. 4.

*on my holy day*—From taking the liberty of doing what thou pleasest, without the control and restraint of conscience and the law of God; or from indulging thyself in the pleasures of sense and carnal delights; *and call the sabbath a delight*—Not looking on the duties of it as a burden and drudgery, but performing them with cheerfulness, and delighting in all its ordinances and services; *the holy of the Lord*—Or, *to the Lord*, that is, dedicated to him, consecrated to his service; *honourable*—Namely, the chief of days, worthy of all honour, and therefore honourable because holy: *and shalt honour him*—That is, The Lord, whose day it is; *not doing thine own ways*—Or *works*, or pursuing thy usual course of life, or thy worldly business; *nor speaking thine own words*—The words that are thine own, in opposition to what God commands to be spoken; words proceeding from the corruption of human nature, or the vanity of the human mind; or, not speaking words unsuitable to the work of the day, tending neither to thy edification nor comfort.

Verse 14. *Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord*—This refers to the preceding verse, as if he had said, If thou wilt delight thyself in the sabbath, then thou shalt delight in the God of the sabbath, namely, in his goodness and faithfulness to thee, and in the assurance of his love and favour. *I will cause thee to ride, &c.*—Thou shalt be above the reach of danger. *And feed thee with the heritage of Jacob*—Thou shalt enjoy the good of the land of Canaan, which God promised as a heritage to Jacob and his seed, Gen. xxxv. 12. Or, figuratively understood, thou shalt enjoy temporal as well as spiritual blessings. The Lord will withhold from thee no manner of thing which he sees to be for thy prosperity and happiness. *For the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it*—The promise is sure, and shall infallibly be fulfilled, having proceeded from the mouth of him who cannot lie.

## CHAPTER LIX.

The foregoing chapter contained a severe reproof of the Jews, and, as some think, also of fallen Christians, 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 to indulge their own passions and vices: with great promises, however, of God's favour, on condition of their reformation. This chapter contains a more general reproof of their wickedness.

(1.) They are charged with obstructing God's favours to themselves by their iniquities; their vain and mischievous devices; their lying and deceit; their bloodshed, violence, and injustice, 1-8. (2.) The prophet makes, in their names, an ample confession of their sins, and deploras their wretched state in consequence of them, 9-15. (3.) God is represented as

appearing, in judgment and mercy, for the rescue of his people from this miserable condition, and that for his own name's sake, 16-19. (4.) The coming of the Redeemer is promised, to convert both Jews and Gentiles to himself, and to give them a new covenant and law, which shall never be abolished, 20, 21. "As the chapter," says Bishop Loveth, "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."

A. M. 3298.  
B. C. 706.

**BEHOLD**, the LORD's hand is not  
<sup>a</sup> shortened, that it cannot save ;  
 neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear :

2 But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins <sup>1</sup> have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.

3 For <sup>b</sup> your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity ; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue hath muttered perverseness.

4 None calleth for justice, nor any pleadeth

<sup>a</sup> Numbers xi. 23 ; Chapter i. 2.—<sup>1</sup> Or, have made him hide.  
<sup>b</sup> Chap. i. 15.—<sup>c</sup> Job xv. 35 ; Psa. vii. 14.

#### NOTES ON CHAPTER LIX.

Verses 1, 2. *Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened*—He is not grown weaker than in former times, but is as omnipotent as ever he was ; *neither his ear heavy*—Or dull of hearing : he is not like your idol gods, that have hands and cannot help, and ears and cannot hear. *But your iniquities have separated*—Have been as a thick wall, between you and your God—And have set him at a distance from you, Prov. xv. 29. "The reason of the continuance of your calamities is not any want either of power in God to deliver you, or of goodness to hear your prayers : but your own iniquities make him a stranger to you, interrupt the correspondence that used to be between God and his people, and stop the course of his blessings."—Lowth.

Verse 3. *Your hands are defiled with blood*—Here the prophet proceeds from a more general to a more particular charge against them. By *blood*, we are to understand, either murders and bloodshed, properly so called, or ways of injustice, extortion, oppression, and cruelties, whereby men are deprived of a livelihood : hence, hating our brother is called murder, 1 John iii. 15, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem murderers, chap. i. 21. *And your fingers with iniquity*—This is added to aggravate their sin ; as if he had said, Not only your hands, but your fingers are defiled, and not the least part of you is free from injustice. *Your lips have spoken lies*—Not only properly so called, but perjuries, slanders, and false accusations : you have not only offered violence to your neighbours by your hands, but circumvented them by your lips. *Your tongue hath muttered perverseness*—Perverse words, or such as were contrary to God's word and will. When they could not, for shame, utter their malice against their neighbours aloud, nor dared to do it for fear of being convicted of falsehood, and put to confusion, they muttered it secretly.

Verse 4. *None calleth for justice*—None seek to redress these wrongs and violences ; they commit

for truth : they trust in vanity, and  
 speak lies ; <sup>c</sup> they conceive mischief,  
 and bring forth iniquity.

5 They hatch <sup>2</sup> cockatrice' eggs, and weave the spider's web : he that eateth of their eggs dieth, and <sup>3</sup> that which is crushed breaketh out into a viper.

6 <sup>d</sup> Their webs shall not become garments, neither shall they cover themselves with their works : their works are works of iniquity, and the act of violence is in their hands.

<sup>a</sup> Or, adds.—<sup>3</sup> Or, that which is sprinkled is as if there brake out a viper.—<sup>d</sup> Job viii. 14, 15.

all rapines and frauds with impunity ; *they trust in vanity*—In vain and empty words, void of all consistency ; or, in *rain things*, such as their idols were, often called vanity and nothing, 1 Cor. viii. 4 ; or in their own power, craft, and policy, whereby, laying aside justice, they oppressed others. *And speak lies*—This may refer to the judges, lawyers, and false prophets, who told them they should not go into captivity ; as if he had said, They speak that which they know to be false. *They conceive mischief, and bring forth, &c.*—These two words, *conceiving* and *bringing forth*, denote the whole contriving and perfecting of their wickedness.

Verses 5, 6. *They hatch cockatrice' eggs*—They contrive and execute wicked purposes and practices, whereby sure and sudden destruction is brought upon themselves and others. Of the *cockatrice*, or *basilisk*, as it should rather be rendered, see on chap. xiv. 29. One kind is put for any venomous creature. The speech is proverbial, signifying, by these *eggs*, mischievous designs, and by hatching them their putting them in practice. *And weave the spider's web*—Another proverbial speech, whereby is signified, both how by their plots they weaved nets, laid snares industriously with great pains and artifice, to entrap or entangle others ; and also how their designs would come to nothing, as the spider's web is soon swept away. *He that eateth of their eggs*—That converses and joins with them in their mischievous designs, and partakes of the fruits thereof ; *dieth*—Is seduced into destructive errors and vices, or involved in ruin. *And that which is crushed*—In order that it may be eaten ; *breaketh out into a viper*—A poisonous viper proceeds from it. The more any one partakes of their counsels, the more he is infected, such a deadly poison lies imbodied in them. *Their webs shall not become garments*—Though they are finely wrought, yet they are too thin and weak to be of any use ; that is, their contrivances and deep designs shall

A. M. 3298. 7 ° Their feet run to evil, and they  
B. C. 706. make haste to shed innocent blood: their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity; wasting and destruction are in their paths.

8 The way of peace they know not: and there is no judgment in their goings: they have made them crooked paths: whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace.

9 Therefore is judgment far from us, neither doth justice overtake us: we wait for light, but behold obscurity; for brightness, but we walk in darkness.

10 We grope for the wall like the blind, and we grope as if we had no eyes: we stumble

\* Prov. i. 16; Rom. iii. 15.—<sup>4</sup> Heb. *breaking*.—<sup>6</sup> Or, *right*.  
<sup>1</sup> Psa. cxxv. 5; Prov. ii. 15.—<sup>4</sup> Jer. viii. 15.

not advantage them. *Neither shall they cover themselves, &c.*—Their works shall neither cover nor defend the actors. *Their works are works of iniquity*—Of injustice, whereby they grieve, vex, and injure their brethren. *And the act of violence is in their hands*—They exercise themselves in all acts of violence and oppression.

Verses 7, 8. *Their feet run to evil*—This seems to be taken from Prov. i. 16; where see the note. He had spoken of their hands, fingers, lips, tongues, &c., before, and now he speaks of their feet, to show that they were wholly set upon mischief. *Their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity*—Their minds and hearts are wholly set upon committing wickedness, and doing injuries: they not only do evil, but do it deliberately. *Wasting and destruction are in their paths*—In what way or work soever they are engaged, it all tends to ruin and destruction. It is a metaphor taken from an overspreading torrent, or sweeping plague, or from beasts of prey, that tear and devour whatever comes in their way. *The way of peace they know not*—They live in continual contentions and discords, and break in pieces the very bonds of society. *And there is no judgment*—No justice, equity, faith, or integrity, which are the foundation of judgment; *in their goings*—In their conduct or actions. *They have made them crooked paths*—They have turned aside from the way of God's commandments, which are a plain and straight way, into the crooked and winding paths of craft, subtlety, and selfishness. *Whosoever goeth therein shall know no peace*—Shall experience none. Whosoever shall do as they do, and be turbulent and perverse as they are, will have as little peace within, or happiness without, as they have.

Verses 9-11. *Therefore is judgment far from us*—Because we have no regard for justice or honesty, God will not plead our cause against our oppressors; *neither doth justice overtake us*—He does not defend our rights, nor avenge our wrongs; as if he had said, If we had executed judgment and equity among one another, they would not now have been far from us. *We wait for light*—In what sense the Hebrews

at noon-day as in the night; we are A. M. 3298.  
in desolate places as dead men. B. C. 706.

11 We roar all like bears, and mourn sore like doves: we look for judgment, but there is none; for salvation, but it is far off from us.

12 For our transgressions are multiplied before thee, and our sins testify against us: for our transgressions are with us; and as for our iniquities, we know them;

13 In transgressing and lying against the Lord, and departing away from our God, speaking oppression and revolt, conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood.

<sup>b</sup> Deut. xxviii. 29; Job v. 14; Amos viii. 9.—<sup>1</sup> Chap. xxxviii. 14; Ezek. vii. 16.—<sup>2</sup> Matt. xii. 34.

use the terms *light* and *darkness*, see before, on chap. lviii. 8, 10. *But behold obscurity*—We are in a state of such thick darkness, that, which way soever we look, we see no hope of deliverance. *We grope for the wall like the blind*—As a blind man, that hath no other means of perceiving and distinguishing objects than his hands, feels for the wall, from whence he expects either direction or a resting-place to lean on; so we expect salvation, as it were, blindfold, not taking direction from the prophets, but hoping to obtain it by our cries and fasts, though we continue in our sins; and therefore may be well said to grope after it. *And, or rather, yea, we grope as if we had no eyes*—As if we were stark blind; *we stumble at noon-day*—This denotes their exceeding blindness, as a man must needs be exceedingly blind who can discern no more at noon-day than if it were midnight. *We are in desolate places as dead men*—He compares their calamitous state to that of men dead, without hope of restoration. *We roar like bears, &c.*—Thus he expresses the greatness of their anguish, which forced from them loud outcries and sorrowful lamentations. *We look for judgment, &c.*—See note on verse 9.

Verses 12, 13. *For our transgressions*—The word  $\text{וְעֲוֹנוֹתַי}$ , here used, signifies sins of a high nature, namely, such as were wilfully committed against light and knowledge; rebellious sins. *Are multiplied before thee*—They admit of no excuse; for they are committed before thee, and multiplied against thee, whereby thou art justly provoked to deny us all help. *And our sins testify against us*—The sins charged upon us are so many witnesses produced to prove our guilt. *For our transgressions are with us*—Are still unforgiven, and we lie under the divine wrath on account of them. *As for our iniquities, we know them*—We are convinced of them. *In transgressing and lying, &c.*—He now enumerates some of those particular sins which they profess themselves to be convinced of; by which he does not mean the sins of some particular persons, or some slight sins, but a general defection and corruption of the whole body. *Transgressing* here,

A. M. 3298. B. C. 706. 14 And judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter.

15 Yea, truth faileth; and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey: and the LORD saw it, and it displeased him that there was no judgment.

16 ¶ And he saw that there was no man,

<sup>6</sup> Or, is accounted mad.—<sup>7</sup> Hebrew, it was evil in his eyes. Ezek. xxii. 30.

and lying, seem to be one and the same thing, inasmuch as in their transgressing the law of God, they broke their solemn engagement to God, made upon mount Sinai. *Departing away from God*—Turning from God to idols. *Speaking oppression, &c.*—As it were, talking of little else one among another, but how to oppress their neighbours, and apostatize from God. *Conceiving and uttering*—That is, first contriving in their hearts false accusations against their neighbours, and false worship, to the dishonour of God; laying the contrivances so that they might be effectual, and then uttering them; *from the heart*—And when they dealt with men in ways of fraud, it was from the heart; but when they spake with God, it was but from the lips.

Verses 14, 15. *And judgment is turned away backward*—He speaks here of the sentences in courts of judicature, which were contrary to right and justice; as if he had said, God denies you justice, as you have denied it to others. *And justice standeth afar off*—Justice and judges are at a great distance from each other; *for truth is fallen*—Truth is cast to the ground, and justice trampled under foot; *in the street*—Even in public. *And equity cannot enter*—No such thing will be admitted in the courts. *Yea, truth faileth*—Truth is more than fallen, which he had said in the last verse; it faileth. If it had been only fallen, it might have recovered itself again: but its failing denotes the loss of its very vitals; as being everywhere neglected, in the court, in the city, in the country; in inferior as well as superior ranks; in the streets, in the gates, in the markets, in the fairs; in all public places of commerce: as if he had said, All things are amiss; neither judgment, nor justice, nor truth is to be found among us; but fraud and deceit; yet none are troubled on account of it. *And he that departeth from evil*—That separateth himself from evil things and evil persons, that will not be as vile as others; *maketh himself a prey*—Or, as כשחולל is rendered in the margin, is accounted mad; is laughed at. Josephus tells us, that immediately before the destruction of Jerusalem, it was a matter of scorn to be religious. The translators reach the meaning of the word by prey: the wicked, like wild beasts, endeavouring to devour such as are not as bad as themselves: where wickedness rules, innocence is oppressed. For they that are simple and innocent are

and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him.

17 ° For he put on righteousness as a breast-plate, and a helmet of salvation upon his head; and he put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloak.

<sup>m</sup> Mark vi. 6.—<sup>n</sup> Psa. xciii. 1; Chap. lxxiii. 5.—<sup>o</sup> Eph. iv. 14, 17; 1 Thess v. 8.

outwitted by the crafty and fraudulent, as not being willing, or rather, not daring to oppose fraud with fraud, but doing all things in sincerity. *And the Lord saw it*—Took notice of it; it was not hid from him. It is spoken of God after the manner of men. *And it displeased him, &c.*—As if he had said, If you would know why God is so angry with you, it is for such things as these; the Lord observes them, and they are great evils in his eyes.

Verse 16. *And he saw there was no man*—Namely, to intercede, which is understood from the following words; or no man to help in such a case, and to appear in the behalf of equity. See Ezek. xxii. 30. *And wondered*—Hebrew, וישהימה, was amazed, or astonished, an expression which denotes both God's solicitude about their condition, and their stupidity, in not laying it to heart themselves, especially considering that they had been a people well instructed, and yet, when under the guilt of such gross sins, should be no more solicitous to obtain pardon. *Therefore, or, yet, his arm brought salvation unto him*—That is, to his people; and his righteousness it sustained him—His justice; seeing there could be no justice found among them, he would avenge the innocent himself. Since magistrates and societies for the reformation of manners fail of doing their part, the one will not do justice, nor the other call for it, God will let them know he can effect it without them, and thus prepare his people for mercy. And then the work of deliverance shall be wrought by the immediate influence of the divine grace on men's spirits, and of the divine providence on their affairs. When God stirred up the spirit of Cyrus, and brought his people out of Babylon, not by human wisdom nor power, but by the Spirit of the Lord, then his own arm brought salvation to them, which arm is not shortened now.

Verses 17, 18. *For he put on righteousness as a breast-plate*—God, resolving to appear as a man of war, puts on his armour; he calls righteousness his breast-plate, to show the justness of his cause, as also his faithfulness in making good his promises. *And a helmet of salvation upon his head*—As the breast-plate is to defend the heart, whereby God signifies the justness of his cause, and his faithfulness; so the helmet is to defend the head, the fountain of knowledge and wisdom, and therefore by this piece of armour God would have us to know that he can neither be deceived nor disappointed with regard to

A. M. 3298. 18 <sup>p</sup> According to *their* <sup>a</sup> deeds, ac-  
B. C. 706. cordingly he will repay, fury to his  
adversaries, recompense to his enemies; to the  
islands he will repay recompense.

19 <sup>a</sup> So shall they fear the name of the LORD  
from the west, and his glory from the rising of  
the sun. When the enemy shall come in <sup>r</sup>like  
a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall <sup>o</sup> lift up a  
standard against him.

20 ¶ And <sup>a</sup> the Redeemer shall come to

<sup>p</sup> Chap. lxiii. 6.—<sup>a</sup> Heb. *recompenses*.—<sup>r</sup> Psa. cxiii. 3; Mal.  
i. 11.—<sup>o</sup> Rev. xii. 15.

the execution of his designs, for the salvation of his faithful and obedient people; but will, without fail, carry them into effect. *And he put on the garments of vengeance*—Or garments made of vengeance: as God is said to put on the former for their sakes whom he would preserve, so he puts on these for their sakes whom he will destroy, namely, his people's enemies. *Was clad with zeal*—For his own honour, and for his people's welfare. The sum of all these expressions is, to describe both the cause and effect together; the cause was *righteousness and zeal in God*; the effect, *salvation to his people, and vengeance on his enemies*. *According to their deeds*—Hebrew, גמלות, *recompenses, or deserts*. That is, he will recompense his adversaries with those effects of his fury that they have deserved. *To the islands he will repay recompense*—He will execute judgment on his enemies to the most remote parts of the earth.

Verse 19. *So shall they fear the name of the Lord*—Worship the Lord; *from the west*—The western parts of the world. *And his glory*—The glorious God; *from the rising of the sun*—The eastern parts. The sum is, the whole world shall fear and worship God, and make his name renowned, laying aside their idolatries: and it may be referred, 1st, To the deliverance of God's people out of Babylon: men shall reverence and adore him when they shall hear how he hath delivered his people, and executed vengeance on their enemies. Or, 2d, To the redemption by Christ, and the calling of the Gentiles. See Mal. i. 11. *When the enemy shall come in like a flood, &c.*—When nothing seems able to withstand the enemies of God's church, but they carry all before them as a flood overruns a country, then God himself shall give them a remarkable check, and visibly interpose in behalf of his oppressed people. The prophet, however, may be understood as speaking of Satan, the grand enemy of God's church, and as signifying that at what time soever he or his instruments should make violent attacks on God's people, and should endeavour to bear down all before them, by an inundation of infidelity, impiety, and wickedness; the Spirit of God would *lift up his standard*, and call together his armies, to oppose these enemies' progress, and subvert their cause. "There can be no doubt," says Mr. Scott, "but the grand accomplishment of this prophecy is future:

Zion, and unto them that turn from <sup>a</sup> transgression in Jacob, saith the LORD.

21 <sup>a</sup> As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the LORD; My Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the LORD, from henceforth and for ever.

<sup>a</sup> Or, *put him to flight*.—Romans xi. 26.—<sup>t</sup> Hebrews viii. 10; x. 16.

and as they, among whom iniquity so abounded, antecedent to this happy change, are spoken of as the professed people of God, and are not accused of idolatry, and as the Lord is represented as wondering that there was no intercessor among them, it is more natural to interpret it of corrupt and degenerate Protestants, than either of the Jews, who are avowed enemies to Christianity, or of Papists, who retain the worship of images, saints, and angels."

Verses 20, 21. *And, or, moreover, the Redeemer shall come to Zion*—To Jerusalem, or to his church, often signified by Zion, namely, Christ shall come, of whom the apostle expounds it, Rom. xi. 26; the prophets usually concluding their promises of temporal deliverances with the promises of spiritual, especially such, of which the temporal were evident types. *And unto them that turn from transgression, &c.*—As he will come in the flesh, and tabernacle among his people; so he will come, by his Spirit, to those of them who turn from their sins unto God, (see John xiv. 15–23,) and *will dwell in their hearts*, (Eph. iii. 17,) so that they shall have *Christ in them, the hope of glory*, Col. i. 27; *Christ living in them*, Gal. ii. 20. *This is my covenant with them*—What I have promised to them that turn from their iniquities. *My Spirit that is upon thee*—Namely, upon Christ: see chap. xi. 1–3. The Spirit promised to the church was first upon him, and from him, the head, that precious ointment descends to the skirts of his garments. *And my word that I have put into thy mouth*—Which thou hast uttered by virtue of my Spirit; *shall not depart out of thy mouth*—But thou shalt continue to be *the Word made flesh*, the wisdom of God incarnate, the great teacher of thy people, and *the light of the world*, till the consummation of all things. *Nor out of the mouth of thy seed, &c.*—*But it shall dwell richly in them in all wisdom*, capacitating them to teach, admonish, reprove, rebuke, exhort, and comfort one another, speaking *with grace in their hearts: from henceforth and for ever*—Always, even unto the end of the world; for the world being permitted to stand for the sake of the church, we may be sure that as long as it doth stand, Christ will have a church in it. Upon the whole, the meaning of this promise is, that God will give and continue his word and Spirit to his people, throughout all generations. 1st, There shall be some in every age, in whose hearts he will

work, and in whom he will dwell, and thus the *Comforter shall abide with the church for ever*, John xiv. 16. 2d, The word of Christ shall always continue in the mouths of the faithful, that is, there shall be some in every age who, *believing with the heart unto righteousness*, shall, with the tongue, *make confession unto salvation*: and there shall still be a seed to speak Christ's holy language, and profess his holy religion. Observe well, reader, the Spirit and the word go together, and by them the church

is upheld. The word in the mouths of our ministers, nay, in our own mouths, will not profit us, unless the Spirit work with the word, and give it efficacy to enlighten, quicken, renew, and comfort us. The Spirit, however, doth his work by the word, and in concurrence with it; and whatever is pretended to be a dictate of the Spirit must be tried by the Scriptures. On this foundation the church is built, stands firm, and shall stand for ever; Christ himself being the chief corner-stone.

## CHAPTER LX.

"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." It is here promised, (1.) That the church should be marvellously enlightened with the knowledge and glory of God, 1, 2. (2.) That it should be wonderfully enlarged by the accession of Gentile converts, 3-8. (3.) That these converts should be very serviceable to it, 9-13. (4.) That it should be in great honour and repute among men, 14-16. (5.) That it should enjoy perfect safety and profound peace and tranquillity, 17, 18. (6.) That, the members of it being all righteous, the glory and joy of it should be everlasting, 19-22. "The state of the church," says Vitringa, "is here exhibited in a perfection which approaches nearest to the divine, the most beautiful and glorious imaginable; though we are yet to seek where or when the true exemplar of it may or shall be found."

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**ARISE**, <sup>a</sup> shine; <sup>1</sup> for thy light is come, and <sup>b</sup> the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee.

2 For behold, the darkness shall cover the

<sup>a</sup> Eph. v. 14.—<sup>1</sup> Or, be enlightened; for thy light cometh.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER LX.

Verse 1. *Arise, &c.*—The prophet here addresses the church of God, which he supposes to be sitting sorrowful, and exhorts her to awake and arise from a state of darkness and mourning, and enter into a state of light and happiness, "now that her salvation, so long desired and hoped for, is at hand, and the divine glory is about to rise upon her, and illuminate the nations and people who had hitherto sat in thick darkness." See Vitringa. The reader will observe the exhortation is accommodated to the Jewish or Hebrew style, wherein, as by *lying down* is signified a servile and calamitous condition, (chap. xlvii. 1.) so, by *rising*, and *standing up*, a recovery out of it into a free and prosperous state, as may be seen frequently. *Shine*—Discover thyself, as a luminary breaking forth from a dark night. Show thy native beauty: suffer thyself to be so strongly irradiated by the glory of the Lord, that thou mayest not only be enlightened, but mayest be able to enlighten others. *For thy light is come*—Thy flourishing and prosperous condition, an allusion to people's rising, when after a dark night the light breaks forth upon them. *And the glory of the Lord*—Glorious light, grace, and salvation from the Lord; or a bright display of the glory, that is, of the glorious attributes of the Lord; or, the *Lord of glory*, Christ, is about to make himself glorious, in some wonderful work, for thy salvation. *Is risen upon thee*—Like as when the sun, arising, spreads his light everywhere, leaving no

earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee.

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<sup>b</sup> Mal. iv. 2.

place dark. Thus shall the church of God be fully illuminated in the latter days, and thus shall she shine for the perfect illumination of all flesh: see chap. xi. 9; and Zech. xiv. 7. In his description of this perfect state of the Christian Church, this evangelical prophet is here peculiarly eloquent, displaying it "in the most splendid colours, and under a great variety of images, highly poetical, designed to give a general idea of its glories, when the fulness 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 God, and of his Christ."—Bishop Lowth.

Verse 2. *For, behold, darkness shall cover the earth*—Ignorance, idolatry, and all kinds of errors and vices; and *gross darkness the people*—Like that of Egypt; the most palpable blindness and infatuation as to divine things; *but the Lord*—Christ, the bright and morning-star, the day-spring from on high, or, rather, the Sun of righteousness, Rev. xxii. 16; Luke i. 78; Mal. iv. 2; *shall arise upon thee*—By his gospel and his grace, bringing light to those that before sat in darkness, and in the shadow of death; and his glory shall be seen upon thee—Shall be wonderfully conspicuous. "The design of the Holy Spirit in this clause, as I suppose," says Vitringa, "is to describe the state of the nations of the world, at the time when God should illuminate the church with this light, as if by a new advent of his Son, and a repeated manifestation of his divine king-

A. M. 3298. 3 And the <sup>c</sup> Gentiles shall come to  
B. C. 706. thy light, and kings to the brightness  
of thy rising.

4 <sup>d</sup> Lift up thine eyes round about, and see :  
all they gather themselves together, <sup>e</sup> they come  
to thee : thy sons shall come from far, and thy  
daughters shall be nursed at *thy* side.

5 Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and  
thy heart shall fear, and be enlarged ; because

<sup>c</sup> Chapter xlix. 6, 23 ; Rev. xxi. 24.—<sup>d</sup> Chapter xlix. 18.  
<sup>e</sup> Chap. xlix. 20, 21, 22 ; lxi. 12.—<sup>f</sup> Rom. xi. 25.—<sup>g</sup> Or,  
*noise of the sea shall be turned toward thee.*

dom. Almost all the world should be found in a  
similar state of darkness to that wherein the Son of  
God found it at his first coming ; and if we might  
form any judgment from the state of things, from  
the darkness which now overspreads the earth,  
through the prevalence of Popery, infidelity, and  
immorality, in the countries professing Christianity,  
and Mohammedanism and paganism in the other  
regions of the earth, we may reasonably conclude,  
that these words of the prophet, at the period alluded  
to, will not want their exact completion.”

Verse 3. *The Gentiles shall come to thy light*—  
Or, shall be allured by thy light to come to thee, as  
travellers in a dark night, and out of their way,  
when a light discovers itself make to it ; so the doc-  
trine of the gospel shall shine so bright, and be made  
so conspicuous by preaching and miracles, that well-  
disposed heathen shall not only congratulate them  
that profess it, and wish them much joy, but shall  
rejoice to participate with them in their happiness.  
A plain prophecy this of the calling of the Gentiles,  
a promise of which was made to Christ, chap. xlix.  
6. *And, or Yea, kings to the brightness of thy ris-  
ing*—That is, the greatness and glories of the church  
shall attract the eyes of kings, and make them will-  
ing to become her proselytes. Or, to add to thy  
lustre, thou shalt not only be honoured by the con-  
version of mean persons, but even of honourable  
personages, yea, of kings, embracing the Christian  
faith, and submitting themselves to Christ's sceptre  
and government : see chap. xlix. 23.

Verses 4, 5. *Lift up thine eyes round about*—Or,  
in a circle, into all parts of the earth. He seems to  
refer to the apostles and disciples, with their succes-  
sors, carrying the gospel into all quarters of the  
world. And because it would be, as it were, a thing  
incredible, he bids them *lift up their eyes*, as if they  
were to behold it in some vision, or upon some  
watch-tower in Jerusalem. See the like expression  
chap. xlix. 18. *All they gather themselves together*  
—He speaks of the coming in of all nations to embrace  
the gospel, and unite themselves to the Christian  
Church. *Thy sons shall come from far*—From the  
remotest parts, having heard the report of thee.  
*And thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side*—  
Shall be brought unto thee tenderly, as it were in  
persons' arms, (chap. xlix. 22.) and shall have their  
education with thee from their infancy : there, where

<sup>f</sup> the <sup>2</sup> abundance of the sea shall be <sup>g</sup> A. M. 3298.  
converted unto thee, the <sup>3</sup> forces of the <sup>h</sup> B. C. 706.  
Gentiles shall come unto thee.

6 The multitude of camels shall cover thee,  
the dromedaries of Midian and <sup>i</sup> Ephah ; all  
they from <sup>j</sup> Sheba shall come : they shall bring  
<sup>k</sup> gold and incense ; and they shall show forth  
the praises of the LORD.

7 All the flocks of <sup>l</sup> Kedar shall be gathered

<sup>i</sup> Or, *wealth*, Verse 11 ; Chapter lxi. 6.—<sup>j</sup> Genesis xxv. 4.  
<sup>k</sup> Psalm lxxii. 10.—<sup>l</sup> Chap. lxi. 6 ; Matt. ii. 11.—<sup>m</sup> Gen.  
xxv. 13.

alone the sincere milk of the word is to be had, must  
the church's newborn babes be nursed, *that they  
may grow thereby*, 1 Pet. ii. 2. *Then thou shalt see*  
—With delight, the multitudes of thy children run-  
ning to thee ; *and flow together*—As when two rivers  
meet, and, joining their waters, run sweetly together,  
as one and the same river. This denotes the abun-  
dance of their united joys and delights. Or the  
words may mean, they shall flock together to behold  
such an amazing sight. *And thy heart shall fear*  
—Or stand amazed, to see such multitudes come to  
the Lord Christ ; *and be enlarged*—Both with joy  
and love. *Because the abundance of the sea*—The  
islands of the sea, the nations ; *shall be converted  
unto thee*—Shall turn to thee in religion and affec-  
tion ; they that formerly so much hated thee shall  
now love thee. Or the sense is, The wealth and  
traffic of those who trade by sea, the riches of the  
merchants, shall be converted to thy use rather than  
to the use of the owners thereof. *The forces of  
the Gentiles shall come unto thee*—Thou shalt not  
only have the wealth, but the strength of the nations  
to stand by thee, to protect thee, and aid thy endeavours  
to evangelize the world.

Verses 6, 7. *The multitude of camels*—The trea-  
sure that is brought upon camels. By these, and  
such like figurative expressions in several verses of  
this chapter, is implied the coming in of all nations  
to Christ, and therefore they are brought in as pre-  
senting the chief commodities of their respective  
countries. *The dromedaries*—Or, also, or, *even the  
dromedaries* ; which are a sort of lesser camel, so  
called from their swiftness in running. For it is  
said by the Arabs that they will run as far in one  
day as their best horses will do in nine ; and therefore  
they are chiefly used for riding : for which they are  
the more fit, because, as Pliny observes, they can  
endure the want of water four days together. *Of  
Midian and Ephah*—The Midianites and Ephahites  
were descended from Abraham, by Keturah, and  
dwelt beyond Arabia, where camels were very nu-  
merous, Judg. vii. 12. *All they from Sheba*—A  
country in Arabia Felix, whose queen it was that  
came to visit Solomon, and her bringing gifts might  
be a type of this. *They shall bring gold and in-  
cense*—The principal commodities with which this  
country abounded, by which we are to understand  
whatever is precious. *All the flocks of Kedar*—

A. M. 3298. together unto thee, the rams of Ne-  
B. C. 706. baioth shall minister unto thee: they shall come up with acceptance on mine altar, and <sup>1</sup> I will glorify the house of my glory.

8 Who *are* these *that fly* as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows?

9 <sup>m</sup> Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, <sup>n</sup> to bring thy sons from far, <sup>o</sup> their silver and their gold with them, <sup>p</sup> unto the name of the LORD thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel, <sup>q</sup> because he hath glorified thee.

<sup>1</sup> Haggai ii. 7, 9.—<sup>m</sup> Psalm lxxii. 10; Chapter xlii. 4; li. 5.  
<sup>n</sup> Gal. iv. 26.—<sup>o</sup> Psa. lxxviii. 30; Zech. xiv. 14.—<sup>p</sup> Jer. iii. 17.  
<sup>q</sup> Chap. lv. 5.—Zech. vi. 15.

Arabia Petrea, or stony Arabia, the people inhabiting which being principally shepherds. *They shall come up with acceptance*—They shall not now, as heretofore, be rejected. *I will glorify the house of my glory*—He alludes to the temple, but must be understood as intending the gospel church, built of living stones, of which the temple at Jerusalem, with all the splendour of its ornaments, and the whole multitude of its sacrifices and oblations, was but a typical or shadowy representation.

Verse 8. *Who are these that fly as a cloud*—These metaphors import the number, as well as speed, of those that should be begotten by the apostles' doctrine. "By this new crowd of believers hastening to the church," Vitringa understands "the Greeks and Asiatics, and those of the west groaning under the Ottoman empire, who, having long sat in a state of ignorance and superstition, at this period shall be freed from their yoke, and hasten to the enlightened church in multitudes, *like a cloud*, and with zeal and impetuosity, (like doves to their cotes or holes,) when once made acquainted with the wonderful change of things, and the mighty works wrought by God for the deliverance of his people. The flight of doves, especially when they return to their cotes, is remarkably swift and precipitate."

Verse 9. *Surely the isles shall wait for me*—The countries remote from Judea, and especially the islands and continents of Europe, generally intended by the term *isles*. *And the ships*—To convey them to me; of *Tarshish first*—Those that traffic by sea. In naming this, he implied all places that had commerce with other nations. Concerning Tarshish, see note on chap. ii. 16. *To bring thy sons from far*—From the most distant countries; *their silver and their gold with them*—With all their treasure; *unto the name of the Lord*—To be presented to the Lord, and employed for the advancement of his glory, and the benefit of his church and people. *Because he hath glorified thee*—He will make thee honourable in the eyes of the world, and that especially by setting up the ministry of the gospel in the midst of thee.

10 And <sup>r</sup> the sons of strangers shall <sup>s</sup> build up thy walls, <sup>t</sup> and their kings shall minister unto thee: for <sup>u</sup> in my wrath I smote thee, <sup>v</sup> but in my favour have I had mercy on thee.

11 Therefore thy gates <sup>x</sup> shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that *men* may bring unto thee the <sup>y</sup> forces of the Gentiles, and *that* their kings *may be* brought.

12 <sup>z</sup> For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, *those* nations shall be utterly wasted.

<sup>r</sup> Chap. xlix. 23; Rev. xxi. 24.—<sup>s</sup> Chap. lvii. 17.—<sup>t</sup> Chap. liv. 7, 8.—<sup>u</sup> Rev. xxi. 25.—<sup>v</sup> Or, *wealth*, Verse 5.—<sup>w</sup> Zech. xiv. 17, 19; Matt. xxi. 44.

Verses 10-12. *And the sons of the stranger*—Namely, such as were not Israelites born, but of Gentile race; and he puts *sons* of strangers, by a usual Hebraism, for strangers; *shall build up thy walls*—As Gentile proselytes to the Jewish religion assisted the Jews in repairing the walls of Jerusalem upon their return from captivity, so Gentile converts to Christianity assisted the apostles, evangelists, and other ministers of Christ, who were of Jewish extraction, in building and adorning the Christian Church: and for many ages its builders have been almost wholly of Gentile race. *And their kings shall minister unto thee*—Ecclesiastical history affords us many instances of kings and princes that were great benefactors to her, among whom Constantine greatly excelled. *For in my wrath I smote thee, &c.*—As I afflicted thee in mine anger, so out of my compassions I will abundantly bless thee. "The discourse here," says Vitringa, "rises, and will continue to rise till the end of the section, that the blindest may discern spiritual things involved in these corporeal figures and emblems. It is not sufficient that the nations only, with their wealth and possessions, shall be added to the church, and perform all requisite offices toward it, but *kings* and *princes* also shall come: nor shall they come alone; a great retinue shall attend them: nor shall instances of their approach be few and rare, but common and frequent; insomuch that the gates of the city shall be always left open to receive this continual accession of kings and people." *The nation, &c., that will not serve thee*—Do offices of kindness to thee, as the word עֲבָדוּ is used chap. xix. 23, or, that will not submit to Christ's sceptre; *shall perish*—Shall not only be subdued to thee, but shall be destroyed by the sword, or famine, or pestilence, or some other of the divine judgments. *Yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted*—Shall, by the peculiar interposition of a righteous providence, be brought to desolation. "This," says Lowth, "must relate to the *latter days*, as the Scripture calls them, when the church shall become a *great mountain*, and *break in pieces all the kingdoms of the earth*, according to Daniel's prophecy, chap. ii. 35, 44."

A. M. 3298.  
B. C. 706. 13 \* The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir-tree, the pine-tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make <sup>a</sup> the place of my feet glorious.

14 The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee: and all they that despised thee shall <sup>b</sup> bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee, The city of the LORD,

\* Chap. xxxv. 2; xli. 19.—<sup>1</sup> 1 Chron. xxviii. 2; Psa. cxxxii. 7.  
<sup>b</sup> Chap. xlix. 23; Rev. iii. 9.

Verse 13. *The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee*—As Lebanon furnished cedars, and other choice timber, for building and beautifying Solomon's temple, so shall different nations contribute what is most excellent and suitable among them for supporting, establishing, enlarging, and adorning the church of Christ, here called *the place of God's sanctuary*, with allusion to the temple, an eminent type of it. See note on Psa. xlvi. 4, 5. *And I will make the place of my feet glorious*—The Christian Church, so called in allusion to the ark in the most holy place of the tabernacle and temple, where the divine glory, termed by the Jews the *Shechinah*, was wont to appear between the wings of the cherubim, over the *mercy-seat*, which was, as it were, the footstool of that glorious symbol of God's presence.

Verse 14. *The sons of them that afflicted thee*—Their posterity, or themselves, for it is the manner of the Hebrews so to speak; *shall come bending unto thee*—Humbling themselves as penitents, and thus manifesting their respect and reverence for thee. They shall acknowledge their former errors, or the errors of their fathers, and instead of being persecutors shall become proselytes. *And all they that despised thee*—As a poor, mean, insignificant, and despicable people; *shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet*—Shall prostrate themselves before thee as humble suppliants, or rather before Christ, the head, husband, and king of his church. *And they shall call thee, The city of the Lord*—They shall acknowledge thee to be so, and to be so called, both from the love that God hath to thee, and from the presence of God with thee. As there is no account of any thing like this happening to the Jews, that any people, who had before persecuted and afflicted them, came and made submission to them in such a suppliant manner as is here represented, this must, of necessity, be considered as a description, either, 1st, Of that change of things which was made in the Roman empire, when the highest powers in it, even the emperors themselves, became Christians, in consequence of which the heathen became suppliants to the Christians, whom they had before treated in the most cruel and barbarous manner: or, 2d, Of that still greater change which shall take place, in this respect, when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ, and he will make his church's enemies to come and

\* The Zion of the Holy One of Israel. A. M. 3298  
B. C. 706. 15 ¶ Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations.

16 Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles, <sup>d</sup> and shalt suck the breast of kings: and thou shalt know that <sup>e</sup> I the LORD *am* thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.

<sup>c</sup> Heb. xii. 22; Rev. xiv. 1.—<sup>d</sup> Chap. xlix. 23; lxi. 6; lxxi. 11, 12.—<sup>e</sup> Chap. xliiii. 3.

worship, that is, to prostrate themselves before her feet, and to know that he has loved her, Rev. iii. 9.

Verse 15. *Whereas thou hast been forsaken—Both of God, as to outward appearance, and man; and hated*—Either slighted and neglected, or suffering actual miseries and slaughters; *so that no man went through thee*—Thy streets were left desolate, and thou wast in a manner depopulated. The state of the Christian Church, during the dark and persecuting ages of Popery, is here described, in language borrowed from Jerusalem lying in desolation. *I will make thee an eternal excellency*—Being reformed from idolatry and other superstitions and abominations, and thy members being enlightened with the truth, and regenerated by the grace of God, and thereby rendered wise and holy, thou shalt be blessed and exalted with continual tokens of the divine favour, and made a lasting and increasing blessing in the world. The Hebrew, לנאון עולם, is literally, *for a lifting up, or, an exaltation, continually, or, for ever. A joy of many generations*—Hebrew, *Of generation and generation*. The meaning is, that the church's prosperity and happiness should be the rejoicing and comfort of many succeeding ages, or the matter of their great and continual rejoicing. Bishop Lowth translates this clause, *I will make thee an everlasting boast, a subject of joy for perpetual generations*. It cannot be said of the Jewish nation, since this was uttered, that it has in any degree answered these characters. For after their restoration to their own land, they were first in subjection to the Persians, afterward to the Macedonians, the successors of Alexander the Great; whose yoke they had scarcely shaken off, when they fell under the power of the Romans, who treated them with great severity, and at last destroyed them, together with their city of Jerusalem, almost to an entire extirpation. So that we are compelled to look for the accomplishment of this prophecy in the Christian Church, the perpetual excellences of which far exceed those of the Jewish, and in the glorious privileges and blessings of the religion of Christ, which are indeed, and will be, *the joy of many generations*.

Verses 16, 17. *Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles*—A metaphor taken from children drawing nourishment from the breast. The sense is, that the church should draw, or receive, the wealth of

A. M. 3298. 17 For brass I will bring gold, and  
B. C. 706. for iron I will bring silver, and for  
wood brass, and for stones iron: I will also  
make thy officers peace, and thine exactors  
righteousness.

18 Violence shall no more be heard in thy  
land, wasting nor destruction within thy bor-  
ders; but thou shalt call <sup>f</sup> thy walls Salvation,  
and thy gates Praise.

<sup>f</sup> Chap. xxvi. 1.—<sup>g</sup> Rev. xxi. 23; xxii. 5.

nations, and the riches and power of kings, and whatever is most excellent; and that it should come freely and affectionately, as milk flows from the breast of the mother. *And thou shalt know*—Name-ly, shall experience; *that I the Lord*—Hebrew, *Jehovah*; *am thy Saviour*—That I have undertaken to save, and that I do and will save thee; *the mighty One of Jacob*—Not only of the literal, but also, and especially, of the spiritual Jacob, or Israel: as if he had said, These things will certainly be accomplished, for he is *the mighty God*, and so is able; and *the God of Jacob*, and so is obliged by covenant with, and relation to them, to deliver and protect his people. *For brass I will bring gold, &c.*—Here we have the effect of the preceding promise: Thy poverty shall be turned to riches; all things shall be altered for the best: it is an allusion to the days of Solomon, when gold was as plentiful as brass. If these words be considered as intended to be taken literally, it is sufficiently evident that they are not applicable to Jerusalem, which was never so enriched, after it was rebuilt, as to have greater riches than the Jews possessed before the wars which they waged with the Babylonians; nor was their state happier. And after Herod the Great, they were in a much worse condition, Judea being reduced to a province of the Roman empire, and governed and pillaged by the deputies or vicegerents of the emperors. Therefore all this is undoubtedly spoken of the Christian Church and of spiritual riches, namely, the privileges and blessings of the gospel. *I will also make thy officers peace*—That is, *men of peace, loving, meek, and friendly*. This was far from being the case with the Jews after their return out of captivity; for, though those who were first set over them, after their return, namely, Zerubbabel, Nehemiah, and others, governed them peaceably and mildly, yet it was not so in the following times; and after their high-priests took upon them the government, they grievously plundered and oppressed the people, and contended with one another with the most outrageous and cruel discord, as appears from Josephus, the Jewish historian. But the governors of the Christian Church, that is, of that church which only deserves the name of Christian, have been, and always will be, mild and gentle, and men of peace and clemency. *And thine exactors*—Or *rulers*, as Dr. Waterland renders עֲשֵׂרֵי. *Righteousness*—Most righteous, as before *peace* was put for peaceable.

Verse 18. *Violence shall no more be heard, &c.*—

19 The <sup>a</sup> sun shall be no more thy <sup>A. M. 3298.</sup>  
light by day: neither for brightness <sup>B. C. 706.</sup>  
shall the moon give light unto thee: but the  
LORD shall be unto thee an everlasting light,  
and <sup>b</sup> thy God thy glory.

20 <sup>i</sup> Thy sun shall no more go down; neither  
shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the LORD  
shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of  
thy mourning shall be ended.

<sup>b</sup> Zech. ii. 5.—<sup>i</sup> Amos viii. 9.

Neither the threats and triumphs of those that do violence, nor the outcries and complaints of those that suffer it, shall be heard again, but every man shall peaceably enjoy his own. *Wasting nor destruction*—Of persons or possessions, anywhere *within thy borders*—Thou shalt be secure from violence and injustice at home, and from invasion and war from abroad. *But thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, &c.*—They shall be safe and able to defend thee; thou shalt be as safe as salvation itself can make thee. And the protection and security, which God by his providence shall afford thee, shall be to thee continual matter of praise and thanksgiving. This verse, and what follows to the end of the chapter, seems to relate chiefly to that peaceable and happy state which the church shall enjoy in the latter days.

Verses 19, 20. *The sun shall be no more thy light, &c.*—The light of the sun and moon shall not be at all esteemed in comparison of the spiritual light of the church, which shall be so glorious as to eclipse all the light formerly enjoyed by her, the divine glory and majesty illuminating her much more brightly than the luminaries of heaven illuminate and adorn the theatre of nature. Or, as Lowth interprets the clause, “God’s favour and the light of his countenance shall give her greater comfort and lustre than the light of the sun and moon doth to the world.” Every reader must perceive that the passage is metaphorical, and it is here introduced to give the church assurance of *comfort*, as the preceding was to assure her of *safety*; so that God will not only be a *shield*, but a *sun* to her, Psa. lxxxiv. 11. *The Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light*—Christ shall scatter all thy darkness and ignorance, enlightening and comforting thee with the doctrines of the gospel, and the graces of his Spirit, and these blessings shall be *everlasting*, not waxing and waning, and suffering eclipses and settings, as the sun and moon do, but shall be constant, without shadow or change; *and thy God thy glory*—Always giving thee reason to glory in him; or, thy relation to him, and interest in him, as *thy God*, shall be thy greatest honour. *Thy sun shall no more go down, &c.*—Thy light and comfort shall be no more withdrawn. “If the church, under the economy of the external and typical covenant, saw only a temporary light, and underwent various changes of its state, at this time it shall rejoice for a long season with unchanged light, in a much more constant and happy

A. M. 3298. B. C. 706. 21 <sup>k</sup> Thy people also *shall be all righteous*: <sup>l</sup> they shall inherit the land for ever, <sup>m</sup> the branch of my planting, <sup>n</sup> the work of my hands, that I may be glorified.

<sup>k</sup> Chapter lii. 1; Revelation xxi. 27.—<sup>l</sup> Psalm xxxvii. 11, 22; Matt. v. 5.

state." *The days of thy mourning shall be ended*—The prosperity and happiness of the church shall be perpetual and uninterrupted. Hebrew, שלמו, *shall be recompensed*, that is, Thy days of rejoicing shall abundantly recompense all thy days of mourning. Observe, reader, "Jesus Christ is the eternal Sun and Light of his church, illuminating and sanctifying it by his Spirit, filling it with his glory, and prospering its whole state by his providence, for the end of eternal joy. (See Rev. xxii. 5.) Who will say that the church has ever yet enjoyed this blessing of divine providence and grace, in the full extent which is here marked out by the prophet?"—Vitringa.

Verses 21, 22. *Thy people shall be all righteous*—Through righteousness imputed to them, Rom. iv. 3-8, 23, 24; implanted in them, Eph. iv. 22-24; and practised by them, 1 John iii. 7; in other words, through the justification of their persons, the renovation of their nature, and their practical obedience to God's law. "It was proper," says Vitringa, "that the prophetic discourse, big with such excellent promises, should set forth the quality of the citizens of this blessed city; for so many and excellent privileges cannot belong to any but to such as are fitted for these times by divine grace. The prophet therefore teaches that the inhabitants of this city should be *all righteous*; where there can be no doubt that the righteousness of faith is meant; of living faith, purifying the soul, sanctifying the affections, abounding in charity, and never separated from true holiness: so that they who are called righteous here are the same who are elsewhere called holy." See the following parallel passages, chap. iv. 3, and xxxiii. 24, and xxxv. 8, and lii. 1; Zech. xiv. 20, 21. *They shall inherit the land for ever*—They shall for ever be continued as God's peculiar people; *the branch of my planting*—Born again of my Spirit, created in the Messiah, unto good works, Eph. ii. 10; broken off from the wild olive, and grafted into the good olive; transplanted out of the field into the nursery; that, being now

22 <sup>o</sup> A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation: I the LORD will hasten it in his time. A. M. 3298. B. C. 706.

<sup>o</sup> Chap. lxi. 3; Matt. xv. 13; John xv. 2.—<sup>p</sup> Chap. xxix. 23; xlv. 11; Eph. ii. 10.—<sup>q</sup> Matt. xiii. 31, 32.

planted in God's garden on earth, they might shortly be removed into his paradise in heaven; *that I may be glorified*—By the good fruit which they bear. *A little one shall become a thousand*—Rather, this should be rendered, *A little number shall become a thousand*. Though their beginning be very small and contemptible, and the members of the church very few, yet shall they greatly multiply, and increase into many hundreds of thousands and millions. Thus Daniel describes the kingdom of Christ as a stone, which, in process of time, becomes a great mountain, and fills the whole earth, which will be verified at the proper season, as it follows. *I the Lord will hasten it in his time*—Namely, in due time, the time that I have appointed; as if he had said, Let not this be doubted, because I have undertaken it, to whom nothing is difficult. Indeed this has been already accomplished in a considerable degree by the great progress the gospel has made. Never were means more unlikely employed to effect any purpose, never was there a stronger opposition; yet the gospel prevailed, and multitudes of both sexes, in different countries, became obedient to the faith, and looked upon it as their greatest glory. Vitringa, who closes his comment on this chapter with some excellent remarks, tending to show that it particularly refers to some future glorious state of the church, which will take place after the conversion of the Jews, and the coming in of the fulness of the Gentiles, concludes with the following important observation: "However, all our care and endeavour should be to conduct ourselves in a manner worthy of so high a hope; and we should so form our lives and manners as rather to regard things present than future; neglecting no duty of a true citizen of the spiritual Jerusalem, whereof we now profess ourselves members; that the expectation of the future may not deprive us of those blessings and privileges which God offers at present to all those who seriously and sincerely seek them; in the mean time humbly and earnestly interceding with him that his kingdom may come."

## CHAPTER LXI.

In this chapter we have, (1.) The appointment and qualifications of the Messiah for his work, according to his three offices of prophet, priest, and king, 1-3. (2.) Under the figure of the Jews repairing their cities, assisted by the Gentiles, of their peculiar relation to God, their distinguished and durable honour and prosperity, and their direction by God, are represented the glories and blessings of the gospel church, 4-9. (3.) The triumph of Jews and Christians in God, and his conferring righteousness, salvation, holiness, and comfort, are represented, 10, 11.

A. M. 3298. B. C. 706. **THE** <sup>a</sup> Spirit of the LORD God is upon me; because the LORD <sup>b</sup> hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me <sup>c</sup> to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim <sup>d</sup> liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to *them that are bound*;  
2 <sup>e</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the

<sup>a</sup> Chap. xi. 2; Luke iv. 18; John i. 32; iii. 34.—<sup>b</sup> Psa. xlv. 7.—<sup>c</sup> Psalm cxlvii. 3; Chap. lvii. 15.—<sup>d</sup> Chapter xlii. 7; Jer. xxxiv. 8.—<sup>e</sup> Lev. xxv. 9.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER LXI.

Verse 1. *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me*—To qualify me for effecting what is foretold and promised in the foregoing chapter. As Christ has applied this passage to himself, (see Luke iv. 16,) and assured us that it was fulfilled in him, we may, with the utmost reason, conclude that he is here introduced by the prophet in his own person, and not that the prophet speaks of himself, as some have thought. *Because, or rather, for, the Lord hath anointed me*—Hath commissioned me with authority, qualified me with gifts, and set me apart, for the important offices here mentioned. Prophets, priests, and kings, among the Jews, were usually appointed and set apart to their several offices, as we have repeatedly seen, by anointing them with oil, which ceremony was used by the express command of God, and was intended to show, not only that the persons so anointed were called to, but were, or should be, qualified for, these offices, with suitable gifts and graces. But the anointing of Christ, who was to sustain offices incomparably more important, and productive of infinitely greater effects, was of another nature, he being anointed, not with external and corruptible oil, but with the eternal Spirit of the incorruptible God, which qualified him for every part of the great work to which he was called, beyond all others that were before him. Which Spirit he had without measure, John iii. 34; and therefore is said (Psa. xlv. 7; Heb. i. 9) to be anointed *with the oil of gladness above his fellows*. *To preach good tidings*—Namely, tidings of salvation, of pardoning mercy, of renewing grace, and of eternal glory; *unto the meek*—Or, *poor*, as the words are rendered by the LXX., whom the evangelists follow, Luke iv. 18; Matt. xi. 5; namely, to the penitent, the humble, and *poor in spirit*; to whom the tidings of a Redeemer, and of salvation through him, are indeed good tidings, *faithful sayings, and worthy of all acceptance*. These, and even the poor, as to worldly circumstances, are best disposed to receive the gospel, Jam. ii. 5; and then it is likely to profit them when it is received *with meekness*, as it ought to be. This relates to Christ's prophetic office. *To bind up the broken-hearted*—To give relief and comfort to persons burdened and distressed with a sense of the guilt and power of their sins, and of the wrath of God, to which they are obnoxious. It is a metaphor taken from surgeons binding up

LORD, and <sup>f</sup> the day of vengeance of our God; <sup>g</sup> to comfort all that mourn;

3 To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, <sup>h</sup> to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called *Trees of righteousness*, <sup>i</sup> The planting of the LORD, <sup>k</sup> that he might be glorified.

<sup>f</sup> Chap. xxxiv. 8; lxiii. 4; lxvi. 14; Mal. iv. 1, 3; 2 Thess. i. 7, 8, 9.—<sup>g</sup> Chap. lvii. 18; Matt. v. 4.—<sup>h</sup> Psa. xxx. 11. <sup>i</sup> Chap. lx. 21.—<sup>k</sup> John xv. 8.

wounds: see chap. i. 6. This relates to Christ's priestly office, his blood being the true expiation of sin, and the procuring cause of pardon and peace to the guilty. *To proclaim liberty to the captives*—Namely, liberty from the dominion and bondage of sin and Satan, of the world and the flesh, and from the slavish, tormenting fear of death and hell. This appertains to his kingly office. And those whom he, who is exalted to be a *prince*, as well as a Saviour, *makes free, are free indeed*; not only discharged from the miseries of captivity and bondage, but advanced to all the immunities and dignities of citizens. This is the gospel proclamation, and it is like the blowing of the jubilee trumpet, which proclaimed the great year of release, Lev. xxv. 9, 40; in allusion to which, it is here called *the acceptable year of the Lord*; the time in which men should find acceptance with God, which is the origin of their liberties: or, it is called *the year of the Lord*, because it publishes his free grace, to his own glory; *and an acceptable year*, because it brings glad tidings to us; and what cannot but be very acceptable to those who know the capacities and necessities of their own souls.

Verses 2, 3. *And the day of vengeance of our God*—Namely, on those who reject or neglect these gracious offers of mercy and salvation: they shall not only be left in their captivity, as they deserve to be, but shall be dealt with as enemies. We have the gospel summed up, Mark xvi. 16, where that part of it, *he that believeth shall be saved*, proclaims *the acceptable year of the Lord* to those that will accept it; but the other part, *he that believeth not shall be damned*, proclaims *the day of vengeance of our God*; that vengeance that he will take on those that *obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ*, 2 Thess. i. 8; see also Heb. x. 27–30; Matt. xxiv. 21; Rev. xviii. 1. The clause seems to have an especial reference to the time in which God punished the unbelieving and disobedient Jews by the destruction of Jerusalem, and the unparalleled calamities that came upon their nation. We find Christ, in several of his discourses, threatening them with the judgments of God for their rejecting him. And he calls the destruction of Jerusalem *the days of vengeance*, Luke xxi. 22, the very expression made use of here. *To comfort all that mourn*—Either on account of their sins, or their sufferings, or the desolations and miseries of the spiritual Zion, his church;

A. M. 3298. 4 ¶ And they shall <sup>1</sup> build the old  
B. C. 706. wastes, they shall raise up the former  
desolations, and they shall repair the waste ci-  
ties, the desolations of many generations.

5 And <sup>m</sup> strangers shall stand and feed your  
flocks, and the sons of the alien *shall be* your  
ploughmen and your vine-dressers.

6 <sup>a</sup> But ye shall be named the Priests of the

<sup>1</sup> Chap. xlix. 8; lviii. 12; Ezek. xxxvi. 33-36.—<sup>m</sup> Eph.  
ii. 12.

and who, mourning, seek to him, and not to the world, for comfort. He not only provides comfort for them, and proclaims it, but he applies and bestows it by giving them the Comforter. There is enough in him to comfort all that mourn, whatever their afflictions or sorrows may be; but this comfort is sure to them that *mourn in Zion*, that is, that *sorrow after a godly sort*, and apply by faith and prayer to God in Christ for relief and consolation. *To appoint unto them beauty*—Or rather, *ornament*, (as the Hebrew עָמַד more properly signifies,) *for ashes*. Bishop Lowth renders the clause, *To give them a beautiful crown instead of ashes; the oil of gladness instead of sorrow*; observing, “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.” *The oil of joy*—Which makes the face to shine, instead of that mourning which disfigures the countenance, and makes it unlovely. This *oil of joy* the saints have from that *oil of gladness* with which Christ himself *was anointed above his fellows*. *The garments of praise*—Such beautiful garments as were worn on thanksgiving days, instead of the *spirit of heaviness*. Hebrew, כִּרְהָ, *contraction, dimness, or obscurity*; “open joys,” says Henry, “for secret mournings. Zion’s mourners keep the spirit of heaviness to themselves, and weep in secret; but the joy, with which they are recompensed, they are *clothed with*, as with a garment, in the eyes of others.” Observe, reader, where God gives the *oil of joy*, he gives the *garment of praise*. Those comforts which come from God dispose the heart to, and enlarge the heart in, thanksgivings to God. *That they might be called trees of righteousness*—That they might be righteous persons, deeply rooted by faith in the ground of gospel truth, solid and firm in sincerity, fortitude, and patience; ornaments to God’s vineyard, and bringing forth fruit suitable to the soil wherein they are planted. *The planting of the Lord*—Planted by that holy Lord who, being himself holy and righteous, would plant none but such: see on chap. lx. 21. *That he might be glorified*—Namely, by the fruit they bear; for *herein is our heavenly Father glorified, that we bring forth much fruit*.

Verses 4, 5. *They shall build the old wastes*—See on chap. lviii. 12. As this is evidently to be understood of gospel times, the meaning seems to be, that

Lord: *men* shall call you the Ministers of our God: <sup>o</sup> ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves.

7 ¶ <sup>p</sup> For your shame *ye shall have* double; and *for* confusion they shall rejoice in their portion: therefore in their land they shall possess the double: everlasting joy shall be unto them.

<sup>a</sup> Exod. xix. 6; Chap. lx. 17; lxvi. 21; 1 Pet. ii. 5, 9; Rev. i. 6; v. 10.—<sup>o</sup> Chap. lx. 5, 11, 16.—<sup>p</sup> Chap. xl. 2; Zech. ix. 12.

the establishment of Christianity in the world should repair the decays of true religion, of genuine piety and virtue, which had been at a very low ebb, not only in the Gentile nations, which were all idolatrous, but also among the Jews, for many centuries. By the ministry of John the Baptist, of our Lord, and his apostles, many thousands of spiritual worshippers were raised up to God in Judea, and the adjacent parts; and when the ministers of the word were sent into the Gentile countries, the cities and provinces which had been as a wilderness, overrun with briars and thorns, *became as Eden, and the deserts like the garden of the Lord*: truth and grace, wisdom and piety, godliness and righteousness, with *joy and gladness, were found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of melody*, chap. li. 3. *And strangers*—Namely, Gentiles, such as were not of the natural race of the Jews, but Gentile converts; *shall stand*—Ready to be at thy service; *and feed your flocks*—The churches, with the word of God. *And the sons of the alien*—The same with the *strangers* before mentioned, or their successors; *shall be your ploughmen, &c.*—Shall manage the whole work of God’s spiritual husbandry. See 1 Corin. iii. 6-9.

Verses 6, 7. *But ye shall be named the Priests, &c.*—The whole body of you shall now be as near to God as the priests were formerly, and shall be a royal priesthood, 1 Pet. ii. 9. This is most certainly true of all the faithful under the gospel; hence they have also their spiritual sacrifices, Rom. xii. 1; Heb. xiii. 15, 16; 1 Pet. ii. 5. *Ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles*—Partake of their plenty; *and in their glory shall ye boast*—You shall be highly advanced by the addition of all that is glorious in them. The LXX. render it, *εν τω πλετω αυτων θαυμασθησεσθε, you shall be wonderful, or the objects of admiration, through their riches*; that is, by the glory which they shall bring to you, namely, in riches, parts, learning, chap. lx. 5, 11. *For your shame ye shall have double*—Honour; though you have been little accounted of among the Gentiles, yet now you shall be highly esteemed by them; you shall have double damages. See on chap. xl. 2. *They shall rejoice in their portion*—Namely, of honour, which God will give them. It is a repetition of that which is asserted in the former clause. *Therefore, or, rather, because, they shall possess the double*—Because of the doubling of their portion; *everlasting joy shall be unto them*—Joy that shall continue long here, and shall

A. M. 3298. B. C. 706. 8 For <sup>a</sup> I the LORD love judgment, <sup>r</sup> I hate robbery for burnt-offering; and I will direct their work in truth, <sup>s</sup> and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.

9 And their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people: all that see them shall acknowledge them, <sup>t</sup> that they are the seed which the LORD hath blessed.

10 <sup>u</sup> I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my

<sup>a</sup> Psa. xi. 7.—<sup>r</sup> Chap. i. 11, 13.—<sup>s</sup> Chap. lv. 3.—<sup>t</sup> Chap. lxxv. 23.—<sup>u</sup> Hab. iii. 18.—<sup>v</sup> Psa. cxxxii. 9, 16.

be everlasting hereafter. The meaning of this prediction seems to be, that though the first Christians should have a large share of shame or ignominy thrown upon them, yet their descendants should, in return, receive a double share of honour and glory. This accordingly came to pass: Christianity, from being considered as the greatest infamy, and being loaded with the greatest shame, came into the highest repute when Constantine became emperor, and received the highest honours that could possibly be paid, and was, as it were, loaded with glory, riches, and honour.<sup>v</sup>

Verses 8, 9. *For I the Lord love judgment*—I will do them right, for I love justice in myself, and in them that practise it. *I hate robbery for burnt-offerings*—I hate all things gotten by injustice, though they be for sacrifice. As God will not accept of that which cost nothing, so much less of that which is the effect of rapine and oppression. *And I will direct their work in truth*—I will lead them so, that they shall do all things in sincerity. They shall do good works with good intentions, and to good ends: they shall love truth, and walk in truth, and serve God in spirit and truth. *I will make an everlasting covenant with them*—Though they have broken covenant with me, yet I will renew my ancient covenant made with their fathers, confirmed with the blood of the Messiah; and it shall be everlasting, never to be abrogated. *And their seed shall be known among the Gentiles*—That is, eminently; a promise of the increase of the church: such shall be their prosperity and multiplying, that they shall be known abroad by their great increase: or else the meaning is, the church shall have a seed of the Gentiles; whereas the church has been confined to one corner of the world, now it shall remain in one nation alone no more, but shall fill all the nations of the earth. *All shall acknowledge they are the seed which the Lord hath blessed*—Such shall be the visible characters of God's love to them, and of God's grace in them.

A. M. 3298. B. C. 706. <sup>w</sup> he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, <sup>x</sup> as a bridegroom <sup>y</sup> decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.

11 For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause <sup>z</sup> righteousness and <sup>a</sup> praise to spring forth before all the nations.

<sup>w</sup> Chap. xlix. 18; Rev. xxi. 2.—<sup>x</sup> Heb. decketh as a priest.—<sup>y</sup> Psa. lxxii. 3; lxxxv. 11.—<sup>z</sup> Chap. lx. 18; lxii. 7.

Verse 10. *I will greatly rejoice in the Lord*—This is spoken in the person of the church, wherein she thankfully acknowledges God's kindness to her in the fore-mentioned promises. *My soul shall be joyful in my God*—The expression here is varied, but the sense is the same with that in the former clause. *He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, &c.*—With salvation as with a garment, and with righteousness as with a robe: the salvation that God will work for me will render me as beautiful and considerable as they are that are clothed with the richest garments. *As the bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments*—Hebrew, כהן יכהן כתר, as the bridegroom decketh himself with a priestly crown; so Bishop Lowth translates it, observing that it is "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, Exod. xxix. 6. The bonnet or mitre of the priests also was made, as Moses expresses it, 'for glory and for beauty,' Exod. xxviii. 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: *ως νυμφιον υπερευομενον στεφανω,*" as a bridegroom exercising the priest's office in a crown.

Verse 11. *For as the earth bringeth forth, &c.*—By this and the other metaphor here used, the church shows, not only the revival and restoration of her blessings, after they had been, as it were, dead and lost in the winter of affliction, but the great plenty and abundance of them that should spring forth and flourish: what had been as a wilderness should be as a paradise, referring to the effects of God's grace and bounty. *So the Lord will cause righteousness*—That is, his great work of salvation; *and praise*—As the natural product and fruit of it; *to spring forth*—To break out and appear; *before all nations*—These things will not be done in a corner, but will be eminently conspicuous in the sight of all the world.

## CHAPTER LXII.

In this chapter, by the typical intercession of Isaiah, and his fellow-prophets, for the prosperity and happiness of the Jews, after their captivity in Babylon, are represented the glories of the Christian Church, procured by the intercession of Jesus Christ and his ministers and disciples. Here are, (1.) Earnest intercessions for the church's vindication, enlargement, and prosperity, 1, 6, 7. (2.) In answer to these, it is promised that the church should be rendered honourable before men, 2. Highly prized, dearly loved, closely united with, and delighted in by God, 3-5. Happily furnished with faithful ministers, and with means of grace, and other necessary comforts, 6, 8, 9. Redeemed from captivity, privileged with the enjoyment of Christ and his salvation, and renowned as the saved, sanctified, and never-forsaken people of God, 10-12.

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**F**OR Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.

2 \*And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: <sup>b</sup> and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the LORD shall name.

\* Chap. lx. 3.—<sup>b</sup> Ver. 4, 12; Chap. lxxv. 15.—<sup>c</sup> Zech. ix. 16.  
<sup>d</sup> Hos. i. 10; 1 Pet. ii. 10.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER LXII.

Verses 1, 2. *For Zion's sake*—Namely, the church's sake, Zion and Jerusalem being both put for the church, Heb. xii. 22. *Will I not hold my peace*—It appears from the last verse of the preceding chapter, that this is immediately connected with it, and these may be considered as the words of the prophet, or, as Vitringa thinks, of a prophetic choir, representing the whole body of the ministers of God, and, among these particularly, the apostles and evangelists, at the beginning of the gospel; declaring that they will not be silent, till the righteousness of the church, that is, its redemption, (alluding to the redemption of the Jewish Church from Babylon,) shall go forth as brightness, &c.—That is, till the kingdom of God shall be most brightly and completely revealed. Others, however, think that the prophet speaks here as the type of Christ, and in his name, and that Christ is to be considered here as declaring his resolution not to cease interceding for the church until it should be freed from the obloquy and reproach, the vexations and persecutions of the Jews and heathen; until its righteousness should be placed in a clear light, and all those crimes which were falsely charged on the Christians by their enemies, (namely, respecting their nightly assemblies, their killing of infants, and drinking their blood, their promiscuous lust, &c.) should be undeniably confuted. For when the assemblies of the Christians came to be held openly, and in the day-time, and were frequented by greater numbers, all these calumnies were proved to be false. And when Constantine came to the empire, especially when he came to have the sole command, the Christian religion was raised out of its state of obscurity, was placed in a true and conspicuous point of view, and freed from the unmerited reproach that had been cast upon it. *And the Gentiles shall see thy right-*

3 Thou shalt also be <sup>e</sup> a crown of A. M. 3298. glory in the hand of the LORD, and <sup>f</sup> a royal diadem in the hand of thy God. B. C. 706.

4 <sup>d</sup>Thou shalt no more be termed <sup>e</sup> Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed <sup>f</sup> Desolate: but thou shalt be called <sup>1</sup> Hephzi-bah, and thy land <sup>2</sup> Beulah: for the LORD delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married.

\* Chap. xlix. 14; liv. 6.—<sup>1</sup> Chap. liv. 1.—<sup>2</sup> That is, My delight is in her.—<sup>3</sup> That is, Married.

*eousness*—Thy innocence with respect to the things laid to thy charge, and the blamelessness, usefulness, and the holiness of thy members. Or, they shall acknowledge that God has justly honoured thee, and thereupon shall join themselves to thee. *And all kings thy glory*—Those that were wont to scorn thee, shall now be taken up with the admiration of thy glory. *And thou shalt be called by a new name*—Not the seed of Abraham, or the children of Israel, but the people and children of God; or by the name mentioned verse 4. *Which the mouth of the Lord shall name*—Thou shalt be brought into a new state, far more glorious than formerly, whereof God shall be the author. Or, thou shalt be called by another name, as it is expressed chap. lxxv. 15. A name, the honour whereof shall make thee famous; ye shall be called Christians.

Verse 3. *Thou shalt be a crown of glory*—Or, a beautiful crown, as Bishop Lowth renders *קטרת תפארת*. The expression is meant to set forth the dignity of her state. *In the hand of the Lord*—Preserved and defended by God's hand. *And a royal diadem*—The same thing with the former for substance. Or the royal priesthood, whereof the apostle speaks, 1 Pet. ii. 9. *In the hand of thy God*—Or palm, or grasp, as *כַּבֵּץ* ought rather to be rendered. The meaning is, that the Christian Church should become glorious in the hand of the Lord, that is, under his protection and blessing, and that God would hold it fast in his hand, figuratively speaking, and in the very palm of it, as what was extremely dear and precious in his sight, so that none should take it from him.

Verses 4, 5. *Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken*—As a woman forsaken by her husband. *Neither shall thy land be termed Desolate*—Neither shall thy places of worship be empty, and thine ordinances of service be unfrequented. He alludes to

A. M. 3298. 5 For as a young man marieth a  
B. C. 706. virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee:

and <sup>3</sup> as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride,  
so <sup>5</sup> shall thy God rejoice over thee.

6 ¶ <sup>h</sup> I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O  
Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace  
day nor night: <sup>4</sup> ye that make mention of the  
LORD, keep not silence,

7 And give him no <sup>5</sup> rest, till he establish,

<sup>3</sup> Heb. with the joy of the bridegroom.—<sup>4</sup> Chap. lxx. 19.  
<sup>5</sup> Ezek. iii. 17; xxxiii. 7.—<sup>6</sup> Or, ye that are the LORD'S re-

membrancers.—<sup>5</sup> Heb. silence.—<sup>1</sup> Chap. lxi. 11; Zeph. iii. 20.  
<sup>6</sup> Heb. If I give.—<sup>k</sup> Deut. xxviii. 31, &c.; Jer. v. 17.

the desolation of Judah during the Babylonish captivity. But thou shalt be called *Hephzi-bah*—*My delight is in her*; a new name, agreeing with her new condition; and thy land, *Beulah*—*Married*, agreeing to her new relation. Whereas she was in a desolate condition, she shall now be as a woman well married, to the great improvement of her state. And thy land shall be married—Thou shalt see the increase of thy children again in the land, as the fruit of thy married condition, who, by reason of thy being forsaken of thy husband, were, in a manner, wasted and decayed: and this refers to the great enlargement of the church in the gospel days. Or, thy land shall be possessed, as תכיל may be properly rendered, and so the expression answers to desolate. Thou shalt be no more desolate, but possessed. For as a young man marieth a virgin—In whom he takes great delight, and whom he exceedingly loves; so shall thy sons marry thee—That is, they shall live with thee, and take great delight in thee. For, as Lowth justly observes, “the word marry is not to be taken strictly, for it would be improper to say that children married their mother.” Thus the LXX., *ως κατοικησιν οι υιοις*, so shall thy sons dwell with thee. Bishop Lowth, however, instead of sons, renders בניך, thy builder, or creator, altering or disregarding the Hebrew points. This emendation, it must be acknowledged, would clear the prophet of the impropriety of using a similitude, which implies that Jerusalem was guilty of incest in marrying her sons; and at the same time would add not only grace but force to the whole verse, which, so altered, runs thus: For, as a young man marieth a virgin, so shall thy Creator marry thee. And as the bridegroom, &c.—The former interpretation, however, which has the sanction of the LXX., and which the present pointing of the Hebrew requires, seems preferable. In the first clause, As a young man marieth a virgin, Sir John Chardin, in his MS. note on the place, considers the prophet as expressing himself according to the custom of the East, which was, and is, “for youths, that were never married, always to marry virgins; and widowers, however young, to marry widows.” See Harmer’s *Observ.*, xliii. p. 482.

Verses 6, 7. *I have set watchmen, &c.*—The word שכיר, thus rendered, signifies properly those priests and Levites who kept watch day and night about the temple, and is from them applied to the spiritual watchmen and ministers of the Christian

and till he make Jerusalem <sup>1</sup> a praise A. M. 3298  
in the earth. B. C. 706

8 ¶ The LORD hath sworn by his right hand, and by the arm of his strength, <sup>6</sup> Surely I will no more <sup>k</sup> give thy corn to be meat for thine enemies; and the sons of the strangers shall not drink thy wine, for the which thou hast laboured:

9 But they that have gathered it shall eat it,

Church. They are said to be set upon the walls of the spiritual Jerusalem, in allusion to sentinels placed upon the walls of besieged cities, from whence they have an extensive prospect, that they may observe and give notice of the motions of the enemy. Which shall never hold their peace day nor night—There shall be a vigilant, faithful, and diligent ministry, willing to endure hardships, and constant in their work of teaching and warning the people, or of interceding for them, which constancy is intimated here by day and night. Ye that make mention of the Lord—That is, that are his servants, and acknowledge your relation to him as such: see chap. xxvi. 13. Here especially are meant his servants in ordinary, his remembrancers, as the word זכור may be properly translated, either such as put God in remembrance of his promises, or such as make the Lord to be remembered, putting his people in mind of him. Keep not silence—As if he had said, Since God, by his peculiar goodness and care of his church, hath appointed watchmen to be placed upon its walls, that they may constantly watch for its safety, therefore do you, who are intrusted with this office, perform your parts diligently, and intercede continually with him, that he would graciously fulfil the magnificent promises which he has made to it. In the command here given, not to keep silence, Bishop Lowth thinks there is an allusion to the manner in which watches are kept in the East. “Even to this day,” says he, “they 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.” “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.’”—*Tavern. Voyage. de Perse*, lib. i. chap. x. And give him no rest—Persevere, and be importunate in your supplications. Observe, reader, fervency and importunity in prayer are very acceptable to God, as implying the sincere and earnest desire of the person praying for the blessings which he asks: see Luke xi. 5-10; and xviii. 1-7. Till he establish, &c.—Till he so settle his church on sure foundations, and enlarge its borders, that it shall become a blessing to all nations, and all nations shall praise him for it, Psa. lxxvii. 3, 4; or that it may be praised, and become renowned and famous in the eyes of the whole world.

Verses 8, 9. *The Lord hath sworn by his right*

A. M. 3298. and praise the LORD; and they that  
B. C. 706. have brought it together shall drink  
it <sup>1</sup> in the courts of my holiness.

10 ¶ Go through, go through the gates; <sup>m</sup> pre-  
pare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up  
the highway; gather out the stones; <sup>n</sup> lift up  
a standard for the people.

11 Behold, the LORD hath proclaimed unto

<sup>1</sup> Deut. xii. 12; xiv. 23, 26; xvi. 11, 14.—<sup>m</sup> Chap. xl. 3; lvii.  
14.—<sup>n</sup> Chap. xi. 12.

*hand*—“Lifting up the hand was a ceremony used in swearing, Deut. xxxii. 40; Ezek. xx. 5, 15. And here God swears by that very hand which used to be held up at the taking of an oath; that is, he swears by his power and might, as it follows, that the enemies of his people should not interrupt that peace and plenty which he should give them, but that they should quietly enjoy his blessings with hearts full of thankfulness for them. This must relate to some happier condition than the Jews enjoyed after their return from captivity, when their enemies frequently invaded them, and, at last, the Romans destroyed both their temple and nation.”—Lowth. The passage is undoubtedly metaphorical; and is to be understood of the free and undisturbed enjoyment of the spiritual blessings of religion, which God will grant the Christian Church in the latter days: and “the oath which ushers in this promise proves that it will be exactly and punctually performed.” See Joel ii. 24; and iii. 18; Jer. xxxi. 12; Zech. ix. 17. The expressions in the next verse, particularly in the latter part of it, allude to the ordinances of the law, which required the people to spend their first-fruits, and other hallowed things, at the temple, in a thankful acknowledgment to God for his blessings, Deut. xii. 11; and xiv. 23, 26.

Verse 10. *Go through the gates*—Namely, the gates of Babylon, which shall be thrown open, that those confined in that idolatrous city may leave it with freedom, and return to the land of Israel. In other words, for the expressions are metaphorical, let all obstructions be removed out of the way of the heathen, that they may have free liberty to bid adieu to their idolatries and vices, and come to, and unite themselves with, the Christian Church. Or, the words may be considered as a command given to the ministers and friends of the church to go forth through Zion’s gates, to invite the nations of the earth to turn to God, and join themselves to his people; and, in order thereto, as far as possible, to prepare their way plain before them, as it follows; or to endeavour to win them over by their pure doctrine, their holy lives, and benevolent actions. The expressions are twice doubled, to give them the greater emphasis. *Gather out the stones*—Let no

the end of the world, ° Say ye to the A. M. 3298.  
daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salva- B. C. 706.  
tion cometh; behold, his <sup>p</sup> reward is with him,  
and his <sup>r</sup> work before him.

12 And they shall call them, The holy peo-  
ple, The redeemed of the LORD: and thou  
shalt be called, Sought out, A city <sup>q</sup> not for-  
saken.

° Zech. ix. 9; Matt. xxi. 5; John xii. 15.—<sup>p</sup> Chap. xl. 10;  
Rev. xxii. 12.—<sup>r</sup> Or, recompense.—<sup>q</sup> Verse 4.

rock of offence, or stone of stumbling, remain in the way. As if he had said, Go to and fro, and remove every scandal and impediment, and make plain paths for their feet, Rom. xiv. 13. *Lift up a standard*—An allusion to generals, who usually set up their standards that the soldiers may know whither to repair from all quarters: see chap. xlix. 22. Thus is Christ held forth in the preaching of the gospel.

Verses 11, 12. *The Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the world*—Hath commanded his gospel to be preached to every creature: or hath sent forth his messengers into all parts of the world, in order to the conversion of Jews and Gentiles. *Say ye to the daughter of Zion*—That is, to Jerusalem, or the church. *Behold, thy salvation cometh*—Either the time of it is come, or rather the person that effects it, thy Saviour. *Behold, his reward is with him*—That is, he has it in his power, and is ready to reward his faithful servants; and his work before him—The work necessary to be wrought in and upon his people, to make them his people, the work of regeneration and sanctification. *And they shall call them*—Or, they shall be called; *the holy people*—A people peculiarly holy, cured of their inclination to idolatry, and all other sins, and consecrated to God only. *The redeemed of the Lord*—So redeemed as none but God could redeem them; and redeemed to be his, the bonds whereby other lords held them in subjection being broken, that they might be his servants. *And thou shalt be called, Sought out*—Or one found that was lost, Ezek. xxxiv. 16. Or rather, *sought to, or sought for*, that is, one in great esteem and request; one that the Gentiles shall seek to join themselves to, so as to be one church with thee. Or, *one cared for*, namely, by God, whom he hath, out of infinite love, gathered to himself. *A city not forsaken*—The meaning is, that they should thus esteem the gospel church, that she should be accosted with such salutations as these are, *the holy people, the redeemed of the Lord, &c.* Vitringa thinks that the first completion of this prophecy is to be sought for in the times of the Emperor Constantine; but it is probable that it has a further reference to some great and future reformation and restoration of the church.

## CHAPTER LXIII.

The fifth and last discourse of the fifth part of Isaiah's prophecies, according to Vitringa, is contained in this and the following chapters, which, with the two preceding, he considers as being explanatory of the prophecies contained in the great and important discourse from chapter 51st to the 60th inclusive. And, as the three last chapters contain a description of the glorious state of the church in the latter days, when it shall be enlarged by the conversion of the Jews, and the fulness of the Gentiles; so now the prophet comes to describe the day of vengeance, mentioned chap. lxi. 2. We have in this chapter, (1.) A dialogue between the prophet, or the church, and Christ, in which the latter is represented as returning in triumph from the slaughter of his enemies, 1-6. (2.) A devout meditation upon God's former mercies to his people, 7-9. (3.) On their rebellions and provocations, followed both by God's judgments and mercies, 10-14. (4.) An humble and earnest prayer to God that he would appear for them in their present distress, pleading his mercy, their relation to him, their desire toward him, and the insolence of their enemies, 15-19.

A. M. 3298.  
B. C. 706.

**WHO** is this that cometh from  
Edom, with dyed garments from  
Bozrah? this that is <sup>1</sup>glorious in his apparel,

<sup>1</sup> Heb.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER LXIII.

Verse 1. "The very remarkable passage," says Bishop Lowth, "with which this chapter begins, seems 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 honour 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?

"I conclude 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, Matt. xxiv. 16-28; Luke xxi. 22. But,

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travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.

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deded.

though this prophecy must have its accomplishment, there is no necessity of 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. xxxviii., and in the Revelation of St. John, chap. xx., 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 imago of the prophet, Rev. xix. 13, 15, 16. Compare chap. xxxiv."

*Who is this, &c.*—Either the prophet, as in some vision or ecstasy, or the church, makes inquiry, and that with admiration, who it is that appears in such a habit or posture, verse 1, and why, verse 2; *that cometh from Edom*—That is, Idumea, the country where Esau, sometimes called *Edom*, dwelt. It is here put for all the enemies of God's church, as it is also chap. xxxiv. 5, 6, where see the notes. "The Idumeans," it must be observed, "joined with the enemies of the Jews in bringing on the destruction of Jerusalem, in the time of the captivity, for which they were severely reproved by the prophets, and threatened with utter destruction, which accordingly came to pass; the prophets, therefore, generally apply the name of this people to signify any inveterate and cruel enemy, as in this place. But the words *Edom* and *Bozrah* may be taken in the appellative sense, to denote in general, *a field of blood, or a place of slaughter*; the word *Edom* signifying *red*, and *Bozrah* *a vintage*, which, in the prophetic idiom, imports God's vengeance upon the wicked."—Lowth. *With dyed or stained garments*—Thus Christ is described Rev. xix. 13, where also he is represented as taking vengeance on his enemies. The LXX. render it *ερυθρὰ μαριῶν, redness of garments*. *This that is glorious*—Or magnificent, as Bishop Lowth renders it; *in his apparel, travelling*—Marching on, *in the greatness of his strength*—Like a general marching in triumph at the head of his army, and carrying tokens of victory upon his raiment. *I that speak in righteousness*—

3

A. M. 3298. 2 Wherefore <sup>a</sup> art thou red in thine  
B. C. 706. apparel, and thy garments like him  
that treadeth in the wine-fat?

3 I have <sup>b</sup> trodden the wine-press alone; and  
of the people *there was* none with me: for I  
will tread them in mine anger, and trample  
them in my fury, and their blood shall be  
sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain  
all my raiment.

4 For the <sup>c</sup> day of vengeance *is* in my heart,  
and the year of my redeemed is come.

5 <sup>d</sup> And I looked, and <sup>e</sup> there was none to  
help; and I wondered that *there was* none to

<sup>a</sup> Rev. xix. 13.—<sup>b</sup> Lam. i. 15; Rev. xiv. 19, 20; xix. 15.  
<sup>c</sup> Chap. xxxiv. 8; lxi. 2.

I the Messiah, who never promise any thing but  
what I will faithfully perform, and who do and will  
always truly execute justice: *mighty to save*—Per-  
fectly able to effect the promised redemption of my  
people, whatever difficulties and oppositions may lie  
in the way of it, and to accomplish their full salva-  
tion. Bishop Lowth renders the clause, *I who pub-  
lish, or announce righteousness, and am mighty to  
save*, observing, that a MS. has הכריז, with the demon-  
strative article added, giving greater force and  
emphasis to the expression, *The Announcer of  
righteousness*.

Verses 2-4. *Wherefore art thou red, &c.*—The  
dialogue is continued, and the prophet or the church,  
having inquired concerning the person, now inquires  
why his habit has been thus sprinkled and stained.  
*I have trodden the wine-press alone*—I have des-  
troyed the enemies of my people, I have crushed  
them as grapes are crushed; this being a usual me-  
taphor to describe the utter destruction of a people,  
Psa. xlv. 5; Rev. xiv. 19, 20; and the ease with  
which God can do it, which is no more than to crush  
a bunch of grapes. This exactly agrees with what  
is said of Christ Rev. xix. 15, *That he treadeth the  
wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty  
God*. Bishop Lowth has observed, that “there is an  
energy and sublimity in this description, which is  
not to be paralleled in any language.” *And of the  
people there was none with me*—I have delivered my  
people, and destroyed their enemies by my own  
power, without any human help. Thus he destroy-  
ed the Assyrians, chap. xxxvii. 36. Thus he infatu-  
ated the Babylonians, and opened the two-leaved  
gates for Cyrus, chap. xlv. 1. Thus he divided the  
sea and Jordan before Israel of old, and overthrew  
Jericho, and the kings and nations of Canaan. It is  
true he often makes use of instruments in conquer-  
ing, whether the temporal or spiritual enemies of his  
people; but he needs them not; and when he em-  
ploys them, they act by commission and authority  
derived from him, and by strength which he commu-  
nicates to them. *For I will tread, &c.*—Or, rather,  
*I trod them in mine anger, and I trampled them in  
mine indignation, and their blood*—Hebrew, צַחֵם,

uphold: therefore mine own <sup>f</sup> arm A. M. 3298.  
brought salvation unto me: and my <sup>g</sup> B. C. 706.  
fury, it upheld me.

6 And I will tread down the people in mine  
anger, and <sup>h</sup> make them drunk in my fury, and  
I will bring down their strength to the earth.

7 <sup>i</sup> I will mention the loving-kindnesses of the  
LORD, and the praises of the LORD, according  
to all that the LORD hath bestowed on us, and  
the great goodness toward the house of Israel,  
which he hath bestowed on them according to  
his mercies, and according to the multitude of  
his <sup>j</sup> loving-kindnesses.

<sup>d</sup> Chap. xli. 28; lix. 16.—<sup>e</sup> John xxi. 32.—<sup>f</sup> Psa. xxviii. 1;  
Chap. lix. 16.—<sup>g</sup> Rev. xvi. 6.

*robur eorum, their strength*; Bishop Lowth renders  
it, *their life-blood was sprinkled on my garments*.  
*For the day of vengeance*—The day designed and  
appointed by me, wherein to take vengeance on the  
enemies of my church, *is, or rather, was, in my  
heart*—So that I could not forget nor neglect to ex-  
ecute it: see notes on chap. xxxiv. 8, and lxi. 1. *And  
the year of my redeemed*—The year appointed for  
their redemption, *is or was come*—Though it seemed  
to tarry, and his people might be ready to give up al-  
l hope of it, it came at last, and did not disappoint their  
expectations.

Verses 5, 6. *I looked, and there was none to help*  
—“Things were come to that extremity, that there  
was no appearance of succour by any human means.  
Those who, by their office and character, ought to  
have stood up in defence of oppressed truth and  
righteousness, even they, contrary to what might  
have been justly expected, betrayed so good a cause,  
or had not the courage to defend it. So that it was  
time for God to interpose, and to appear in defence  
of his own honour and people.” *Therefore my own  
arm, &c.*—See note on chap. lix. 16. *And my fury,  
it upheld me*—Or, *my zeal* rather, namely, against  
the adversaries of my church, and for the deliver-  
ance of my people: I was resolved to vindicate my  
own honour, and my concern for my people made  
me go through with the undertaking in spite of all  
opposition. Thus God says, Zech. viii. 2, *I was  
jealous for Zion with great fury*. God’s arm signi-  
fies his strength and power, and his zeal sets his  
power on work. *And I will tread down*—The  
LXX. render it, *καταπαύσά, I have trodden down the  
people in mine anger*. So also the vulgar Latin,  
which translation agrees better with the context,  
where Christ is described as having his garments  
already stained with the blood of his enemies. *And  
made them drunk in my fury*—“God’s judgments  
are often represented by a cup of intoxicating liquor,  
because they astonish men, and bereave them of  
their usual discretion.” See the note on chap. li. 17.

Verse 7. “The remaining part of this chapter”  
says Bishop Lowth, “with the whole chapter follow-  
ing, contains a penitential confession and supplica-

A. M. 3298. 8 For he said, Surely they *are* my  
B. C. 706. people, children *that* will not lie: so  
he was their Saviour.

9 <sup>h</sup>In all their affliction he was afflicted, <sup>i</sup>and  
the angel of his presence saved them: <sup>k</sup>in his

<sup>h</sup>Judg. x. 16; Zech. ii. 8; Acts ix. 4.—<sup>i</sup>Exod. xiv. 19;  
xxiii. 20, 21; xxxiii. 14; Mal. iii. 1; Acts xii. 11.—<sup>k</sup>Deut.  
vii. 7, 8.—Exod. xix. 4; Deut. i. 31; xxxii. 11, 12; Chap.

tion of the Israelites in their present state of disper-  
sion, in which they have so long marvellously sub-  
sisted, 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 des-  
troyed, 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.”  
Vitringa has nearly the same views of this section  
of the prophet's discourse. He supposes that it per-  
tains to the present Jews and their posterity, during  
this their dispersion, and that when they shall see  
that wonderful display of God's power, which will  
hereafter be made in the destruction of the Papal  
church and tyranny, they will be converted to the  
Christian religion. In a view to this, he considers  
the prophet as here introducing a company of them,  
who represent the first-fruits at the beginning of this  
great work of grace, deploring the blindness and  
hardness of their nation, and with the utmost humili-  
ty turning themselves to God, and praying for that  
complete conversion of their people which is to fol-  
low the coming in of *the fulness of the Gentiles*.  
See Rom. xi. 25, 26.

*I will mention the loving-kindness of the Lord*—  
Those penitent Jews, in whose name the prophet is  
supposed to speak, being convinced themselves of  
the truth of Christianity, begin here to intercede for  
the rest of their brethren, still remaining in that state  
of blindness and darkness under which the nation  
had long groaned. “They begin with acknowledg-  
ing God's great mercies and favours to their nation,  
and the ungrateful returns made for them on their  
part; that by their disobedience they had forfeited  
his protection, and caused him to become their ad-  
versary. But now, induced by the memory of the  
great things he had done for them, they address their  
humble supplication to him for the renewal of his  
mercies. They beseech him to regard them in con-  
sideration of his former loving-kindness; they ac-  
knowledge him for their Father and Creator; they  
confess their wickedness and hardness of heart;  
they entreat his forgiveness, and deplore the misera-  
ble condition under which they had so long suffered.  
The whole passage is in the elegiac form, pathetic  
and elegant, and probably designed as a formulary  
of humiliation for the Israelites, in order to their  
conversion.” A few remarks on some of the ex-  
pressions used therein may tend to place them in a  
clearer point of view.

Verses 8, 9. *For he said*—Namely, within him-  
self, of old, when he made a covenant with our

A. M. 3298. love and in his pity he redeemed  
B. C. 706. them; and <sup>l</sup>he bare them, and carried  
them all the days of old.

10 But they <sup>m</sup>rebelled, and <sup>n</sup>vexed <sup>o</sup>his Holy  
Spirit: <sup>o</sup>therefore he was turned to be their

xlvi. 3, 4.—<sup>m</sup>Exod. xv. 24; Num. xiv. 11; Psa. lxxviii. 56;  
xcv. 9.—<sup>n</sup>Psalm lxxviii. 40; Acts vii. 51; Eph. iv. 30.  
<sup>o</sup>Exod. xxiii. 21.

fathers, and brought them out of Egypt; *Surely they  
are my people*—In covenant with me: though they  
are unworthy of me, yet I cannot but look upon  
them as my people. *Children that will not lie*—  
That will keep my covenant; that will not deal  
falsely with me, to whom they are under such un-  
speakable obligations. This is spoken by God, after  
the manner of men, who are always apt to hope the  
best concerning their children, even though, in times  
past, they may have been refractory and disobedient.  
*So he was their Saviour*—Namely, on these hopes  
and conditions he undertook to be their Saviour:  
or, he alone was their Saviour. When there was  
none to save, none to uphold, then he saved them.  
*In all their affliction he was afflicted*—When there  
was a necessity of correcting them, in order to their  
amendment, he had a compassionate sense of the  
evils which they suffered: see Deut. xxxii. 36;  
Judges x. 16; Psa. cvi. 44, 45. *And the angel of his  
presence saved them*—From the house of bondage,  
through the Red sea, and in the wilderness. The  
same angel that conducted them in all their journeys,  
and brought them into Canaan, as *Captain of the  
Lord's host*, (Josh. v. 15,) even the Lord Jesus  
Christ, who appeared to Moses in the bush, (Exod.  
iii. 2-6, compared with Acts vii. 35,) in whom God's  
name was, Exod. xxiii. 20, 21. Whom the Jews  
*tempted in the wilderness*, for they *tempted Christ*,  
1 Cor. x. 9; and who was the *spiritual rock that  
followed them*, typified by the natural rock cleft to  
afford them water: who was *before Abraham*, John  
viii. 58, and *before all things*, Col. i. 17: see note on  
Exod. xxiii. 20, 21: called the *angel, messenger, or  
mediator of the covenant*, Mal. iii. 1; and here the  
*angel of his presence*; and his *presence*, Exod. xxxiii.  
14, as appearing continually before his face to inter-  
cede for his church. *In his love and in his pity he  
redeemed them*—This shows the ground of his kind-  
ness: they were a stubborn, superstitious, idolatrous  
people, yet Christ's love and pity saved them not-  
withstanding. *And he bore them, and carried them*  
—As a father his child, or an eagle her young ones;  
he carried them in the arms of his power, and on the  
wings of his providence: see notes on Deut. i. 31;  
and xxxii. 10-12; and chap. xlvi. 4. And this he  
did *all the days of old*, for many ages past; from  
the days of Abraham or Moses; from their bondage  
in Egypt to their settlement in Canaan, and through  
their succeeding generations. And this his ancient  
kindness is thus mentioned to induce him to con-  
tinue it, and still to uphold, protect, and preserve his  
church till he should bring her to his Father.

Verse 10. *But they rebelled*—Revolted from him,

A. M. 3298. enemy, and he fought against them.  
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11 Then he remembered the days of old, Moses, and his people, saying, Where is he that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of his flock? where is he that put his Holy Spirit within him?

12 That led them by the right hand of Moses with his glorious arm, dividing the water before them, to make himself an everlasting name?

13 That led them through the deep as a horse in the wilderness, that they should not stumble?

<sup>p</sup> Exod. xiv. 30; xxxii. 11, 12; Num. xiv. 13, 14, &c.; Jer. ii. 6.  
<sup>q</sup> Or, *shepherds*, as Psa. lxxvii. 20.—<sup>r</sup> Num. xi. 17, 25; Neh. ix. 20; Dan. iv. 8; Hag. ii. 5.—<sup>s</sup> Exod. xv. 6.—<sup>t</sup> Exod. xiv. 21; Josh. iii. 16.—<sup>u</sup> Psa. cvi. 9.—<sup>v</sup> 2 Sam. vii. 23.

and, as it were, took up arms against him, many instances of which we find in their history; and vexed, or grieved, his Holy Spirit—With their unbelief and murmuring, and continual proneness to idolatry, as well as by their repeated acts of obstinacy and disobedience. Therefore he was turned to be their enemy—Withdrew the tokens and evidences of his love and favour; and fought against them—By one judgment after another, both in the wilderness, and after their settlement in Canaan.

Verses 11–14. Then, or yet, he remembered the days of old—God is here represented by an elegant figure, as recollecting with himself what he had done for his people, and using that as a motive why he should still own and defend them. The same argument is used by Moses: see the margin. Moses and his people—Or, what great things he had done for them by Moses. Where is he that brought them out of the sea—That divided the sea for them? Here God speaks of himself as in the former clause; and dividing the sea being one of the greatest miracles he ever wrought for his people, it is therefore mentioned, with peculiar propriety, by way of encouragement to them in their sore troubles, as indeed it frequently is. With the shepherd—Or shepherds, as the margin reads it; of his flock—That is, Moses and Aaron. That put his Holy Spirit within him—That gave his Spirit, the spirit of wisdom and courage, as well as of prophecy, to Moses and the seventy elders, to furnish them with gifts and graces for the great work of governing his people. That led them by the right hand of Moses—Namely, by the power that God gave him. With his glorious arm—Or, that arm wherewith God gained to himself so much glory, being always present to the assistance of Moses, Deut. iv. 34. Dividing the water before them—The Red sea, and also Jordan. To make himself an everlasting name—With reference both to his power and providence: that he might be glorified, and that everlastingly, upon this account. That led them through the deep—Between those vast heaps of waters, that stood up as a wall on each

14 As a beast goeth down into the valley, the Spirit of the LORD caused him to rest: so didst thou lead thy people, to make thyself a glorious name.

15 Look down from heaven, and behold from the habitation of thy holiness and of thy glory: where is thy zeal and thy strength, the sounding of thy bowels and of thy mercies toward me? are they restrained?

16 Doubtless thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not: thou, O LORD, art our Father, our Redeemer; thy name is from everlasting.

<sup>x</sup> Deut. xxvi. 15; Psa. lxxx. 14.—<sup>y</sup> Psa. xxxiii. 14.—<sup>z</sup> Or, the multitude.—<sup>a</sup> Jer. xxxi. 20; Hos. xi. 8.—<sup>b</sup> Deut. xxxii. 6; 1 Chron. xxix. 10; Chap. lxiv. 8.—<sup>c</sup> Job xiv. 21; Eccles. ix. 5.  
<sup>d</sup> Or, our redeemer from everlasting is thy name.

side of them. As a horse in the wilderness—Or plain, as the word rendered wilderness is sometimes taken; namely, with as much safety as a horse traverses the plain ground, or with as much ease as a horse is led by the bridle. That they should not stumble—That is, though the sea was but newly divided, yet the ground was so dried and smoothed by the wind which God sent, that it was, as it were, prepared before them. As a beast, &c.—As a beast goes down to his pasture; or as a camel, or such like beast of burden, travels through a campaign country, so the Spirit of the Lord conducted the people of Israel into the promised land of rest and security.

Verses 15, 16. Look down from heaven—In this excellent and pious prayer of the first-fruits of the converted Jews, in which they entreat God, for his grace and mercy, to behold them with an eye of compassion, they argue both from the goodness of his nature, and from the greatness of the works which he had formerly done for them. God sees everywhere and every thing; but he is said to look down from heaven, because there is his throne, whereon he reigns in majesty. Behold, &c.—Not barely see and look on, but behold, with regard and respect, thy poor people. Where is thy zeal?—What is become of that love which of old would not let thee suffer thy people to be wronged? And thy strength?—That power of thine manifested in those great acts which thou didst perform for thy people? The sounding of thy bowels—This is spoken of God after the manner of men. The meaning is, where are thy tender compassions and mercies which thou formerly showedst toward us? and which thy servants have compared to the affection that a mother bears to her children? Are they restrained?—Or, canst thou be thus straitened? An expostulation that agrees well with the next verse. Doubtless thou art our Father—Our only hope is in the relation we have to thee, that thou hast vouchsafed to call thyself our Father: we, therefore, as thy children, expect to find in thee the bowels and compassions of a father

A. M. 3298. 17 O LORD, why hast thou <sup>o</sup> made  
B. C. 706. us to err from thy ways, and <sup>d</sup> hardened  
our heart from thy fear? <sup>o</sup> Return for thy  
servants' sake, the tribes of thine inheritance.

18 <sup>f</sup> The people of thy holiness have possessed

<sup>c</sup> Psa. cxix. 10.—<sup>d</sup> Chap. vi. 10, with John xii. 40; Rom. ix.  
18.—<sup>e</sup> Num. x. 36; Psa. xc. 13.

*Though Abraham be ignorant of us*—Though he, who was our father after the flesh, be dead, and so ignorant of our condition. *And Israel acknowledge us not*—Though Jacob, who also was our father, should disown us because of our degeneracy. *Thou, O Lord, art our Father*—Thou art neither unacquainted with our state, nor wilt disown thy relation to us, but wilt continue to act the part of a father and redeemer to thy people. *Thy name is from everlasting*—Thy gracious and merciful nature and attributes are eternal and unchangeable.

Verse 17–19. *O Lord, why hast thou made us to err*—Suffered us to err; *from thy ways*—Thy commandments. *And hardened our heart from thy fear*—That is, the fear of thee? Why hast thou withdrawn thy grace, and left us to our own hardness of heart? See on chap. vi. 10. *Return for thy servants' sake*—Be reconciled to us for the sake of our godly progenitors, Abraham, Isaac, &c.; namely, for the sake of thy promises made to them; or rather, for our sakes, that little remnant who are thy servants: see Psa. xc. 13. *The tribes of thine inheritance*—What will thine enemies say if thou suffer us, thy people, to perish, or thine inheritance, the land of Canaan, to remain an eternal desolation? *The people of thy holiness*—The people set apart for thy service, distinguished from other people, and consecrated to thee; *have possessed it*—Namely, thine inheritance, mentioned in the former clause; *but a little while*—In comparison of the time promised, which was for ever. So the Jews commonly understood the grant made them of the land of Canaan. They had, however, possessed it about fourteen hundred years, but this they thought a little while. *Our adversaries have trodden down thy sanctuary*—The temple, called the *sanctuary*, from its being dedicated to

it but a little while: <sup>o</sup> our adver- A. M. 3298.  
saries have trodden down thy sanc- B. C. 706.  
tuary.

19 We are *thine*: thou never barest rule over them; <sup>o</sup> they were not called by thy name.

<sup>f</sup> Deut. vii. 6; xxvi. 19; Ch. lxii. 12; Dan. viii. 24.—<sup>g</sup> Psa. lxxiv.  
7.—<sup>h</sup> Or, *thy name was not called upon them*, Chap. lxxv. 1.

God. This their adversaries, the Babylonians, had trodden down, or rather, as the prophet foresaw, would tread down. "If we understand this of the devastations made by the Romans under Titus, and by the Mohammedans since, the phrase is exactly parallel to the words of Christ, Luke xxi. 24, *Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles.*" *We are thine*—We continue so; we are in covenant with thee, which they never were, and thus it is an argument they use to induce God to have compassion upon them. *Thou never barest rule over them*—Not in that manner thou didst over us. *They were not called by thy name*—Neither owned thee, nor were owned by thee. Some translate this last verse thus: "We have been for a long time as those over whom thou didst not bear rule, and who were not called by thy name." "Thou hast rejected us altogether, and dost disregard us as if we had never had any relation to thee, nor ever were called thy people; which sense agrees very well with the present condition of the Jewish nation, that hath continued for many ages without king, or prince, or sacrifice, as the Prophet Hosea foretold, Hos. iii. 4."—Lowth. "There is no doubt," says Vitringa, "but that the calamity of the external state of the Jewish people is here described. If you compare this description with the repetition of the same calamity, verses 10, 11 of the next chapter, you will have no doubt that these words pertain to the Jewish people, banished as they are, and have been for a long time, from the land which, in comparison of this tedious exile, they possessed but a little while; their sanctuary and holy city being possessed and trodden down by their bitterest enemies; so that they are in such a state as to seem like people who never were the chosen and peculiar people of God."

## CHAPTER LXIV.

Here the prayer begun in the preceding chapter is continued, in the name of the church and people of the Jews, languishing and disconsolate under the long rejection they at present suffer. (1.) They express an earnest wish that God would show himself as visibly in favour of his ancient people as he did when he came down upon mount Sinai, amidst thunder, and lightning, and tempests, that shook heaven and earth, and testified his presence, 1–3. (2.) They plead what God had formerly done, and was always ready to do for his people, 4, 5. (3.) Confess themselves to be sinful, and utterly unworthy of God's favour, and that they had deserved the judgments under which they now suffered, 6, 7. (4.) They refer themselves to the mercy of God as a father, and submit themselves to his sovereignty, 8. (5.) They represent the very deplorable condition they were in, and earnestly pray for the pardon of sin, and the turning away of God's anger, 9–12.

A. M. 3299.  
B. C. 706.

**O** THAT thou wouldest <sup>a</sup>rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down, that <sup>b</sup>the mountains might flow down at thy presence,

2 As *when* <sup>1</sup>the melting fire burneth, the fire causeth the waters to boil, to make thy name known to thine adversaries, *that* the nations may tremble at thy presence!

3 When <sup>c</sup>thou didst terrible things *which* we looked not for, thou camest down, the mountains flowed down at thy presence.

<sup>a</sup> Psa. cxliv. 5.—<sup>b</sup> Judg. v. 5; Mic. i. 4.—<sup>1</sup> Heb. *the fire of meltings*.—<sup>c</sup> Exod. xxxiv. 10; Judg. v. 4, 5; Psa. lxxviii. 8; Hab. iii. 3, 6.

#### NOTES ON CHAPTER LXIV.

Verses 1, 2. *O that thou wouldest rend the heavens*—This God is said to do, or to *bow the heavens, and come down*, when he gives a very signal display of his power. It is a metaphor taken from men who, when they would resolutely and effectually help a person in distress, break through every opposition and obstacle. *That the mountains might flow down, &c.*—Or, *melt*; that all impediments might be removed out of the way. There seems to be an allusion to God's coming down upon mount Sinai in those terrible flames of fire, Judg. v. 4, 5. *As when the melting fire burneth*—Come with such zeal for thy people that the solid mountains may be no more before thee than metal that runs, or water that boils by the force of a vehement fire; *to make thy name*—That is, thy power; *known to thine adversaries*—That thine enemies, who are also the enemies of thy people, may know thy power, and that thy name may be dreaded among them.

Verses 3, 4. *When thou didst terrible things*—This may relate to what he did first in Egypt, and afterward in the wilderness; *which we looked not for*—Such things as we could not have expected; *the mountains flowed down*—See Exod. xix. 18; Deut. xxxii. 22; Psa. xviii. 7, with the notes. But Lowth proposes another interpretation, which he thinks agrees better with what follows, namely, *When thou shalt do terrible and unexpected things, when thou shalt come down*, (and visibly interpose for the deliverance of thy people,) *the mountains shall melt at thy presence. For since the beginning of the world, &c.*—“The methods of thy dispensations, whereby thou wilt fulfil thy promises made to thy people, are beyond any thing we can think or conceive.” Bishop Lowth translates this verse, more agreeably both to the Hebrew and the LXX., thus: For “never have men heard, nor perceived, by the ear; nor hath eye seen a God besides thee, who doeth such things for those that trust in him.” Some of the Jewish doctors have understood this passage of the blessings belonging to the days of the Messiah; and to them the apostle applies it, 1 Cor. ii. 9. Others extend it to the glories of the world to come. Of both these it may be truly said, that *from the beginning of the world* men have not, either by

4 ¶ For since the beginning of the world <sup>d</sup>men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye <sup>2</sup>seen, O God, besides thee, *what* he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him.

5 Thou meetest him that rejoiceth <sup>e</sup>and worketh righteousness, <sup>f</sup>those that remember thee in thy ways: behold, thou art wroth; for we have sinned: <sup>g</sup>in those is continuance, and we shall be saved.

6 But we are all as an unclean *thing*; and all

<sup>d</sup> Psa. xxxi. 19; 1 Cor. ii. 9.—<sup>e</sup> Or, *seen a god beside thee, which doeth so for him, &c.*—<sup>f</sup> Acts x. 35.—<sup>g</sup> Chap. xxvi. 8. <sup>h</sup> Mal. iii. 6.

*hearing or seeing*; or, as the apostle adds, by any reasonings or conceptions of their own minds, come to the full knowledge of them. None have seen or heard, or can understand, but God himself; and so far as he has been, and is, pleased to reveal it by his Spirit, what the provision is, which is made for the present and future felicity of holy souls; or, as our translation here expresses it, of those that *wait for him*, namely, in the way of duty; that sincerely and earnestly desire, and live in the daily and ardent expectation of, the salvation he hath promised them. The apostle has it, *that love him*; to show that as none can *wait* for him who do not *love* him, so all that *love* him will *wait* for him.

Verse 5. *Thou meetest him that rejoiceth, &c.*—“Thou preventest, with the blessings of thy goodness, those that take pleasure in the ways of thy commandments, and live under a continual sense of thy providence.” *Behold, thou art wroth*—Or greatly angry; *for, or because, we have sinned*—Have been guilty of many and great offences, whereby we have provoked thy heavy displeasure. *In those*—Those ways of thine, thy ways of mercy, in which we have remembered thee; *is continuance*—Or, *perpetuity*; or, *in those thou art ever to be found*; *and we shall be saved*—At last, though thou art wroth, and we have sinned. “The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting on them that fear him,” Psa. ciii. 17. He always waits to be gracious, and through all ages meets his worshippers in his ordinances. This seems to be the sense of this obscure passage; at least it will bear this sense; and, as it is in perfect consistency with the general tenor of the Scriptures, it is certainly safer to admit it, unless a better can be proposed, than to have recourse to any mere conjectural alterations of the Hebrew text.

Verses 6, 7. *We are all as an unclean thing*—Or, *unclean person*, as טמא equally signifies. He seems to allude to persons unclean through the leprosy, which was the highest degree of uncleanness among the Jews. He means that the body of the people were like one under a ceremonial pollution, who was not admitted into the courts of the tabernacle; or like one labouring under some loathsome disease. We are all, by sin, not only become obnoxious to

A. M. 3298. <sup>h</sup> our righteousnesses *are* as filthy rags; B. C. 706. and we all do <sup>i</sup> fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

7 And <sup>k</sup> *there is* none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee: for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast <sup>3</sup> consumed us, <sup>4</sup> because of our iniquities.

8 <sup>1</sup> But now, O LORD, thou *art* our Father; we *are* the clay, <sup>m</sup> and thou our potter; and we all *are* <sup>n</sup> the work of thy hand.

9 ¶ Be not <sup>o</sup> wroth very sore, O LORD, nei-

<sup>h</sup> Phil. iii. 9.—<sup>i</sup> Ps. xc. 5, 6.—<sup>k</sup> Hos. vii. 7.—<sup>3</sup> Heb. *meltd.*  
<sup>4</sup> Heb. *by the hand*, as Job viii. 4.—<sup>1</sup> Ch. lxiii. 16.—<sup>m</sup> Ch. xxix. 16; xlv. 9; Jer. xviii. 6; Rom. ix. 20, 21.—<sup>n</sup> Eph. ii. 10.

God's justice, but odious to his holiness. "The prophets frequently borrow their images from the received customs and spiritual ceremonies of the nations among which the distinction between things *clean* and *unclean* makes no small figure; and under these images they frequently describe moral defects and religious offences, as in the present passage." And all our righteousnesses, or, justifications, *are as filthy rags*—As rags, which cannot cover us; as filthy rags, which would only defile us. With respect to the Jews, he refers to all those external ceremonies and services wherein they placed merit, and whereby they hoped for justification, Rom. x. 3, at the same time that they neglected moral duties, and were guilty even of very gross violations of God's holy law. Micah, who lived at the same time, speaks in the same manner, chap. vii. 2-4. But the prophet's declaration is true, if considered as comprehending the best works and actions that can be performed by any of mankind; for all our works have so great an alloy of imperfection, that they cannot justify us before a holy and just God; see Psa. cxliii. 2; Rom. iii. 19, 20; Gal. ii. 16. And our iniquities, *like the wind*—A wind that withers both leaves and fruit, or that sweeps away all before it; *have taken us away*—Out of our own land, and from all our privileges and blessings, and scattered us abroad through all the earth; or from God's favour, into a state of condemnation and wrath. And *there is none*—Or, *yet there is none*, that is, *few*: they are not to be discerned among the multitude; *that calleth upon thy name*—That call upon thee as they ought, as Jacob, Moses, and David did. This shows the universal depravity and apostacy of the Jewish people at the time referred to; *that stirreth up himself to take hold on thee*—On thy power, truth, and love by faith; that uses fervency and importunity in prayer to recover thy favour, which has been withdrawn from us, and to obtain the removal of the various and heavy calamities with which we are oppressed. *For thou hast consumed us*—Hebrew, תכנינו, *hast melted us*; our sins have kindled such a fire of thy wrath against us that we are melted with it.

Verses 8, 9. *But now, O Lord, thou art our Father*—Notwithstanding all this, thou art our Father, having both created and adopted us; therefore pity

ther remember iniquity for ever: be- A. M. 3298. hold, see, we beseech thee; <sup>p</sup> we *are* all B. C. 706. thy people.

10 Thy holy cities are a wilderness, Zion is a wilderness, <sup>q</sup> Jerusalem a desolation.

11 <sup>r</sup> Our holy and our beautiful house, where our fathers praised thee, is burned up with fire: and all <sup>s</sup> our pleasant things are laid waste.

12 <sup>t</sup> Wilt thou refrain thyself for these things, O LORD? <sup>u</sup> wilt thou hold thy peace, and afflict us very sore?

<sup>o</sup> Psa. lxxiv. 1, 2; lxxix. 8.—<sup>p</sup> Psa. lxxix. 13.—<sup>q</sup> Psa. lxxix. 1.  
<sup>r</sup> 2 Kings xxv. 9; Psa. lxxiv. 7; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 19.—<sup>s</sup> Ezek. xxiv. 21, 25.—<sup>t</sup> Chap. xliii. 14.—<sup>u</sup> Psa. lxxxiii. 1.

us thy children; *we are the clay, and thou our potter*—We are in thy hands as clay in the hands of the potter: thou canst form us, and dispose of us as thou pleasest. And we will not quarrel with thee, however thou art pleased to deal with us. *We are all the work of thy hands*—Therefore forget us not, forsake us not, but spare, and preserve, and save us. *Be not wroth* with us *very sore*—But let thy anger be mitigated by the clemency and compassion of a father. *Neither remember iniquity for ever*—Thou hast been angry with us a long time, be not so for ever. *Behold, &c. we are thy people*—Thy peculiar people, chap. lxiii. 19. Another argument to enforce the former petition.

Verses 10-12. *Thy holy cities*—Zion and Jerusalem, mentioned immediately after; or other cities also in the land of Judea besides these two; called *holy*, because God had his synagogues in them, in which he was worshipped, Psa. lxxiv. 8. *Zion is a wilderness, &c.*—Utterly waste: not only the ordinary cities, but Zion and Jerusalem themselves are in a state of ruin and desolation. *Our holy and beautiful house*—Our temple. Not only our principal cities, but even our temple, which we thought sacred and inviolable, in which we gloried, because it was *thine*, and our fathers' house, and ours: the place where thy holy service was performed, and thy glory and presence were wont to be manifested. *Where our fathers praised thee*—They do not presume to mention themselves, having been every way so very abominable; but put the Lord in mind of their fathers, many of whom were his faithful servants, having praised him there. *Is burned up with fire*—This relates to the burning of the temple by the Romans, who made an entire destruction of it, according to our Saviour's prediction, Matt. xxiv. 2. *And all our pleasant things are laid waste*—Not only the *pleasant land*, but all that was magnificent, ornamental, or desirable in Jerusalem, or any other city, town, or place. *Wilt thou refrain, or, contain, thyself for, or, at, these things*—Wilt thou behold them unmoved, as an indifferent spectator? Wilt thou neither show thy compassion toward thy servants, nor thy resentment toward thine enemies? *Wilt thou hold thy peace*—Wilt thou be as one that regards not? *And afflict us very sore*—And persist to afflict us in thy continued hot displeasure?

## CHAPTER LXV.

This chapter contains a defence 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 his repeated call, 1, 2; for their obstinate disobedience, their idolatrous practices, and detestable hypocrisy, 3-7. That, nevertheless, he would not destroy them all; but would preserve a remnant, to whom he would make good his ancient promises, 8-10. Severe punishments are threatened to the apostates, 11-16. And great blessings are promised to the obedient in a future and glorious state of the church, that is, the Christian Church, 17-25.

A. M. 3298.  
B. C. 706. **I** <sup>a</sup> AM sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not: I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation <sup>b</sup> that was not called by my name.

2 <sup>c</sup> I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, which walketh in a way that was not good, after their own thoughts;

<sup>a</sup> Rom. ix. 24, 25, 26, 30; x. 20; Eph. ii. 12, 13.—<sup>b</sup> Chap. lxiii. 19.—<sup>c</sup> Rom. x. 21.—<sup>d</sup> Deut. xxxii. 21.—<sup>e</sup> Chap. i. 29;

## NOTES ON CHAPTER LXV.

Verse 1. That in the primary sense of this text it is a prophecy of the conversion of the Gentiles, upon the rejection of the Jews, for their contempt and crucifying of Christ, cannot be doubted by any, who will not arrogate to themselves a greater ability to interpret the prophecies of the Old Testament than St. Paul had, who, Rom. x. 20, expressly so interprets it, and applies it; which shows the vanity of the Jews in their other interpretations of it. *I am sought*—Hebrew, נִרְשַׁתִּי, literally, diligent inquiry is made after me; or, I am diligently inquired of. Vitringa renders it, "Quæsitus sum cum effectu;" *I am sought so as to be found.* The LXX. read, εμφανης εγενηθη, *I am made manifest, or, made known,* as Bishop Lowth translates it; to them that asked not for me—That in times past made no inquiry after me; *I am now found by them that formerly sought me not.* *I said, Behold me, behold me*—I invited whole nations, by the preaching of my gospel, to behold me, and that with importunity, reiterating my calls and entreaties; and this I did unto a nation not called by my name, with which I was not in covenant, and which did not profess any relation to me. The prophet speaks of what was to take place some hundreds of years afterward, as if it were a thing already done, to signify the certainty of it.

Verse 2. *I have spread out my hands*—This is applied to the Jews, Rom. x. 21. *I have stretched out my hands,* I have used all means to reduce them; I have stretched out the hands of a passionate orator, to persuade them; of a liberal benefactor, to load them with my benefits: this I have done continually, in the whole course of my providence with them. *To a rebellious people*—Yet they are a rebellious people. St. Paul expounds it by λαον απειθευτα και αντιλεγοντα, *A people not persuaded, not believing, or, not obeying; but gainsaying, or, contradicting the word and will of God.* Which walketh in a way that is not good—Less is expressed

3 A people <sup>d</sup> that provoketh me to anger continually to my face; <sup>e</sup> that sacrificeth in gardens, and burneth incense <sup>f</sup> upon altars of brick;

4 <sup>g</sup> Which remain among the graves, and lodge in the monuments, <sup>h</sup> which eat swine's flesh, and <sup>i</sup> broth of abominable things is in their vessels;

lxvi. 17; Lev. xvii. 5.—<sup>1</sup> Heb. upon bricks.—<sup>f</sup> Deut. xviii. 11.—<sup>g</sup> Chap. lxvi. 17; Lev. xi. 7.—<sup>2</sup> Or, pieces.

than is intended: the meaning is, in a way that is very bad. *After their own thoughts*—Or, as it is elsewhere expressed, after the imaginations of their hearts; a usual phrase to describe sin, especially in the matter of God's worship. The Prophet Jeremiah expresses sin in this manner many times.

Verses 3, 4. *A people that provoketh me to anger*—That the Jews are the people here intended, is without question: the prophet, speaking of the calling of the Gentiles, upon their rejection, enumerates some of their sins which were the causes thereof: for though their crucifying of Christ was the sin which was the principal or proximate cause, yet God visited on that generation their iniquities and the iniquities of their fathers together; they having, by the act of rejecting and crucifying their Messiah, filled up the measure of their sins. *Continually to my face*—With the utmost impudence, not taking notice of my omnipresence and omniscience. *That sacrificeth in gardens, and burneth, &c.*—Directly contrary to the divine rule. "These are instances," says Bishop Lowth, "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, Deut. xii. 2, 3. These apostate Jews sacrificed upon altars built of bricks; in opposition to the command of God, with regard to his altar, which was to be of unhewn stone, Exod. xx. 25. 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 2 Kings xxiii. 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 Zeph. i. 5." *Who*

A. M. 3298. 5 <sup>h</sup> Which say, Stand by thyself,  
B. C. 706. come not near to me; for I am holier  
than thou. These *are* a smoke in my <sup>3</sup> nose,  
a fire that burneth all the day.

6 Behold, <sup>i</sup> it is written before me: <sup>k</sup> I will  
not keep silence, <sup>1</sup> but will recompense, even  
recompense into their bosom,

7 Your iniquities, and <sup>m</sup> the iniquities of your  
fathers together, saith the LORD, <sup>n</sup> which have

<sup>h</sup> Matt. ix. 11; Luke v. 30; xviii. 11; Jude 19.—<sup>3</sup> Or, anger.  
<sup>i</sup> Deut. xxxii. 34; Mal. iii. 16.—<sup>k</sup> Psa. l. 3.

remain among the graves, and lodge in the monu-  
ments—Or, as Bishop Lowth renders it, *Who dwell  
in the sepulchres and lodge in the caverns*, for the  
purposes of *necromancy*, (or, the art of revealing  
future events by communications with the dead,)  
and *divination*; to obtain dreams and revelations:  
another instance this of heathenish superstition,  
which the Latin poet describes as follows:

—————“Huc dona sacerdos  
Cum tulit, et cæsarum 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.”  
VIRG. ÆN., vii. 86.

“Here in distress th’ Italian nations come,  
Anxious to clear their doubts, and learn their doom:  
First, on the fleeces of the slaughter’d sheep,  
By night the sacred priest dissolves in sleep;  
When, in a train, before his slumb’ring 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.

*Which eat swine's flesh*—“Which was expressly  
forbidden by the law, Lev. xi. 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 re-  
nouncing their religion, 2 Mac. vi. 18; and vii. 1.  
*And broth of abominable things*—For lustrations,  
magical arts, and other superstitious and abominable  
practices.”—Bishop Lowth.

Verses 5, 6. *Who say, Stand by thyself, come not  
near to me*—Though they were so exceedingly  
guilty, yet they pretended to singular sanctity, so  
that they would not suffer others to come near or  
touch them. The reader will observe that the crime  
of hypocrisy is here decried, and every one that is  
acquainted with the gospels will easily see that the  
character of the Pharisees and their followers is  
drawn in this passage; see Luke xviii. 10. And  
there cannot be a more lively description of spiritual  
pride and hypocritical arrogance than it gives us.  
*For I am holier than thou*—Thus they esteemed  
themselves *holier* than others, though all their *holi-  
ness* lay in rituals, and those too such as God never

burned incense upon the mountains, A. M. 3298.  
<sup>o</sup> and blasphemed me upon the hills: B. C. 706.  
therefore will I measure their former work into  
their bosom.

8 ¶ Thus saith the LORD, As the new wine  
is found in the cluster, and *one* saith, Destroy  
it not; for <sup>p</sup> a blessing is in it: so will I do for  
my servants' sake, that I may not destroy them  
all.

<sup>1</sup> Psa. lxxix. 12; Jer. xvi. 18; Ezek. xi. 21.—<sup>m</sup> Exod. xx. 5.  
<sup>n</sup> Ezek. xviii. 6.—<sup>o</sup> Ezek. xx. 27, 28.—<sup>p</sup> Joel ii. 14.

commanded. Of these God saith, *These are a  
smoke in my nostrils, a fire that burneth all the  
day*—That is, a continual provocation to me: as  
*smoke* is an *offence* to our noses. *Behold, it is writ-  
ten before me*—They may think I take no notice of  
these things, but I will as certainly remember them  
as princes remember the things which, in order that  
they may not forget them, they record in writing.  
And they shall know that I take notice of, and will  
remember them; for *I will not keep silence*—That  
is, I will not long neglect the punishment of them,  
though for a while I have delayed it, like a man who  
restrains his wrath, for some wise reasons which are  
best known to himself, Psa. l. 21; *but will recom-  
pense into their bosom*—My punishment of them  
shall be severe and certain, but yet it shall be just,  
and not greater than their sins have merited.

Verse 7. *Your iniquities, and the iniquities of  
your fathers together*—Yea, and when I reckon  
with them, I will punish them, not only for their  
personal sins, but for the sins of their parents, which  
they have made their own, by imitation. *Which  
have burned incense upon the mountains*—There per-  
forming to idols that homage which I commanded  
them to pay unto me; or, if any of them pretend it  
was to me they performed that service, though be-  
fore an image, yet it was in a way and place in  
which I expressly forbid them to worship me, having  
appointed the place where, and the manner how, I  
would be worshipped. *And blasphemed me upon  
the hills*—Dishonoured instead of glorifying me, by  
worshipping me in a way which I had not appoint-  
ed, and which they learned only from idolaters.  
*Therefore will I measure their former work, &c.*—  
I will not only punish the late sins that they have  
committed, but the former sins of this kind, which  
those that went before did practise, and they have  
continued in.

Verses 8-10. *Thus saith the Lord*—These words  
may be conceived as a gracious answer from God to  
the prophet, pleading God's covenant with *Abra-  
ham, Isaac, and Israel*. To this God replies, that  
he intended no such severity as the utter destruc-  
tion of the whole nation; that the unfaithfulness of  
men should not make his promise to the ancient pa-  
triarchs of none effect, Rom. iii. 3; that his threat-  
ening should be made good upon the generality of  
this people, whose *vine was of Sodom*, and of the  
*fields of Gomorrah*, Deut. xxxii. 32. *As the new*

A. M. 3298. 9 And I will bring forth a seed out  
B. C. 706.

of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains: and mine elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there.

10 And Sharon shall be a fold of flocks, and the valley of Achor a place for the herds to lie

¶ Verses 15, 22; Matt. xxiv. 22; Rom. xi. 5, 7.—Chapter xxxiii. 9; xxxv. 2.—Josh. vii. 24, 26; Hos. ii. 15.

wine is found in the cluster, &c.—As in a vineyard, which is generally unfruitful, there may be some vine that brings forth fruit; or as in a vine that is full of luxuriant branches, that bring forth no fruit, there may be here and there a bunch that contains good grapes, and as to such, the gardener bids his servants *destroy it not*, for there is in them what speaks God's blessing. So—So (saith God) will I do for my servants' sake, that I may not destroy them all—Namely, for the sake of my servants, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. I will bring a seed out of Jacob—A small number, which shall be as a seed, from whence others shall spring, Rom. ix. 27–29. And out of Judah—God further promises to bring out of Judah an inheritor of his mountains—That is, of the country of Judea, which was mountainous. God calls them his mountains, because he had chosen that country before all others. Though this may first refer to the return of the Jews out of the captivity of Babylon into their own land, yet, according to this whole prophecy, it must ultimately respect their restoration to the land of Canaan, after their conversion to Christianity. And mine elect shall inherit it—My chosen ones, namely, such as should embrace Christianity, termed by St. Paul, the *election of grace*, (Rom. xi. 5–7,) who, in consequence of repentance toward God, and faith in Jesus of Nazareth as the true Messiah, should become, with the Gentile Christians, a *chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people*, to offer spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. And Sharon shall be a fold of flocks—After they are restored, as mentioned above, to their own land. Sharon was a place of great fruitfulness for pastures. It was become like a wilderness, but God here promises that it should again be a place for the flocks. And the valley of Achor a place, &c.—Achor was a valley to the north of Jericho, opposite to the town of Ai, where Achan was put to death, and which was remarkably fertile, Josh. vii. 26. For my people that have sought me—Lest the wicked, idolatrous Jews should apply this promise to themselves, God here limits it to the people who should seek him, that is, should turn to him in true repentance and faith, and seek his favour. That the words have the force of such a limitation appears from what follows.

Verse 11. But, &c.—The prophet now returns to address his discourse to the sinners and apostates, whom he had reprov'd and threatened, (verses 2, 3,) and renews his charge against them for forsaking the Lord, separating themselves from his worship,

down in, for my people that have sought me. A. M. 3298 B. C. 706.

11 ¶ But ye are they that forsake the Lord, that forget my holy mountain, that prepare a table for that troop, and that furnish the drink-offering unto that number.

¶ Chap. lvi. 17; lvii. 13; Verse 25.—Ezek. xxiii. 41; 1 Cor. x. 21.—Or, Gad.—Or, Meni.

and polluting themselves with idolatry, the most shameful and abominable in his sight. Ye are they that forsake the Lord—Let not any of you that are idolaters and covenant-breakers think that these promises belong to you: you are apostates from God's fear and love, his worship and service, and have neither part nor lot in this matter; that forget my holy mountain—My temple and worship, a figure of the Christian Church. That prepare a table, &c.—As God had altars, which are sometimes called tables, (see Ezek. xli. 22,) so they prepared altars for their idols. By preparing a table here, however, seems rather to be meant the feasts they made upon their sacrifices, in imitation of what the true God had commanded his people, Deut. xvi. 14, 15; for that troop—A troop of idols, worshipped by the heathen; and furnish the drink-offerings unto their number—God had appointed drink-offerings, as a sort of homage to be paid to him; and these people paid this homage to their idols. The words *gad* and *meni*, the former of which is rendered *troop* here, and the latter *number*, are thought by many commentators to be the names of certain idols. The LXX. render the former word *τω δαιμονια*, the demon, or devil, and the latter *τη ρυχη*, fortune. Or, according to the copy St. Jerome seems to have used, they have translated *gad*, fortune, and *meni*, demon. Not to mention the opinion of other learned men, Dr. Waterland and Bishop Lowth suppose that *gad* means the sun, and *meni*, the moon. And it seems very probable that the moon, at least, is meant by one of these names, being generally worshipped throughout all the East, and termed the *queen of heaven*, and afterward by the Greeks under the name of Hecate. The idolatrous Jews erected altars to this fancied goddess on the tops of their houses, or near their doors, and in the corners of their streets, or in groves, and offered to her incense, cakes baked with oil and honey, and drink-offerings of wine, and other liquors. And it appears to have been usual among the Greeks from the most ancient times, to spread in the evening a table covered with dainties, in the highways, in honour to her. But it is of no consequence to us what these objects of idolatrous worship were; nor have we any cause to regret, that the inspired penmen have not deigned to inform us, but have "chosen 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 quite at a loss to know what, and what sort of things they were."—Schmidius, quoted by Bishop Lowth.

A. M. 3298. 12 Therefore will I number you to  
B. C. 706.

the sword, and ye shall all bow down to the slaughter: <sup>a</sup> because when I called, ye did not answer; when I spake, ye did not hear; but did evil before mine eyes, and did choose *that* wherein I delighted not.

13 Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, my servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry: behold, my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty: behold, my servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be ashamed:

14 Behold, my servants shall sing for joy of

<sup>a</sup> 2 Chron. xxxvi. 15, 16; Prov. i. 24; Chap. lxvi. 4; Jer. vii. 13; Zech. vii. 7; Matt. xxi. 34-43.—<sup>b</sup> Matt. viii. 12; Luke xiii. 28.—<sup>c</sup> Heb. *breaking*.

Verse 12. *Therefore will I number you to the sword*—"Here the allusion to *meni*, which signifies *number*, is obvious." *And you shall all bow down to the slaughter*—As you have bowed down to idols, which are my enemies, I will make you bow down to your enemies' swords; *because when I called*—Namely, by my prophets, you did not answer by doing the things that I enjoined. *But did evil before mine eyes*—You sinned deliberately, choosing sinful courses, the things which I hated. It must be observed here, that though the Jews, in the time of Christ and his apostles, (the period, it seems, referred to,) were not guilty of such idolatries as those above mentioned, yet, as they manifested the same spirit of rebellion, perverseness, and enmity to God, he therefore threatens that he would number them to the sword, as criminals ordered for execution, which he accordingly did, sending the Roman armies to desolate their country, lay their cities level with the ground, and almost extirpate their whole nation.

Verses 13-15. *Behold, my servants shall eat, but you shall be hungry, &c.*—I will make a great difference between my faithful servants and such unbelievers as you are. This promise the Lord fulfilled in a remarkable manner before the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. In consequence of the direction given by Christ to his disciples, (Matt. xxvi. 15,) when they observed the Roman armies approaching toward Jerusalem, they left the devoted city and fled to the mountains, an opportunity for doing which being given them by the special providence of God. For after the Romans, under Cestius Gallus, made their first advance toward Jerusalem, they suddenly withdrew again in a most unexpected, and, indeed, impolitic manner; at which Josephus testifies his surprise, since the city might then have been easily taken. By this means they gave, as it were, a signal to the Christians to retire; which, out of regard to their Lord's admonition, they did, some to Pella, and others to mount Libanus, and thereby not only preserved their lives, but obtained a supply of all their wants; while, in the mean time, the unbelieving and disobedient Jews, who had rejected and crucified their Messiah, pertinaciously seeking

heart, but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and <sup>v</sup> shall howl for <sup>e</sup> vexation of spirit.

15 And ye shall leave your name <sup>a</sup> for a curse unto <sup>a</sup> my chosen: for the Lord God shall slay thee, and <sup>b</sup> call his servants by another name:

16 <sup>c</sup> That he who blesseth himself in the earth, shall bless himself in the God of truth; and <sup>d</sup> he that sweareth in the earth, shall swear by the God of truth; because the former troubles are forgotten, and because they are hid from mine eyes.

<sup>a</sup> Jer. xxix. 22; Zech. viii. 13.—<sup>b</sup> Verses 9, 22.—<sup>c</sup> Chap. lxii. 2; Acts xi. 26.—<sup>d</sup> Psa. lxxii. 17; Jer. iv. 2.—<sup>e</sup> Deut. vi. 13; Psa. lxxiii. 11; Chap. xix. 18; xlv. 23; Zeph. i. 5.

to defend themselves in the city, were overwhelmed with the greatest calamities that ever came upon any people, and perished with hunger and thirst, the sword of their enemies, and mutual slaughters, in the greatest anguish and despair, *crying*, as it is here said, *for sorrow of heart, and howling for vexation of spirit*. *And ye shall leave your name for a curse unto my chosen*—That is, to the Christians. They shall use your name as examples of the eminent wrath of God upon sinners; or, as Vitringa reads it, *Ye shall leave your name for an oath to my chosen*; explaining the meaning to be, "That the punishment and calamity of these apostates should be so remarkable, that in the forms of swearing men should take their example from the severity of the divine judgment inflicted upon them, and from their miserable state; saying, 'If I knowingly and wilfully deceive, may as great calamities happen to me as have happened to those wicked and apostate Jews.'" See Jer. xxix. 22. *For the Lord shall slay thee*—For you shall not perish by an ordinary hand, but by the hand of the Lord God. Your destruction shall be most extraordinary. The prophet may either allude in this expression to the total abolition of the Jewish economy, or to the prodigious slaughter made of that people by one dreadful massacre after another, especially during the siege of Jerusalem; *and shall call his servants by another name*—God himself shall consider your very name as infamous and accursed, and will not suffer his people to be called by it. They shall not be called *Jews* or *Israelites*, but *Christians*. See note on chap. lxii. 2.

Verse 16. *That he who blesseth himself in the earth*—In any part of the world, for God shall have servants out of all nations, that shall be dignified with this new name; *shall bless himself in the God of truth*—That is, in his name; shall renounce every species of idolatry, and invoke and praise the true God alone. They shall have recourse to, and trust in, him alone, for blessing and happiness, and for a supply of all their wants. Observe, reader, it is of great consequence what that is in which we bless ourselves in, and which we most please ourselves with. Worldly people bless themselves in the abundance

A. M. 3298. 17 ¶ For behold, I create ° new hea-  
B. C. 706. vens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor 7 come into mind.

18 But be ye glad and rejoice for ever *in that* which I create: for behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy.

19 And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy

\* Chap. li. 16; lxvi. 22; 2 Pet. iii. 13; Rev. xxi. 1.—7 Heb. *come upon the heart.*

which they have of this world's goods, Psa. xlix. 18; Luke xii. 19; but God's servants bless themselves in him, as a God all-sufficient for them. *And he that sweareth, &c.*—By him also they shall swear, and not by any creature, or any false god. To his judgment they shall refer themselves, from whom every man's judgment proceeds. Both in prayer and praise, and in every act of homage and worship, they shall give honour to him as the *God of truth*—Hebrew, *Amen*, which some understand of Christ, who is himself *the Amen, the faithful and true witness*, and in whom all the promises are *yea and amen*. In him we must bless ourselves, and by him we must swear unto the Lord, and covenant with him. Some read it, *He that is blessed in the earth shall be blessed in the true God*; for Christ is the *true God and eternal life*, 1 John v. 20. And it was promised of old, that in him should *all families of the earth be blessed*. *Because the former troubles are forgotten*—Namely, the troubles of the church. They shall see that what God hath promised he hath also fulfilled, and that he hath put an end to the troubles of his people, the remembrance of which shall be swallowed up in their present comforts. The chief reason of this is assigned in the next verse.

Verses 17–19. *For behold, I create new heavens, &c.*—I will tell you yet a more admirable thing: I am about wholly to change the state, not only of my people, freeing them from the afflictions and troubles by which they have been oppressed, but also of the world, bringing a new face upon it; sending my Son to institute a new economy and worship, and raise up a new church; and pouring out my Spirit in a more plentiful manner; which new state shall continue until *a new heaven and a new earth appear, in which shall dwell nothing but righteousness*, 2 Pet. iii. 13; Rev. xxi. 1. *And the former shall not be remembered*—That state of things shall be so glorious, that the former state of my people shall not be noticed in comparison of it. *But be you glad and rejoice for ever*—You that are my people. Though you cannot rejoice with that degree of joy which will attend the fruition of such a good, yet be glad and rejoice with the *rejoicing of hope*, for the thing is certain, and what I have already begun to do. Nor let your present state, nor the discouragements you have from seeming improbabilities, prevent your joy; for it is not a work to be performed in an ordinary way, or by an ordinary power, but by that almighty and creating energy

in my people: and the ° voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying.

20 There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die a hundred years old: <sup>h</sup> but the sinner *being* a hundred years old shall be accursed.

† Chap. lxii. 5.—‡ Chap. xxxv. 10; li. 11; Rev. vii. 17; xxi. 4. <sup>h</sup> Eccles. viii. 12.

which produces and brings into being what before had no existence. *For behold, I create Jerusalem*—Namely, the gospel church; *a rejoicing*—That is, a cause and source of joy, because of the light and grace, the wisdom, holiness, and happiness that shall be possessed by its members, the pure doctrine which shall be held and professed, and the excellent discipline which shall be maintained in it; *and her people a joy*—They shall not only rejoice, but be rejoiced in: those that sorrowed with the church shall rejoice with her. *And I will rejoice in Jerusalem*—The prosperity of the church shall be a rejoicing to God himself, who has pleasure in the prosperity of his servants; *and joy in my people*—Taking complacency in the work of my grace wrought in them, and in the works of righteousness wrought by them. *And the voice of weeping shall be no more heard*—Such promises, many of which are to be found in the Scriptures, must either be understood in a comparative sense, meaning they shall suffer no such misery as formerly, or as signifying only *some long or eminent state of happiness*; unless they be referred to another life, in which case they may be taken strictly, as signifying a perpetuity and perfection of joy and happiness.

Verse 20. *There shall be no more thence an infant of days, &c.*—There shall be no untimely or premature deaths, either of infants and children, who do not grow up to man's estate, or of old men, who do not live out the full term of life. *For the child shall die, &c.*—This should rather be translated, *For he that dies a hundred years old shall die a child: and the sinner that dies a hundred years old shall be (that is, shall be deemed) accursed, or cut off by the justice of God for his crimes*. Thus “the prophet describes this renovation of the world as a paradisiacal state, and such as the patriarchs enjoyed before the flood, when men commonly lived nearly a thousand years. So he that died at a hundred years of age would have been looked upon as dying in the age of childhood, and be judged to have been cut off in the beginning of his years, as a punishment for some great sins he had committed.”—Lowth. It is justly observed here by Mr. Scott, that “the event alone can certainly determine whether this is meant literally or figuratively; but it is evident that the universal prevalence of real Christianity would so terminate wars, murders, contentions, idleness, intemperance, and licentiousness, as greatly to lengthen out the general term of man's

A. M. 3298. 21 And <sup>i</sup> they shall build houses and  
B. C. 706. inhabit *them*; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them.

22 They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for <sup>k</sup> as the days of a tree *are* the days of my people, and <sup>l</sup> mine elect <sup>o</sup> shall long enjoy the work of their hands.

23 They shall not labour in vain, <sup>m</sup> nor bring forth for trouble; for <sup>n</sup> they *are* the seed of the

<sup>i</sup> Lev. xxvi. 16; Deut. xxviii. 30; Chap. lxii. 8; Amos ix. 14.  
<sup>k</sup> Psa. xcii. 12.—<sup>l</sup> Verses 9, 15.—<sup>o</sup> Heb. *shall make them continue long, or, shall wear out.*

life. Many diseases which now destroy thousands and tens of thousands in the prime of life, and communicate distempers to succeeding generations, would, in that case, scarcely be heard of any more; and thus the human constitution would soon be much mended, and children would generally come into the world more vigorous and healthy than they can do while vice so greatly prevails. What God may further intend in this matter we cannot determine." Vitringa's view of the passage seems to have been, that "there shall be no violent or punitive death in this holy city, but that all the inhabitants being holy, all shall die full of days and happy, and shall have, as it were, a foretaste, pledge, and earnest of life eternal, in their long and happy life below."

Verses 21-23. *They shall build houses and inhabit them*—The prophet here describes another privilege of the church in these happy days. They shall enjoy blessings the very reverse of the curses denounced on the disobedient, Deut. xxviii. 30. *They shall plant vineyards and eat the fruit of them.* See note on chap. lxii. 8. *They shall not plant and another eat*—Which might happen, either through their enemies seizing the fruits of the trees they planted, or through their own premature death before those fruits were brought to perfection. *For as the days of a tree are the days of my people*—Not like the fading of a leaf, to which our present frail state is often compared, but their age shall equal the duration of the trees planted by them; yea, of the oaks, the most long-lived of trees, supposed to last about a thousand years, being five hundred years growing to full perfection, and as many decaying;

blessed of the LORD, and their offspring shall spring with them. A. M. 3299.  
B. C. 706.

24 And it shall come to pass, that <sup>a</sup> before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.

25 The <sup>b</sup> wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: <sup>c</sup> and dust *shall be* the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the LORD.

<sup>a</sup> Deuteronomy xxviii. 41; Hosea ix. 12.—<sup>b</sup> Chapter lxi. 9.  
<sup>c</sup> Psalm xxxii. 5; Daniel ix. 21.—<sup>d</sup> Chapter xi. 6, 7, 9.  
<sup>e</sup> Genesis iii. 14.

"which," says Bishop Lowth, "seems to be a moderate and probable computation." The LXX. translate this clause, *γὰρ τὰς ἡμέρας τῆς ξύλης τῆς ζωῆς εἰσὺνταὶ αὐτῆς ἡμέραι τῆς λαοῦ μῶ;* *As the days of the tree of life shall be the days of my people. They shall not labour in vain*—As those do who do not enjoy the fruit of their labour; *nor bring forth*—Beget and bring forth children; *for trouble*—Those that shall give them trouble by their bad conduct, or by the poverty and misery in which they shall be involved; *for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, &c.*—There is a blessing entailed upon them by descent from their ancestors, which their offspring with them shall partake of; who shall be a comfort to them, and whom they shall have the happiness to see walking in the truth.

Verse 24. *Before they call I will answer*—"Behold here," says Vitringa, "a desirable blessing, the truest seal of divine favour and paternal love. The closest conjunction of heaven and earth, that is, of God and men, is expressed in this verse; seeing that God declares he will abundantly and immediately satisfy the desires of his people, which desires are here supposed to be just and conformable to his will; and that he will be of such goodness as of his own accord to prevent their requests, and even answer their prayers before they utter them."

Verse 25. *The wolf and the lamb shall feed together*—Concerning the metaphorical sense of these expressions see chap. xi. 7, and xxxv. 9. But since the renovation here spoken of extends to the whole creation, the words may imply the correcting the noxious qualities of fierce or venomous creatures.

## CHAPTER LXVI.

This chapter is a continuation of the subject of the foregoing, and many of the expressions in it are nearly the same with those there used. If it relate at all to the different state of the good and bad among the Jews, at their return out of captivity, yet it chiefly respects the rejection of the Jews in the days of the Messiah, the conversion of the Gentiles, and the erection of the kingdom of Christ in the world. The first verse of the chapter is applied by Stephen (Acts vii. 49, 50) to the dismantling of the temple by the planting of the Christian Church, which may serve as a key to the whole chapter.

We have here, (1.) The contempt which God puts upon ceremonial services in comparison of moral duties, and an intimation of his purpose shortly to put an end to sacrifices and the whole temple service, and to reject those that adhered to them,

1-4. (2.) *The salvation which God would, in due time, work for his people, delivering them out of the hands of their oppressors, 5; speaking terror to the persecutors, 6; and comfort to the persecuted, with a wonderful accession of the Gentiles to them, and abundant satisfaction therein, 7-14.* (3.) *The terrible vengeance which God would bring upon the enemies of his church and people, 15-18.* (4.) *The happy establishment of the church upon large and sure foundations, its constant attendance on God, and triumph over its enemies, 19-24.*

A. M. 3298. B. C. 706. **THUS** saith the LORD, <sup>a</sup> The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest?

2 For all those things hath my hand made, and all those things have been, saith the LORD:

<sup>a</sup> 1 Kings viii. 27; 2 Chron. vi. 18; Matt. v. 34, 35; Acts vii. 48, 49; xviii. 24.—<sup>b</sup> Chap. lviii. 15; lxi. 1.—<sup>c</sup> Psa. xxxiv. 18; li. 17.

#### NOTES ON CHAPTER LXVI.

Verses 1, 2. *Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is my throne*—That is, the throne of my glory and government; the place where I most manifest my power, and show myself in my majesty. Hence we are taught to pray, *Our Father which art in heaven. And the earth is my footstool*—Or, a place on which I set my feet, (Matt. v. 35,) overruling all the affairs of it according to my will. *Where is the house that ye build me?*—Can there be a house built that will contain me, who encompass and fill heaven and earth? and where is the place of my rest?—Where is the place wherein I can be said to rest in a proper sense? The ark was indeed called God's footstool, and the place of his rest, in a figurative sense, because there God manifested himself, though in degrees much beneath the manifestations of himself in heaven: but properly God hath no certain place of rest, and especially no temple built by man can be a place of rest for him. For what satisfaction can the Eternal Mind take in a house made with men's hands? What occasion has he, as we have, for a house to repose himself in, *who fainteth not, neither is weary; who neither slumbers nor sleeps?* Or, if he had occasion, *he would not tell us*, Psa. l. 12. *For all those things hath his hands made*—Heaven and all its courts, earth and all its borders, and all the hosts of both. *And all these have been*—Have had their beginning by the power of God, who was infinitely happy from eternity before they existed, and therefore cannot be benefited by them. Or, as the clause may be rendered, *all these things are*: they still continue upheld by the same power that made them; so that *our goodness extendeth not to him*. Vitringa is justly of opinion that "this discourse is directed to the hypocrites, who, despising the gospel of the Son of God, after they had made the temple a den of thieves, were yet zealous to repair and adorn it. They did not consider that a new economy being established, no earthly and material temple could be acceptable to Him whose throne was in heaven, and who everywhere found the place of his rest in the humble and contrite heart." "The Jews," says Bishop Lowth, "valued themselves much upon their temple, and the pomp-

<sup>b</sup> but to this man will I look, <sup>c</sup> even to <sup>d</sup> him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and <sup>e</sup> trembleth at my word.

3 <sup>f</sup> He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a <sup>g</sup> lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine's blood; he that <sup>h</sup> burneth

<sup>d</sup> Ezra ix. 4; x. 3; Prov. xxviii. 14; Verse 5.—<sup>e</sup> Chap. i. 11. <sup>f</sup> Or, *kid*.—<sup>g</sup> Deut. xxiii. 18.—<sup>h</sup> Heb. *maketh a memorial of*, Lev. ii. 2.

ous 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, 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, therefore, 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 colours, which brings the prophet again to the subject of the former chapter; and he pursues it in a different manner, with more express declarations of the new economy, and of the flourishing state of the church under it; the increase of which he shows is to be sudden and astonishing."

*But to this man will I look*—But though I regard not the magnificence and splendour of a temple built with human hands, nor any ornaments that are or can be bestowed upon it, nor the pomp and show of the ceremonies and services performed in it, or connected with it; and though I reign on a throne in majesty in the highest heavens, and *fill both heaven and earth with my glory*, yet will I look with a favourable eye to him that hath a *broken and contrite spirit*—Whose heart is subdued to the will of God, and who is poor and low in his own eyes; and that *trembleth at my word*—Who trembles when he hears my threatening words, and receives every revelation of my will with reverence. Such a one is a living temple of God, (chap. lvii. 15,) and of infinitely more value in his sight than the most sumptuous edifice that can be raised by the art or power of man, though it should be adorned in the most costly manner with gold and silver, and precious stones.

Verse 3. *He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man*—Without this humble and devout temper of mind, killing an ox for a burnt-offering is no more acceptable to God than if a man offered his son in

A. M. 3298. incense, as if he blessed an idol. Yea, B. C. 706. they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations.

4 I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them; because when I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear: but they did evil before mine eyes,

<sup>3</sup> Or, devices.—<sup>4</sup> Prov. i. 24; Chap. lxx. 12; Jer. vii. 13.

sacrifice to Moloch. "God here shows that the external ritual worship, offered to him by hypocrites and wicked persons, void of faith and virtue, was no more estimable in his sight than the material temple above spoken of; but that he was as much offended by the ritual worship of the impure, as by the most grievous crimes perpetrated against the immediate commands of the law, and particularly under the new economy, after the promulgation of the law of liberty, and the perfect and true sacrifice offered by Christ to expiate the sins of the world. The declaration is most important, but will not be understood unless by those who are well acquainted with the interior part of religion." See Vitringa. Solomon, it may be observed, gives (Prov. xv. 8) a short but full commentary on the whole verse: *The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord. He that sacrificeth a lamb as if he cut off a dog's neck*—Namely, in order to sacrifice it. This animal was held in the greatest abhorrence by the Jews, inasmuch that the very price of a dog was forbidden to be brought into the house of the Lord, Deut. xxiii. 18. The comparison shows God's detestation of ceremonial performances from persons destitute of true piety. *He that offereth, &c., as if he offered swine's blood*—Which, being one of the principal sacrifices which the heathen offered to their idols, was in a particular manner abominable to God. *He that burneth incense as if he blessed an idol*—As if he honoured an idol with gifts and presents. From hence it is plain that the prophet is not here reflecting upon idolatrous worship, but formal worship; for to say, *He that burneth incense to an idol is as he that blesseth an idol*, would be only to say, *He that blesseth an idol, blesseth an idol*; that is, it would be saying nothing. But he is reflecting upon those who, in a formal way, and not in spirit and in truth, worshipped the true God, and by acts which he had appointed. God, by the prophet, declares that these men's services were no more acceptable to him than murder, idolatry, or the most horrid profanation of his name. *Yea, they have chosen their own ways*—They live as they list; they persist in their wicked practices, and yet expect to recommend themselves to my favour by their ceremonial observances. *And their soul delighteth in their abominations*—Taking pleasure in their sins, and showing their contempt of my authority and enmity to my holiness, as much as their fathers did when they were mad upon their idols.

Verse 4. *I also will choose their delusions*—I will

and chose that in which I delighted not. A. M. 3298. B. C. 706.

5 ¶ Hear the word of the LORD, ye that tremble at his word; Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let the LORD be glorified: but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed.

<sup>b</sup> Verse 2.—<sup>c</sup> Chap. v. 19.—<sup>d</sup> 2Thess. i. 10; Tit. ii. 13.

punish them in their own way, and set those over them as teachers who shall govern them by their traditions instead of my word. Or, I will suffer false Christs and false prophets to deceive them, Matt. xxiv. 24; John v. 43. *And I will bring their fears upon them*—This was exactly fulfilled when, as they crucified Christ for fear of the Romans, (John xi. 48,) that very sin was punished with their utter destruction by the Romans. *Because when I called*—Because when, by my servants, I called you to repentance, to bring forth fruit worthy of repentance, and to believe in my Son, your true Messiah; none did answer—Very few yielded obedience. He evidently speaks of the calls to repentance, and the invitations to believe in Christ, given them by John the Baptist, Jesus himself, and his apostles and evangelists. *When I spake they did not hear*—God accounts that those do not hear who do not obey his will.

Verse 5. *Hear, &c.*—The prophet here, forbearing to proceed in denouncing judgments against the hypocrites and formalists among the Jews, now turns his discourse to such as feared God, whose religion is described by their trembling at his word, as in verse 2. Such apostrophes, or diversions of his speech to other persons, we had chap. l. 10, and li. 1, 7. The same addresses, it must be observed, belong not to saints and presumptuous sinners. It is highly probable, as Vitringa supposes, that the apostles and other disciples and followers of Christ, who embraced the gospel, who were the seed of the first church, and were to constitute that spiritual temple which God had determined to build and inhabit upon the abolition of the material temple, are here addressed and comforted by God, on account of the contempt, hatred, and excommunication of them by their brethren among the Jews and Pharisees. See John xvi. 2. *Your brethren*—By nation, or by an external profession of religion; though false brethren, that cast you out—That cast you out of their synagogues, cast you out of their city, and some of you out of the world; for my name's sake—For your adherence to my law; said, *Let the Lord be glorified*—Thinking they did God good service, John xvi. 2. Or, we may understand it as spoken in defiance of God; as if he had said, You say God will be glorified in your deliverance. Let him be glorified then. *Let him make speed and hasten his work*, chap. v. 19. Thus they derided Christ, *Let him deliver him since he delighted in him. But he shall appear to your joy, &c.*—There

A. M. 3298. 6 A voice of noise from the city, a  
B. C. 706. voice from the temple, a voice of the  
LORD that rendereth recompense to his enemies.  
7 ¶ Before she travailed, she brought forth ;

will come a time, which is at no great distance, when God will come forth, and let them know his judgment concerning their unjust and violent proceedings. Then you shall have joy, and they shall be ashamed, 2 Thess. i. 6-8. This was fulfilled when, upon the signal given of Jerusalem's approaching destruction, *the hearts of the Jews failed them for fear*: but the disciples of Christ, whom they hated and persecuted, *lifted up their heads with joy, knowing that their redemption drew nigh*, Luke xxi. 26.

Verse 6. *A voice of noise from the city, &c.*—This is an expression of a prophetic ecstasy, in which the prophet hears the noise of the ruin of the city and temple sounding in his ears. This *voice of noise* comes not from the city only, but from the temple, wherein these formalists had so much gloried, and reposed so much confidence. There is a noise of soldiers slaying, and of the poor people shrieking or crying out. *A voice of the Lord*—Not in thunder, which is sometimes called the Lord's voice, but *that rendereth recompense to his enemies*—Thus he expresses the destruction of the Jews by the *Roman armies*, as a thing at that time doing. Some think this prophecy was fulfilled, partly at least, in the prodigies which, according to Josephus, in his history of the Jewish wars, (lib. vii. cap. 12,) preceded the destruction of Jerusalem: that the eastern gate of the temple, which was of solid brass and very heavy, and was scarcely shut in an evening by twenty men, and was fastened by strong bars and bolts, was seen, at the sixth hour of the night, opened of its own accord, and could hardly be shut again: that before the setting of the sun, there were seen over all the country chariots and armies fighting in the clouds, and besieging cities: that at the feast of pentecost, as the priests were going into the inner temple by night, as usual, to attend their service, they heard first a motion and noise, and then a voice, as of a multitude, saying, *Let us depart hence*; and, what he reckons as the most terrible of all, that one Jesus, the son of Ananus, an ordinary country fellow, four years before the war began, and when the city was in peace and plenty, came to the feast of tabernacles, and ran crying up and down the streets day and night, *A voice from the east, a voice from the west, a voice from the four winds, a voice against Jerusalem and the temple, a voice against the bridegrooms and the brides, a voice against all the people*. The magistrates endeavoured by stripes and torture to restrain him; but he still cried with a mournful voice, *Wo, wo to Jerusalem!* This he continued to do for seven years and five months together, and especially at the great festivals; and he neither grew hoarse nor was tired, but went about the walls and cried with a loud voice, *Wo, wo to the city, and to the people, and to the temple!* and, as

before her pain came, she was delivered of a man-child. A. M. 3298.  
B. C. 706.

8 Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? shall the earth be made to

he added at last, *Wo, wo also to myself!* it happened that a stone from some sling or engine immediately struck him dead. It may be proper to remark here, that there is not a more creditable historian than Josephus, who relates these things, and who appeals to the testimony of those who saw and heard them. But, as Bishop Newton observes, it may add some weight to his relation, that Tacitus, the Roman historian, a heathen, also gives us a summary account of the same occurrences. He says, "There happened several prodigies. Armies were seen to engage in different parts of the sky—glittering arms appeared—the temple shone by the sudden fire of the clouds—the doors of the temple were suddenly thrown wide open—a voice, more than human, was heard, that the gods were departing, and, at the same time, a great motion as if departing." See *Tacitus's Hist.*, book v. page 217, in Lipsius's edition.

Verses 7, 8. Here begins a new paragraph of the prophet's discourse, containing a description of the sudden and great increase of the Christian Church, upon God's rejecting the Jews, and destroying their temple and worship: "the very destruction of the Jewish polity making way for the reception and spread of the gospel, inasmuch as it abated that opposition which the Jewish zealots all along made to its progress; and the abolishing the Jewish worship contributed very much to the abrogating the law of Moses, and burying it with silence and decency." See Rom. xi. 11, and Lowth. This paragraph, however, is not unconnected with what precedes. "It is," as Vitringa observes, "another consolatory argument, directed to those who *reverenced the word of Jehovah*, and formed the true Zion, taken from the rapid and wonderful increase of the church among the Gentiles, superior to all human thought, all expectation. For when in the former section Isaiah had done two things; first, had predicted the calling of the Gentiles, (chap. lxxv. 1,) and then the punishment of the ungodly, and such as rejected the gospel; in this section, after he had repeated the indignation conceived by God against the hypocrites and those who did not obey the gospel, he in the same manner comforts the *pious Jews*, from the unexpected event of the most wished-for success of the calling of the Gentiles, who, joined with them in one body, should form one church, and inherit the earth." *Before she travailed she brought forth*—The church is represented here as a *travailing woman*, the mother of all true believers: see chap. liv. 1; Gal. iv. 26. The whole verse is expressive of a great and sudden salvation which God would work for his church, like the delivery of a woman, and that *before her travail, and without pain*, of a *man-child*. It undoubtedly refers to the introduction of the gospel, and its rapid and unexpected progress. *Who hath heard such a thing?*—The prophet here calls either

A. M. 3298. bring forth in one day? or shall a  
B. C. 706. nation be born at once? for as soon as  
Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.

9 Shall I bring to the birth, and not <sup>4</sup> cause  
to bring forth? saith the LORD: shall I cause to  
bring forth, and shut *the womb*? saith thy God.

10 ¶ Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad  
with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy  
with her, all ye that mourn for her:

\* Or, *beget*.—\* Or, *brightness*.—† Chap. xlvi. 18; lx. 5.

to the whole world, or to such as feared God among  
the Jews, to admire his stupendous work of provi-  
dence and grace, in the sudden erection and wonder-  
ful enlargement of the gospel church. *Who hath  
seen such things?*—Who hath witnessed such an  
extraordinary event? *Shall the earth be made to  
bring forth in one day, or shall a nation, &c.*—“The  
suddenness of this event is as surprising as if the  
fruits of the earth, which are brought to perfection  
by slow degrees, should blossom and ripen all in one  
day. And the fruitfulness of this spiritual increase  
is as wonderful as if a whole nation were born at  
once, or by one woman.” *For as soon as Zion  
travailed*—As soon as the fulness of time came for  
erecting the gospel church; *she brought forth her  
children*—In great multitudes, without pain or diffi-  
culty, no inauspicious circumstance occurring to  
prevent their birth: see Acts ii. 41; and iv. 4.

Verse 9. *Shall I bring to the birth*—Shall I dis-  
appoint and render abortive a design of which I  
myself was the author, when every thing is ripe for  
execution, and the effect just ready to be produced?  
Shall I begin a work and not perfect it? *Shall I  
cause to bring forth, and shut the womb*—That  
there should not be a continual succession of con-  
verts in all ages? Zion shall not bring forth once  
only, but she shall continue to be fruitful: her  
womb shall not be shut: she shall every day bring  
forth more and more children, and my presence shall  
be with my church to the end of the world. Thus  
the prophet still carries on the comparison between  
the natural and the spiritual birth.

Verses 10, 11. *Rejoice ye with Jerusalem*—Let all  
that wish her well congratulate her for the favours  
God hath conferred upon her, and particularly let  
the Gentiles rejoice with the Jewish Church, for her  
advancement shall redound to their benefit. Thus  
Moses, (Deut. xxxii. 43,) referring probably to the  
very events here predicted by Isaiah, *Rejoice, O ye  
nations, with his people; for he will avenge the blood  
of his servants, and will render vengeance to his  
adversaries, and will be merciful unto his land and  
to his people. Be glad with her, all ye that love her*  
—All that love God love the church of God, lay its  
interests very near their hearts, and heartily espouse  
its cause. And they that have a sincere affection  
for it have a cordial sympathy with it in all the cares  
and sorrows of its militant state. They mourn for  
Zion in her afflictions and troubles: her grievances  
excite their sorrows; and if she be in distress, their

11 That ye may suck, and be satis- A. M. 3299.  
fied with the breasts of her consola- B. C. 706.  
tions; that ye may milk out, and be delighted  
with the <sup>5</sup> abundance of her glory.

12 For thus saith the LORD, Behold, <sup>1</sup> I will  
extend peace to her like a river, and the glory  
of the Gentiles like a flowing stream: then  
shall ye <sup>m</sup> suck, ye shall be <sup>n</sup> borne upon *her*  
sides, and be dandled upon *her* knees.

<sup>m</sup> Chap. lx. 16.—<sup>n</sup> Chap. xlix. 22; lx. 4.

harpes are hung on the willows. But here Jerusalem  
is represented as having great cause for rejoicing;  
the days of her mourning are at an end, and she is  
comforted according to the time in which she hath  
seen adversity. And of course all her friends, who  
sympathized with her in her sorrows, are here in-  
vited to join with her in her joys, because they are  
to participate in those blessings from which her joys  
are derived. *That ye may suck*—Or, *because ye  
shall suck: and be satisfied with the breasts of her  
consolations*—The word of God, the covenant of  
grace, especially the promises of that covenant, gos-  
pel ordinances, and all the opportunities of attend-  
ing on God, and conversing with him, are breasts of  
the church's consolations. In these her comforts  
are laid up, and thence they are drawn by faith and  
prayer. From these breasts, therefore, we must  
suck by an application of the promises of God to  
ourselves, and a diligent attendance on his ordi-  
nances; and with the consolations which are drawn  
thence we must be satisfied, and not be unsatisfied  
though we have a very small share of earthly com-  
forts. *That ye may be delighted with the abun-  
dance of her glory*—It is the glory of the church  
that she hath the Lord for her God; that to her per-  
tains the adoption and the service of God; and with  
the abundance of this glory we must be delighted.  
We must take more pleasure in our relation to God,  
and communion with him, than in all the delights of  
the sons and daughters of men. Whatever is the  
glory of the church must be *our glory and joy*, par-  
ticularly her purity, unity, and increase.

Verses 12, 13. *For, behold, I will extend*—Or *am  
extending, peace to her*—That is, all good; *like a  
river*—That runs in a constant stream, still increasing  
till it is swallowed up in the ocean. The gospel  
brings with it, wherever it is received in its power,  
peace, which proceeds forward like a river, supply-  
ing the souls of believers with all good, and making  
them fruitful as a river doth the lands through which  
it passes: such peace as the springs of this world's  
comforts cannot send forth, and the dams of the  
world's troubles cannot stop or drive back; such a  
river of peace as will carry us to the ocean of bound-  
less and endless bliss. *And the glory of the Gentiles  
like a flowing stream*—Gentile converts shall come  
pouring into the church, and shall swell the river of  
her peace and prosperity; for they shall *bring their  
glory* with them; their wealth and honour, their  
power and interest shall all be devoted to the Lord,

A. M. 3298. 13 As one whom his mother com-  
B. C. 706. forteth, so will I comfort you; and  
ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem.

14 And when ye see *this*, your heart shall  
rejoice, and ° your bones shall flourish like an  
herb: and the hand of the LORD shall be known  
toward his servants, and *his* indignation toward  
his enemies.

° Ezek. xxxvii. 1, &c.

and employed for the good of the church. *Then shall ye suck*—Ye Jews also. When you see such crowding for a share in those comforts, you shall be the more solicitous, and the more earnest and diligent to secure your share; not through a fear lest you should have the less, because others come in such multitudes to partake of them, for Christ has enough for all, and enough for each; but their zeal shall provoke you to a holy jealousy. *Ye shall be borne upon her sides*—Compare chap. lx. 4, where see the note. Those that are joined to the church should be treated thus affectionately. The great Shepherd *gathers the lambs in his arms, and carries them in his bosom*; and so must the under shepherds, that young converts may not be discouraged. *As one whom his mother comforteth, &c.*—That is, in the most tender and compassionate way. *So will I comfort you*—I will not only use rational arguments to comfort you, such as a prudent father uses toward his child in distress, but I will manifest toward you such tender affections and compassions, as a loving mother feels toward her afflicted infant. *And ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem*—In the favours bestowed on the church, which you shall partake of; and in the thanksgivings offered by the church, which you shall concur with.

Verse 14. *And when ye see this*—To what a happy state the church is restored; *your heart shall rejoice*—The peace of the church, and the extension of the kingdom of Christ, are always causes of real joy to such as fear God. *And your bones shall flourish like an herb*—The bones that were dried and withered, the marrow of them being quite exhausted, shall recover a youthful strength and vigour, and shall flourish like an herb in the spring, whose verdure and beauty in the winter were concealed in the root hid in the earth. In other words, you Jews shall recover your ancient strength and glory, and be renewed in as wonderful a manner as if dry, withered bones should recover their youth and moisture: or, as if the dead bones in a charnel-house should be united with sinews, clothed again with flesh and skin, and should have life and vigour infused into them. Then shall be effected that resurrection of the dry bones spoken of by Ezekiel, chap. xxxvii. 1, &c., for that vision relates to the restoration of the Jewish nation, after it had lain for many ages in a dead, hopeless condition. In like manner St. Paul calls the receiving of the Jews into the church, *life from the dead*, Rom. xi. 15. *And the*

15 ¶ For behold, the LORD A. M. 3298.  
will come with fire, and with his B. C. 706.  
chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire.

16 For by fire and by ¶ his sword will the LORD plead with all flesh: and the slain of the LORD shall be many.

¶ Chap. ix. 5; 2 Thess. i. 8.—¶ Chap. xxvii. 1.

*hand of the Lord shall be known toward his servants*—The power, protection, and influence of God shall be made manifest for, and upon, all such as truly serve and obey him. *And his indignation toward his enemies*—But the wicked shall experience a quite contrary dispensation, Psa. i. 4. As God's hand shall be upon and toward such as fear him, to cover, bless, and influence them, so his indignation shall in that day be showed toward those of your nation who have manifested themselves to be his enemies.

Verses 15, 16. *For, behold, &c.*—Here the prophet comes more particularly to show the nature of that indignation which should be exercised toward God's enemies. The passage, it must be observed, is metaphorical, "exhibiting God as about to take vengeance on the enemies of his church, under the figure of a commander and warrior, as well as of a judge, armed at all points, severely to punish those who have provoked his indignation: see chap. lxiii. 1, &c.; Rev. xviii. 8; and xiv. 20. Some suppose that this passage refers to the general judgment; but it is rather, according to the whole tenor of this prophecy, to be referred to the judgments of God upon the rebellious Jews, and upon the antichristian enemies of the church." *The Lord will come with fire*—With terrible judgments: an allusion possibly to the fire with which enemies use to consume places brought under their power. *And with his chariots*—Like the general of a victorious army. *With a whirlwind*—With a sudden sweeping calamity, that, like a whirlwind, shall destroy all before it. *To render his anger with fury*—That is, with fervour; for fury, properly taken, is not in God, chap. xxvii. 4. But God, at certain times, executes judgment more severely than at others. *And his rebukes*—By rebukes he means punishments, for it is said God will execute them *with flames of fire*—They had contemned the rebukes of the law, now God will rebuke them with fire and sword. *For by fire, &c., will the Lord plead with all flesh*—God at first *pleads* with sinners by *word*, but if he cannot so prevail, he will *plead with them* in a way by which he will overcome; by fire, pestilence, and blood. Thus he threatens to do with all flesh, that is, with all sinners continuing in sin, and especially with the impenitent and unbelieving Jews, who, being favoured with the oracles and ordinances of God, *held the truth in unrighteousness*, and abused their extraordinary privileges to their greater condemnation: see Rom. ii. 8, 9. *And the slain of the Lord shall be many*—Those whom

A. M. 3298. 17 † They that sanctify themselves,  
B. C. 706. and purify themselves in the gardens † behind one tree in the midst, eating swine's flesh, and the abomination, and the mouse, shall be consumed together, saith the LORD.

18 ¶ For I know their works and their thoughts: it shall come, that I will gather all nations and

† Chap. lxxv. 3.—† Or, one after another.

God should cause to be slain. This was awfully fulfilled in the destruction brought on the Jews by the Romans for crucifying the Messiah; no fewer than eleven hundred thousand, according to Josephus, perishing in the siege of Jerusalem, and at least three hundred thousand more during the war; not to mention the vast numbers that perished in caves, woods, wildernesses, common sewers, of whom no account could be taken; and the great slaughter made of them afterward in the wars waged against them by Adrian, when fifty of their strongest fortresses were razed, and nine hundred and eighty-five of their noblest towns were sacked, and consumed by fire. See note on Deut. xxviii. 62.

Verse 17. *They that sanctify themselves, &c.*—"Behold," says Vitranga, "the reason of the great severity above mentioned, namely, a base and abominable departure from God, represented under a certain kind of idolatry and detestable superstition, of all others the most odious and contrary to the institutions of the ancient religion." It is evident the passage is to be understood figuratively, like those in verse 3, and in chap. lxxv. 3, 4, 11, on which see the notes. *And purify themselves in the gardens*—There were several sorts of lustrations, or purifications, used among the heathen, from whence the Jews learned their idolatrous customs, some of which were performed by washings, for which purpose they had fountains in their sacred groves and gardens. *Behind one tree*—The word *tree* is not in the Hebrew. The words are אָחָד אָחָד, *achar achad*, which may signify, after the manner of *achad*. Or, as Bishop Lowth renders it, *after the rites of achad*; observing, "the Syrians worshipped a god called *Adad*, whom they held 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. But whatever the particular mode of idolatry might be, the general sense of the verse is perfectly clear." It is plainly a reproof of the wicked Jews for the many idolatries and superstitions of which they were guilty, and which are here set forth in figurative language, borrowed from the abominable practices to which many of the Jews were addicted in Isaiah's time; who privately, in enclosed gardens which were not exposed to view, performed the heathen lustrations, sacrificed in the heathen manner, and to their gods, and eat meats which were

tongues; and they shall come, and see my glory. A. M. 3298. B. C. 706.

19 † And I will set a sign among them, and I will send those that escape of them unto the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, to Tubal, and Javan, to the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory;

† Luke ii. 34.

prohibited by the law as unclean, although in public they pretended to be true Jews, or strict observers of the law. *Eating swine's flesh*—Forbidden, Lev. xi. 7; Deut. xiv. 8. *And the abomination*—Other abominable meats forbidden to the Jews; and *the mouse*—The word which we translate *mouse* being nowhere found but Lev. xi. 29; 1 Sam. vi. 4, 5, 11, 18, and here, some think it is not that creature which we call a *mouse*, but rather signifies some serpent. Be this as it may, the sense evidently is, that God would not only destroy the open and gross idolaters and superstitious persons, but all those who made no conscience of yielding obedience to the law of God in such things as seemed to them of a trivial nature, and in which they easily might have yielded obedience. The Lord here assures them that they should all perish together. Observe, reader, in the day of final judgment, the idolatrous pagan or Papist, and the ungodly Protestant, shall fare alike. For no man can reasonably imagine that either baptism, or a profession of Christianity, can save a man from God's wrath without holiness, any more than circumcision, and the being reputed a member in the Jewish Church.

Verses 18–20. *For I know their works and their thoughts*—Of idolatry, superstition, and other wickedness. The word *know* not being in the Hebrew, some apply the ellipsis thus: *I have observed their works, &c.* Others consider the clause as a question, and read, *Should I endure their works, &c.?* No: *it shall come, that I will gather, &c.*—My threatened judgments shall come upon them, and I will gather all nations and tongues to see my glorious holiness and justice manifested in their punishment. Or the sense may be, *Because I know and will no longer bear with their works, therefore it shall come to pass that I will cast them off, and then I will gather all nations, &c.*—That is, take the Gentiles to be my people in their stead. This sense of the clause agrees well with what follows. *And they shall see my glory*—My oracles, my holy institutions and ordinances, which hitherto have been locked up in the church of the Jews, and have been their glory, shall be published to the Gentiles, Psal. xcvi. 6; and chap. xl. 5. *And I will set a sign among them*—It is agreed by all, that this is a prophecy concerning the conversion of the Gentiles. By a *sign* here some understand an *ensign*, as the word אֵשֶׁת signifies Psal. lxxiv. 4, which is a military sign, to gather people together, to which, as is promised chap. xi. 12, the Gentiles shall seek.

A. M. 3298. 'and they shall declare my glory  
B. C. 706. among the Gentiles.

20 And they shall bring all your brethren  
for an offering unto the LORD, out of all  
nations, upon horses, and in chariots, and in  
litters, and upon mules, and upon swift  
beasts, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith  
the LORD, as the children of Israel bring an

offering in a clean vessel into the house of the LORD. A. M. 3298.  
B. C. 706.

21 And I will also take of them for priests  
and for Levites, saith the LORD.

22 For as the new heavens and the new  
earth, which I will make, shall remain before  
me, saith the LORD, so shall your seed and  
your name remain.

' Mal. i. 11.—' Rom. xv. 16.—' Or, coaches.—' Exodus  
xix. 6; Chapter lxi. 6; 1 Peter ii. 9; Revelation i. 6.

7 Chap. lxxv. 17; 2 Pet. iii. 13; Rev. xxi. 1.

The preaching of the word seems to be intended, accompanied with miracles called signs, or followed by some distinguishing providence, whereby they should be preserved from the common destruction. *And I will send those that escape of them unto the nations*—Those few Jews who, being converted to the Christian faith, escaped the national impenitence and unbelief, and the common destruction of the nation; and many of them, the apostles in particular, shall be employed in all parts of the world, for the conversion of others, Matt. xxviii. 19; Acts xiii. 46. *Tarshish, Pul, Lud*, and the other places here mentioned, are intended to signify the different quarters of the world into which the gospel would be sent. *And they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles*—The glorious riches of my grace in Christ. *And they shall bring all your brethren, &c.*—The apostles and gospel ministers thus sent abroad shall bring the converts of the Gentiles, who are your brethren in Christ, (Gal. iii. 28,) Abraham's spiritual seed; *for an offering unto the Lord*—Who will have no more offerings of bullocks, or rams, or lambs, but will have men and women, reasonable oblations, Rom. xii. 1. He will particularly have the offering up of the Gentiles, which shall be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost, Rom. xv. 16. *Upon horses and in chariots, &c.*—That is, by every method of conveyance then in use. *To my holy mountain, Jerusalem*—That is, to the Christian Church, typified by Jerusalem. *As the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel*—These converted Gentiles shall be a holy people, and therefore acceptable to God.

Verse 21. *I will also take of them for priests and for Levites*—God will find among the converted Gentiles those who, though they are not of the tribe of Levi, yet shall do the true work of the priests and Levites. They shall minister in holy things, preside in the religious assemblies, teach the people, and bless in the name of the Lord. They shall be stewards of the mysteries of God, as the priests and Levites were under the law; angels or messengers of the churches, pastors overseeing and feeding their several flocks, elders, presbyters, or bishops, giving themselves to the word of God and prayer, (Acts vi. 2-4,) and wholly occupied in these holy duties. The apostles were all Jews, and so were the seventy disciples; the great apostle of the Gentiles was himself a Hebrew of the Hebrews. But when churches

were planted among the Gentiles, they had ministers appointed them who were, *of themselves, elders in every church*, Acts xiv. 23; Titus i. 5; which made the ministry to spread the more easily, and to be the more familiar, and, if not the more venerable, yet the more acceptable. God saith, *I will take, not all them*, though they are all, in a spiritual sense, made to our God kings and priests, but of them, that is, some of them. It is God's work to choose ministers, by qualifying them for, and inclining them to, the service, as well as to make ministers, by giving them their commission. *I will take them*—That is, I will admit them, though Gentiles, and will accept of them and their ministrations. This is a great honour and advantage to the Gentile Church, as it was to the Jewish Church, that God raised up of their sons for prophets, and their young men for Nazarites, Amos ii. 11.

Verses 22, 23. *For as the new heavens, &c.*—The new state of the church to be raised up under the Messiah; shall remain before me—Unalterable. As the gospel dispensation is to be continued till the end of time, and not to be succeeded by any other; as it shall therefore remain, because it is before me, under my eye, my care, and special protection; so shall your seed and your name remain—A seed of ministers, a seed of Christians. As one generation of both passeth away, another generation shall come, and thus the name of Christ, with that of Christians, shall continue on earth while the earth remains, and his throne as the days of heaven! The gates of hell, though they fight against the church, shall not prevail against it, nor wear out the saints of the Most High: for there shall be a daily succession of true believers for the upholding of it; for, if believers could fail from the earth, the church, made up of them only, as the true members of it, must fail also. *And from one new-moon to another, &c.*—In the gospel church there shall be as constant and settled a course of worship, (though of another nature,) as ever was in the Jewish Church. This is described in expressions suited to the Old Testament dispensation, to show that, though the ceremonial law should be abolished, and the temple service at an end, yet God should be still as regularly, statedly, and acceptably worshipped as ever. Heretofore the Jews were only obliged to appear three times in a year at the place of God's public worship, but, saith the prophet, in the gospel church people shall worship from one new-

A. M. 3298. 23 And <sup>a</sup>it shall come to pass,  
B. C. 706. *that* <sup>b</sup>from one new-moon to another,  
and from one sabbath to another, <sup>a</sup>shall all  
flesh come to worship before me, saith the  
LORD.

<sup>a</sup>Zech. xiv. 16.—<sup>b</sup>Heb. from new-moon to his new-moon, and from sabbath to his sabbath.

*moon to another, and from one sabbath to another*—They shall be perpetually employed in serving and glorifying him, although in different ways. Their state shall be one continued festival. And whereas, under the former dispensation, the Jews only were bound to attend God's worship at the great feasts, and of them only the males; now, under the new dispensation, all flesh, Gentiles as well as Jews, women as well as men, shall *come and worship before God*—That is, shall worship in his presence, though not in his temple at Jerusalem, but in religious assemblies dispersed all over the world, which shall be to them as the *tabernacle of meeting* was to the Jews: God will in them record his name; and, though but two or three come together, he will be in the *midst of them*, will meet and bless them.

Verse 24. *And they shall go forth*—Namely, those who had joined themselves to the communion of the church spoken of in the preceding verses; *and look upon the carcasses of the men that have sinned against me*—Meaning chiefly the unbelieving Jews who rejected Christ and his gospel, including, however, all impenitent sinners, and especially all the enemies and persecutors of God's truth and people. By *looking upon their carcasses* is meant beholding the dreadful vengeance taken on them. This is here represented in figurative language. The misery is described by an allusion to the frightful spectacle of a field of battle covered with the carcasses of the slain, which lie rotting upon the ground, full of worms, crawling about them, and feeding on them. It seems the Lord, by his prophet, first intends to set forth the dreadful temporal calamities that should come upon the Jews, in the destruction of their city and nation by the Romans; in which destruction, as has been intimated in the note on verse 16, not less than between two and three millions, first and last, were cut off by the sword, famine, and pestilence. But when it is added, *for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched*, it is certain the punishment of the wicked in the world to come is chiefly intended. These words, it is well known, are applied by our Saviour, (Mark ix. 44,) to express the everlasting punishment of the wicked in *Gehenna*, or *hell*, so called, in allusion to the valley of *Hinnom*, 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; concerning which place see note chap. xxx. 33. "Our Saviour," says Bishop Lowth, '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

A. M. 3299. 24 And they shall go forth, and look  
B. C. 706. upon <sup>b</sup>the carcasses of the men that  
have transgressed against me: for their <sup>a</sup>worm  
shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched;  
and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.

<sup>a</sup>Psa. lxx. 2.—<sup>b</sup>Verse 16.—<sup>c</sup>Mark ix. 44, 46, 48.

Abraham at table, in the kingdom of heaven; (see Matt. viii. 11; John xiii. 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*, which 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, that preys on the body, *dies*: 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 Saviour'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 Saviour, Luke xiv. 15. And, in regard to *Gehenna*, the Chaldee paraphrast renders everlasting, or continual burnings, by the *Gehenna of everlasting fire*. And before this time the son of Sirach (vii. 17) had said, *The vengeance of the ungodly is fire and worms*. So likewise the author of the book of Judith: 'Wo to the nation rising up against my kindred: the Lord Almighty will take vengeance on them in the day of judgment, putting fire and worms in their flesh;' chap. xvi. 17, manifestly referring to the same emblem."

*And they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh*—Hebrew רריון, an *execration*, as Dr. Waterland renders it. "Christ the Lord," says Vitringa, "in passing his judicial sentence on false Christians and wicked persons, will say, *Go, ye cursed, or execrated, into eternal fire*. That evil will be added to their state of pain, and a condemning conscience. Separated from the blessed and glorious communion of God and the saints, cast into the deepest state of misery, they will be exposed to the reproach, ignominy, contempt, and execration of angels and saints," (say rather of devils and condemned spirits,) "suffering the punishment of their pride, arrogance, tyranny, cruelty, injustice, crimes, hatred of the truth, persecutions, by which things in this life, fighting against God, and afflicting his saints, they knowingly and willingly provoked his displeasure. These are the ends of the two opposite kinds of men, the pious and the ungodly, in which, after various preparatory judgments of God, the fates of all ages, as well as our own fates, will be terminated, and in

which this divine book of the great Prophet Isaiah also terminates. May our lot be with the saints, with those who reverence God and love the truth; with the humble, the meek, the merciful, and those that persevere in good works to the end of life, through the grace of our great Lord, Saviour, and Judge, Jesus Christ, who will distribute these blessings according to the will of his Father."

This eminent divine concludes his very learned commentary on this incomparable prophecy with the following devout prayer and thanksgiving, with which the author of this work, adopting his words,

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also closes his observations thereon. "Influenced by which hope, and prostrate before his throne, I return, with the most profound humility, my sincerest thanks to God the Father, in his Son Jesus Christ, by the Spirit, for the grace and light wherewith he hath favoured me, his unworthy servant, during my comment on this book; earnestly requesting from his grace and mercy that, pardoning the errors into which I have ignorantly fallen, he would render this work, of whatever sort it is, conducive to the glory of his great name, the benefit of the church, and the consolation of the pious." Amen!

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# THE BOOK

## OF THE

# PROPHET JEREMIAH.

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### ARGUMENT.

JEREMIAH was of the sacerdotal race, being the son of *Hilkiah*, one of the priests, who dwelt at *Anathoth*, a city in the tribe of *Benjamin*, situate, according to *Jerome*, about three miles north of *Jerusalem*. He was appointed to the prophetic office from his mother's womb, and was called to the exercise of it when very young; namely, in the thirteenth year of *Josiah's* reign, the year of the world 3375, and six hundred and twenty-nine years before Christ. He continued to prophesy more than forty years; namely, till after the destruction of *Jerusalem* by the *Chaldeans*, which happened in the year of the world 3416, and he died, as is generally believed, in *Egypt*, two years afterward; into which country, after the desolation of *Judea*, he followed the remnant of the *Jews*. In the course of his ministry he met with great difficulties and opposition from his countrymen of all degrees, whose persecution and ill usage sometimes wrought so far upon his mind, as to draw from him some expressions, in the bitterness of his soul, which many have thought it difficult to reconcile with the sacredness of his prophetic office; but which, when duly weighed, may be found to demand our pity rather than censure. He was certainly a man of unblemished piety, and conscientious integrity; a warm lover of his country, whose miseries he pathetically deplores; and so affectionately attached to his countrymen, notwithstanding their injurious treatment of him, that he chose rather to abide with them, and undergo all hardships in their company, than separately to enjoy a state of ease and plenty, which the favour of the king of *Babylon* would have secured to him. The time and manner of his death are very uncertain. The current tradition indeed among the *Jews* and *Christians* is, that he was stoned to death by the *Jews* of *Tahpanhes*, offended by his warm and continual remonstrances against their idolatrous practices: but this account, though not improbable, considering the temper and disposition of the parties concerned, is not, however, absolutely to be relied on. If true, their wickedness did not long pass without its reward; for, in a few years after, those *Jews* were miserably destroyed by the *Babylonian* armies, which invaded *Egypt*, according to the prophet's prediction, chap. *xliv.* 27, 28.

Jeremiah being ordained, as we find, chap. *i.* 5, to prophesy, not only to the *Jews*, but also to other nations; to go to all to whom God should send him, and to speak whatsoever he commanded him; he accordingly not only uttered prophecies against God's chosen people, but also against the *Egyptians*, the *Philistines*, the *Moabites*, the *Ammonites*, the *Idumeans*, the *Syrians*, and other nations, and, in a more particular manner, against the *Babylonians*. The prophecies against these foreign nations are placed by themselves, beginning at the 46th chapter. The foregoing chapters relate to the *Jews*, being reproofs of their wickedness, exhortations to repentance, and denunciations of God's judgments, if they continued obstinate; and, in particular, an express denunciation, that they should come under subjection to the *Chaldeans*, and be carried captives to *Babylon*; but with a promise annexed, that after the expiration of just seventy years, they should be released from their captivity, and come back again to their own country. There are likewise some prophecies concerning particular persons, as against *Pashur*, *Shallum*, *Jehoiakim*, *Coniah*, *Haniah*, and *Zedekiah*; and also some concerning the coming of *Christ*, the calling of the *Gentiles* to the knowledge of the true God; and of the new covenant which God would make with *Israel*. With the prophecies is interspersed the history of some affairs, particularly of the treatment *Jeremiah* met with from the *Jews*; and of the taking of *Jerusalem* by the *Chaldeans*. As to the style and genius of this prophet's writing, the character given thereof by an acknowledged critic, a character to which every reader of discernment will heartily subscribe, is as follows: "*Jeremiah* is by no means wanting, either in elegance or sublimity, although, generally speaking, inferior to *Isaiah* in both. *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 expression 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 is 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 lofty style of *Isaiah*. But of the whole book of *Jeremiah* it is hardly the one half which I look upon as poetical." Lowth, de sacra Poesi Hebræorum, Prælec. xxi.

## CHAPTER I.

In this chapter, which forms an entire section by itself, we have, (1.) A general inscription or title of this book; with the time of the continuance of Jeremiah's public ministry, 1-3, (2.) His call to the prophetic office, his modest objection against it answered, and an ample commission given him for the execution of it, 4-10. (3.) The visions of an almond-tree and a seething-pot, signifying the approaching ruin of Judah and Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, 11-16. (4.) Encouragement given him to go on undauntedly in his work, in an assurance of God's presence with him, 17-19.

A. M. 3375. **T**HE words of Jeremiah the son of  
B. C. 629. Hilkiyah, of the priests that were

<sup>a</sup> in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin :

2 To whom the word of the LORD came in the days of Josiah the son of Amon king of Judah, <sup>b</sup> in the thirteenth year of his reign.

<sup>a</sup> Joshua xxi. 18; 1 Chronicles vi. 60; Chapter xxxii. 7, 8, 9.  
<sup>b</sup> Chap. xxv. 3.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER I.

Verses 1, 2. *The words of Jeremiah*—That is, the sermons or prophecies, the contents of which he received from God, that he might declare them unto the people, and which are comprised in this book under his name. See on Isa. ii. 1. *The son of Hilkiyah*—Some have supposed this to have been Hilkiyah the high-priest, by whom the book of the law was found in the temple, in the reign of Josiah; but for this opinion there is no better ground than his being of the same name, which was not an uncommon one among the Jews; whereas, had he been in reality the high-priest, he would doubtless have been mentioned by that distinguishing title, and not put upon a level with the priests of an ordinary and inferior class. Besides this, Hilkiyah dwelt at Anathoth, which was indeed one of the cities allotted to the priests, but not the place of residence of the high-priest, who always lived at Jerusalem. It may be observed here, that Jeremiah, being of the family of Aaron, would have been a teacher of the people even if he had not been called to the extraordinary office of prophesying. *To whom the word of the Lord came*—Not only a charge and commission to prophesy, but also a revelation of the things themselves which he was to deliver; *in the days of Josiah*—That young but good king, who, in the twelfth year of his reign, began a work of reformation, applying himself with all sincerity and diligence to purge Judah and Jerusalem of the groves, the images, and the high places, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 3. Now the very next year was this young prophet seasonably raised up to assist and encourage the young king in that good work. And it might have been expected that,

3 It came also in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, <sup>a</sup> unto the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah the son of Josiah king of Judah, <sup>d</sup> unto the carrying away of Jerusalem captive <sup>e</sup> in the fifth month.

<sup>a</sup> Chapter xxxix. 2.—<sup>d</sup> Chapter lii. 12, 15.—<sup>e</sup> 2 Kings xxv. 8.

by the joint efforts of such a prince and such a prophet, both young, and likely to continue long to be useful, such a complete reformation would have been effected, as would have prevented the ruin of the church and state. But, alas! it proved quite otherwise: and their united labours, with respect to the generality of their countrymen, only served to aggravate their guilt and accelerate their destruction.

Verse 3. *It came also*—Namely, the word of the Lord, as verse 2; *in the days of Jehoiakim*—Called at first by Josiah, *Eliakim*, 2 Kings xxiii. 34. It must be observed, that Jehoahaz, who reigned before him, (2 Kings xxviii. 8.) and Jehoiakim, who succeeded him, are not mentioned here, because each of them reigned only three months, and could hardly be said to be established in the government. *Unto the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah*—The meaning is, that he prophesied not only during the reigns of Josiah and Jehoiakim, but also during the whole reign of Zedekiah, which was eleven years: *unto the carrying away of Jerusalem captive*—That great event of which he had so often prophesied. He continued, indeed, to prophesy after that, (chap. xl. 1.) but the computation of the time is here made to end with that event, because it was the accomplishment of many of his predictions: and from the thirteenth year of Josiah to the captivity was just forty years. It is observed from Dr. Lightfoot, that as Moses was forty years a teacher of the Israelites in the wilderness, till they entered into their own land; Jeremiah was so long a teacher in their own land before they were sent into the wilderness of the heathen: and he thinks that therefore a special mark is set upon the last forty years of the iniquity of

A. M. 3375. 4 ¶ Then the word of the LORD  
B. C. 629. came unto me, saying,

5 Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.

6 Then said I, Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child.

7 But the LORD said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak.

<sup>a</sup> Isa. xlix. 1, 5.—<sup>b</sup> Exod. xxxiii. 12, 17.—<sup>c</sup> Luke i. 15, 41; Gal. i. 15.—<sup>d</sup> Hebrew, *gave*.—<sup>e</sup> Exod. iv. 10; vi. 12, 30; Isa. vi. 5.—<sup>f</sup> Num. xxii. 20, 38; Matt. xxviii. 20.—<sup>g</sup> Ezek. ii. 6; iii. 9; Verse 17.

Judah, which Ezekiel bore forty days, a day for a year, because, during all that time, they had Jeremiah prophesying among them, which was a great aggravation of their impenitency.

Verses 4, 5. *Then the word of the Lord came unto me*—With a satisfying assurance to himself, that it was the word of the Lord, and not a delusion. *Before I formed thee in the belly*—That is, the womb. Having spoken before on the time of his call, he now speaks of the manner of it. *I knew thee*—That is, I had thee in my view, or approved thee as a fit minister for this work, in the same sense as it is said, Acts xv. 18, *Known unto God are all his works from the foundation of the world*; he contemplated the plan of them, and approved it in his mind, before he created and brought them into being. *I sanctified thee*—I set thee apart in my counsel for executing the office of a prophet. We have examples of a similar designation with that mentioned here, in John the Baptist and St. Paul, as the reader will see if he consult the texts referred to in the margin. *And ordained thee a prophet unto the nations*—He speaks thus to Jeremiah, not to the other prophets, because he stood in need of greater encouragement than they, both in respect to the tenderness of his years, and the difficulties which he was to encounter. *And ordained thee a prophet to the nations*—To other nations besides the Jews.

Verse 6. *Then said I, Ah, Lord God, &c.*—He modestly excuses himself from a consideration of the weight of the work, and the tenderness of his age, as in the next expression. *Behold, I cannot speak; for I am a child*—We cannot infer from this, that Jeremiah was within the years of what is properly called childhood. For he might call himself a child by way of extenuating his abilities; as Solomon calls himself a little child, 1 Kings i. 7, although at that time he was married, and must have been at least twenty years of age. And the word *child*, or *youth*, is elsewhere used of those who were arrived at the first years of manhood.

Verses 7, 8. *But the Lord said unto me, &c.*—God refuses to accept of his excuse, and renews his commission to him to execute the prophetic office. Thus God refused to accept the excuse of Moses,

8 <sup>1</sup> Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the LORD.

9 Then the LORD put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the LORD said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth.

10 See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant.

<sup>a</sup> Exod. iii. 12; Deut. xxxi. 6, 8; Josh. i. 5; Chap. xv. 20; Acts xxvi. 17; Heb. xiii. 6.—<sup>b</sup> Isa. vi. 7.—<sup>c</sup> Isa. li. 16; Chap. v. 14.—<sup>d</sup> 1 Kings xix. 17.—<sup>e</sup> Chap. xviii. 7; 2 Cor. x. 4, 5.

made on a like occasion. See Exod. vi. 30; and vii. 1, 2. *Thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee*—This is not so much a command as a promise: as much as to say, I will enable thee, notwithstanding thy youth, to go with proper boldness to those to whom I send thee, and to declare my commands with that dignity and precision wherewith they ought to be uttered. *Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee, &c.*—The style of God's commission to his prophets and messengers commonly runs in these words, *I am with thee*, (see the margin,) importing that God, who sent them, would enable them to discharge the office he had committed to them, and would give them strength proportionable to the work in which they engaged. To reprove the faults of all persons, of the high as well as the low, the rich as well as the poor, with that plainness and impartiality which the prophets used, required a more than ordinary degree of courage, as well as of prudence, for which cause the promise of God's presence with them was particularly necessary, to encourage them in the discharge of their duty.

Verses 9, 10. *Then the Lord put forth his hand, and touched my mouth*—This appeared to the prophet to be done in his vision; whereby he was taught that the divine help should go along with him, that the gift of utterance should be bestowed upon him, and that he should be able to declare the divine commands in a proper spirit and manner: compare Isa. vi. 7; and li. 16. *Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth*—By the seeing of this symbolical action in his vision, and the hearing of these words, Jeremiah could not but be assured that he should be able to speak in the proper language of a prophet, or with words becoming his office, and that he should have that firmness and boldness given him which were necessary for the purpose. Jeremiah does not indeed equal Isaiah in eloquence of speech, but he seems to have been no way inferior to him in firmness of mind. *See, I have this day set thee over the nations*—Namely, to speak to them in my name, for this is all that is meant here by being set over them. *To root out and to pull down, &c.*—In the style of Scripture the prophets are said to do what they declare shall be done; and therefore Jeremiah

A. M. 3375. 11 ¶ Moreover the word of the LORD  
B. C. 629. came unto me, saying, Jeremiah, what  
seest thou? And I said, I see a rod of an almond-tree.

12 Then said the LORD unto me, Thou hast well seen: for I will hasten my word to perform it.

13 And the word of the LORD came unto me the second time, saying, What seest thou? And I said, I see a seething-pot; and the face thereof is toward the north.

<sup>r</sup> Ezek. xi. 3, 7; xxiv. 3.—<sup>s</sup> Heb. *from the face of the north.*  
<sup>t</sup> Chap. iv. 6; vi. 1.—<sup>u</sup> Heb. *shall be opened.*

is here said to root out, &c., because he was authorized to make known the purposes of God, and because the events here mentioned would follow in consequence of his prophecies. See Isa. vi. 9; and Bishop Newton on the Prophecies, vol. 1.

Verses 11, 12. *Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me*—Probably at the same time, and in the same vision, wherein he was first appointed to his office; *saying, What seest thou*—Here, by symbolical representations, the meaning of which God immediately interpreted, future things were presented to his view. This method of instruction or information sinks deeper into the mind, and leaves a more lasting impression there, than any mere words can do; and therefore the prophets frequently received communications from God in this way. *And I said, I see a rod of an almond-tree*—Namely, which had leaves, and possibly blossoms on it, like Aaron's rod; otherwise the prophet could not so readily have discerned of what kind of wood it was. The almond-tree is one of the first that wakes and rises from its winter repose, flowering, in the warm southern countries, in the month of January, and by March bringing its fruits to maturity. From this circumstance, which is mentioned by Pliny, lib. xvi. cap. 42, it is supposed to have received its name, זקק, *shaked*, as being *intent*, and, as it were, *on the watch* to seize the first opportunity of emitting its buds and blossoms: which is the proper sense of the verb, from which that noun is derived. A branch of this tree, therefore, with buds or leaves, and blossoms upon it, was a proper emblem to denote God's *hastening* the execution of the predictions which he declared by this prophet, who lived to see most of his prophecies fulfilled. There is also in the original a remarkable *paronomasia*, or affinity in sound, between *shaked*, an *almond-tree*, and *shoked*, *hastening*, which makes the words more striking than they can possibly be in any translation. For not only the nature of the almond-tree, but the very sound of the Hebrew word, which signifies it, denoted God's hastening to fulfil the prophecies which Jeremiah uttered by his directions. *Thou hast well seen*—Or, thou hast seen and judged right. Hebrew, הִטַּבְתָּ לְרֵאוֹתַי, *Thou hast done well to see*, that is, in seeing so. *For I will hasten my*

14 Then the LORD said unto me, A. M. 3375.  
Out of the north an evil shall break B. C. 629.  
forth upon all the inhabitants of the land.

15 For lo, I will call all the families of the kingdoms of the north, saith the LORD; and they shall come, and they shall set every one his throne at the entering of the gates of Jerusalem, and against all the walls thereof round about, and against all the cities of Judah.

16 And I will utter my judgments against them touching all their wickedness, who have

<sup>v</sup> Chap. v. 15; vi. 22; x. 22; xxv. 9.—<sup>w</sup> Chap. xxxix. 3; xliii. 10.—<sup>x</sup> Deut. xxviii. 20; Chap. xvii. 13.

*word*—Literally, *I will act like the almond-tree respecting my word*; namely, my word of threatening, against Judah and Jerusalem, to perform it.

Verse 13. *I see a seething-pot*—Or, *a pot boiling*. The steam of this boiling pot represented God's judgments, which are often compared to a fire, as the afflictions of Israel were to a smoking furnace, Gen. xv. 17. *And the face thereof was toward the north*—The steam was represented to the prophet as raised by a fire, or driven by a wind coming from the north. Thus interpreted, the *pot* or *caldron* denoted Judea or Jerusalem, expressed by the same figure, Ezek. xi. 3, 7, and xxiv. 3. But the Hebrew פְּנֵי מַנְיָ צִפּוֹנָה, seems to be more exactly rendered by Blaney; *The face thereof is turned from the north*, or, as it is expressed in the margin, *from the face of the north*. For it appears from the next verse, that the evil was to come from the north; and therefore the steam, which was designed for an emblem of that evil, must have issued from that quarter. According to this interpretation, the pot denoted the empire of the Chaldeans, lying to the north of Judea, and pouring forth its multitudes like a thick vapour.

Verses 15, 16. *For lo, I will call*—Or, *I am upon calling*, or, *about to call*; *all the families of the kingdoms of the north*—By these seem to be meant the different nations who were subject to Nabopolassar and Nebuchadnezzar, and who served in their armies, such as the Medes, Armenians, Chaldeans, inhabitants of Mesopotamia, and Syrians. The kings of Assyria were formerly troublesome to the Jews, chiefly under Ahaz and Hezekiah; but they do not seem to be spoken of here, but only those people who, from the thirteenth year of Josiah, when Jeremiah had this vision, grievously harassed Judea, until the taking of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, to whom the kings of the north were either tributaries or auxiliaries. *And they shall set every one his throne, &c.*—To set up a throne in, or over, any place, denotes taking full possession of it, as appears from chap. xliii. 10, and xlix. 38; but, by *thrones* here, *seats*, *pavilions*, or *tents* pitched, may be intended; and so this prophecy was fulfilled when the city was taken by Nebuchadnezzar: see chap. xxxix. 3. *And I will utter my judgments against them*—

A. M. 3375. forsaken me, and have burned in—  
B. C. 629. — cense unto other gods, and worshipped  
the works of their own hands.

17 ¶ Thou therefore ¶ gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak unto them all that I command thee: \* be not dismayed at their faces, lest I † confound thee before them.

18 For behold, I have made thee this day \* a

† 1 Kings xviii. 46; 2 Kings iv. 29; ix. 1; Job xxxviii. 3; Luke xii. 35; 1 Pet. i. 13.

Namely, against the Jews, for this is spoken of them, and not of the kings or people, mentioned in the foregoing verse; *touching their wickedness*—Then I will no longer speak unto them by my prophets, whose threatenings they have disregarded; but the judgments which I will bring upon them shall declare their wickedness, and the vengeance due unto them for it.

Verse 17. *Thou therefore gird up thy loins*—Prepare to do the work to which I call and appoint thee. For, it being the custom of the eastern people to wear long garments, which they girded about their loins when any business required great activity or expedition; by thus speaking the Lord enjoins his prophet to use all possible vigour and intention of mind as well as of body, that he might execute, with diligence and despatch, the office which God had assigned him. *And arise*—Another expression of the same meaning. *And speak all that I command thee*—Hebrew, *shall command thee*. *Be not dismayed at their faces*—Discover no fear, and conceal no message; *lest I confound thee*—The Hebrew verb is the same in both parts of the sentence, which may be literally rendered thus: *Be not confounded at their faces*, (namely, when thou appearest in their presence,) *lest I confound thee before them*. God exhorts him not to be dismayed at the scoffs and ill treatment he should meet with from hardened

defenced city, and an iron pillar, and A. M. 3375.  
brazen walls against the whole land, B. C. 629.  
against the kings of Judah, against the princes thereof, against the priests thereof, and against the people of the land.

19 And they shall fight against thee; but they shall not prevail against thee; † for I am with thee, saith the LORD, to deliver thee.

\* Exod. iii. 12; Verse 8; Ezek. ii. 6.—† Or, *break to pieces*.  
† Isa. l. 7; Chap. vi. 27; xv. 20.—‡ Verse 8.

sinners, especially from those who thought their power and authority set them above reproof, and would bear them out in whatsoever they did: see Ezek. xi. 6. He tells him it is better to bear the reproaches of men than the reproofs of God, who would call him to a strict account how he discharged his duty.

Verses 18, 19. *For I have made thee this day a defended city*—That is, from this day I will so defend thee that they shall be no more able to hurt thee than they would be if thou wast in a strongly-fortified and impregnable city. *And brazen walls*—Which cannot be broken or battered down with any force. *Against the whole land, against the kings, &c.*—All its inhabitants in general; intimating that, though men of all degrees should set themselves against him, yet God would support him against them all, and would carry him through his work, although his troubles would not only be great, but long, extended through several kings' reigns. *And they shall fight against thee*—Shall oppose thee, and manifest much hostile hatred against thee; *but they shall not prevail*—They shall not be able, by all their devices, to shorten thy days, or to prevent thy executing the charge given thee. *For I am with thee, to deliver thee*—I will show my power in protecting and delivering thee out of all thy troubles, when thy adversaries shall become a prey to their enemies.

## CHAPTER II.

*This and the four following chapters contain a solemn remonstrance against the wickedness of the Jews, calls to repentance, and threatenings of ruin if they remained obstinate and impenitent. The sin with which they are most particularly charged here is idolatry, forsaking their own God, the true God, for other and false gods. It is urged, (1.) That their conduct was extremely ungrateful to God, who had been so kind to their nation, 1-8. (2.) That it was without a precedent even among the heathen, who had only idols for their gods, 9-13. (3.) That by their alliances with the Egyptians and Assyrians, and imitation of their idolatries, they had disparaged and ruined themselves, 14-19. (4.) That hereby they had broken their covenant engagements, and degenerated from their good beginnings, 19-21. (5.) That their wickedness was too manifest to be concealed, and too bad to be excused, they having wilfully, obstinately, and indefatigably persisted in it, 22-25, 33-36. (6.) That they had shamed themselves by trusting to idols, which could not help them, 26-29, 37. (7.) That they contemned the rebukes of providence, and even God himself, 30-32. (8.) That, with their idolatry, they had mingled the most unnatural murder of their children, 34.*

A. M. 3375. **M**OREOVER, the word of the  
B. C. 629. LORD came to me, saying,

2 Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the LORD; I remember<sup>1</sup> thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown.

3 Israel was holiness unto the LORD, and<sup>2</sup> the first-fruits of his increase: all that devour him shall offend; evil shall come upon them, saith the LORD.

4 Hear ye the word of the LORD, O house

of Jacob, and all the families of the house of Israel: A. M. 3375.  
B. C. 629.

5 Thus saith the LORD, What iniquity have your fathers found in me, that they are gone far from me, and have walked after vanity, and are become vain?

6 Neither said they, Where is the LORD that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, that led us through the wilderness, through a land of deserts and of pits, through a land of drought, and of the shadow of death, through a land that no man passed through, and where no man dwelt?

<sup>1</sup> Or, for thy sake.—<sup>a</sup> Ezek. xvi. 8, 22, 60; xxiii. 3, 8, 19; Hos. ii. 15.—<sup>b</sup> Deut. ii. 7.—<sup>c</sup> Exod. xix. 5, 6.—<sup>d</sup> James i. 18; Rev. xiv. 4.

<sup>e</sup> Chapter xii. 14; Chapter l. 7.—<sup>f</sup> Isaiah v. 4; Mic. vi. 3. <sup>g</sup> 2 Kings xvii. 15; Jonah ii. 8.—<sup>h</sup> Isa. lxiii. 9, 11, 13; Hos. xiii. 4.—<sup>i</sup> Deut. viii. 15; xxxii. 10.

#### NOTES ON CHAPTER II.

Verse 1. *Moreover, the word of the Lord came unto me*—The discourse begun here is continued to the end of the fifth verse of the next chapter. In it God professes to retain the same kind and merciful disposition toward his people which he had manifested in their earlier days. He expostulates with them on their ungrateful returns for his past goodness, and shows that it was not want of love in him, but their own extreme and unparalleled wickedness, which had already subjected, and would still subject them, to calamities and misery. He concludes with a pathetic address, exhorting them to return to him, with an implied promise of acceptance; and laments the necessity he was under, through their continued obstinacy, of giving them further proofs of his displeasure. See Blaney.

Verses 2, 3. *Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem*—In the most public parts of the city, that all may hear; *saying, Thus saith the Lord*—I deliver his message, and not my own. I come to you with a commission from God, and speak in God's name. *I remember thee, &c.*—I remember my first kindness to thee, when I delivered thee out of Egypt; (see Hos. ii. 15;) and espoused thee to myself, to be my own peculiar people. The covenant which God made with the Israelites, at mount Sinai, is commonly represented under the metaphor of a marriage contract. Upon this account idolatry is represented as spiritual adultery, because it is the same degree of unfaithfulness to God which an adulteress is guilty of in respect of her husband. *When thou wentest after me in the wilderness*—Out of that love and affection that thou didst manifest to me in following my conduct. Or rather, when thou wast led by me through the wilderness, and I took such care both to protect and provide for thee, and that by a train of miracles; *in a land that was not sown*—Or, as Houbigant reads it, *in an uncultivated land.* *Israel was holiness to the Lord*—A people dedicated to God; *and the first-fruits of his increase*—Or, as the first-fruits. As the first-fruits are holy to God, so was Israel. *All that devour, or rather, devoured, him*—For it refers to the time past, not to the future;

and so the following words: all that were injurious to him; *shall, or, did, offend*—Were obnoxious and liable to punishment, as if they had devoured holy things, Prov. xx. 25. *Evil shall come, rather, came, upon them*—Some evil was inflicted on them from the Lord, who was always wont to stand forth for the vindication of his people; as upon the Egyptians, Amalekites, Sihon, Og, the Midianites, Canaanites, and others, as the four last books of Moses abundantly testify.

Verses 4-6. *Hear, O house of Jacob, &c.*—The prophet here directs his discourse to the twelve tribes, as he does afterward, chap. iii. 14, &c. For the captivity of the ten tribes was not so total but that there were some Israelites still remaining in the land among the Assyrian colonists. *What iniquity have your fathers found in me?*—That is, what injustice or unfaithfulness in not performing my part of the Sinai covenant? *That they are gone far from me*—Far from the love and fear of me, and from obedience to my laws; far from my worship and service; *and have walked after vanity*—Have followed after vain idols, incapable of affording them either protection or help. *And are become vain*—In their imaginations, Rom. i. 21, 22; fools, as senseless as the stocks or stones, of which they made their idols. *Neither said they, Where is the Lord?*—They made no inquiry after him, took no thought about their duty to him, nor expressed any desire to recover his favour; *that brought us up out of the land of Egypt?*—Working such a deliverance for us as had never been wrought for any people. *That led us through the wilderness*—Conducting and sustaining our whole nation in that barren desert for the space of forty years, by almost incessant miracles; *through a land of deserts and pits*—Through desolate and dangerous places; *through a land of drought*—Where we had no water but by a miracle; *and of the shadow of death*—Houbigant renders it, *where death threatened us.* A barren and deadly land, where no man could live; bringing forth nothing that could support life, and therefore where nothing but death could be expected; and, besides, possessed by great numbers of venomous and de-

A. M. 3375. 7 And I brought you into <sup>2</sup> a plentiful country, to eat the fruit thereof and the goodness thereof; but when ye entered, ye <sup>1</sup> defiled my land, and made my heritage an abomination.

8 The priests said not, Where *is* the LORD? and they that handle the <sup>m</sup> law knew me not: the pastors also transgressed against me, <sup>n</sup> and the prophets prophesied by Baal, and walked after *things that* <sup>o</sup> do not profit.

9 Wherefore <sup>p</sup> I will yet plead with you, saith

<sup>2</sup> Or, *the land of Carmel.*—<sup>k</sup> Numbers xiii. 27; xiv. 7, 8; Deut. viii. 7, 8, 9.—<sup>1</sup> Lev. xviii. 25, 27, 28; Num. xxxv. 33, 34; Psa. lxxviii. 58, 59; cvi. 38; Chap. iii. 1; xvi. 18. <sup>m</sup> Mal. ii. 6, 7; Rom. ii. 20.—<sup>n</sup> Chap. xxiii. 13.

structive creatures, such as scorpions, serpents, &c., and where we were exposed to the attacks of many enemies. *A land that no man passed through*—As having in it no accommodation for travellers, much less for habitation.

Verses 7, 8. *And I brought you into a plentiful country*—Hebrew, *into the land of Carmel*. Carmel was so fertile a part of Judea, that the word from thence came to be used to express a fruitful place in general. Canaan was as one great, fruitful field, Deut. viii. 7. *When ye entered, ye defiled my land*—By your sins, especially by your idolatries, Psa. cvi. 38; that sin being greatly aggravated by this circumstance, that the people thereby renounced God's authority in that very land into which he had brought them, by a train of unparalleled wonders, and the propriety of which he had reserved to himself, though he had graciously bestowed upon them the use of it: see Lev. xxv. 23. *The priests said not, Where is the Lord?*—That race of men, whom I exalted to the honourable office of ministering to me in holy things, neither inquired after me, nor cultivated any acquaintance or intercourse with me. *And they that handle the law knew me not*—They, whom I appointed to the important office of instructing others in the knowledge of me and their duty, (see Mal. vii. 6, 7,) were ignorant or regardless of it themselves. And this was the principal cause of that degeneracy of manners which prevailed among the people. *The pastors also transgressed against me*—By *pastors* here, distinguished from the priests and prophets, are meant the *kings, princes, and chiefs* of the nation; for the word *pastor* is used in the prophets for a magistrate, as well as for a teacher of the people, and ecclesiastical governor. *And the prophets prophesied by Baal*—Gave forth prophecies in the name of Baal, with a view to recommend him as a god. Or, they that should have taught the people the true worship of God, were themselves worshippers of, and advocates for, Baal, and drew others from God to the worship of that idol; and *walked after things that do not profit*—Namely, after idols; things that could not possibly do them any service, but were sure to bring ruin upon them. It appears from hence, that all orders and degrees

the LORD, and <sup>q</sup> with your children's children will I plead.

10 For pass <sup>r</sup> over the isles of Chittim, and see; and send unto Kedar, and consider diligently, and see if there be such a thing.

11 <sup>r</sup> Hath a nation changed *their* gods, which are <sup>s</sup> yet no gods? <sup>t</sup> but my people have changed their glory for <sup>u</sup> *that which* doth not profit.

12 <sup>v</sup> Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the LORD.

<sup>q</sup> Verse 11; Hab. ii. 18.—<sup>r</sup> Ezek. xx. 35, 36; Mic. vi. 2. <sup>s</sup> Exod. xx. 5; Lev. xx. 5.—<sup>t</sup> Or, *over to.*—<sup>u</sup> Mic. iv. 5. <sup>v</sup> Psa. cxv. 4; Isa. xxxvii. 19; Chap. xvi. 20.—<sup>w</sup> Psa. cvi. 20; Rom. i. 23.—<sup>x</sup> Verse 8.—<sup>y</sup> Isa. i. 2; Chap. vi. 19.

of men in authority had contributed to that general corruption of manners, whereof Jeremiah complains.

Verse 9. *Wherefore I will yet plead with you*—By my prophets, and by my judgments, as I pleaded with your fathers, that you may be left without excuse. *And with your children's children will I plead*—According to the tenor of the law, wherein God threatens to *visit the sins*, particularly the sin of idolatry, *of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation*.

Verses 10, 11. *For pass over the isles of Chittim*—The neighbouring isles and peninsulas, which lay west of Judea, meaning especially the countries of Greece and Macedonia, and the islands and continents of Europe in general; the countries that were more polite and learned. *And send unto Kedar*—To Arabia, and the countries to the east and south, as the others lay to the west and north: send to them that are more rude and barbarous. *And consider diligently*—As a matter well worth your attention; and *see if there be such a thing*—As if he had said, If you search from east to west, from south to north, you will find no instance of apostacy from the objects of their worship like this of yours. *Hath a nation changed their gods?*—The gods worshipped by their forefathers? or shown a disposition to change them? *Which are yet no gods?*—But mere imaginary beings, or images made by men's hands, or the creatures of the living and true God. But my people have changed their glory, have relinquished the worship of the infinite and eternal Jehovah, their Creator, Preserver, Benefactor, Redeemer, Friend, and Father, to whom they owe their all, and whose worship and service, favour and protection, were their greatest glory. *For that which doth not profit*—For those idols which never did, nor can, do them any good; that have no essence or power; and of which they must necessarily be ashamed.

Verses 12, 13. *Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this*—A pathetic expression, in the poetic style, signifying that the wickedness of these apostates from God was so great, that the very inanimate creatures, could they be sensible of it, might well

A. M. 3375. 13 For my people have committed  
B. C. 629.

two evils; they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.

14 ¶ Is Israel a servant? is he a home-born slave? why is he spoiled?

† Psa. xxxvi. 9; Chap. xvii. 13; xviii. 14; John iv. 14.—\* Ex. iv. 22.—<sup>4</sup> Heb. become a spoil?—Isa. i. 7; Chap. iv. 7.

stand amazed at it: that the heavens might be affronted to behold it, and the celestial bodies withdraw their light and influences from that part of the world where such enormities were practised. "Such rhetorical apostrophes import the unusualness, and likewise the indignity, of the things spoken of; implying them to be such that, if men take no notice of them, the elements themselves will testify against such practices."—Lowth. See note on Isa. i. 2. *For my people have committed two evils*—Two remarkable evils, ingratitude and folly: they have acted contrary both to their duty and to their interest; *they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters*—In whom they had an abundant and constant supply of all that comfort and relief they stood in need of, and had it freely; *and hewed them out cisterns*—Have had recourse to creatures, and to schemes of their own devising; to gods of their own making, for relief in their necessities, for deliverance out of, or support and comfort in, their troubles. *Broken cisterns*—False at the bottom, and leaky, so that they can hold no water—They have acted as foolishly as persons would do who should reject the waters of a clear, perpetual spring, to drink rain-water, received in cisterns, which could neither be so sweet nor so wholesome as that of pure springs; and not only so, but should betake themselves to such cisterns as, being broken, could hold no water, or none for any length of time, and therefore could give them no assurance of finding any upon having recourse to them. God may, indeed, be justly compared to a perpetual spring, as he is the fountain or origin of all good things; the author and giver of all blessings, both spiritual and temporal, from whom all good gifts are derived, as from an inexhaustible source; see Psa. xxxvi. 9. "And wherever else men place their happiness, whether in false religions, or in the uncertain comforts of worldly blessings, they will find themselves as wretchedly disappointed as those who expect to find water in broken cisterns or conduits. Hereby is strongly set forth the folly of the Jews in renouncing the worship of the true God, and their dependance upon him, and betaking themselves to the worship of idols, and the alliance and protection of idolaters."—Lowth.

Verse 14. *Is Israel a servant? is he a home-born slave?*—Is he of a condition to be delivered as a prey to his enemies? Is he of those people whom God regards as slaves and strangers? These interrogations imply, and have the force of, a negative. As if he had said, Is not Israel the son, the chosen and peculiar people of God? Why then hath the

15 \* The young lions roared upon A. M. 3375.  
him, and <sup>5</sup> yelled, and they made his B. C. 629.  
land waste: his cities are burned without inhabitant.

16 Also the children of Noph and <sup>b</sup>Tahapanes <sup>6</sup> have broken the crown of thy head.

<sup>4</sup> Heb. gave out their voice.—<sup>b</sup> Chap. xliiii. 7, 8, 9.—<sup>6</sup> Or, feed on thy crown, Deut. xxxiii. 20; Isa. viii. 8.

Lord treated him as a common slave, and given him up into the power of tyrannical lords and masters? The sense is, God redeemed Israel from the bondage of Egypt, and adopted him to be his son, Exod. iv. 22. So that the servitude he now undergoes, and his being made a prey to so many foreign enemies, cannot be owing to his birth, or primitive condition, but must be imputed to his sins, of which his slavery is the consequence. Compare Isa. i. 1, and lii. 3.

Verses 15, 16. *The young lions roared upon them*—Lions, in the figurative style of prophecy, denote powerful princes and conquerors; see chap. i. 17; where the king of Assyria is mentioned as one of those lions which had devoured him, and Nebuchadnezzar as another. If we consider the prophet as speaking here of what was past, by the young lions he probably means the kings of Syria and Assyria, who laid the country waste, not only of the ten tribes, but also Judah and Benjamin; and carried the Israelites into captivity; see Isa. i. 7. But the words יִשְׁמְרוּ כְפָרִים are more properly rendered, *The young lions shall roar upon him*; and so may be understood of Pharaoh-necho, king of Egypt, and Nebuchadnezzar, whose successive hostilities against the kingdom of Judah were foreseen by the prophet, and are probably here foretold. It is true, the following verbs of this verse are in the past time, but the context favours interpreting them of the future. Nor is it unusual for the prophets to speak of events yet to come, and foreseen by them, as if they had been already accomplished. *They made his land waste, his cities are burned, &c.*—That Jeremiah speaks here of the future, and not of the past, appears from this: that in the time of Josiah, when this prophecy was uttered, the country was not in the condition here described; the land had not been reduced to desolation, nor the cities burned with fire; but the determination of the Lord was past, and the prophet clearly foresaw that these calamities would come. *Also the children of Noph, &c., have broken the crown of thy head*—By the children of Noph and Tahapanes are meant the Egyptians, these being the two principal cities of Egypt, called by heathen writers *Memphis* and *Taphanes*, or *Daphne Pelusica*. "This no doubt alludes," says Blaney, "to the severe blow which the nation received in a capital part, when the good King Josiah was defeated by the Egyptians, and slain in battle; or when, afterward, upon the deposition of Jehoahaz, the glory of the monarchy was debased, by its being changed into a tributary and dependant kingdom, 2 Kings xxiii. 29–34, and 2 Chron. xxxv. 20.

A. M. 3375. 17 ° Hast thou not procured this unto  
B. C. 629. thyself, in that thou hast forsaken the  
LORD thy God, when <sup>d</sup> he led thee by the way?

18 ¶ And now what hast thou to do ° in the  
way of Egypt, to drink the waters of <sup>f</sup> Sihor?  
or what hast thou to do in the way of Assyria,  
to drink the waters of the river?

19 Thine own <sup>g</sup> wickedness shall correct thee,  
and thy backslidings shall reprove thee: know

<sup>a</sup> Chapter iv. 18.—<sup>d</sup> Deut. xxxii. 10.—<sup>e</sup> Isaiah xxx. 1, 2.  
<sup>f</sup> Josh. xiii. 3.—<sup>g</sup> Isa. iii. 9; Hos. v. 5.—<sup>h</sup> Ex. xix. 8; Josh.

Verse 17. *Hast thou not procured this unto thyself?*—Are not all these calamities owing to thy sins, thy known and wilful sins? By their sinful confederacies with the nations, and especially their conformity to them in their idolatrous customs and usages, they had made themselves very mean and contemptible, as all those do that have made a profession of religion, and afterward throw it off. Nothing now appeared of that which, by their constitution, made them both honourable and formidable, and therefore the neighbouring nations neither respected nor feared them. But this was not all: they had provoked God to give them up into the hands of their enemies, who, after becoming a dreadful scourge to them, at last subdued them, and overturned their government. And thus they brought their miseries upon themselves, *in forsaking the Lord their God*, in revolting from their allegiance to him, and so throwing themselves out of his protection; for protection and allegiance go together. *When he led thee, &c.*—Hebrew, בעת בדרך, מולכך, *at the time, the very time, he was leading thee on to a happy peace and settlement, and thou wast arrived at the very borders of it, thou didst draw back, and forsake thy guide.* We may observe here, that although Josiah was a very pious prince, and exerted himself to the utmost to restore the worship of God, breaking down the altars and groves, and beating the graven images into powder, &c., 2 Chron. xxxiv., xxxv., nevertheless, from the complaints of Jeremiah, and his reproofs of their idolatry, it sufficiently appears that the people were far from being reformed.

Verse 18. *And now what hast thou to do, &c.*—“The kings of Egypt and Assyria were the most potent monarchs in the neighbourhood of Judea; and according as either of these was the stronger, the Jews made their court to him, and desired his assistance. This is expressed by *drinking the waters of Sihor*, an Egyptian river, which some suppose, and Dr. Waterland renders, *the Nile*; (see note on Isa. xxiii. 3;) and of the *Euphrates*, called here *the river*, by way of eminence. The expressions allude to verse 13, where human assistances are styled *broken cisterns*, and opposed to God, who, by reason of his all-sufficiency, is called *the fountain of living waters*. To drink of the waters of these rivers might possibly allude, further, both to the

therefore and see that *it is* an evil <sup>A. M. 3375.</sup>  
*thing* and bitter, that thou hast for- <sup>B. C. 629.</sup>  
saken the LORD thy God, and that my fear *is*  
not in thee, saith the Lord GOD of hosts.

20 For of old time I have broken thy yoke,  
and burst thy bands; and <sup>b</sup> thou saidst, I will  
not <sup>7</sup> transgress; when <sup>i</sup> upon every high hill  
and under every green tree thou wanderest,  
<sup>k</sup> playing the harlot.

xxiv. 18; Judg. x. 16; 1 Sam. xii. 10.—<sup>7</sup> Or, *serve*.—<sup>i</sup> Deut.  
xii. 2; Isa. lvii. 5, 7; Chap. iii. 6.—<sup>k</sup> Exod. xxxiv. 15, 16.

strong propensity which the Israelites had to return to Egypt, and that which they showed for adopting the idolatrous worship of these countries. For the Egyptians worshipped the *water*, and particularly that of the Nile.” See *Div. Leg.*, vol. iii., and Calmet.

Verse 19. *Thy own wickedness shall correct thee*—The miseries that your own sins have brought upon you, one would suppose, might be sufficient to reclaim you from your evil courses, and induce you to return to God, by a sincere repentance, Hos. ii. 7. *Know therefore*—Upon the whole matter; and see that *it is an evil thing that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God*—For that is the thing that makes thine enemies enemies indeed, and thy friends friends in vain. The sense of the clause is, Call to mind what thou hast found by experience, and reflect seriously upon it, and thou canst not but be convinced how dear the forsaking of God hath cost thee. *And that my fear*—Or, *the fear of me*; or, that thou hast *not my fear in thee, saith the Lord*—Consider this well, for it is the ground of all thy sin and suffering, in order that thy correction may not end in thy utter ruin. This whole discourse of Jeremiah is a kind of pleading, wherein the prophet maintains the cause of God against his people.

Verses 20, 21. *For of old time I have broken thy yoke*—That is, I have delivered thee from the bondage and tyranny that thou wast under, of old time, in Egypt; as also divers times besides. See the book of Judges. *And burst thy bands*—Alluding either to the bands and fetters with which prisoners were wont to be bound, chap. xl. 4, or those bands wherewith yokes were usually fastened upon the necks of beasts. *And thou saidst, I will not transgress*—When the deliverance was fresh, thou didst form good resolutions. This translation is according to the marginal reading of the Masorettes; but in the Hebrew text, confirmed by the LXX., Syriac, and Vulgate, we read לא אעבור, *I will not serve*, namely, Jehovah. According to this reading, which seems very just and unexceptionable, and is approved by Houbigant and Dr. Waterland, the meaning of the passage is, that even after the Jews had been freed, by God, from their Egyptian bondage, and admitted into an immediate covenant and alliance with him, they had been guilty of the utmost ingratitude in refusing obe-

A. M. 3375. 21 Yet I had <sup>1</sup> planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed: how then art thou turned into <sup>2</sup> the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto me?

22 For though thou <sup>3</sup> wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, yet <sup>4</sup> thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord God.

23 <sup>5</sup> How canst thou say, I am not polluted,

<sup>1</sup> Exod. xv. 17; Psa. xlv. 2; lxxx. 8; Isa. v. 1, &c.; lx. 21; Matt. xxi. 33; Mark xii. 1; Luke xx. 9.—<sup>2</sup> Deut. xxxii. 32; Isa. i. 21; v. 4.—<sup>3</sup> Job ix. 30.—<sup>4</sup> Deut. xxxii. 34; Job xiv. 17; Hos. xiii. 12.

dience to the divine law, and particularly in respect to the prohibition of idolatry. *When upon every high hill, and under every green tree, &c.*—Alluding to their worshipping their idols upon the hills, and under the trees; *thou wanderest, playing the harlot*—Worshipping false gods. As idolatry is frequently called *whoredom* in the Scripture language, so the prophet describes the Israelites under the image of a strolling harlot, seeking for lovers wherever she can, without any shame. *Yet I planted thee a noble vine*—Hebrew, *the vine of Sorek*; concerning which see note on Isa. v. 2. Israel is here compared to a shoot, or branch, taken from a generous or good vine, and transferred to another soil, where it degenerates. *Wholly a right seed*—Without any mixture; the offspring of those true believers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: and the laws which I gave thee, and the means of grace which I afforded thee, were sufficient to have made thee fruitful in every good work. *How then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine?*—That is, one which has degenerated from the nature of the vine whence it was taken, and bears worse fruit than that did. The constitution of the Israelitish government, both in church and state, was excellent; their laws righteous, and all their ordinances instructive, and very significant; and there was a generation of good men among them, when they first settled in Canaan. For we learn, Josh. xxvi. 31, that *Israel served the Lord*, and kept close to him, *all the days of Joshua, and of the elders that outlived Joshua*. They were then *wholly a right seed*, likely to replenish the vineyard they were planted in with choice vines: but it proved otherwise; the very next generation *knew not the Lord, nor the works that he had done*, Judg. ii. 10, and they grew worse and worse, till they became *the degenerate plant of a strange vine*—The very reverse of what they were at first. Their constitution was now quite broken, and there was nothing in them of that good which one might have expected from a people so happily formed; nothing of the purity or piety of their ancestors; but *their vine was*, according to Moses's prediction, *as the vine of Sodom*.

Verse 22. *For though thou wash thee with nitre, &c.*—Though thou shouldst use ever so many methods of washing away thy sins, such as the rites of expiation prescribed by the law, or practised by

I have not gone after Baalim? See A. M. 3375. thy way <sup>6</sup> in the valley, know what <sup>7</sup> thou hast done: <sup>8</sup> *thou art* a swift dromedary traversing her ways:

24 <sup>9</sup> A <sup>10</sup> wild ass <sup>11</sup> used to the wilderness, *that snuffeth up the wind at* <sup>12</sup> *her pleasure*; in her occasion who can <sup>13</sup> turn her away? all they that seek her will not weary them-

<sup>6</sup> Prov. xxx. 12.—<sup>7</sup> Chap. vii. 31.—<sup>8</sup> Or, *O swift dromedary*.—<sup>9</sup> Job xxxix. 5; Chap. xiv. 6.—<sup>10</sup> Or, *O wild ass, &c.*—<sup>11</sup> Heb. *taught*.—<sup>12</sup> Heb. *the desire of her heart*.—<sup>13</sup> Or, *reverse it*.

idolaters; though thou shouldst insist ever so much upon thy own innocence and righteousness, yet the marks or stains of thy sins will always appear in the sight of God, till they are done away by his pardoning mercy, exercised toward thee in consequence of thy repentance and reformation. "The nitre here mentioned is not what we call nitre, or salt-petre, but a native salt of a different kind, distinguished among naturalists by the name of *natrum*, or the nitre of the ancients. It is found in abundance in Egypt, and in many parts of Asia, where it is called *soap-earth*, because it is dissolved in water, and used like soap in washing."—Blaney.

Verses 23, 24. *How canst thou say, I am not polluted?*—With what face canst thou go about to excuse thyself, or deny what is so evident, and so truly charged upon thee? see verse 20. *I have not gone after Baalim*—The word is plural, because meant to comprehend all their idols; being a name usually given to several of them, as *Baal-peor*, Num. xxv. 3; *Baal-zebul*, 2 Kings i. 16. Because they had the temple, and sacrifices offered therein, &c., they still persuaded themselves that they worshipped the true God, though they joined their idolatries with his worship. Thus the Papists, though they make use of idols in their worship, yet pretend they are not idolaters. *See thy way in the valley*—Whether of Hinnom, (where they burned their children in sacrifice,) or in any valleys where thou hast been frequent in thy idolatries. *Know what thou hast done*—Look on, and consider thy ways. *Thou art a swift dromedary, traversing her ways*—Or, *as a swift dromedary*. The prophet compares their fondness for a variety of idols to the eagerness with which, in the time of breeding, the swift dromedaries are wont to traverse the plain, and run to and fro in every direction. "And the impossibility of restraining one of those fleet animals, when hurried away by the impetuous call of nature, is represented as a parallel to that unbridled lust and eagerness with which the people of Judah ran after the gratification of their passion for idolatry, called *spiritual whoredom*."—Blaney. *A wild ass*—Or, *as a wild ass*; used to the wilderness—Another similitude, for the more lively description of the same thing. *That snuffeth up the wind at her pleasure*—This should rather be rendered, *When she snuffeth up the wind in her lust*; meaning the time when the female asses seek the males by the wind, smelling

A. M. 3375. selves; in her month they shall find  
B. C. 629. her.

25 Withhold thy foot from being unshod, and thy throat from thirst: but <sup>a</sup>thou saidst, <sup>13</sup>There is no hope: no; for I have loved <sup>a</sup>strangers, and after them will I go.

26 As the thief is ashamed when he is found, so is the house of Israel ashamed; they, their kings, their princes, and their priests, and their prophets,

<sup>a</sup> Chap. xviii. 12.—<sup>13</sup> Or, is the case desperate?—<sup>14</sup> Deut. xxxii. 16; Chap. iii. 13.—<sup>15</sup> Or, begotten me.—<sup>16</sup> Heb. the hinder part of the neck.

them afar off. *In her occasion*—When she is desirous of the male; *who can turn her away?*—She bears down all opposition. *All that seek her will not weary themselves*—They will not bestow their labour in vain, but will let her take her course, and wait their time and opportunity for taking her. *In her month they shall find her*—Hebrew, בְּחֹדֶשׁ, which Blaney renders, *when her heat is over*; or, *in her renewal*, deriving the noun from the verb חָדַשׁ, to renew. “That is,” says he, “when the heat is abated, and she begins to come about again to the same state as before the fit came on. The LXX. seem so to have understood it: ἐν τῇ ταπεινώσει αὐτῆς εὐρησθήσεται αὐτήν, ‘when she is humbled, they shall find her.’ And perhaps it was designed to insinuate to the Jews, by way of reproach, that they were less governable than even the brute beast, which, after having followed the bent of appetite for a little time, would cool again, and return quietly home to her owners: but the idolatrous fit in them seemed never to abate, nor to suffer the people to return to their duty. Or else it may mean, that when their affairs took a new turn, and became adverse, then would be the time when, being humbled, they would again have recourse to the true God, who alone could save them.” The expression, *in her month*, is explained in the margin of our ancient Bible to mean, *when she is with foal*, an interpretation which many commentators follow. Thus Henry: “They that seek her will have a little patience till she is big with young, heavy, and unwieldy; and then they shall find her, and she cannot outrun them.” And he thus applies it: “The time will come when the most fierce will be tamed, and the most wanton will be manageable: when distress and anguish come upon them, then their ears will be open to discipline; that is the *month* in which you may find them.” Psa. cxli. 5, 6.

Verse 25. *Withhold thy foot from being unshod, &c.*—“Do not wear out thy shoes, or sandals, and expose thyself to thirst and weariness in undertaking long journeys, to make new alliances with idolaters.” Thus Lowth, and many other expositors. “But I rather take it,” says Blaney, “to be a warning to beware of the consequences of pursuing the courses they were addicted to: as if it had been said, Take care that thou dost not expose thyself, by

27 Saying to a stock, Thou art my father; and to a stone, Thou hast

<sup>14</sup> brought me forth: for they have turned <sup>a</sup>their back unto me, and not <sup>a</sup>their face: but in the time of their <sup>a</sup>trouble they will say, Arise, and save us.

28 But <sup>a</sup>where are thy gods that thou hast made thee? let them arise, if they <sup>v</sup>can save thee in the time of thy <sup>16</sup>trouble: for <sup>a</sup>according to the number of thy cities are thy gods, O Judah.

<sup>a</sup> Judg. x. 10; Psa. lxxviii. 34; Isa. xxvi. 16.—<sup>v</sup> Deut. xxxii. 37; Judges x. 14.—<sup>v</sup> Isaiah xlv. 20.—<sup>16</sup> Hebrew, evil. <sup>a</sup> Chap. xi. 13.

thy wicked ways, to the wretched condition of going into captivity unshod, as the manner is represented Isa. xx. 4; and of serving thine enemies in hunger, and in thirst, and in want of the necessaries of life,” Deut. xxviii. 48. *But thou saidst, There is no hope*—The language of desperate sinners, who are resolved to continue in their wickedness, in spite of every reason that can be offered to the contrary. *No; for I have loved strangers*—Strange gods, idols; *and after them will I go*—The Jews probably did not really speak in this manner, but they acted thus: this, the prophet signifies was the language of their conduct. By their actions they professed that idolatry which they denied with their mouths.

Verses 26–28. *As the thief is ashamed*—As the thief has nothing to say for himself, but is perfectly confounded when he is taken in the very act, so the house of Israel hath no manner of plea wherewith to defend or excuse their idolatry. *They, their kings, their princes*—Whose duty it was to have restrained them from such practices by their authority; *their priests, and their prophets*—Who ought to have set them a better example, and have given them better instruction. *Saying to a stock, Thou art my father*—Giving the title of *father*, which belongs to God, as the sovereign Creator and Preserver of all things, (see chap. iii. 19,) to senseless images, made of wood and stone. They did not, indeed, think themselves to be created or made by these images, but thus they addressed the gods whom they thought to be present in the consecrated images. But as there was in fact no such deity residing in the image, but it was a mere *nothing*, a fiction of the idolaters, their worship in reality centred in, or went no higher than, the image itself. *For they have turned their back unto me*—A token of contempt and aversion; *and not their face*—Which they turn wholly toward their idols. *But in the time of their trouble*—A time which is approaching; *they will say, Arise, and save us*—As they did formerly; see the margin. When they prove, by experience, the vanity of their idols, and their own folly in relying on things that cannot help or save them, and in rejecting me, then they will apply to me for relief and aid. *But where are thy gods?*—Thy idols, the

A. M. 3375. 29 <sup>a</sup> Wherefore will ye plead with  
B. C. 629. me? ye all have transgressed against  
me, saith the LORD.

30 In vain have I <sup>b</sup> smitten your children; they receive no correction: your own sword hath <sup>c</sup> devoured your prophets, like a destroying lion.

31 O generation, see ye the word of the LORD. <sup>d</sup> Have I been a wilderness unto Israel? a

<sup>a</sup> Verses 23, 35.—<sup>b</sup> Isaiah i. 5; ix. 13; Chapter v. 9. <sup>c</sup> 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16; Neh. ix. 26; Matt. xxiii. 29; Acts vii. 52; 1 Thess. ii. 15.

gods of thy own making? *Let them arise*—From the places where they are fixed; *if they can save thee in the time of thy trouble*—In thy great distress, when thou art in such need of help. *For according to the number of thy cities are thy gods*—For thou hast a sufficient number of them, every country and city having its peculiar deity, imitating the heathen, who, according to Varro, had above thirty thousand gods. Make trial, if any, or all of them together, can help thee.

Verses 29, 30. *Wherefore will ye plead with me?*—Why do you insist upon your innocence? See verse 35. Why do you lay claim to my former promises, as if you had not forfeited your title to them by your sins? *In vain have I smitten your children*—That is, the children or people of Judah. They had been under divine rebukes of many kinds, whereby God designed to bring them to repentance, but it was in vain: they did not answer God's end in afflicting them; their consciences were not awakened, nor their hearts softened and humbled, nor were they induced to seek unto God by repentance and prayer. *They received no correction*—Though they were corrected, yet they would not be instructed and reformed. They did not receive, that is, they did not submit to, or comply with, the correction; but in their hearts fretted against and opposed the Lord. Observe, reader, it is a great loss thus to lose an affliction. *Your own sword hath devoured your prophets*—You are so far from receiving and improving by God's chastisements, that you take away the lives of those prophets who, in God's name, reprove you, and call you to repentance. Thus Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada, was put to death in the reign of Joash, 2 Chron. xxiv. 20, 21. See also 1 Kings xix. 1, 10; Neh. ix. 26; Matt. xxiii. 30–37.

Verses 31, 32. *O generation*—O wicked generation; *see ye the word of the Lord*—Consider what I say to you from the mouth of God. *Have I been a wilderness unto Israel?*—Have ye not been plentifully provided for by me? Have I been backward in bestowing favours upon you? Have I not accommodated you with all necessaries? *A land of darkness*—Hebrew, ארץ כְּאֶפְלַיִם, rendered by the Vulgate, *terra serotina*, a land backward or late in producing its fruits. Our translation of the clause, however, *a land of darkness*, seems preferable, as

land of darkness? wherefore say my people, <sup>17</sup> We <sup>e</sup> are lords; <sup>f</sup> we will come no more unto thee? A. M. 3375. B. C. 629.

32 Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire? yet my people <sup>g</sup> have forgotten me days without number.

33 Why trimmest thou thy way to seek love? therefore hast thou also taught the wicked ones thy ways.

<sup>d</sup> Verse 5.—<sup>17</sup> Heb. *We have dominion*.—<sup>e</sup> Psa. xii. 4. <sup>f</sup> Deut. xxxii. 15.—<sup>g</sup> Psa. cvi. 21; Chap. xiii. 25; Hos. viii. 14.

darkness is often used to denote calamity and distress: see chap. xiii. 16; Isa. v. 30, and viii. 22. "The meaning of the passage," says Blaney, "is, Have I been wanting to you, while ye have been under my guidance, in providing you with good things, or have I brought you unto the gloom of trouble and distress?" *Wherefore say my people, We are lords, &c.*—We are our own masters, and will no more acknowledge thee as Lord over us, nor obey thy laws. This was the language, probably, not of the lips, but of the hearts and lives of the idolatrous Jews, who would not return to the worship and service of the true God. *Can a maid forget her ornaments*—How seldom is it, and unlikely, that a maid should forget her ornaments? *or a bride her attire?*—On which her thoughts and affections are placed? *Yet my people have forgotten me*—Their chief glory and ornament, on whose favour and protection they were wont justly to value themselves, and whereby they were distinguished from all other nations. Such was the folly and wickedness of God's ancient people, called by his name, rescued from bondage and misery by his power, enriched with all temporal and spiritual blessings by his bounty, and guarded as the apple of his eye. Strange infatuation and weakness this, we are ready to exclaim, of the Jews! But are not multitudes of persons called Christians equally weak and foolish? Do not things of very small worth, and short duration, frequently occupy their thoughts, and even possess their hearts; things of as little value as the ornaments which vain women delight in, while things of the highest excellence and greatest necessity, things far superior to every visible and temporal object, such as salvation, grace, and glory, God, and Christ, and heaven, are overlooked and neglected? Reader, is not this thy practice? does not thy conscience accuse thee of this wickedness and folly?

Verses 33, 34. *Why trimmest thou thy way to seek love*—"The prophet," says Lowth, "alludes to the practices of common harlots, who deck themselves, and use all inveigling arts, that they may recommend themselves to their gallants: in like manner," the prophet intimates, "the Jews tried all methods to gain the friendship and assistance of foreign idolaters, who are called their lovers:" see chap. iii. 1, and xxii. 22. Houbigant's translation of this verse is, "Why dost thou strew thy way, that

A. M. 3392. 34 Also in thy skirts is found <sup>h</sup> the  
B. C. 612. blood of the souls of the poor innocents: I have not found it by <sup>18</sup> secret search, but upon all these.

35 ¶ <sup>i</sup> Yet thou sayest, Because I am innocent, surely his anger shall turn from me. Behold, <sup>k</sup> I will plead with thee, <sup>1</sup> because thou sayest, I have not sinned.

<sup>h</sup> Psalm cvi. 38; Chapter xix. 4.—<sup>18</sup> Hebrew, *digging*.  
<sup>i</sup> Verses 23, 29.—<sup>k</sup> Verse 9.—<sup>1</sup> Prov. xxviii. 13; 1 John i. 8, 10.

thou mayest find lovers; and teachest thy ways to thy companions?" The original word, rendered *trimmest*, מִטִּיב, properly means, *to make good, right, or agreeable*. Noldius expounds the clause, "Why dost thou justify thy ways, or insist upon thy innocence?" And the French interpret the verse, "Why wouldest thou justify thy conduct, to enter into favour with me? so long as thou hast taught to others the evil which thou hast done; and while (verse 34) in thy skirts," &c. *Also in thy skirts is found the blood of the souls, &c.*—This would be better rendered, *Also in thy skirts is found the blood of poor and innocent persons*, for by *souls* is meant *persons*; and by the *blood being found in their skirts*, the prophet means their committing murders and oppressions, secretly, perhaps; but their guilt was as manifest as though the blood of the persons slain had been found sprinkled upon their garments. The LXX. render the clause *εν ταις χειρι σι ευρεθησαν αιματα ψυχων αθων, in thy hands have been found the blood of innocent souls, or persons*. Their sacrificing of their little children to their idols, as well as their oppressing and murdering of adult persons, is intended to be comprised here. *I have not found it by secret search*—The LXX., with whom all the ancient versions agree, render the clause *εκ εν διορυμασιν ευρον αυτες, I have not found them in digged holes, or ditches*, but upon all these. The LXX. and Syriac render *על כל מלה*, here, upon every oak. "The meaning of which," says Blaney, "is this: In the law it is commanded, (Lev. xvii. 13,) that the blood of animals killed in hunting should be covered with dust, in order, no doubt, to create a horror at the sight of blood. In allusion to this command, it is urged against Jerusalem, (Ezek. xxiv. 7,) that she had not only shed blood in the midst of her, but that she had set it upon the top of a rock, and poured it not upon the ground to cover it with dust; that is, she had seemed to glory in the crime, by doing it in the most open and audacious manner, so as to challenge God's vengeance. In like manner it is said here, that God had not discovered the blood that was shed in holes under ground, but that it was sprinkled upon every oak before which their inhuman sacrifices had been performed."

Verses 35, 36. *Yet thou sayest*—Or interrogatively, *Darest thou say?* Hast thou the impudence to affirm it? *Because I am innocent*—Clear of this whole charge; *surely his anger shall turn from me*

36 <sup>a</sup> Why gaddest thou about so much to change thy way? <sup>a</sup> thou also shalt be ashamed of Egypt, <sup>o</sup> as thou wast ashamed of Assyria.

37 Yea, thou shalt go forth from him, and <sup>p</sup> thy hands upon thy head: for the Lord hath rejected thy confidences, and thou shalt not prosper in them.

<sup>a</sup> Verse 18; Chap. xxxi. 22; Hos. v. 13; xii. 1.—<sup>o</sup> Isa. xxx. 3; Chapter xxxvii. 7.—<sup>p</sup> 2 Chron. xxviii. 16, 20, 21. <sup>2</sup> Sam. xiii. 19.

—Shall not break out against me, Isa. v. 25. *Behold, I will plead with thee*—I will proceed in my judgment against thee; *because thou sayest, I have not sinned*—Because thou continuest to justify thyself, as if I had no cause to be angry with thee. *Why gaddest thou about so much to change thy way?*—That is, thy actions. Why hast thou recourse to so many different expedients for relief? Why dost thou seek auxiliaries anywhere rather than cleave to me? Or act like those adulterous women, whose love is never fixed, but sometimes set on one, sometimes on another. This is rendered by the Vulgate, "How vile art thou become, changing or repeating thy ways!" Continuing still to seek new succours from strangers, though thou hast been so often deceived! Egypt now shall fail thee, as Assyria has done before. Blaney renders this last clause, "By means of Egypt also shalt thou be put to shame, even as thou hast been put to shame by Assyria." "The people of Judah," he observes, "seem to have courted the assistance of foreign nations, by a sinful compliance with their idolatrous customs. But this measure had already failed them, and they had been disappointed in their expectations from Assyria in the time of King Ahaz, who, as we read 2 Chron. xxviii. 16–21, called upon the king of Assyria to help him in his need; but he distressed him only, instead of helping him. In the same manner, also, it is here prophesied they would be served by the Egyptians, whose alliance would only disappoint them, and make them ashamed of having trusted to so ineffectual a support; and it turned out accordingly." See chap. xxxvii. 7, 8.

Verse 37. *Yea, thou shalt go forth from him*—The ambassadors thou sendest to Egypt shall return with disappointment and confusion; *and their hands on their heads*—Condoling the desperate condition of their people. Or, *Thou shalt go forth from hence, namely, into captivity, in a strange land. And thy hands upon thy head*—As Tamar went forth from her brother Amnon, her garments torn, and her hands upon her head, insulted and despised, and in the greatest grief and misery; and Egypt, on which thou reliedst, shall not be able to prevent it, or to rescue thee out of captivity. *For the Lord hath rejected thy confidences*—Hath refused to give success to them, or hath rejected thee for thy confidences; or he disapproves thy confidences, namely, all thy dependances and refuges, which thou seekest

out of him. *And thou shalt not prosper in them—They shall not stand thee in any stead, nor give thee any satisfaction. As there is no counsel or wisdom that can prevail against the Lord, so there is none that can prevail without the Lord. Some read it, The Lord hath rejected thee for thy confidences; that is, because thou hast dealt so unfaithfully with*

him as to trust in his creatures, nay, in his enemies, when thou shouldst have trusted in him only, he has abandoned thee to that destruction from which thou thoughtest thus to have sheltered thyself; and then thou canst not prosper, for none ever either hardened himself against God, or estranged himself from God, and prospered.

CHAPTER III.

After the reproofs and threatenings contained in the preceding chapter, we have, in this, gracious and pressing invitations given the Jews to return to God, notwithstanding the multitude and greatness of their provocations. It is here shown, (1.) How wicked they had been, and how well they had deserved to be quite abandoned, and yet how ready God was to receive them into his favour upon their repentance, 1-5. (2.) How their impentence and persisting in sin were aggravated by the judgments of God upon Israel, of which they had been spectators, and by which they ought to have taken warning, 6-11. (3.) Great encouragements are given, both to the Jews and to the ten tribes, already carried captive into Assyria, to return to God by repentance and faith, from a consideration of the great mercy which God had in store for them; from the relation of a husband, in which he was still ready to stand to them, and the many gracious promises he had made them, 12-19. (4.) The charge is renewed against them for their apostacy from God, and the invitation to repent and return to him is repeated, and words are put into their mouths proper to be used in their addresses to God upon their return, 20-25.

A. M. 3392. B. C. 612. **THEY** <sup>1</sup> say, If a man put away his wife, and she go from him, and become another man's, <sup>a</sup> shall he return unto her again? shall not that <sup>b</sup> land be greatly polluted? but thou hast <sup>c</sup> played the harlot with many lovers; <sup>d</sup> yet return again to me, saith the LORD.

**2** Lift up thine eyes unto <sup>e</sup> the high places, and see where thou hast not been lain with. <sup>f</sup> In the ways hast thou sat for them, as the Arabian in the wilderness; <sup>g</sup> and thou hast polluted the land with thy whoredoms, and with thy wickedness.

<sup>1</sup> Heb. *Saying*.—<sup>a</sup> Deut. xxiv. 4.—<sup>b</sup> Chap. ii. 7.—<sup>c</sup> Chap. ii. 20; Ezek. xvi. 26, 28, 29.—<sup>d</sup> Chap. iv. 1; Zech. i. 3.

<sup>e</sup> Deut. xii. 2; Chap. ii. 20.—<sup>f</sup> Gen. xxxviii. 14; Prov. xxiii. 28; Ezek. xvi. 24, 25.—<sup>g</sup> Chap. ii. 7; Verse 9.

NOTES ON CHAPTER III.

Verse 1. *They say*—That is, *men use to say, If a man put away his wife*—Or give her a bill of divorce, Deut. xxiv. 1; *and she go from him*—In consequence thereof; *and become another man's*—Engage herself to another; *shall he return unto her?*—He cannot take her again according to the law, Deut. xxiv. 1-4. Or, rather, will a man do such a thing? If the law were not against it, would any man be inclined to take such a woman again? Certainly not. Such playing fast and loose with the marriage-bond would be a horrid profanation of that ordinance, and would greatly pollute the land. Thus they had reason to expect, that God would refuse ever to take them again to be his people, who had not only been joined to one strange god, but had *played the harlot with many lovers*. If we had to do with a man like ourselves, after such provocations as we have been guilty of, he would be implacable, and we might despair of his ever being reconciled to us again. But he is God and not man, and therefore he adds, *Yet return again to me*—Namely, forsaking all those other lovers; which invitation

implies a promise, that he would receive them upon their repentance and reformation.

Verse 2. *Lift up thine eyes*—Do but look and consider whether I charge thee wrongfully or not; *unto the high places*—The places of thy spiritual whoredoms or idolatries, their false gods being generally worshipped upon the hills and mountains, 2 Kings xxi. 3. Thy idolatries have been so frequent that thou canst scarcely show a place where some false god has not been worshipped. *In the ways hast thou sat for them*—To allure passengers. Thus the fondness of the people for idolatry is compared to the wantonness of a harlot, who lies in wait for men as for her prey; or, *as the Arabian* hides himself in the desert, to rob and spoil the unwary traveller. "The Arabs," says Sir John Chardin, in a manuscript quoted by Harmer, "wait for caravans with the most violent avidity, looking about them on all sides, raising themselves upon their horses, running hither and thither, to see if they can perceive any smoke, or dust, or tracks on the ground, or any other marks of people passing along." *And with thy wickedness*—Not only with thy idolatries hast

A. M. 3392. 3 Therefore the <sup>h</sup>showers have been  
B. C. 612. withholden, and there hath been no  
latter rain; and thou hadst a <sup>l</sup>whore's forehead,  
thou refusedst to be ashamed.

4 Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me,  
My father, thou art <sup>h</sup>the guide of <sup>l</sup>my youth?

5 <sup>m</sup> Will he reserve *his anger* for ever? will  
he keep *it* to the end? Behold, thou hast

<sup>h</sup> Lev. xxvi. 19; Deut. xxviii. 23, 24; Chap. ix. 12; xiv. 4.  
<sup>l</sup> Chapter v. 3; vi. 15; viii. 12; Ezekiel iii. 7; Zeph. iii. 5.  
<sup>k</sup> Prov. ii. 17.

thou polluted the land, but with all thy other wicked  
courses.

Verse 3. *Therefore the showers have been withholden*—Namely, by me, according to my threatening, Lev. xxvi. 19; Deut. xxviii. 23, 24; that is, a drought was sent upon their land, either as a punishment of their wickedness, public sins bringing public judgments, or as an aggravation of it, in which case the clause ought to be read, *Though the showers, &c.*; that is, notwithstanding the great drought, whereby thou hast been chastised, thou hast not been brought to repentance; and *there hath been no latter rain*—Though the latter rain hath been withheld as well as the former: concerning which two seasons of rain, see notes on Deut. xi. 14, and Prov. xvi. 15. *Thou hadst a whore's forehead*—Notwithstanding all this, thou didst still remain impudent and obstinate, as one ashamed of nothing. “The general import of the passage is, that though God had begun, in some degree, to chastise his people, as he had threatened, with a view to their reformation, his chastisements had not produced the desired effect, for they continued as abandoned as before, without showing the least sign of shame or remorse.”—Blaney.

Verses 4, 5. *Wilt thou not from this time*—Namely, that I have withholden showers, this time of conviction and correction; now that thou hast been made to see thy sins, and to smart for them, wilt thou not forsake them and return to me, saying, *I will go and return to my first husband, for then it was better with me than now?* Or from this time that thou hast had so kind an invitation to return, and an assurance that thou shalt be well received. *Wilt thou not cry unto me, My father?*—Wilt thou not, as a child, humble thyself, and call upon me, whom thou hast greatly provoked, and own me as a father, for such I have been to thee? Psa. ciii. 13; Mal. i. 6, and iii. 17. Wilt thou not beg pardon for thy undutiful carriage toward me, and hope to find in me the tender compassion of a father toward a returning prodigal? Wilt thou not come and make thy complaints to me as to a father, and confide in me for relief and succour? *Thou art the guide of my youth*—The husband who didst espouse me, and become my guide in the days of my youth: alluding to the time when their manners had not been corrupted by idolatry. Though thou hast gone after many lovers, wilt thou not at length remember

spoken and done evil things as thou <sup>A. M. 3392.</sup>  
couldst. <sup>B. C. 612.</sup>

6 ¶ The LORD said also unto me in the days of Josiah the king, Hast thou seen *that* which <sup>a</sup>backsliding Israel hath done? she is <sup>o</sup>gone up upon every high mountain, and under every green tree, and there hath played the harlot.

<sup>l</sup> Chap. ii. 2; Hos. ii. 15.—<sup>m</sup> Psa. lxxvii. 7, &c.; ciii. 9; Isa. lvii. 16; Verse 12.—<sup>a</sup> Verses 11, 14; Chap. vii. 24.  
<sup>o</sup> Chap. ii. 20.

the love of thine espousals, and return to the husband of thy youth? Or the relation of a father may rather be referred to; as if he had said, Wilt thou not remember and lay to heart under whose eye and care thou wast brought up, and who was the guide of thy inexperienced years? In our return to God, we ought thankfully to remember that he was our guide when we were young in years, in the way of comfort; and we must faithfully covenant that he shall be our guide from henceforward in the way of duty, and that we will follow his guidance, and give ourselves up to his government. *Will he reserve anger for ever?*—Surely he will not, for he hath proclaimed his name, *gracious and merciful*. They seem to be the words of the people reasoning thus with themselves, for their encouragement to return to God. Repenting sinners may encourage themselves with this, that though God chide, he will not always chide; though he be angry, he will not keep his anger to the end; but *though he cause grief he will have compassion*. Behold, thou hast spoken, &c.—Or, as Blaney translates the clause, “Behold, thou hast spoken and done; thou hast wrought wickedness, and hast prevailed.” These are the words of God, or of the prophet speaking in God’s name, reminding them of, and reproving them for, their long and obstinate continuance in idolatry and other sins. The prophets had endeavoured to dissuade them from persevering in their evil courses, but their arguments had no weight with them; “they continued to do as they had said, or resolved; they carried their wicked thoughts into execution, in spite of all that was urged to the contrary.”

Verse 6. *Then the Lord said unto me*—“Here begins an entire new section, or distinct prophecy, which is continued to the end of the sixth chapter. It consists of two distinct parts. The first part contains a complaint against Judah for having exceeded the guilt of her sister Israel, whom God had already cast off for her idolatrous apostacy, verses 6–12. The prophet is hereupon sent to announce to Israel the promise of pardon upon her repentance, and the hopes of a glorious restoration in after times, which are plainly marked out to be the times of the gospel, when the Gentiles themselves were to become a part of the church, verses 12–21. In the second part, which begins chap. iv. 3, and is prefaced with an address to the people of Judah and Jerusalem, exhorting them to prevent the divine judgments by

A. M. 3392. 7 <sup>p</sup> And I said after she had done  
B. C. 612. all these things, Turn thou unto me.

But she returned not. And her treacherous  
<sup>s</sup> sister Judah saw it.

8 And I saw, when <sup>r</sup> for all the causes where-  
by backsliding Israel committed adultery, I had  
<sup>a</sup> put her away, and given her a bill of divorce;  
<sup>t</sup> yet her treacherous sister Judah feared not,

<sup>p</sup> 2 Kings xvii. 13.—<sup>a</sup> Ezek. xvi. 46; xxiii. 2, 4.—<sup>r</sup> Ezek.  
xxiii. 9.—<sup>s</sup> 2 Kings xvii. 6, 18.—<sup>t</sup> Ezek. xxiii. 11.

a timely repentance; the Babylonian invasion is clearly and fully foretold, with all the miseries which it would be attended with; and the universal and incorrigible depravity of the people is represented at large, and pointed out as the justly provoking cause of the national ruin.

*In the days of Josiah the king*—This date of the prophecy, or sermon, must be particularly observed, in order to the right understanding of it. It was delivered in the days of Josiah, who began a blessed work of reformation, in which he was hearty; but the people were not sincere in their compliance with it. To reprove them for that, and warn them of the consequences of their hypocrisy, is the scope of that which God here declares to the prophet, and which he delivers to them. *Hast thou seen what backsliding Israel hath done*—The case of the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah is here compared, the ten tribes that revolted from the throne of David and the temple at Jerusalem, and the two tribes that adhered to both. The distinct history of these two kingdoms is given us in the two books of the Kings; by referring to the notes on which the reader will be enabled the better to understand this paragraph, and many other parts of this prophecy. When God asks, *Hast thou seen what Israel has done?* he refers to the prophet's acquaintance with that history, for as he lived between sixty and seventy years after Israel was carried into captivity, he could not otherwise see what they had done. *She hath gone up upon every high mountain, &c.*—See note on chap. ii. 20. They had openly, and almost with common consent, apostatized from the worship appointed by God, insomuch that all their kings proved wicked and idolatrous: and no marvel, since from the time of their defection from the kingdom of David, they worshipped God by the golden calves at Dan and Beth-el, and hence easily proceeded from worshipping by the medium of images, to worship images themselves, and other false and imaginary deities.

Verse 7. *After she had done all these things*—For which she might justly have been abandoned; *I said, Turn thou unto me*—Namely, and I will receive thee. Though they had forsaken both the house of David and the house of Aaron, who both had their authority from God without dispute, yet God sent his prophets among them to call them to return to him, that is, to the worship of him only, not insisting so much upon their return to the house of David as to that of Aaron. We do not read that

but went and played the harlot also. A. M. 3392.  
B. C. 612.

9 And it came to pass, through the  
<sup>l</sup> lightness of her whoredom, that she <sup>u</sup> defiled  
the land, and committed adultery with <sup>x</sup> stones  
and with stocks.

10 And yet for all this, her treacherous sister  
Judah hath not turned unto me <sup>y</sup> with her  
whole heart, but <sup>z</sup> feignedly, saith the LORD.

<sup>u</sup> Or, fame.—<sup>a</sup> Chapter ii. 7; Verse 2.—<sup>x</sup> Chapter ii. 27.  
<sup>y</sup> 2 Chron. xxxiv. 33; Hos. vii. 14.—<sup>z</sup> Heb. in falsehood.

Elijah, that great prophet, ever mentioned their returning to the former, but only to the faithful service of the true God. It is serious and genuine piety that God regards more than any ritual observances, whether with respect to matters civil or religious. *But she returned not*—Which God observed, and with which he was much displeased; *and her treacherous sister Judah saw it*—A sister, because descended from the same common stock, Abraham and Jacob; and as Israel had the character of a backslider, so Judah is called treacherous, because, though she professed to keep close to God when Israel had backslidden, and adhered to the kings and priests that were of God's own appointing, yet she proved treacherous, false, and unfaithful to her profession and promises, as is stated in the following verses.

Verse 8. *And I saw*—As if he had said, That which others discerned not, I saw perfectly; namely, both her hypocrisy and her incorrigibility, notwithstanding what had befallen Israel, whose correction should have instructed and reformed her. *When for all the causes*—The various idolatries and other sins, for which *I had given her*—That is, Israel; *a bill of divorce*—Delivered her up into the hands of the Assyrians, and thereby taken from her the title of being my church; *yet her sister Judah feared not*—Was neither afraid of giving me offence, nor of the like punishment; *but went and played the harlot also*—Was forward enough to worship any idol that was introduced, and to join in any idolatrous usage, although she had seen the judgment of God executed upon Israel before her eyes.

Verses 9, 10. *And through the lightness of her whoredom*—"By this phrase," says Blaney, "I take to be meant, that she was not nice in the choice of the objects, but was ready to prostitute herself to all that came in her way; that is, she eagerly fell in with all kinds of idolatrous worship indiscriminately, descending so low as to images of wood and stone." *That she defiled the land*—Brought the whole land under the guilt of idolatry. *Yet for all this*—Though God saw what she did, and though she saw the shameful idolatry of Israel, and what she had suffered; *yet Judah hath not turned unto me, &c.*—When they had a good king that would have reformed the nation, they did not heartily concur with him in that good work. In the reigns of Manasseh and Amon, who were disposed to idolatry, the people were so too, and all the country was corrupted by it, none fearing the ruin which Israel, by

A. M. 3392. B. C. 612. 11 And the LORD said unto me, <sup>a</sup> The backsliding Israel hath justified herself more than treacherous Judah.

12 ¶ Go and proclaim these words toward <sup>a</sup> the north, and say, Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the LORD; and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you: for I am <sup>b</sup> merciful, saith the LORD, and I will not keep anger for ever.

<sup>a</sup> Ezek. xvi. 51; xxiii. 11.—<sup>b</sup> 2 Kings xvii. 6.—<sup>c</sup> Psa. lxxxvi. 15; ciii. 8, 9; Verse 5.—<sup>d</sup> Lev. xxvi. 40; Deut. xxx. 1, 2;

this sin, had brought on themselves. God therefore tried whether they would manifest a different spirit and conduct under a good king, but the evil disposition was still the same, and they returned not to the Lord with all their hearts, but feignedly—They were forced indeed to an external compliance with Josiah, who went further in destroying idolatry than the best of his predecessors had done, joined with him in keeping a very solemn passover, and in professing to renew their covenants with God, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 32, and xxxv. 17; but they were not sincere in all this, nor were their hearts right with God. For which reason God, at that very time, said, *I will remove Judah out of my sight, as I have removed Israel*, (2 Kings xxiii. 27,) because Judah was not removed from their sin by the sight of Israel's removal from their land.

Verse 11. *And the Lord said unto me, &c.*—The case of these sister kingdoms is here compared, and judgment given upon the comparison. *Israel hath justified herself more than Judah*—Hebrew, צרקה גופשה, *hath justified her soul*: so the LXX. εδικαιωσε την ψυχην, and the Vulgate. The meaning is, that of the two, Judah was the more guilty, because, though Israel's sins were more numerous, and their idolatry had continued longer, yet in Judah that and other sins were more heinous, because Judah had sinned against greater light, and would not take warning by that desolation which God had brought upon the whole kingdom of Israel. Observe, reader, this comparative justification stood Israel in little stead. It will little avail us to say we are not so bad as others, when yet we are not really good ourselves. And God's judgments upon others, if they be not the means of our reformation, will help to aggravate our destruction. The Prophet Ezekiel makes the same comparison between Jerusalem and Samaria, that Jeremiah here makes between Judah and Israel, nay, and between Jerusalem and Sodom, and Jerusalem is represented as being the worst of the three. See Ezek. xxiii. 11; and xvi. 48.

Verses 12, 13. *Go, and proclaim these words toward the north*—"The sin of the ten tribes being attended with more favourable circumstances than that of Judah, the prophet is commanded to call them to repentance with promises of pardon. In order to this he is bid to direct his speech northward, that is, toward Assyria and Media, whither the ten tribes had been carried away captive, which countries lay north of Judea." *And say, Return, thou*

13 <sup>a</sup> Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the LORD thy God, and hast <sup>d</sup> scattered thy ways to the <sup>e</sup> strangers <sup>f</sup> under every green tree, and ye have not obeyed my voice, saith the LORD.

14 Turn, O backsliding children, saith the LORD; <sup>g</sup> for I am married unto you: and I

Prov. xxviii. 13.—<sup>d</sup> Verse 2; Ezek. xvi. 15, 24, 25.—<sup>e</sup> Chap. ii. 25.—<sup>f</sup> Deut. xii. 2.—<sup>g</sup> Chap. xxxi. 32; Hos. ii. 19, 20.

*backsliding Israel*—Repent of thy backslidings, return to thy allegiance; come back to that good way out of which thou hast turned aside. *And I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you*—Namely, more grievously than it has already fallen, or for ever; for otherwise his anger lay heavy upon them at this time. Observe, reader, God's anger is ready to fall on sinners, as a lion falls on his prey, and there is none to deliver. But if they repent, it shall be turned away, for he is merciful, and will not keep anger for ever. *Only acknowledge thine iniquity*—Own thyself in a fault, and thereby take shame to thyself, and give glory to God. Confess and forsake thy sins; for *he that confesseth and forsaketh shall find mercy*. This will aggravate the condemnation of sinners, that the terms of pardon and peace were brought so low, and yet they would not come up to them. Sinner, *if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldst thou not have done it? How much more when he saith, Only acknowledge thine iniquity*. The Hebrew, רצי עון, is properly, *Know thine iniquity*, that is, in order to thy acknowledging and forsaking it. We must call our sins to mind, consider the number, greatness, and inexcusableness of them, that we may conceive a proper hatred to them, and sorrow for them, and thereby, and through faith in the divine mercy and grace in Christ, may obtain pardon and deliverance from them. *That thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God*—Against the infinite and eternal Jehovah, who had taken thee to be his peculiar people, and was in covenant with thee as *thy God*. *And hast scattered thy ways to the strangers*—To other gods, to idols, running hither and thither to worship them. The phrase is taken from the lewdness of common harlots, who promiscuously prostitute themselves to all comers: see Prov. xxx. 20. The clause may be rendered, *Thou hast wandered among strangers, or strange gods*; that is, thou hast not repaired, or had recourse, to one strange god, but many; *under every green tree*—Alluding to the heathen performing the ceremonies of their idolatrous worship in groves, or under large spreading trees. *And ye have not obeyed my voice*—So that your sin is not a sin of ignorance, but of obstinacy, for you shut your ears against my counsels, sent by my prophets for reclaiming you.

Verse 14. *Turn, for I am married unto you*—I am in covenant with you, and this covenant, notwithstanding all your unfaithfulness, I am ready to

A. M. 3392. will take you <sup>h</sup> one of a city, and two  
B. C. 612. of a family, and I will bring you to  
Zion :

15 And I will give you <sup>1</sup> pastors according to  
my heart, which shall <sup>h</sup> feed you with know-  
ledge and understanding.

16 And it shall come to pass, when ye be

<sup>h</sup> Rom. xi. 5.—<sup>1</sup> Chap. xxiii. 4; Ezek. xxxiv. 23; Eph. iv. 11.  
<sup>h</sup> Acts xx. 28.

renew with you. Hebrew, בעלתי נכס, which Blaney translates, *I have been a husband among you*; observing, that God hereby “means to remind them that he had fulfilled the covenant on his part, by protecting and blessing them, as he had promised when he engaged to be their God: and therefore, as they had never any reason to complain of him, he urges them to return to their duty, and promises, in that case, to be still kinder to them than before.” *I will take you one of a city, &c.*—Some interpret these words thus: “I will receive you, though there should be but one from a city willing to return, and two from a province, or tribe.” This prophecy was accomplished in the letter, after the edict of Cyrus, when several of the Israelites returned to Palestine, but only by little and little, and, as it were, one by one. But undoubtedly it was intended to be understood chiefly, in a spiritual sense, of their conversion to Christianity, and their reception into the gospel church, into which they partly have been, and probably hereafter in greater numbers will be admitted, “not all at a time, or in a national capacity, but severally, as individuals, here and there one.” See Isa. xxvii. 12.

Verse 15. *I will give you pastors according to my heart*—This is likewise an evangelical promise, (compare chap. xxiii. 4,) implying that under the happy times here foretold all governors, both civil and ecclesiastical, should faithfully discharge their trust, in duly governing and instructing the people committed to their charge; and that all in authority should answer the character which God gives of David, namely, that he was a man after his own heart, whereas, at the time when Jeremiah lived, the princes, the priests, and prophets were the ringleaders in seducing the people, and enticing them to idolatry: see chap. ii. 8, and Lowth. “Those are pastors after God’s own heart,” says Henry, “that make it their business to feed the flock; not to feed themselves and fleece the flock, but to do all they can for the good of those that are under their charge; that feed them with wisdom and understanding—That is, wisely and understandingly, as David fed them, in the integrity of his heart and by the skillfulness of his hands, Psa. lxxviii. 72. Those that are not only pastors, or rulers, but teachers, must feed them with the word of God, which is wisdom and understanding, and is able to make us wise unto salvation.”

Verse 16. *And when ye be multiplied*—That is, when the kingdom of the Messiah shall be set up,

multiplied and increased in the land, A. M. 3392.  
in those days, saith the LORD, they B. C. 612.  
shall say no more, The ark of the covenant  
of the LORD: <sup>1</sup> neither shall it <sup>4</sup> come to mind:  
neither shall they remember it; neither shall  
they visit it; neither shall <sup>5</sup> that be done any  
more.

<sup>1</sup> Isa. lxxv. 17.—<sup>4</sup> Heb. come upon the heart.—<sup>5</sup> Or, it be magnified.

and there shall be a vast increase of the members of the church by the accession of the Gentiles: for that the days of the Messiah are here intended, the Jewish masters themselves acknowledge; *they shall say no more, The ark, &c.*—The ark is here put for all the legal ceremonies, being, with the rites connected with it, the chief part thereof. The sense is, that whole worship, with all the rites and ceremonies belonging to it, shall wholly cease, Christ being come, who was the substance of what the ark and all other rites did but shadow out for a time. “Here,” says Blaney, “God comforts the Jews with an assurance that, though upon their return to him they might not find themselves in possession of exactly the same privileges as they had before, they should be no losers, but should receive ample indemnification, so as to leave them no just cause of regret. The ark of the covenant was the visible seat of God’s residence among his people; it was therefore the object of their boast; but after the destruction of the first temple they had it no more. But, to compensate this loss, they are told, in the next verse, that *Jerusalem should be called the throne of Jehovah*, to which, not the Jews only, but all nations should resort. By Jerusalem is probably meant the Christian Church: see Gal. iv. 26; Rev. xxi. 2, 3. The greater privileges of this latter would, of course, supersede all boast on account of those which had belonged to the Jewish Church at any time.”

*Neither shall it come to mind*—Hebrew, ולא יעלה על לב, which Blaney renders, *Nor shall it be the delight of their heart*; namely, as it formerly was, observing, that several passages of Scripture where the same phrase occurs show this to be the import of it. What value the Israelites set upon the ark, and how much they were attached to it, appears from many parts of their history. *Neither shall they remember it*—They shall forget the less in contemplation of the greater benefit. *Neither shall they visit it*—Or care for it, as Blaney translates פקרו, which often signifies to look after a thing, which has been long lost or neglected, with a wish or design to recover or restore it. In this sense God is said to have visited his people, Exod. iii. 16; Luke i. 68; that is, he again showed that he concerned himself about them. And so it is said of the people, Isa. xxvi. 16, *O Lord, in trouble have they visited thee*; that is, they, who before neglected thee, in their affliction turned their thoughts and desires toward thee. *Neither shall that be done any more*—It shall be no more in use; neither shall men trouble their

A. M. 3392. B. C. 612. 17 At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the LORD; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart.

18 In those days the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel, and they shall

<sup>m</sup> Isa. lx. 9.—<sup>n</sup> Chap. xi. 8.—<sup>o</sup> Or, stubbornness.—<sup>p</sup> Isa. xi. 13; Ezek. xxxvii. 16-22; Hos. i. 11.—<sup>q</sup> Or, to.—<sup>r</sup> Verse 12; Chap. xxxi. 8.—<sup>s</sup> Amos ix. 15.—<sup>t</sup> Or, caused your fa-

thoughts about it, or mention it. The Hebrew, וְלֹא יִעָשֶׂה עוֹד, is literally rendered by the LXX., καὶ οὐ ποιήσεται ἐτι, *Nor shall it be made any more.* So also the Vulgate, *nec fiet ultra.* The ark, once lost, was never to be made again, or restored: and for a good reason, which immediately follows; because, instead of the ark, Jerusalem itself, that is, the Christian Church, was to become the seat of God's residence. It is probable that this great variety of expressions is used, not only to show that the ceremonies of the law of Moses should be totally and finally abolished, never to be used any more, but that it would be with difficulty that those who had been so long wedded to them would be weaned from them; and that they would not quite relinquish them till their holy city and holy house should both be levelled with the ground.

Verse 17. *At that time—Of reformation, διορθώσεως, emendation,* (Heb. ix. 10.) when things should be put into a better state by the coming of the Messiah; *they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord—*Instead of the ark, the Christian Church, typified by Jerusalem, shall be the place of God's special residence, power, and glory; where he will rule and act, and display his glory, in and by his word and ordinances, and especially in and by the Messiah. *And all the nations shall be gathered unto it—*Not only the Jews and Israelites, but many of all nations: many of the heathen shall be brought to worship the true God, and to embrace the Christian faith. *To the name of the Lord—*Which shall be both manifested and called upon in his church, as formerly at Jerusalem. *Neither shall they walk, &c.—*Both Jews and Gentiles shall now conform themselves to the will of God. The word שָׁרָו, here rendered *imagination*, is derived from a root that signifies *to see*, and is sometimes applied to the judgment, and sometimes to the affections. Here it may comprehend both: they shall neither follow their own corrupt judgment nor affection, but wholly the word of God.

Verse 18. *In those days the house of Judah, &c.—*Judah and Israel shall be happily united; the enmity that was between them shall be taken away, and they shall walk one with another, in a friendly manner, in the ways of God. This implies their being incorporated in one body, by one spirit, under Christ their head, and that without distinction of nations. This reunion of Israel and Judah, and their

come together out of the land of the north to the land that I have given for an inheritance unto your fathers. A. M. 3392. B. C. 612.

19 But I said, How shall I put thee among the children, and give thee a pleasant land, a goodly heritage of the hosts of nations? and I said, Thou shalt call me, My father; and shalt not turn away from me.

*thers to possess.—* Psa. cvi. 24; Ezek. xx. 6; Dan. viii. 9; xi. 16, 41, 45.—<sup>9</sup> Heb. *land of desire.*—<sup>10</sup> Heb. *a heritage of glory, or, beauty.*—<sup>11</sup> Isa. lxiii. 16.—<sup>11</sup> Heb. *from after me.*

joint participation of the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom, is elsewhere foretold. See the margin. *And they shall come together out of the land of the north—*Namely, out of their captivity; *to the land that I have given them—*That is, the land of Canaan. Both Assyria and Chaldea fell into the hands of Cyrus, and his proclamation extended to all the Jews in all his dominions. And therefore we have reason to think that many of the *house of Israel* came with those of Judah out of the land of the north; though at first there returned but forty-two thousand, of whom we have an account, Ezra ii., yet Josephus saith, (*Antiq.*, lib. xi. cap. 4.) that some years after, under Darius, Zerubbabel went and fetched up above four million of souls to the land that was given for an inheritance to their fathers. And we never read of such animosities and enmities between Israel and Judah as had been formerly. And the happy coalescence between Israel and Judah in Canaan was a type of their union, and that of Jews and Gentiles in the gospel church, when, all enmities being slain, they should become *one flock* under one *shepherd*. It may also be implied in these words, as many commentators think is expressly declared in many other passages of the ancient prophets, that in the latter days the Jews and Israelites, after their conversion to Christianity, shall actually return from their several dispersions to dwell, as a nation, in their own land.

Verse 19. *But I said—*Namely, within myself. God is here represented as deliberating with himself, after the manner of men, in what way he might, consistently with his divine attributes, receive the Jewish people into his favour, and admit them into the Christian Church. *How shall I put thee among the children, and give thee a pleasant land?—*How can it be consistent with my divine holiness and justice to receive such a rebellious people into my favour, to own them for my children, and restore them to the possession of that goodly inheritance which I gave to their fathers. Judea is elsewhere called a *pleasant land, the glory of all lands*, and the land which God had *espied out* for his chosen people: see Dan. viii. 9; and xi. 16, 45; Ezek. xx. 6. *A goodly heritage of the hosts of nations—*The Hebrew, צְבִי צְבֵאוֹת גּוֹיִם, is literally, *the glory of hosts, or, multitudes of nations*, that which they esteem glorious, a phrase of the same import with that now quoted from Ezekiel, *the glory of all lands.* This

A. M. 3392. B. C. 612. 20 ¶ Surely as a wife treacherously departeth from her <sup>12</sup> husband, so have ye dealt treacherously with me, O house of Israel, saith the LORD.

21 A voice was heard upon <sup>a</sup> the high places, weeping and supplications of the children of Israel: for they have perverted their way, and they have forgotten the LORD their God.

<sup>12</sup> Heb. friend.—<sup>a</sup> Isa. xviii. 8; Chap. v. 11.—<sup>a</sup> Isa. xv. 2. Verse 14; Hos. xiv. 1.

pleasant land, and glory of the hosts of nations, is here to be taken figuratively, for the Christian Church and the privileges of the gospel covenant. And the condition of adoption into the former, and of enjoying the latter, are expressly stated by Christ and his apostles to be the same as are here prescribed, namely, true faith in God, as our Father, our reconciled Father in Christ, (which faith is always preceded by the repentance required, verse 13,) and uniform obedience for the time to come. *Thou shalt call me, My Father, and shalt not turn away from me*—On these conditions I will put thee among the children.

Verses 20, 21. *Surely, as a wife treacherously departeth, &c.*—This may be rendered, *As a woman is not faithful to her husband, or, her friend*, as the Hebrew רעה signifies. Here God returns to the carnal Israelites; so that the Jewish doctors seem to be right in calling the spirit of prophecy an *abrupt spirit*. *So have you dealt treacherously with me*—God, by thus reminding the Israelites of what they had formerly been, endeavours to bring them to repentance and new obedience for the time to come. *A voice was heard, &c.*—Here the prophet, foreseeing that some of them would at length be brought to true repentance for all their misdoings, represents them as bewailing themselves upon the high places, the scenes of their former idolatries. Compare chap. xxxi. 9, and l. 4; Zech. xii. 10. Or, as some think, he alludes to the usual practice of praying upon the tops of houses in great calamities, Isa. xv. 3; and xxii. 1; Jer. vii. 29. *For they have perverted their way*—This is that which they lament: for this they bemoan themselves. *They have forgotten the Lord their God*—Of this they were now sensible, and for this they were humbled, as being the first step toward their apostacy. Observe well, reader, 1st, Sin is the perverting of our way; it is turning aside to crooked paths, and perverting that which is right. By it we embarrass ourselves, and bring ourselves into trouble and misery. 2d, Forgetting the Lord our God is at the bottom of all sin: if men would remember God, and their obligations to him, and consider that his eye is upon them, they would not transgress as they do. 3d, Prayers and tears well become those whose consciences tell them that they have perverted their way and forgotten their God.

Verse 22. Here begins a dialogue between God and his people, wherein he offers gracious terms of

22 <sup>a</sup>Return, ye backsliding children, A. M. 3392. and <sup>b</sup>I will heal your backslidings. B. C. 612.

Behold, we come unto thee; for thou art the LORD our God.

23 <sup>a</sup>Truly in vain is salvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of mountains: <sup>a</sup>truly in the LORD our God is the salvation of Israel.

<sup>b</sup> Hosea vi. 1; xiv. 4.—<sup>a</sup> Psalm cxxi. 1, 2.—<sup>a</sup> Psalm iii. 8.

pardon to them, and they make sincere professions of obedience to him. *Return, ye backsliding—Or revolted, children*—Return to me, and to my worship and service; return to your duty. God is introduced as saying this upon hearing the weeping and supplications of the Israelites, acknowledging their sin, and humbling themselves for it. *And I will heal your backslidings*—Your revolts, or apostacies: I will take away the guilt of them, and save you from a refractory and revolting disposition. God heals our backslidings by his pardoning mercy, his composing peace, and his renewing grace. *Behold, we come unto thee*—We readily and cheerfully obey thy command, and comply with thy invitation. It is an echo to God's call; an immediate, speedy answer, without delay; not we will come hereafter, but we do come now; we need not take time to consider of it. *For thou art the Lord our God*—Words expressing the strongest inducements to return to God imaginable, because God had an undoubted right to them and their services, was willing to accept them, and able to save them, Isa. lv. 7; chap. xiv. 22. Not only this latter part of the verse, but what follows, to the end of the chapter, is spoken of in the name of the Israelites, accepting the divine invitation, acknowledging the vanity of their misplaced trust, and professing the deepest contrition and shame for their misconduct. It is a description, not of what was really done by the Israelites in general, but of what was necessary to be done in order to their regaining God's favour; and of what he foresaw would actually be done by such of them as should believe on the Messiah, when he came, and receive the privileges and blessings of the new covenant.

Verse 23. *Truly in vain is salvation hoped for from the hills*—From idols worshipped on hills and mountains. It is a continuation of that form of confession begun verse 22, drawn up with a reference to the present state of the idolatrous Israelites; wherein they express their abhorrence of those idols which they worshipped upon the hills and mountains, and declare their firm resolution of adhering to, and depending upon, the Lord their God. There being nothing in the original of this clause for *salvation is hoped for*, it has been differently interpreted by learned men. The LXX. render it, οὐτως εἰς ψευδος ἦσαν οἱ βουνοι, καὶ ἡ δυναμις τῶν ὀρεων, *Truly the hills and the power of the mountains were for a lie. And the Vulgate nearly to the same sense, Vere mendaces erant colles, et multitudo montium, Truly the hills*

A. M. 3392. 24 <sup>b</sup> For shame hath devoured the  
B. C. 612. labour of our fathers from our youth ;  
their flocks and their herds, their sons and their  
daughters.

25 We lie down in our shame, and our confu-

<sup>b</sup> Chap. xi. 13 ; Hos. ix. 10.

were liars, and the multitude of mountains ; that is, they were deceitful : they promised what they did not perform. To the same purpose the Syriac. Blaney renders the verse, " Surely the hills are lies ; the tumult of mountains : surely in Jehovah our God is the salvation of Israel." " The people," he observes, " acknowledge that the hills, the places sacred to idolatrous worship, and the tumultuous rites with which that worship was accompanied, (see 1 Kings xviii. 26, 28,) were mere impostures, deceiving and disappointing those that trusted in them ; whereas Jehovah was indeed the author of salvation to his people."

Verses 24, 25. *For shame hath devoured the labour of our fathers*—That is, the fruit of their labour, עֲמָלָא, which properly signifies labour and toil, being here put by a metonymy for the substance acquired by toil ; that is, their labours have been followed by disappointment and shame ; they have not reaped the expected fruit of them. Or sin, which causes shame, especially the sin of idolatry, has brought all our calamities upon us, the loss of our goods and substance, the dispersion of our families and nearest relations, and all the other miseries of our captivity :

sion covereth us : <sup>c</sup> for we have sinned A. M. 3392.  
against the LORD our God, we and B. C. 612.  
our fathers, from our youth even unto this day,  
and <sup>d</sup> have not obeyed the voice of the LORD  
our God.

<sup>c</sup> Ezra ix. 7.—<sup>d</sup> Chap. xxii. 21.

all these evils, which we and our forefathers have felt, are the effects of our idolatry, of which we are now heartily ashamed, and which had brought shame and confusion upon us. Blaney renders תּוֹכַחַת, (which we translate shame,) that thing of shame, meaning the idol which they worshipped, called by the same name, chap. xi. 13 ; Hos. x. 10 ; " and with good reason," says he, " because, in return for all the expense and pains bestowed upon it, it only frustrated the hopes of its votaries, and, as it follows in the next verse, left them mortified with disappointment, and overwhelmed with disgrace, for having deserted the service of a Being that could have saved them, in pursuit of so vile and worthless an object." *We lie down in our shame*—Being unable to bear it. *Our confusion covereth us*—On account both of our sins and sufferings. Sin hath laid us under such rebukes of God's providence, and such reproaches of our own consciences, as surround us and fill us with shame. These expressions, which set forth the greatness of their repentance and sorrow, are taken from those who cast themselves down upon the ground, and cover themselves with dust or ashes, out of grief and anguish of mind.

CHAPTER IV.

The first two verses of this chapter seem to be closely connected with the preceding, being directed to Israel, the ten tribes, by way of reply to their compliance with God's call, encouraging them to keep and execute their resolution, 1, 2. The rest of the chapter concerns Judah and Jerusalem. (1.) They are called to repent and reform their conduct, 3, 4. (2.) They are warned of the approach of Nebuchadnezzar and his forces against them, compared to devouring lions, to a blasting east wind, flying clouds, whirlwinds, and eagles ; that they should besiege their cities, dispirit their governors, and punish them for their sins, 5-18. (3.) The prophet most pathetically laments over their folly and wickedness ; and the dreadful ravage, confusion, desolation, and despair, which should be occasioned by the Chaldean army, 19-31.

A. M. 3392. IF thou wilt return, O Israel, saith the  
B. C. 612. LORD, <sup>a</sup> return unto me : and if thou

<sup>a</sup> Chap. iii. 1, 22 ;

NOTES ON CHAPTER IV.

Verse 1. *If thou wilt return, O Israel, return unto me*—Israel having promised repentance in the latter part of the preceding chapter, they are here directed what sort of a repentance it must be ; that it must not be hypocritical and feigned, but real and hearty ; not deferred to another time, but immediate, without any delay ; the words being not improperly interpreted, as they are by many, *If thou wilt return, return now*. Repentance, if it be delayed from time to time, is seldom ever put in exe-

wilt put away thine abominations out of A. M. 3392.  
my sight, then shalt thou not remove. B. C. 612.

Joel ii. 12.

cution ; and therefore there cannot be a more useful admonition than to put our good resolutions immediately in practice. Blaney, who considers the clause as being principally intended to assure them " that upon their conversion they should be accepted and received again into the bosom of God's church, from which they had before apostatized," translates it very literally, thus, " If thou wilt turn again, O Israel, saith Jehovah, unto me shalt thou return." *And if thou wilt put away thine abominations*—Thine evil practices, and especially thine idolatries, as the word

A. M. 3392. 2 <sup>b</sup> And thou shalt swear, The LORD liveth, <sup>c</sup> in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness; <sup>d</sup> and the nations shall bless themselves in him, and in him shall they <sup>e</sup> glory.

3 ¶ For thus saith the LORD to the men of Judah and Jerusalem, <sup>f</sup> Break up your fallow ground, and <sup>g</sup> sow not among thorns.

4 <sup>h</sup> Circumcise yourselves to the LORD, and take away the foreskins of your heart, ye men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem; lest

my fury come forth like fire, and burn that none can quench it, because of the evil of your doings.

5 Declare ye in Judah, and publish in Jerusalem; and say, Blow ye the trumpet in the land: cry, gather together, and say, <sup>i</sup> Assemble yourselves, and let us go into the defenced cities.

6 Set up the standard toward Zion: <sup>j</sup> retire, stay not: for I will bring evil from the <sup>k</sup> north, and a great <sup>l</sup> destruction.

<sup>b</sup> Deut. x. 20; Isa. xlv. 23; lxx. 16; Chap. v. 2; Zech. viii. 8. <sup>c</sup> Isa. xlviii. 1.—<sup>d</sup> Gen. xxii. 18; Psa. lxxii. 17; Gal. iii. 8. <sup>e</sup> Isa. xlv. 25; 1 Cor. i. 31.—<sup>f</sup> Hos. x. 12.—<sup>g</sup> Matt. xiii. 7, 22.

<sup>b</sup> Deut. x. 16; xxx. 6; Chap. ix. 26; Col. ii. 11; Rom. ii. 28, 29.—<sup>i</sup> Chap. viii. 14.—<sup>j</sup> Or, strengthen.—<sup>k</sup> Chap. i. 13, 14, 15; vi. 1, 22.—<sup>l</sup> Heb. breaking.

שָׁרַף commonly signifies: *out of my sight*—Hebrew, מִפְּנֵי, *from before me*: though God's eye be everywhere, and therefore, as is implied, idols are nowhere to be admitted, either in public or private, yet the expression particularly relates to the place of his more immediate presence, as their land and the place of his solemn worship. *Then shalt thou not remove*—Thou shalt be restored to thine ancient inheritance, and shalt be established in the peaceable possession of it. As if he had said, *If thou wilt remove thy idols, thou shalt not be removed*. The Hebrew, לֹא תִנּוּךְ, may be properly rendered, *Then thou shalt not wander*, that is, be an unsettled, fugitive, and vagabond people. "In the former part," says Houbigant, "the conversion of their morals is spoken of; in the latter, the stability of their republic."

Verse 2. *And thou shalt swear, &c.*—In taking a solemn oath, thou shalt appeal, not to dead and vain idols, but to Jehovah, the living and true God. This is put here for the whole worship of God, acknowledging and owning God as the only God, which is strongly expressed by this act: see Isa. xlviii. 1, and lxx. 16. *In truth*—In sincerity, knowing that the matter of the oath is strictly true; *in judgment*—Deliberately, advisedly, and reverently, the occasion being great and important; *in righteousness*—That none be injured by it, that the things we engage to do, or to see done, be both lawful and possible, and that we look to the performance of our oaths. *And the nations shall bless themselves in him*—This shall be a means of inducing the heathen nations to turn to the true God, and embrace the same way of worship. They shall think themselves happy to be incorporated with thee, that it may be with them according to the promise, Gen. xii. 3. *And in him shall they glory*—Whereas before they gloried in their idols, they shall now glory in Jehovah alone. This is evidently "a prediction of gospel times, when the heathen should join with the Israelites in paying all solemn acts of worship and devotion to the true God only, and in ascribing all honour and glory to him, and to his only Son, the Messiah, in whom all the nations were to be blessed."

Verses 3, 4. *For thus saith the Lord*—The pro-

phet now addresses himself to the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem, and exhorts them to repentance and reformation in metaphorical language. *Break up your fallow ground, &c.*—That is, purge and purify the field of your hearts, by godly sorrow for your sins, and hatred to them; prepare your hearts for receiving the seed of the divine word, by making them soft, tender, and pliable, fit to believe and obey it. *And sow not among thorns*—Eradicate the lusts and vices, the corrupt principles and dispositions, habits and practices, which, unless rooted out, will effectually choke the good seed of truth and grace, and prevent the growth of piety and virtue in your souls. *Circumcise yourselves to the Lord*—Put away your corruptions; mortify your vicious inclinations and passions: the same thing with the former, expressed in other words. *Take away the foreskin of your heart*—Let your repentance and renovation be inward in your soul and spirit, and not merely outward in your flesh; *lest my fury come forth like fire*—Which it is now ready to do, as that fire which came forth from the Lord, and consumed the sacrifices; *and burn that none can quench it*—Which wrath is not only fierce and consuming like fire, but unquenchable; *because of the evil of your doings*—Which is the thing that kindles the fire of God's wrath against us. Observe, reader, that which is to be dreaded by us more than any thing else, in time or eternity, is *the wrath of God* kindled against us by the evil of our doings, for it is the spring and bitterness of all present miseries, and will be the quintessence and perfection of everlasting misery. And the consideration of the imminent danger we are in of falling and perishing under this wrath, should awaken us with all possible care to sanctify ourselves to God's glory, and to see to it that we be sanctified by his grace.

Verses 5, 6. *Blow ye the trumpet*—The Lord, being now about to bring enemies upon them, speaks in martial language, warning them of the nature of their approaching judgment. It is the beginning of a new discourse, in which the prophet describes the dreadful preparations of war, such as *blowing a trumpet, and setting up a standard*, for the assembling men together, in order to their leaving the

A. M. 3392. 7 <sup>1</sup>The lion is come up from his  
B. C. 612. thicket, and <sup>m</sup> the destroyer of the  
Gentiles is on his way; he is gone forth from  
his place <sup>n</sup> to make thy land desolate; and thy  
cities shall be laid waste, without an inhabitant.

8 For this <sup>o</sup> gird you with sackcloth, lament  
and howl: for the fierce anger of the LORD is  
not turned back from us.

9 And it shall come to pass at that day, saith  
the LORD, that the heart of the king shall perish,  
and the heart of the princes; and the priests shall  
be astonished, and the prophets shall wonder.

10 Then said I, Ah, Lord God! <sup>p</sup> surely  
thou hast greatly deceived this people and Jeru-

<sup>1</sup> 2 Kings xxiv. 1; Chap. v. 6; Dan. vii. 4.—<sup>m</sup> Chap. xxv. 9.  
<sup>n</sup> Isa. i. 7; Chapter ii. 15.—<sup>o</sup> Isaiah xxii. 12; Chapter vi. 26.  
<sup>p</sup> Ezekiel xiv. 9; 2 Thess. ii. 11.—<sup>q</sup> Chapter v. 12; xiv. 13.  
<sup>r</sup> Chap. li. 1; Ezek. xvii. 10; Hos. xiii. 15.

open country, and retiring with their families and  
goods into the defenced cities, both for their own  
safety, and that they might maintain those garrisons  
against the power of the enemy. *Retire, stay not*  
—Make haste away. *I will bring evil from the*  
*north*—I am about to bring a great destruction upon  
you from Chaldea.

Verses 7, 8. *The lion is come up from his thicket*  
—Nebuchadnezzar, so called from his fierceness and  
strength, shall come up from Babylon, where his  
chief seat is, as lions are principally among the  
thickets of the forests, in coverts. Babylon being  
remote and little known to the Jews, they did not  
expect trouble to arise from thence. *The destroyer*  
*of the Gentiles*—Or, rather, the nations; *is on his*  
*way*—Is already on his march: another description  
of the same person, who is so called, because God  
had given, not only Judea, but all the neighbouring  
countries, into his hands. *To make thy lands desolate*  
—With a resolution to do so, and with power to  
effect his purpose. *For this gird you with sack-*  
*cloth*—Put on the habit of mourners. It is intended  
to express the dreadfulness of the approaching cala-  
mity. *Lament and howl*—You will do so when the  
cry is made through the kingdom, *Arm, arm*. Then  
all will be seized with terror, and put to confusion.  
*For the fierce anger of the Lord*—Which makes  
the army of the Chaldeans thus fierce and powerful;  
*is not turned back from us*—Is not appeased, but  
still burns against us. The LXX., with whom the  
Syriac and Vulgate agree, read ἀφ' ὑμῶν, *from you*.

Verse 9. *At that day the heart of the king shall per-*  
*ish*—Both his wisdom and his courage: despairing  
of success, he shall have no spirit to do any thing,  
and if he had, he would be at a loss what to do;  
*and the heart of the princes*—His privy counsellors,  
who ought to animate and advise him, shall be as  
much at a loss, and as much in despair as he. *And*  
*the priests shall be astonished*—Shall be in such a  
consternation that they shall have no heart to exe-  
cute their office, and therefore not likely to put spirit  
into the people. *The prophets shall wonder*—The

salem, <sup>q</sup> saying, Ye shall have peace; A. M. 3392.  
whereas the sword reacheth unto the B. C. 612.  
soul.

11 At that time shall it be said to this people  
and to Jerusalem, <sup>r</sup> A dry wind of the high  
places in the wilderness toward the daughter of  
my people, not to fan, nor to cleanse,

12 *Even* <sup>s</sup> a full wind from those *places* shall  
come unto me: now also <sup>t</sup> will I <sup>u</sup> give sentence  
against them.

13 Behold, he shall come up as clouds, and <sup>v</sup> his  
chariots shall be as a whirlwind: <sup>w</sup> his horses are  
swifter than eagles. Wountous! for we are spoiled.

14 O Jerusalem, <sup>x</sup> wash thy heart from wick-

<sup>q</sup> Or, a fuller wind than those.—<sup>r</sup> Chapter i. 16.—<sup>s</sup> Hebrew,  
utter judgments.—<sup>t</sup> Isaiah v. 28.—<sup>u</sup> Deuteronomy xxviii. 49;  
Lam. iv. 19; Hos. viii. 1; Hab. i. 8.—<sup>v</sup> Isaiah i. 16; James  
iv. 8.

false prophets, that had nothing but visions of peace  
for them, shall be thrown into the greatest amaze-  
ment imaginable, seeing their own guilty blood ready  
to be shed by that sword, of which they had fre-  
quently told the people there was no danger.

Verse 10. *Then said I, Ah, Lord God!*—The  
Hebrew word, *Aha*, is a word expressive both of  
admiration and lamentation. *Surely thou hast great-*  
*ly deceived this people*—Hast suffered them to be  
deceived by their false prophets. These pretenders  
to prophecy studied only to speak pleasing things  
to the people, and sooth them up in their impeni-  
tency and carnal security; and thou hast, in thy just  
judgment, given them up to follow these delusions:  
compare 2 Thess. ii. 11, 12. *Saying, Ye shall have*  
*peace*—The word *peace* here comprises all good,  
signifying that all things should go on prosperously  
with them; *whereas the sword reacheth unto the*  
*soul*—Whereas the sword is at the door, not only  
to take away the comforts of life, but even life itself.

Verse 11. *At that time*—When that calamity com-  
mences; *shall it be said to this people and to Jeru-*  
*salem*—There shall be tidings brought both to the  
country and city; *A dry wind of the high places*—  
“The prophet here describes the Chaldean army  
coming up for the destruction of Judea, under the  
metaphor of a hot, pestilential wind, which sweeps  
away multitudes in a moment, blasts the fruits of  
the earth, and spreads desolation everywhere around.  
The passage, like that in the preceding verses, is  
spirited and sublime; but it loses a good deal of its  
elegance in our version. Houbigant renders it thus:  
“Behold, a wind hangs over the mountains of the  
deserts; behold, it shall come upon the daughter of  
my people, but not to fan or to cleanse, verse 12.  
A mighty wind shall come from thence upon her,  
and then at length will I declare my judgment con-  
cerning them, or her, verse 13. Behold, as clouds  
it shall hang over; its chariots shall be as a whirl-  
wind; its horses swifter than eagles,” &c. See  
Lowth and Dodd.

Verses 14, 15. *O Jerusalem, wash thy heart*—O

A. M. 3392. edness, that thou mayest be saved.  
B. C. 612.

How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?

15 For a voice declareth <sup>r</sup> from Dan, and publisheth affliction from mount Ephraim.

16 Make ye mention to the nations; behold, publish against Jerusalem, *that watchers come* <sup>r</sup> from a far country, and give out their voice against the cities of Judah.

17 <sup>r</sup> As keepers of a field, are they against her round about; because she hath been rebellious against me, saith the LORD.

<sup>r</sup> Ch. viii. 16.—<sup>r</sup> Ch. v. 15.—<sup>r</sup> 2 Kings xxv. 1, 4.—<sup>r</sup> Psa. cvii. 17; Isa. li. 1; Chap. ii. 17, 19.—<sup>r</sup> Isa. xv. 5; xvi. 11;

ye inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, cleanse your inward parts; not your hands only, as hypocrites do, but your hearts, James iv. 8; *from wickedness*—Namely, from *all filthiness* of flesh and spirit, 2 Cor. vii. 1. See note on Isa. i. 16. *That thou mayest be saved*—As the means to prevent the judgments that are impending. *How long shall vain thoughts lodge within thee?*—Hopes of safety by the help of foreign forces, or any other such means, while thou continuest in the practice of thine idolatries and other sins. The reformation of a corrupt state is absolutely necessary in order to its salvation. There is no other way of preventing the divine judgments, or turning them away when we are threatened with them, but putting away the sins by which we have procured them to ourselves. And no reformation is saving, but that which reaches the heart and makes it new. And it is made new by the washing of regeneration, and the renovating power of the Holy Ghost; or, by the exercise of repentance toward God, and that faith in him and his word which is productive of new obedience. *For a voice declareth from Dan*—*For, lo! a sound of devastation comes from Dan; lo! a tumult is heard from the mountains of Ephraim.*—Houbigant. As if he had said, It is high time to repent, because reports succeed reports of the enemy's swift approach toward you. Dan, being the most northern part of Judea, was first invaded by the Chaldean army, which did not march directly through Mesopotamia and Arabia Deserta into Judea, because of the vast sandy deserts which lay in the way, but took a compass, and passed over the Euphrates at Thapsacus, which lay far northward of Judea, and thence marched through Syria: so that, of course, the rumour of the enemy's approach was first heard from Dan. And the evil tidings still increased as the army marched forward toward Jerusalem, by the way of mount Ephraim.

Verses 16, 17. *Make ye mention to the nations*—Tell the nations that now inhabit the cities of the ten tribes, that the Chaldean army is approaching, that they may provide for their own safety. *Behold, publish against Jerusalem*—Let her be made acquainted with what is coming upon her. Let her have notice beforehand, that she may be warned.

18 <sup>b</sup> Thy way and thy doings have <sup>r</sup> procured these *things* unto thee; this <sup>r</sup> is thy wickedness, because it is bitter, because it reacheth unto thy heart.

19 ¶ My <sup>o</sup> bowels, my bowels! I am pained at <sup>o</sup> my very heart; my heart maketh a noise in me; I cannot hold my peace, because thou hast heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war.

20 <sup>d</sup> Destruction upon destruction is cried; for the whole land is spoiled: suddenly are <sup>o</sup> my tents spoiled, and my curtains in a moment.

xxi. 3; xxii. 4; Chap. ix. 1, 10; Luke xix. 42.—<sup>b</sup> Heb. *the walls of my heart.*—<sup>d</sup> Psa. xlii. 7; Ezek. vii. 26.—<sup>r</sup> Chap. x. 20.

*That watchers come from a far country*—That is, soldiers from Chaldea, that will watch all opportunities to do mischief. By *watchers*, some think, are meant those scouts who usually precede an army, and announce its approach, whom Cesar, in his *Commentaries*, calls *antecessores*, or *antecursores*. But Blaney and others are of opinion that besiegers are intended, placing sentinels round the city to prevent any from coming in or going out, and keeping the place in continual alarm by shouts of war. *As keepers of the field, &c.*—Those couriers or spies of the Chaldean army will be as diligent in their observation of Judah and Jerusalem, or those besiegers will as strictly watch her on all sides, as the keepers of a field watch the cattle, or the vineyards and fruits thereof, under their care. "As in the East," says Sir John Chardin, in a MS. note on this place, quoted by Harmer, "pulse, roots, &c., grow in open and unenclosed fields, when they begin to be fit to be gathered, they place guards; if near a great road, more; if distant, fewer, who place themselves in and round about these grounds, as is practised in Arabia," chap. v. obser. 15.

Verse 18. *Thy way and thy doings*—Thy manner of life, and particularly thy idolatries; *have procured these things unto thee*—Have been the causes of this thy grievous affliction, of bringing such a bitter enemy against thee, which hath reached unto thy very heart. "Whatsoever happens to you," says Jerome on the place, "happens by your own fault, who have turned the sweet goodness of God into bitterness, and have compelled him, however unwilling, to rage against you."

Verses 19, 20. *My bowels, &c.*—Or, as Dr. Waterland renders it, *My bowels, my bowels! I am pained at the centre, or in the midst, of my heart; my heart is tumultuous within me!* It is an exclamation of the prophet, moved beyond measure at the calamities coming on his country, in being made the seat of war, and utterly ruined by a hostile invasion: which was so strongly represented to him in his vision, that he, as it were, saw the army of Nebuchadnezzar before his eyes, and the destruction and desolation made by it, heard the noise of the trumpets, the shouts of the soldiers, the outcries and lamentations of his countrymen, and the groans of

A. M. 3392. 21 How long shall I see the stand-  
B. C. 612. ard, and hear the sound of the trumpet?

22 For my people is foolish, they have not known me; they are sottish children, and they have none understanding: <sup>f</sup> they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge.

23 <sup>g</sup> I beheld the earth, and lo, it was <sup>h</sup> without form, and void; and the heavens, and they had no light.

<sup>f</sup> Rom. xvi. 19.—<sup>g</sup> Isa. xxiv. 19.—<sup>h</sup> Gen. i. 2.

the wounded and dying. And "the calamities described are presented to the mind in such lively colours, the images are so crowded, and arranged with so much art, and the breaks and apostrophes are so animated, that we seem to be involved in the same scene of misery with the prophet."—Bishop Lowth's 9th and 17th Prelec. *I cannot hold my peace*—I am so troubled I cannot forbear my complaints. *Because thou hast heard, O my soul, &c.*—I have heard in the spirit of prophecy; the calamity will as certainly come as if I now heard the trumpet sounding. *Destruction upon destruction*—Dr. Waterland reads, *Breach upon breach*, or, *destruction dashes upon destruction*; one sad calamity, like Job's messengers, treading upon the heels of another. First, good Josiah is slain in battle; within three months after, his son and successor, Jehoahaz, is deposed by the king of Egypt; within two or three years after, Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem and took it, and from thence forward was continually making descents on the land of Judah with his armies, during the reigns of Jehoiakim, Jeconiah, and Zedekiah, till, about nineteen years after, he completed their ruin by the destruction of Jerusalem. *For the whole land is spoiled*—This is more particularly described verses 23-26. *Suddenly are my tents spoiled*—The enemy makes no more of overthrowing my stately cities than if he were overturning tents made of curtains.

Verses 21, 22. *How long shall I see the standard, &c.*—This dreadful war continued a great while, not in the borders, but in the bowels of the country; for the people were very obstinate, and would not submit to, but took all opportunities of rebelling against, the king of Babylon, which did but lengthen out and aggravate the calamity, as Jeremiah did not fail to warn them it would do. Had they taken his advice, and yielded sooner, their country would have escaped the utter destruction which came upon it. But God, as a punishment for their sins, suffered them to be infatuated. *For my people is foolish*—Some commentators have considered these words, as well as those preceding, as being spoken by God, in answer to the prophet's complaints of his grievous vision, to show that such sad images were presented to him, because, on account of the people's obstinacy and wickedness, it was necessary that they should feel the effects of his just anger, even until Jerusalem should be levelled with the ground. But the

24 <sup>i</sup> I beheld the mountains, and <sup>j</sup> lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly.

25 I beheld, and lo, *there was no man*, and <sup>k</sup> all the birds of the heavens were fled.

26 I beheld, and lo, the fruitful place was a wilderness, and all the cities thereof were broken down at the presence of the Lord, and by his fierce anger.

<sup>i</sup> Isa. v. 25; Ezek. xxxviii. 20.—<sup>j</sup> Zeph. i. 3.

passage seems to suit the prophet much better, speaking here as one commissioned by the divine authority to preach to this people. *They have not known me*—Namely, they have not known the Lord, in whose name the prophet speaks. Those are foolish indeed, who, calling themselves God's people, and having the advantage of becoming acquainted with him, yet have not known him. *They are sottish children*—Stupid and senseless; and have no understanding—They cannot distinguish between truth and falsehood, good and evil; cannot discern the mind of God, either in his word or in his providence; they do not understand what their true interest is, nor on which side it lies. *They are wise to do evil*—To plot mischief against the quiet of the land; wise to contrive the gratification of their lusts, and then to conceal or palliate their conduct; *but to do good they have no knowledge*—No contrivance, no application of mind; they know not how to make a good use either of the ordinances or providences of God, nor how to bring about any design for the good of their country. They are perfect strangers to the obligations of religion and virtue, and never show any quickness of thought but when they are contriving to bring about some mischief.

Verses 23-26. *I beheld the earth, and lo, it was without form and void*—"The images under which the prophet here represents the approaching desolation, as foreseen by him, are such as are familiar to the Hebrew poets on the like occasions." See note on Isa. xiii. 10, and Bishop Lowth, *De Sac. Poesi Heb.*, Præl. ix. "But the assemblage is finely made, so as to delineate altogether a most striking and interesting picture of a ruined country, and to justify what has been before observed of the author's happy talent for pathetic description. The earth is brought back, as it were, to its primitive state of chaos and confusion; the cheerful light of the heavens is withdrawn, and succeeded by a dismal gloom; the mountains tremble, and the hills shake under dreadful apprehensions of the Almighty's displeasure; a frightful solitude reigns all around; not a vestige to be seen of any of the human race; even the birds themselves have deserted the fields, unable to find any longer in them their usual food. The face of the country, in the once most fertile parts of it, now overgrown with briars and thorns, assumes the dreary wilderness of the desert. The cities and villages are either thrown down and demolished by

A. M. 3392. B. C. 612. 27 For thus hath the LORD said, The whole land shall be desolate; <sup>1</sup> yet will I not make a full end.

28 For this <sup>m</sup> shall the earth mourn, and <sup>n</sup> the heavens above be black: because I have spoken *it*, I have purposed *it*, and <sup>o</sup> will not repent, neither will I turn back from it.

29 The whole city shall flee for the noise of the horsemen and bowmen; they shall go into thickets, and climb up upon the rocks: every

<sup>1</sup> Chap. v. 10, 18; xxx. 11; xlvi. 28.—<sup>m</sup> Hos. iv. 3.—<sup>n</sup> Isa. v. 30; l. 3.—<sup>o</sup> Num. xxiii. 19; Chap. vii. 16.

the hand of the enemy, or crumble into ruins of their own accord, for want of being inhabited.”—Blaney.

Verse 27. *Yet will I not make a full end*—That is, say some commentators, neither shall the punishment suffice, nor my anger stop here: but it rather seems to be a word of comfort, signifying that they should not be utterly destroyed, but that, in the midst of judgment, God would remember mercy, and preserve a remnant: accordingly, in fact, after seventy years' captivity, he brought a remnant back again into their own land.

Verses 28, 29. *For this shall the earth mourn, &c.*—More expressions to set forth the dreadfulness of the judgment: he makes the elements to personate mourners. *And the heavens above be black*—Under sad calamities every thing looks dismal; even the heavens themselves do not seem to shine with their usual brightness. *Because I have spoken it, I have purposed it, &c.*—Blaney, following the LXX., changes a little the order of the words, and reads, “I have spoken, and do not repent: I have purposed, and will not recede from it.” God's purpose of delivering up the Jews into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar was irreversible, because he foresaw that the greatest part of them would continue impenitent, and that it would be expedient and necessary, in order to their being humbled and brought to repentance, that they should be carried into captivity. Otherwise the removal of judgments, either those inflicted or threatened to be inflicted, is promised upon repentance, to which God frequently exhorted these Jews by his prophets. *The whole city shall flee*—The inhabitants of all ranks and qualities shall seek to escape the fury of the Chaldean army, chap. xxxix. 4. *They shall go into thickets*—Either upon the report of the coming of their enemies, the prophet hereby, as it were, deriding their confidence, or rather at the approach of their vast armies: for they were closely besieged before they fled, as appears 2 Kings xxv. 4. Such a consternation there shall be upon them, that they shall run into every hole to hide themselves; thus Manasseh was taken among the thorns, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 11. The Hebrew is, כְּבָרִים בְּעֵבֶר, *they shall go into the clouds*; meaning, probably, dark places on the tops of hills, reaching, as it were, to the clouds, or among the cloudy shades of trees and groves that usually grew there. The LXX. render it, εἰσεδύσαν εἰς τὰ σπηλαία,

city shall be forsaken, and not a man dwell therein. A. M. 3392. B. C. 612.

30 And *when thou art spoiled*, what wilt thou do? Though thou clothest thyself with crimson, though thou deckest thee with ornaments of gold, <sup>p</sup> though thou rendest thy <sup>q</sup> face with painting, in vain shalt thou make thyself fair; <sup>r</sup> *thy lovers will despise thee, they will seek thy life.*

31 For I have heard a voice as of a woman

<sup>p</sup> 2 Kings ix. 30; Ezek. xxiii. 40.—<sup>q</sup> Heb. *eyes*.—<sup>r</sup> Chap. xxii. 20, 22; Lam. i. 2, 29.

*they entered into the caves*; adding, και εἰς τὰ ἀσπηλαία, *they were hid in the groves*. *And climbed up upon the rocks*—Namely, to save their lives. *Every city shall be forsaken*—There shall be an utter desolation, their cities being quite deserted, and none left to inhabit them.

Verse 30. *And when thou art spoiled*—When this destruction shall come upon thee, which is very near; *what wilt thou do?*—When thou, O daughter of Zion, art besieged by the Babylonians, what course wilt thou take? As if he had said, Thy condition will be desperate. *Though thou clothest thyself, &c.*—The prophet proceeds in a kind of insulting speech, in which he, as it were, upbraids them with their pride and false confidence. *With crimson, or scarlet*. *Though thou deckest thyself with ornaments, &c.*—Though thou superinduce those ornaments, or jewels of gold, that may render thy attire the most rich and splendid. *Though thou rendest thy face with painting*—The Hebrew is, *Though thou rendest thine eyes, &c.* “This alludes to the custom of the eastern ladies, who, esteeming large eyes beautiful, make use of *stibium*, a sort of black paint, which is laid upon the eyelids with a pencil, and being of an astringent quality, partly contracts the eyelids, and partly, by the contrast of colour, tends to enlarge the appearance of the white part of the eyes.”—Blaney. See Bishop Lowth's note on Isa. iii. 16. Dr. Durrell has remarked, that the Ethiopians, to this day, paint their eyebrows with antimony mixed with moist soot. See *Ludolphi, Hist. Ethiop.*, lib. vii. cap. 7. *In vain shalt thou make thyself fair*—The prophet carries on the idea wherewith he began, representing Jerusalem under the figure of a harlot, dressing herself up to captivate lovers; seeking, by the finery of her dress and other allurements, to engage their affections, but in vain: so, he signifies, it should be with them; all the arts they had made use of to engage the Egyptians, or other foreigners, to assist them against the Chaldeans, should stand them in no stead; nay, those very allies of theirs would join with their enemies.

Verse 31. *For I have heard a voice of a woman in travail*—Here Jerusalem is very pathetically described by the character of a woman under the pangs of her first child-bearing, when her pains as well as her fears are usually greatest. Such, saith the prophet, shall be the anguish of Jerusalem, bewailing

A. M. 3392. in travail, and the anguish as of her  
B. C. 612. that bringeth forth her first child; the  
voice of the daughter of Zion, that bewaileth

herself, that <sup>r</sup>spreadeth her hands, A. M. 3392  
saying, Wo is me now! for my soul B. C. 612.  
is wearied because of murderers.

<sup>r</sup> Isa. i. 15;

Lam. i. 17.

the loss of her children by the devouring sword of the Chaldeans, and in vain imploring comfort and assistance. *That spreadeth her hands, &c.*—Spreading out the hands is the gesture of one displaying the helplessness of her condition, and imploring the aid of others.

“Ingemit, et duplices tendens ad sidera palmas,  
Talia voce refert—”

VIRGIL ÆN., I. l. 97.

“Struck with unusual fright, the Trojan chief,  
With outspread hands and eyes, invokes relief.”

DRYDEN.

## CHAPTER V.

In this chapter, which intermixes awful threatenings with sharp reproofs, to render them the more afflicting, we have, (1.) A list of the most notorious sins of the Jews; injustice and falsehood, 1; hypocrisy and perjury, 2; incorrigibleness, 3; ignorance and profligacy, 4, 5; idolatry and adultery, 7, 8; treacherous apostasy from, and impudent defiance of, God, 11–13; want of his fear, notwithstanding repeated calls to it, 20–24; violence and oppression, 25–28; combination of priests and prophets, who ought to have been reformers, to debauch the nation, 30, 31. (2.) A list of terrible judgments that God would certainly and fearfully inflict, 9, 29; that, according to this prophet's predictions, the Chaldeans should waste the country, 14–17; besiege and destroy their cities, 6, 10; slay or carry the people into captivity, but not utterly destroy them, 10, 18.

A. M. 3392. **R**UN ye to and fro through the  
B. C. 612. streets of Jerusalem, and see now,  
and know, and seek in the broad places thereof,  
if ye can find a man, if there be any that

executeth judgment, that seeketh the A. M. 3392  
truth; ° and I will pardon it. B. C. 612.

2 And <sup>d</sup> though they say, ° The LORD liveth;  
surely they <sup>f</sup> swear falsely.

<sup>a</sup> Ezek. xxii. 30.—<sup>b</sup> Gen. xviii. 23, &c.; Psa. xii. 1.

<sup>c</sup> Gen. xviii. 26.—<sup>d</sup> Tit. i. 16.—<sup>e</sup> Chap. iv. 2.—<sup>f</sup> Chap. vii. 9.

### NOTES ON CHAPTER V.

Verse 1. *Run ye to and fro, &c.*—In this chapter, which seems to be a continuation of the preceding discourse, God justifies the severity of the judgments denounced in the foregoing chapter. The expressions are strong, but not to be taken strictly in the letter, signifying only the extreme degeneracy of the times, and the great want of justice and piety in Jerusalem. *And see now and know, &c.*—Search here and there, and in every part of the city. The words, *saith the Lord*, should be supplied; for it is plain that the first and second verses are the words of God. In verse 3 the prophet speaks, and goes on to verse 7, where God speaks again. *And seek in the broad places thereof*—The word רחובותיה, thus rendered, means, no doubt, the market-places, and other spacious areas, where citizens used to meet to do business with each other. *If ye can find a man*—Namely, a man fearing God, and working righteousness. *If there be any that executeth judgment*—That in the magistracy rightly administers justice. *That seeketh the truth*—Any one among the commonality that deals faithfully and uprightly. The universal corruption of manners was such, that a man might walk the streets of Jerusalem long enough before he could meet with any one that was truly religious. *And I will pardon it*—Namely, the city of Jerusalem. The strong expressions of this verse,

if they were taken strictly, would imply that Jerusalem was now worse than Sodom, in the days of Lot: for, in offering pardon to Sodom and Gomorrah, God came no lower than ten, but, according to the literal meaning of these expressions, he promises to pardon Jerusalem if there should be one righteous man found. But it seems evident that, as we have intimated above, they are not to be taken in so strict a sense as if, in so great a city, there was not one good man; for certainly the prophet could not be reckoned among the number of the wicked, and there were besides, Baruch his disciple, and Ebedmelech, and, without doubt, some others that were truly pious. So that the meaning can be no more than that there were very few good men compared with the number of the wicked.

Verse 2. *And though they say, The Lord liveth, &c.*—Though, when they swear, they use the common form of an oath, and say, *The Lord liveth*, or, *as the Lord liveth*, or, *by the living God*. Surely, or rather, nevertheless, they swear falsely—That is, either, 1st, They are not sincere in the profession they make of respect to God, but are false to him; they honour him with their lips, but their hearts are far from him, nor have they any proper conviction or sense that he lives and sees them, Gen. xvi. 13, 14. Or, 2d, Though they appeal to God only, they make no conscience of calling him to witness a lie: though they do not

A. M. 3392. 3 O LORD, are not <sup>a</sup> thine eyes  
B. C. 612.

upon the truth? thou hast <sup>b</sup> stricken them, but they have not grieved; thou hast consumed them, *but* <sup>c</sup> they have refused to receive correction: they have made their faces harder than a rock; they have refused to return.

4 Therefore I said, Surely these *are* poor; they are foolish: for <sup>k</sup> they know not the way of the LORD, *nor* the judgment of their God.

5 I will get me unto the great men, and will speak unto them; for <sup>l</sup> they have known the way of the LORD, *and* the judgment of their God: but these have altogether <sup>m</sup> broken the yoke, *and* burst the bonds.

6 Wherefore <sup>n</sup> a lion out of the forest shall slay them, <sup>o</sup> *and* a wolf of the <sup>1</sup> evening shall

<sup>a</sup> 2 Chron. xvi. 9.—<sup>b</sup> Isa. i. 5; ix. 13; Chap. ii. 30.—<sup>c</sup> Chap. vii. 28; Zephaniah iii. 2.—<sup>k</sup> Chapter vii. 8.—<sup>l</sup> Mic. iii. 1.—<sup>m</sup> Psalm ii. 3.—<sup>n</sup> Chapter iv. 7.—<sup>o</sup> Psalm civ. 20; Hab. i. 8; Zeph. iii. 3.—<sup>1</sup> Or, *deserts*.

swear by idols, they forswear themselves, which is no less an affront to Jehovah, as the *God of truth*, than the other is to him, as the *only true God*.

Ver. 3-5. *O Lord, are not thine eyes upon the truth*—Dost thou not approve of truth and faithfulness? And dost thou not search men's hearts, and clearly discern their real dispositions from their hypocritical pretences? *Thou hast stricken them*—With one affliction after another; *but they have not grieved*—They have remained insensible as stocks or stones: they have not been humbled, and made truly penitent. *Thou hast consumed them*—Not chastised them lightly, but wasted them by several enemies: *but they have refused to receive correction*—To accommodate themselves to, and answer thy design in, correcting them. They have not been instructed or amended by it. *They have made their faces harder than a rock, &c.*—They have been obstinate and impudent in their evil practices, and have wilfully rejected thy counsel, and disregarded thy judgments. *Therefore I said, These are poor, &c.*—I thought at first, says the prophet, that such insensibility and want of concern respecting the duties of religion could be only charged upon the rude and ignorant vulgar, who, through the ignorance and poverty of their parents, were not sufficiently instructed when young, and afterward had neither leisure nor opportunity of learning their duty. *I will get me to the great men*—And see if I can find them better acquainted with, and regardful of, the providence and word of God. *For*—I thought, surely they have been better educated, and have had all opportunities and means of instruction and improvement, and therefore they must have known the way of the Lord, &c. *But these have altogether broken the yoke, &c.*—These are more refractory than the others; no law of God is able to hold them.

Verse 6. *Wherefore a lion, &c.*—Nebuchadnezzar and the Chaldean army are here pointed at under

spoil them, <sup>p</sup> a leopard shall watch over <sup>q</sup> their cities: every one that goeth out <sup>r</sup> thence shall be torn in pieces: because their transgressions are many, *and* their backslidings <sup>s</sup> are increased.

7 ¶ How shall I pardon thee for this? thy children have forsaken me, and <sup>t</sup> sworn by *them* <sup>v</sup> that are no gods: <sup>w</sup> when I had fed them to the full, they then committed adultery, and assembled themselves by troops in the harlots' houses.

8 <sup>x</sup> They were *as* fed horses in the morning: every one <sup>y</sup> neighed after his neighbour's wife.

9 <sup>z</sup> Shall I not visit for these *things*? saith the LORD: <sup>1</sup> and shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?

<sup>p</sup> Hos. xiii. 7.—<sup>q</sup> Heb. *are strong*.—<sup>r</sup> Jos. xxxiii. 7; Zeph. i. 5.—<sup>s</sup> Deut. xxxii. 21; Galatians iv. 8.—<sup>t</sup> Deut. xxxii. 15.—<sup>u</sup> Ezek. xxii. 11.—<sup>v</sup> Chap. xiii. 27.—<sup>w</sup> Verse 29; Chap. ix. 9.—<sup>x</sup> Chap. xlv. 22.

the metaphor of beasts of prey, of three kinds: being powerful, courageous, and violent as a *lion*; rapacious, greedy, and devouring as a *wolf*; and swift, lively, and active as a *leopard*. The word עֵרְבוּת, rendered *evenings* in the text, is translated *deserts* in the margin of our Bibles, which probably is the sense here intended. "And those wide and extensive plains, or unenclosed commons, seem to be meant, which were used only for sheep-walks and pasturage, and were, of course, most likely to be infested with wolves."—Blaney.

Verses 7-9. *How shall I pardon thee for this?*—How canst thou expect that the holy God, the righteous Governor and Judge of the world, should connive at, or bear with, such iniquitous conduct in his intelligent and accountable creatures. He appeals to themselves, whether they can think it consistent with his justice to let such enormous offences as he mentions go unpunished. *Thy children*—Thy people, both in city and country; *have forsaken me*—Have apostatized from my worship and service; *and have sworn by them that are no gods*—Have made their appeals to them, as if they were omniscient and their proper judges. This is here put for all acts of religious worship which are due to God only, but with which they honoured their idols, thereby robbing God of his essential attributes, and ascribing them to creatures of their own fancy. *When I fed them to the full*—Gave them temporal blessings in abundance; *then they committed adultery*—Such is the natural effect of unsanctified prosperity. *Shall I not visit for these things?*—Do not such crimes as these call for some remarkable judgments as their chastisement? Can you yourselves suppose that Jehovah, whose name is *Holy and Jealous*, will let them go unpunished? *Shall not my soul be avenged?* &c.—God's anger and vengeance signify, in Scripture, the execution of his justice, the effects of which are as terrible against obstinate sin-

A. M. 3392. 10 ¶ <sup>a</sup> Go ye up upon her walls, <sup>b</sup> and destroy; <sup>c</sup> but make not a full end: take away her battlements; for they are not the LORD's.

11 For <sup>b</sup> the house of Israel and the house of Judah have dealt very treacherously against me, saith the LORD.

12 <sup>c</sup> They have belied the LORD, and said, <sup>d</sup> It is not he; neither shall evil come upon us; <sup>e</sup> neither shall we see sword nor famine:

13 And the prophets shall become wind, and the word is not in them: thus shall it be done unto them.

14 Wherefore thus saith the LORD God of hosts, Because ye speak this word, <sup>f</sup> behold, I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them.

15 ¶ Lo, I will bring a <sup>g</sup> nation upon you

<sup>a</sup> Chap. xxxix. 8.—<sup>b</sup> Chap. iv. 27; Verse 18.—<sup>c</sup> Chap. iii. 20.—<sup>d</sup> 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16; Chap. iv. 10.—<sup>e</sup> Isa. xxviii. 15.—<sup>f</sup> Chap. xiv. 13.—<sup>g</sup> Chap. i. 9.—<sup>h</sup> Deut. xxviii. 49; Isa. v. 26;

ners as if they proceeded from the highest resentment.

Verses 10-13. *Go ye up upon her walls, &c.*—Ye Babylonians, go, execute my vengeance on them; and destroy—I commission you not only to take the city, but to make havoc of its inhabitants. *But make not a full end*—Leave a remnant. Thus he sets bounds to the destroying sword, beyond which it must not go. *Take away her battlements*—Lay her fortifications level with the ground. *For they are not the Lord's*—I disown them, and take away my protection from them. *For the house of Israel and the house of Judah*—The two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, as well as the ten; *have dealt very treacherously*—Have acted perfidiously beyond measure. *They have belied the Lord*—Given the lie to his threatenings in the mouth of his prophets: or have disbelieved and denied his providence, justice, and power, and his government of human affairs, ascribing his judgments to chance or fortune, or mere second causes. *And have said, It is not he*—Hebrew, לא הוה, "not he:" that is, he hath not spoken, or he will not do as the prophets have threatened in his name; or, he hath no hand in these affairs. Thus the wicked are represented as speaking, Psa. xciv. 7, "The Lord shall not see: neither shall the God of Jacob regard it." *Neither shall we see sword or famine*—The dreadful judgments which the prophet speaks of shall not befall us. *And the prophets shall become wind*—A proverbial expression, implying that the prophecies of the prophets were vain, and to no purpose; and that all their threats should come to nothing. *And the word is not in them*—That is, the word of true prophecy; the prophets' words are not from God. *Thus shall it be done unto them*—Nay, the very evils which they denounce upon others shall happen to themselves. So said the infidels.

<sup>b</sup> from far, O house of Israel, saith the LORD: it is a mighty nation, it is an ancient nation, a nation whose language thou knowest not, neither understandest what they say.

16 Their quiver is as an open sepulchre, they are all mighty men.

17 And they shall eat up thy <sup>i</sup> harvest, and thy bread, *which* thy sons and thy daughters should eat: they shall eat up thy flocks and thy herds: they shall eat up thy vines and thy fig-trees: they shall impoverish thy fenced cities, wherein thou trustedst, with the sword.

18 Nevertheless, in those days, saith the LORD, I <sup>k</sup> will not make a full end with you.

19 And it shall come to pass, when ye shall say, <sup>l</sup> Wherefore doeth the LORD our God all these things unto us? then shalt thou answer

Chap. i. 15; vi. 22.—<sup>b</sup> Isa. xxxix. 3; Chapter iv. 19.—<sup>i</sup> Lev. xxvi. 16; Deut. xxviii. 31, 33.—<sup>k</sup> Chap. iv. 27.—<sup>l</sup> Deut. xxix. 24, &c.; 1 Kings ix. 8, 9; Chap. xiii. 22; xvi. 10.

Verses 14-18. *Wherefore, thus saith the Lord God of hosts*—The prophet now, in the name of God, answers the blasphemous speeches of these infidels, ascribing to Jehovah that power and supremacy which were calculated to give his words the greater influence. *Because you speak this word*—because these scoffers express themselves in this manner; *I will make my words in thy mouth fire, &c.*—Thy words shall take effect, and thy predictions begin to be accomplished suddenly and unexpectedly, irresistibly and fiercely, (as fire is wont to kindle upon and consume dry wood,) to their utter overthrow and ruin. They shall be but fuel to my wrath, which shall be executed upon them by the Chaldean army. *I will bring a nation upon you from far*—The prophet, in the two following verses, marks out the Chaldeans by their distance; by their power and valour; by their antiquity; by their language, unknown to the Jews; by their arms, their might, and their cruelty." *And they shall eat up thy harvest*—In the field; *and thy bread*—In the house; *which thy sons and thy daughters should eat*—Necessary for the sustenance of thy own offspring. They shall consume all, leaving thee no supports of life, but bringing an utter famine upon thee. Here is a plain allusion to the predictions of Moses, Deut. xxviii. 49-51. *They shall eat up thy flocks and thy herds*—Out of which thou hast taken sacrifices for thine idols. *They shall eat up thy vines and thy fig-trees*—They shall leave thee no part of the produce of thy vineyards or fields. *They shall impoverish thy fenced cities, &c.*—After besieging, they shall take and destroy thy cities, though defended by high and strong walls; *wherein thou trustedst*—For the protection of the country; slaying the garrisons and inhabitants thereof with the sword, and leaving them desolate. See this also foretold, Deut. xxviii. 52.

Verse 19. *And when ye shall say, Wherefore*

A. M. 3392 them, Like as ye have forsaken  
B. C. 612 me, and served strange gods in your  
land, so shall ye serve strangers in a land that  
is not yours.

20 ¶ Declare this in the house of Jacob, and  
publish it in Judah, saying,

21 Hear now this, O ° foolish people, and  
without <sup>3</sup> understanding; which have eyes, and  
see not; which have ears, and hear not:

22 <sup>p</sup> Fear ye not me? saith the LORD: will  
ye not tremble at my presence, which have  
placed the sand for the <sup>a</sup> bound of the sea by a

<sup>m</sup> Chap. ii. 13.—<sup>n</sup> Deut. xxviii. 48.—<sup>o</sup> Isa. vi. 9; Ezek. xii. 2; Matt. xiii. 14; John xii. 40; Acts xxviii. 26; Rom. xi. 8.  
<sup>p</sup> Heb. heart, Hos. vii. 11.—<sup>q</sup> Rev. xv. 4.

doeth the Lord our God all these things?—Those that fall under the severity of God's judgments are apt to think so favourably of themselves, as to wonder why they should be singled out for examples of the divine vengeance, and of terror to others. And particularly the Jews were very apt to think themselves innocent, however guilty they were, and to contend they did not deserve the punishments inflicted on them; and that this severe proceeding was not consistent with those many gracious promises which God had made to their nation. *Then shalt thou answer them, &c.*—God doth not execute these judgments upon you without cause. All his promises were made to you, to be fulfilled upon condition of your obedience, which, when you withheld, you had reason to expect that his threatenings, instead of his promises, as he had repeatedly warned you, would take effect. *Like as ye have forsaken me*—I only retaliate upon you your own conduct: you have forsaken me, therefore I forsake you. You, in that good land which I gave you, have served strange gods, to whom you owed nothing; as being, indeed, the work of your own hands, or mere imaginary beings that had no existence; so will I make you to serve strange masters and lords in a land that is not yours—And where you shall not be able to call any thing your own. You have loved strangers, and to strangers you shall go. Or, as some paraphrase the words, "As you have refused to have me for your God, your Master, and your King, you shall have other kings and masters in a strange land, and shall experience the difference between my dominion and that of these severe and tyrannical masters."

Verse 21. *Hear this, O foolish people*—Ignorant and imprudent, as blind to your interest as to your duty; and without understanding—Hebrew, לֹב לֵב, and there is no heart, or without heart, stupid and regardless of all counsel, wisdom, and common sense. *Which have eyes and see not, &c.*—Wilfully blind, and obstinately deaf, who will neither see nor hear the word, will, or works of God; of which he gives two instances in the two following verses.

Verses 22–24. *Fear ye not me? saith the Lord*—He ascribes their stupidity and foolishness to their want of the fear of God. As if he had said, If you

perpetual decree, that it cannot pass A. M. 3392.  
it: and though the waves thereof B. C. 612  
toss themselves, yet can they not prevail;  
though they roar, yet can they not pass over  
it?

23 But this people hath a revolting and a  
rebellious heart; they are revolted and gone.

24 Neither say they in their heart, Let us  
now fear the LORD our God, <sup>r</sup> that giveth rain,  
both the <sup>s</sup> former and the latter, in his season:  
<sup>t</sup> he reserveth unto us the appointed weeks of  
the harvest.

<sup>q</sup> Job xxvi. 10; xxxviii. 10; Psalm civ. 9; Proverbs viii. 29.  
<sup>r</sup> Psa. cxlvii. 8; Chap. xiv. 22; Matthew v. 45; Acts xiv. 17.  
<sup>s</sup> Deut. xi. 14; Joel ii. 23.—<sup>t</sup> Gen. viii. 22.

would but call to mind God's almighty power, and your own weakness, and keep an awe of him upon your minds, you would be more observant of his commands, and be afraid to disobey them. *Which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea*—Who need not place rocks or walls to keep it in; but can give an effectual check to it by a little despicable sand. "The keeping of the waters within bounds, so that they cannot overflow the earth, is often mentioned in Scripture as an immediate effect of God's overruling power and providence. For water being specifically lighter than earth, by the common laws of gravitation it should rise above it, and overflow it. And then the adjusting the proportion of the tides, that they rise no higher, to the prejudice of the lower grounds, is another remarkable instance of God's special providence."—Lowth. *But this people* are more ungovernable than the unruly waves of the sea: they have a revolting and a rebellious heart—They have not only revolted from me and gone back, but they continue obstinate, and will not return. They persist in their evil courses, and are determined so to do: they are gone quite away, and are irreclaimable. *Neither say they in their heart*—They are so careless that they never trouble themselves about any thing of the kind; or are so obdurate that they never lay it to heart, nor consider that it is God, who disposeth of all things according to his own pleasure, both in the great deep and on dry land. *Let us now fear the Lord our God*—Or, worship and obey him; all acceptable service to God being both performed in his fear, and proceeding from it. *That giveth rain*—Without which the earth could produce no fruits. By this the true God is distinguished from all false gods, chap. xiv. 22; and in this appears not only his power in appointing and preparing it, (Psa. cxlvii. 8,) and his sovereignty in withholding it, (Amos iv. 7,) but his general goodness in bestowing it, (Deut. xxviii. 12,) and his special providence in distributing it according as there is need. As in the former instance God shows how insensible his people were of his power and glorious greatness in taming such an unruly element as the sea; so here he further sets forth their inattention to, and disregard of, his providence and goodness; implying that

A. M. 3392. 25 <sup>a</sup> Your iniquities have turned away these *things*, and your sins have withheld good *things* from you.

26 For among my people are found wicked *men*: <sup>4</sup> they <sup>x</sup> lay wait, as he that setteth snares; they set a trap, they catch men.

27 As a <sup>5</sup> cage is full of birds, so *are* their houses full of deceit: therefore they are become great, and waxen rich.

28 They are waxen <sup>y</sup> fat, they shine: yea, they overpass the deeds of the wicked: they

judge not <sup>a</sup> the cause, the cause of the fatherless, <sup>a</sup> yet they prosper; and the right of the needy do they not judge.

29 <sup>b</sup> Shall I not visit for these *things*? saith the LORD: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?

30 ¶ <sup>a</sup> A wonderful and <sup>c</sup> horrible thing is committed in the land;

31 The prophets prophesy <sup>d</sup> falsely, and the priests <sup>7</sup> bear rule by their means; and my people <sup>e</sup> love to *have it* so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?

<sup>a</sup> Chap. iii. 3.—<sup>4</sup> Or, *they pry as fowlers lie in wait.*—<sup>x</sup> Prov. i. 11, 17; Hab. i. 15.—<sup>5</sup> Or, *coop.*—<sup>y</sup> Deut. xxxiii. 15. <sup>z</sup> Isa. i. 23; Zech. vii. 10.—<sup>z</sup> Job xii. 6; Psa. lxxiii. 12; Chap.

xii. 1.—<sup>b</sup> Verse 9; Mal. iii. 5.—<sup>c</sup> Or, *Astonishment and filthiness.*—<sup>c</sup> Chap. xxiii. 14; Hos. vi. 10.—<sup>d</sup> Chap. xiv. 14; xxiii. 25, 26; Ezek. xiii. 6.—<sup>7</sup> Or, *take into their hands.*—<sup>e</sup> Mic. ii. 11.

they were grown so stupid, unfeeling, and obstinate, that they neither stood in awe of him for his greatness, nor feared to offend him for his goodness. "The vicissitudes of seasons, of cold and heat, of drought and moisture, so wisely fitted for the growth of the fruits of the earth, and other uses of human life, are so remarkable a proof of the being and attributes of God and his providence, as to be obvious to the meanest capacity, and on this account they are frequently insisted on by the inspired writers."—Lowth. Concerning the *former and latter rain*, see note on Deut. xi. 14; and Prov. xvi. 15. *He reserveth, &c., the appointed weeks of the harvest*—He gives seasonable harvests, according to his appointment. The sum is: the prophet would let them know what a foolish as well as wicked thing it was to set themselves against that God who kept, as he still keeps, the whole order of nature at his disposal, governing and changing it as he sees men behave toward him.

Verses 25–29. *Your iniquities have turned away these things*—See note on chap. iii. 3. *For among my people are found wicked men*—I need not search for such among the heathen nations, for they are easily found among them that are called by my name. *They lay wait, &c.*—They use all the arts of fraud and cunning, that they may overreach others, and make a prey of them and their substance. *They set a trap, they catch men*—Such a trap did Jezebel lay for Naboth, 1 Kings xxi. 9, 10. Such a one was that conspiracy of more than forty men against Paul, Acts xxiii. 13–15. *As a cage is full of birds, &c.*—As in the foregoing words they were compared to a hunter, or a fowler, who takes beasts or birds in snares; so here, carrying on the same similitude, he describes their houses as cages

full of birds, that is, of goods gotten by robbery and fraudulent arts. *They are waxen fat, they shine*—Or, so fat that they shine. By living at ease, and bathing themselves in all the delights of sense, they look so fair and gay that every body admires them. *Yea, they overpass the deeds of the wicked*—"They exceed the common instances of injustice and oppression, and make no conscience of enriching themselves with the spoils of the fatherless, and those who have most need of their charity and kindness."—Lowth. Waterland renders the clause, "Yea, they have exceeded all expression of wickedness; or, have been wicked beyond expression." *Shall I not visit, &c.*—See note on verse 9.

Verses 30, 31. *A wonderful and horrible thing is committed*—So stupendous a crime, that it is beyond the apprehension of man to conceive, much more to express, its greatness; and so abominable, that a man ought even to loathe the thoughts of it. What this is, we have in the next verse; *in the land*—That is, this land, which aggravates the greatness of the wonder that such a thing should exist in such a land! *The prophets prophesy falsely, &c.*—Both priests and prophets agree to speak pleasing things to the people, thereby to keep up their interest and authority with them. *And my people love to have it so*—They are well enough pleased to be thus misled. If the prophets and priests will let them alone in their sins, they will give them no disturbance in theirs. They love to be held and governed by a loose rein, and like those rulers very well that will not restrain their lusts, and those teachers that will not reprove them: see note on Isa. xxx. 10. *And what will ye do in the end thereof*—And what can this end in, but a total corruption of manners? The consequence of which must be the utter ruin of the state.

## CHAPTER VI.

In this chapter we have, (1.) A representation of the invasion of Judea, and the besieging of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, 1–8. Of their spoiling the country and murdering the inhabitants, 9, 11, 12; and spreading terror and consternation

among them, 21, 26. (2.) An account of those sins of Judah and Jerusalem, which provoked God to bring this desolating judgment upon them: their oppression, 7; their contempt of the word of God, 10-12; their universal covetousness, and the treacherous villany of the priests and prophets, 13, 14; their impudence in sin, and obstinacy against reproof while they hypocritically, but in vain, multiplied their sacrifices, 15-20. (3.) Earnest admonitions to reformation given them, but without success, 8, 16, 17. God, faithfully warning them, tries them for a time, and at last gives them up as irreclaimable, 21, 27-30.

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**O** YE children of Benjamin, gather yourselves to flee out of the midst of Jerusalem, and blow the trumpet in Tekoa, and set up a sign of fire in <sup>a</sup> Beth-haccerem: <sup>b</sup> for evil appeareth out of the north, and great destruction.

2 I have likened the daughter of Zion to a <sup>1</sup>comely and delicate woman.

3 The shepherds with their flocks shall come

<sup>a</sup> Neh. iii. 14.—<sup>b</sup> Chapter i. 14; iv. 6.—<sup>1</sup> Or, dwelling at home.

NOTES ON CHAPTER VI.

Verse 1. *O ye children of Benjamin, &c.*—The prophet proceeds in his remonstrances, rebukes, and faithful warnings to the disobedient Jews. A great part of Jerusalem stood in the tribe of Benjamin, Josh. xviii. 28; on which account, and because Jeremiah, being of Anathoth, was of that tribe, and probably lived therein, the inhabitants are here addressed by the name of the children of Benjamin, and are directed to leave the city, which God was about to destroy, and to take refuge in the mountains. *Blow the trumpet in Tekoa*—One of those cities which Rehoboam built, 2 Chron. xi. 6, twelve miles from Jerusalem. *Set up a sign of fire*—A beacon; in *Beth-haccerem*—A village between Tekoa and Jerusalem, built upon a mountain, situate in the way which led from Chaldea to Jerusalem. As the word signifies the house of the vineyard, it was probably at first some high tower, built among the vineyards, for the keepers of them to watch in, and that it afterward became a village of some note. The design of such signals of war as the prophet here mentions, is generally to assemble men together in order to their mutual defence; but, as he knew it was utterly in vain to attempt any thing of that kind, he seems only to have meant that by these means general notice should be given of the enemies' approach, that the people might disperse, and escape from danger and destruction. *For evil appeareth, &c.*—See note on chap. i. 14. Dr. Waterland reads this verse, "Haste away the children of Benjamin out of, &c., and set up a signal in Beth-haccerem; for mischief threateneth out of the north."

Verses 2, 3. *I have likened, &c.*—There being nothing for woman in the Hebrew text, and the word נָוָה, here rendered comely, frequently signifying a pasture, a sheep-fold, and a habitation, the verse is translated different ways by learned men. Houbigant and several others read it and the next verse thus: "I have likened the daughter of Zion to a pleasant pasture, whither the shepherds, with their flocks, come to feed: they have pitched their tents near it, and they feed round it, every one in his

unto her; <sup>a</sup> they shall pitch their tents against her round about; they shall feed every one in his place.

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4 <sup>a</sup> Prepare ye war against her; arise, and let us go up <sup>a</sup> at noon. Wo unto us! for the day goeth away, for the shadows of the evening are stretched out.

5 Arise, and let us go by night, and let us destroy her palaces.

<sup>a</sup> 1 Kings xxv. 1, 4; Chap. iv. 17.—<sup>a</sup> Chap. li. 27; Joel iii. 9. <sup>b</sup> Chap. xv. 8.

place." According to this reading, in which Zion is likened to a rich pasture, the shepherds and their flocks that come together to take possession of it, and eat it up, mean the Chaldean generals and their armies, who should possess themselves of Judea and Jerusalem, with as much ease as shepherds lead their flocks into a fresh and open pasture, and should enrich themselves with the spoil thereof. This is certainly a very easy and probable sense of the passage. Blaney, however, prefers rendering the word נָוָה habitation; and, taking the verb רָמַתִּי to signify here, not, I have likened, but, I have destroyed, (a sense which it sometimes bears,) he reads the passage, "The habitation, even the delightful one, have I doomed to destruction, the daughter of Zion. The shepherds, with their flocks, shall come to her. And they shall pitch their tents against her round about." "Jerusalem," he observes, "is in like manner called simply נָוָה, the habitation, Isa. xxvii. 10. And it seems entitled to the name by way of eminence, as the chief residence both of Israel and the God of Israel. Accordingly, speaking of the very desolation here intended, the psalmist says, *They have devoured Jacob, and laid waste his dwelling-place*, נָוָה, *Psa. lxxix. 7*. It is also called God's habitation, *Exod. xv. 13; 2 Sam. xv. 25, &c.* And, with respect to the epithet annexed, *the delightful one*, Jerusalem is frequently spoken of in terms that show it to have been, in a very eminent degree, the object of delight both with God and man."

Verses 4, 5. *Prepare ye war against her*—The prophet now drops the metaphor, and tells them in plain terms whom he means by the shepherds namely, warriors. These seem to be the words of God giving a commission to the Chaldeans, by his prophet, to make war upon Jerusalem. *Arise, and let us go up at noon, &c.*—"The alacrity and eagerness with which the Chaldeans should undertake and execute the commission with which they were charged, are described in these and the following words in a beautiful vein of poetry. Though it was late in the day before they received their orders, they are for beginning their march immediately;

A. M. 3392. B. C. 612. 6 ¶ For thus hath the LORD of hosts said, Hew ye down trees, and <sup>2</sup> cast a mount against Jerusalem: this is the city to be visited; she is wholly oppression in the midst of her.

7 <sup>1</sup> As a fountain casteth out her waters, so she casteth out her wickedness: <sup>2</sup> violence and spoil is heard in her; before me continually is grief and wounds.

8 Be thou instructed, O Jerusalem, lest <sup>h</sup> my soul <sup>3</sup> depart from thee; lest I make thee desolate, a land not inhabited.

<sup>2</sup> Or, pour out the engine of shot.—<sup>1</sup> Isa. lvii. 20.—<sup>3</sup> Psa. lv. 9, 11; Chapter xx. 8; Ezek. vii. 11, 23.—<sup>h</sup> Ezek. xxii. 18; Hos. ix. 12.

and though it was night before they got to the place, they are unwilling to put off the assault till morning."—Blaney. *Let us destroy her palaces*—And make ourselves masters of the wealth contained in them. This was the motive that influenced them, and produced such eagerness. The end they had in view was not that they might fulfil God's counsels; but that they might enjoy the spoils of all the stately palaces and rich houses of the nobles and great ones: hereby, however, God served his own purposes.

Verses 6, 7. *For thus hath the Lord of hosts said*—To the Chaldeans: God would have the Jews to know, that they have not so much to do with the Chaldeans as with him; that they are his rod to scourge them for their sins. And thus God is said to hiss for, or hist, those whom he would employ in such work, Isa. v. 26; vii. 18. And he styles himself the *Lord of hosts*, to show that it is in vain to contend in battle with them whom he sent forth, and would be, as it were, the captain of their hosts. *Hew down trees, &c.*—That is, to be employed in the siege: see Deut. xx. 19, where the same word is used as here. *Cast up a mount*—Throw up one continued trench, as a mount, round about it. *This is the city, &c.*—The Hebrew may be literally rendered, *She is a city to be visited*—That is, a proper object of punishment; the reason of which follows in the next words. *As a fountain casteth out her waters, &c.*—A metaphor, to express how natural all manner of wickedness was to her, how full she was of it, and how incessant in it. *Violence and spoil is heard in her*—I hear the continual complaints of those that groan under the oppression that they suffer, being cruelly used and spoiled in her.

Verse 8. *Be thou instructed, O Jerusalem, &c.*—Take warning by the many threatenings and judgments I have denounced against thee; amend thy ways and doings, lest, if thou persist in thy wickedness, I be utterly alienated from thee; and I cast off all bowels of compassion toward thee, and give thee up to ruin and desolation. This threatening God fulfilled afterward, when he suffered the city and nation to be utterly ruined and destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar: but it still received a further comple-

9 ¶ Thus saith the LORD of hosts, A. M. 3392. B. C. 612. They shall thoroughly glean the remnant of Israel as a vine: turn back thy hand as a grape-gatherer into the baskets.

10 To whom shall I speak, and give warning, that they may hear? Behold, their <sup>1</sup> ear is uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken: behold, <sup>2</sup> the word of the LORD is unto them a reproach; they have no delight in it.

11 Therefore I am full of the fury of the LORD; <sup>1</sup> I am weary with holding in: I will pour it out <sup>m</sup> upon the children abroad, and

<sup>1</sup> Heb. be loosed, or, disjointed.—<sup>1</sup> Chap. vii. 26; Acts vii. 61; Exodus vi. 12.—<sup>2</sup> Chapter xx. 8.—<sup>1</sup> Chapter xxix. 9. <sup>m</sup> Chap. ix. 21.

tion, in that final desolation brought upon them by the Romans, under Titus Vespasian.

Verse 9. *They shall thoroughly glean*—As if he had said, Come, ye Chaldeans, into my vineyard; collect the vintage; gather even to the very last grapes; *the remnant of Israel as a vine*—The prophet, by this, seems to express, that all the remains of the Israelites, who had escaped when the main body of them had been carried into captivity by the Assyrians, and who had taken refuge in Judea and Jerusalem, should also be carried away into captivity by the Babylonians. *Turn back thy hand, &c.*—That is, begin the work of gathering or gleaning anew: return again after the first time, and pick up those few inhabitants that were left before, and carry them also into captivity. Thus the Chaldeans did, as may be seen chap. lii. 28-30.

Verse 10. *To whom shall I speak and give warning?*—I cannot find out any that will so much as give me a patient hearing, much less will any take warning. I cannot speak with any hope of success. *Behold, their ear is uncircumcised*—A figurative expression, not unfrequent with the prophets, signifying the rejecting of instruction; as an *uncircumcised heart* signifies an obstinate and rebellious will. As if he had said, Their mind is unbelieving and carnal, and therefore not disposed to hearken to the voice of God. Nay, they are not only deaf to it, but prejudiced against it; and they cannot hearken—Namely, because they are resolved they will not. *Behold, the word of the Lord is unto them a reproach*—Both the reproofs and the threatenings of it are so; they consider themselves as wronged and affronted by both, and resent plain dealing as they would the most causeless slander and calumny. *They have no delight in it*—More is implied than expressed; they have an antipathy to it, their hearts rise against it; it exasperates them, and inflames their passions; and they are ready to fly in the face of their reprovers.

Verses 11, 12. *Therefore I am full of the fury*—אֵת הַכֶּחַח, *the anger*, or *wrath*, as it should rather have been rendered; *of the Lord*—An expression which is to be understood of that divine justice which is worthy of God, and which inflicts most heavy,

A. M. 3392. B. C. 612. upon the assembly of young men together: for even the husband with the wife shall be taken, the aged with *him that is full of days*.

12 And <sup>a</sup>their houses shall be turned unto others, *with their* fields and wives together: for I will stretch out my hand upon the inhabitants of the land, saith the LORD.

13 For from the least of them even unto the greatest of them every one *is* given to <sup>o</sup>covetousness; and from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely.

<sup>a</sup> Deut. xxviii. 30; Chap. viii. 10.—<sup>o</sup> Isa. lvi. 11; Chap. viii. 10; xiv. 18; xxiii. 11; Mic. iii. 5, 11.—<sup>p</sup> Chap. viii. 11; Ezek. xiii. 10.

and yet most just, punishment on the obstinately wicked, after having a long time waited for their repentance. *I am weary with holding in*—Or, as the words may be rendered, *I have laboured to hold it in*. They are the words of the prophet, who was unwilling to declare to the people the avenging justice which was ready to fall upon them. *I will pour it out*—The word in the Hebrew, כָּפַשׁ, is imperative, *Pour it out*: God, as it seems, commanding his prophet not to delay to denounce his judgments, about to be inflicted on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, of all ages and orders. The prophets are said to do things, when they declare God's purpose of doing them, as hath been observed on chap. i. 10; *upon the children abroad*—Or, *in the streets*, where they are wont to play: the sword of the merciless Chaldeans shall not spare them, chap. ix. 21. The children perish in the calamity, which the sins of their fathers have procured. *And upon the assembly of young men*—Who meet together for diversion or conversation. *The husband with the wife shall be taken*—One sex, as well as the other, shall be a prey to the enemy. *The aged with him that is full of days*—From hence it appears, says Blaney, that the word, יָקַן, here and elsewhere rendered *aged*, "means only a man that has passed a certain time of life, which may be considered as his zenith, so as from thenceforth to be upon the decline. In contradistinction to whom is placed one who is arrived at what is esteemed the full period of human life; in respect to which the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, David, and Job, are said to have died *full of years, or days*. See the same distinction made Isa. lxxv. 20." No age or condition shall escape. *And their houses shall be turned unto others, &c.*—According to the threatening denounced by Moses, Deut. xxviii. 30.

Verses 13–15. *For, from the least of them, &c.*—Old and young, rich and poor, high and low, those of all ranks, professions, and employments; *every one is given to covetousness*—Greedy of filthy lucre; and this made them oppressive, for of that evil, as well as others, the love of money is the bitter root. Nay, and this hardened their hearts against the word of God and his prophets: they were the covetous Pharisees that derided Christ. *From the prophet to*

14 They have <sup>p</sup>healed also the <sup>4</sup>hurt <sup>A. M. 3392. B. C. 612.</sup> of the daughter of my people slightly,

<sup>a</sup>saying, Peace, peace; when *there is* no peace.

15 Were they <sup>r</sup>ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush; therefore they shall fall among them that fall: at the time *that* I visit them they shall be cast down, saith the LORD.

16 Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the <sup>s</sup>old paths, where *is* the good way, and walk therein, and

<sup>4</sup> Heb. *bruise, or, breach*.—<sup>a</sup> Chap. iv. 10; xiv. 13; xxiii. 17. <sup>r</sup> Chap. iii. 3; viii. 12.—<sup>s</sup> Isa. viii. 20; Chap. viii. 15; Mal. iv. 4; Luke xvi. 29.

*the priest, every one dealeth falsely*—Not only in speaking false things, but, as the Hebrew, שָׁקַר, signifies, *doing falsehood; acting a lie*; that is, playing the hypocrite; keeping up an outward form, or appearance, of piety, and desiring to be accounted righteous, when, before God, they were abominably wicked. *They have healed also the hurt, &c., slightly*—Skinning over the wound, and never searching it to the bottom; applying lenitives, soothing speeches, when there was need of corrosives, or sharp reproofs, which might have brought them to a true sense of the danger of their condition: encouraging them in their sins, and carnal security, by promising them peace and safety when they were on the brink of ruin and destruction. So that the ministry of these priests and prophets, instead of proving a blessing, became a real curse to them. *Were they ashamed, &c.*—Nothing is a greater sign of an incorrigible temper than being past shame. Such the prophet tells us was the character of the generality of the Jews at this time: their hearts were so hardened that *they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush*. Nay, it seems they even gloried in their wickedness, and openly confronted the convictions that should have humbled and brought them to repentance. This is thought by some to refer especially to the priests and prophets, who had soothed the people in their sins, with false hopes of peace, and yet were not ashamed of their deceit and treachery; no, not when the event disproved and gave the lie to their promises. *Therefore shall they fall among them that fall*—They shall have their portion with those whom they have deceived and destroyed.

Verses 16, 17. *Stand ye in the ways, &c.*—He now turns his speech to the people, and gives them counsel; by a metaphor taken from travellers, who, being in doubt of their way, stand still, and consider, whether the direction, which they have received from some false guide, be right or not. *Ask for the old paths*—Inquire in what way the patriarchs, the judges, the kings, and prophets of former times walked, and imitate their practices. *And ye shall find rest for your souls*—You will find peace with God, will be safe under his protection, and in conse-

A. M. 3392. ye shall find <sup>t</sup> rest for your souls. But  
B. C. 612. they said, We will not walk *therein*.

17 Also I set <sup>u</sup> watchmen over you, *saying*,  
Hearken to the sound of the trumpet. But they  
said, We will not hearken.

18 ¶ Therefore hear, ye nations, and know,  
O congregation, what *is* among them.

19 <sup>a</sup> Hear, O earth: Behold, I will bring evil  
upon this people, *even* <sup>v</sup> the fruit of their  
thoughts, because they have not hearkened  
unto my words, nor to my law, but rejected it.

20 <sup>a</sup> To what purpose cometh there to me  
incense <sup>a</sup> from Sheba, and the sweet cane  
from a far country? <sup>b</sup> your burnt-offerings  
*are* not acceptable, nor your sacrifices sweet  
unto me.

<sup>t</sup> Matt. xi. 29.—<sup>u</sup> Isa. xxi. 11; lviii. 1; Chap. xxv. 4; Ezek. iii. 17; Hab. ii. 1.—<sup>a</sup> Isa. i. 2.—<sup>v</sup> Prov. i. 31.—<sup>x</sup> Psa. xl. 6; l. 7, 9; Isa. i. 11; lxvi. 3; Amos v. 21; Mic. vi. 6, &c.

quence thereof will have comfort and satisfaction in your own minds. See Matt. xi. 28, 29. *But they said, We will not walk therein*—If they did not say so in express words, yet such was the language of their actions: though the prophets had directed them into the right way, and though they knew others had experienced it to be so, yet they would not be persuaded to walk in it, but deliberately refused the blessings offered them. *Also I set watchmen over you*—I gave you prophets, as so many watchmen, to warn you of the evils that threatened you. And they faithfully discharged their duty, admonishing you of your sins, and giving you faithful warning of the judgments they would bring upon you; *saying, Hearken to the sound of the trumpet*—That is, to the warning given you of approaching danger. It was customary, in those days and countries, to have continually watchmen placed on high towers, or on hills, who observed the country all round, to prevent any sudden hostile invasion, by giving early notice of any appearance thereof by sound of trumpet. “So the prophets, who were the observers of the manners of the people, and who had early notice from God what evils were coming, unless prevented by repentance and amendment of life, are called watchmen.”

Verses 18, 19. *Therefore hear, ye nations*—The very heathen are called upon to take notice of these threatenings and denunciations of God’s wrath against the Jews, lest they should think that the calamities which were soon to fall upon that people had happened by chance, and not by the appointment of that God whom they had dishonoured and refused to obey; *and know, O congregation*—Of Israel, namely, the general assembly of the people at Jerusalem; *what is among them*—Rather, *what I have decreed against them*. God would have all the world to know that the judgments which were coming on the Jews had been foretold by him, and inflicted for the punishment of their sins. *Hear, O*

21 Therefore thus saith the LORD, A. M. 3392.  
Behold, I will lay stumbling-blocks be- B. C. 612.  
fore this people, and the fathers and the sons together shall fall upon them; the neighbour and his friend shall perish.

22 Thus saith the LORD, Behold, a people cometh from the <sup>o</sup> north country, and a great nation shall be raised from the sides of the earth.

23 They shall lay hold on bow and spear; they *are* cruel, and have no mercy; their voice <sup>d</sup> roareth like the sea; and they ride upon horses, set in array as men for war against thee, O daughter of Zion.

24 We have heard the fame thereof: our hands wax feeble: <sup>e</sup> anguish hath taken hold

<sup>a</sup> Isa. lx. 6.—<sup>b</sup> Chap. vii. 21.—<sup>c</sup> Chap. i. 15; v. 15; x. 22; l. 41, 43.—<sup>d</sup> Isaiah v. 30.—<sup>e</sup> Chapter iv. 31; xiii. 21; xlix. 24; l. 43.

*earth*—God’s people, meant, it seems, by the word *congregation*, in the former clause; and the heathen nations are justly equivalent to the earth. *Behold, I will bring evil upon this people*—The Chaldean army, with all the direful effect of it; *even the fruit of their thoughts*—They may thank themselves for what is coming upon them, being the fruit of their contrivances and sinful imaginations. As they have sown, so shall they reap. They thought to strengthen themselves by their alliances with foreigners, which they formed independent of me, and in opposition to my express prohibition, and by having recourse to various species of idolatry, and other superstitions; and these very things will bring ruin upon them.

Verse 20. *To what purpose—incense from Sheba?*—Sheba was a part of Arabia Felix, and famous for its spices and perfumes, Isa. ix. 6. Here the prophet reproves the hypocrisy of the Jews, who sought to cover their inward corruption by the external shows of religion; which the prophets often declare to be of no value, when they do not proceed from a devout mind. See chap. vii. 21, 22; Isa. i. 11. *And the sweet cane from a far country*—Respecting which, see on Isa. xliii. 24. *A far country* seems equivalent with Sheba before mentioned, whose queen is said, Matt. xii. 42, to have come *from the uttermost parts of the earth*, namely, from the southern extremity of the peninsula of Arabia, which, with respect to Judea, was a far country, and at the extreme parts of the earth, or bordering upon the ocean on the south.

Verses 21–26. *Behold, I will lay stumbling-blocks before this people*—I will suffer such things to be laid in their way as shall be the occasion of their destruction. Or, I will bring calamities upon them, by which they shall fall. *The neighbour and his friend shall perish*—Men of all sorts and conditions. *Behold, a people cometh, &c.*—The Chaldeans are here again described, as in chap. v. 15; a

A. M. 3392. of us, and pain, as of a woman in  
B. C. 612. travail.

25 Go not forth into the field, nor walk by the way; for the sword of the enemy and fear is on every side.

26 ¶ O daughter of my people, 'gird thee with sackcloth, ' and wallow thyself in ashes: ' make thee mourning, as for an only son,

† Chapter iv. 8.—‡ Chapter xxv. 34; Mic. i. 10.—‡ Zech. xii. 10.

distant nation, violent, cruel, armed with bows and spears, and well mounted. *A great nation from the sides of the earth*—Or rather, from the coasts, ends, or extremities of the earth, as Dr. Waterland reads it. *Their voice roareth like the sea*—The shouts of hostile armies are fitly compared to the waves of the sea, which dash upon the shores with a great noise. *And they ride upon horses*—Of which there was a great scarcity in Judea, which was one reason that induced the Jews to enter into alliances with Egypt, that they might be furnished with horses from thence. *We have heard the fame thereof*—The prophet personates the people, and describes the very great consternation which Judah and Jerusalem should be in, upon the approach of this formidable enemy. *Our hands wax feeble*—We have no heart to make any resistance; *anguish hath taken hold of us*—We are in an extremity of pain, like that of a woman in travail. *Go not forth into the fields, &c.*—Thus he expresses the great danger that would be everywhere. *O daughter of my people, &c.*—Here the prophet calls upon them to lament the desolations that were coming upon them; as if he had said, Hear thy God calling thee to weeping and mourning, and answer his call. *Gird thee with sackcloth*—Not only put on sackcloth for a day, but gird it on thee to be worn constantly. *Wallow thyself in ashes*—Lie down among them; use all the tokens of the deepest mourning, and most bitter lamentation; and that not forced, and for show, but with the greatest sincerity, as parents mourn for an only son, and think themselves comfortless because they are childless. The expression, *as for an only son*, was proverbial among the Jews, to denote the greatest grief. *For the spoiler shall suddenly come upon us*—Though he is not come yet, he is coming; the decree is gone forth, let us therefore meet the execution of it with a suitable sadness.

Verse 27. *I have set thee for a tower, &c.*—According to this reading, God speaks here by way of encouragement to the prophet, and tells him he had made him a fortified tower, that he might be safe, notwithstanding all the attempts of the wicked against him. But Lowth, with some others, thinks that "the sense would be plainer if the words were translated thus: *I have set thee (in) a watch-tower, and (in) a fortress*," that is, God tells the prophet that he hath placed him as a watchman in a high tower, or fortress, to take an account of the people's behaviour, and to warn them accordingly. *That thou mayest know and try their way*—That is,

most bitter lamentation: for the spoiler shall suddenly come upon us.

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27 I have set thee for a tower and <sup>i</sup> a fortress among my people, that thou mayest know and try their way.

28 <sup>k</sup> They are all grievous revolters, <sup>l</sup> walking with slanders: they are <sup>m</sup> brass and iron; they are all corrupters.

<sup>i</sup> Chapter i. 18; xv. 20.—<sup>k</sup> Chapter v. 23.—<sup>l</sup> Chapter ix. 4.  
<sup>m</sup> Ezek. xxii. 18.

their actions and manners, and how they stand affected toward God and his word; that thou mayest bring their whole conduct under thy strict observation and scrutiny, as refiners do metals. Hereby the prophet is encouraged to reprove them more freely, and with authority, because God promises to defend him from injury, and would give him prudence to see what was amiss, and undauntedness to oppose it. It may be proper to observe here, that this latter clause of the verse favours the sense in which the LXX. and the Vulgate have taken the preceding clause. They render the word *בִּטוֹן*, which we translate a tower, *δοκιμαστήριον, probatorem, a prover, or trier*, which Blaney interprets thus: "*I have appointed thee the office of an assay-master among my people, as to the gold thereof*; that is, to try what is in them of genuine worth and excellence, which, like pure gold, will stand the utmost test." Dr. Dodd considers the passage in the same light, observing, "The prophet in these verses evidently takes his ideas from metals, and the trial of them; and the verbs in the latter clause of this verse, referring to such trial, manifestly require something corresponding in the preceding part. But what has a tower and fortress to do with the trying of metals? In this view the reader will agree with me, that the passage is rendered much more properly in some of the versions, and indeed more agreeably to the Hebrew, *I have given, or established, thee as a strong prover, or trier of metals among my people that thou mightest know, &c.*"

Verses 28, 29. *They are all grievous revolters*—Obstinate and refractory; *walking with slanders*—Making it their business to detract from thee and the other prophets. Blaney translates the clause, *They are all of them the dross of revolters, passing with a fraudulent currency*; an interpretation for which he assigns plausible reasons. *They are brass and iron*—They have basely degenerated. It appears, upon trial, that they have nothing in them of the purity of silver or gold, but their impudence resembles brass, and their obstinacy iron. *They are all corrupters*—Hebrew, *כְּשֹׁרֵי אֵם, corrupting, or adulterating*; or, as Blaney renders it, *instruments of adulteration*, alluding to brass and iron, or any base metals, being used to adulterate the pure silver. *The bellows are burned, &c.*—All methods to purify and amend them are ineffectual. All the expressions to the end of the chapter are metaphorical. *The lead is consumed of the fire*—Before the use of quicksilver was known, the refiners used lead to

A. M. 3392. 29 The bellows are burned, the lead is  
B. C. 612. consumed of the fire; the founder melteth  
in vain: for the wicked are not plucked away.

<sup>a</sup> Isa. i. 22.

separate the silver from the other substances mixed with it. Thus Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, lib. xxxi. sec. 31, "Excoqui (argentum) non potest, nisi cum plumbo nigro, aut cum vena plumbi." *The founder melteth in vain*—Or, as Houbigant reads it, *heapeth up fire in vain*. For the wicked are not plucked away—Or rather, *The dross of iniquity is not purged away*. The word רעים, meaning here, it seems, the base ingredients among the metals; that is, the bad principles and habits, which prevailed so much, and ad-

30 <sup>a</sup> Reprobate <sup>b</sup> silver shall men A. M. 3392.  
call them, because the LORD hath re- B. C. 612.  
jected them.

<sup>a</sup> Or, refuse silver.

hered so closely, that all endeavours and pains used to purge them away and get clear of them proved ineffectual; so that, as it follows in the next verse, nothing remained but to throw them aside, as metal disallowed, and cried down by authority; counterfeiting silver, but not capable of being brought to the sterling standard. See Blaney. In other words: As base money is refused by every one, because it cannot bear the touchstone; so should these hypocrites and evil-doers be rejected both by God and man.

## CHAPTER VII.

A new prophecy begins here, and is continued on to the end of the 10th chapter. In it the prophet inveighs against the vices of Judah and Jerusalem, particularly their hypocrisy, and false confidence in their religious principles and ceremonies; delivering also some threats against Edom, Moab, Ammon, and the people of Arabia. See chap. ix. 26. In this chapter he, (1.) Shows them, that while they continued in their sins, unreformed, practising injustice, oppression, murder, perjury, and idolatry, their having God's temple and ordinances among them would do them no service, 1-11. (2.) Warns them that, for their obstinacy, God would quickly render Jerusalem and Judea as desolate as Shiloh was, where the tabernacle long continued, and as the land of Israel, 12-15. (3.) Forbids Jeremiah to pray for them, because they were so set on idolatry, 16-20. (4.) Declares that none of their sacrifices would be regarded while they continued disobedient to the common laws of morality, 21-28. (5.) Denounces utter desolation, on account of their idolatries and impieties; and threatens to multiply their slain as they had multiplied their sins, 29-31.

A. M. 3404. THE word that came to Jeremiah  
B. C. 600. from the LORD, saying,

2 <sup>a</sup> Stand in the gate of the LORD's house,  
and proclaim there this word, and say, Hear the

word of the LORD, all ye of Judah, A. M. 3404.  
that enter in at these gates to worship B. C. 600.  
the LORD.

3 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of

<sup>a</sup> Chapter xxvi. 2.

### NOTES ON CHAPTER VII.

Verse 1. *The word of the Lord, &c.*—The date of this new sermon is not precisely marked, but it is probable it was delivered not long after the preceding one, and on the following occasion. "Besides the prophets who were commissioned to announce the approaching calamities of Judah and Jerusalem, there were others who took upon themselves to flatter the people with opposite predictions. They taught them to look upon such threats as groundless, since God, they said, would have too much regard to his own honour, to suffer his temple to be profaned, and the seat of his holiness to be given up into the hand of strangers. Jeremiah is therefore commanded openly to reprove the falsehood of these assertions, and to show, by an example in point, that the sanctity of the place would afford no security to the guilty; but that God would assuredly do by his house at Jerusalem what he had done unto Shiloh; and cast the people of Judah out of his sight as he had already cast off the people of Israel for their wickedness."—Blaney.

Verse 2. *Stand in the gates of the Lord's house*—Namely, the east gate of the temple, which led directly to it, where he delivered this discourse, before all the people who entered there. *And proclaim there this word*—*Proclaiming* signifies both the authority by which he spake, and the divulging of what he spake plainly and boldly. And as it was in so public a place, namely, at the entrance of the court of the people, not of that of the priests, that he uttered this prophecy, so possibly it might be at one of the three feasts, when all the males from all parts of the country were to appear before the Lord in the courts of his house. In that case he would have many collected together to preach to, and that was the most seasonable time to admonish them not to trust in their privileges.

Verse 3. *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel*—As creatures, we are all bound to regard the Lord of hosts; as members of the visible church, the God of Israel; what he said to them he says to us; and it is much the same with that which John the Baptist said to those whom he baptized,

A. M. 3404. Israel, <sup>b</sup> Amend your ways and  
B. C. 600. your doings, and I will cause you to  
dwell in this place.

4 <sup>c</sup> Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The  
temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD,  
The temple of the LORD, are these.

5 For if ye thoroughly amend your ways and  
your doings; if ye thoroughly <sup>d</sup> execute judg-  
ment between a man and his neighbour;

6 *If* ye oppress not the stranger, the father-  
less, and the widow, and shed not innocent

blood in this place, <sup>e</sup> neither walk  
after other gods to your hurt;

7 <sup>f</sup> Then will I cause you to dwell in this  
place, in <sup>g</sup> the land that I gave to your fathers,  
for ever and ever.

8 ¶ Behold, <sup>h</sup> ye trust in <sup>i</sup> lying words, that  
cannot profit.

9 <sup>k</sup> Will ye steal, murder, and commit adul-  
tery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto  
Baal, and <sup>l</sup> walk after other gods whom ye  
know not;

<sup>b</sup> Chapter xviii. 11; xxvi. 13.—<sup>c</sup> Mic. iii. 11.—<sup>d</sup> Chapter  
xxii. 3.—<sup>e</sup> Deut. vi. 14; viii. 19; xi. 28; Chapter xiii. 10.  
<sup>f</sup> Deut. iv. 40.

<sup>g</sup> Chapter iii. 18.—<sup>h</sup> Verse 4.—<sup>i</sup> Chapter v. 31; xiv. 13.  
<sup>k</sup> 1 Kings xviii. 21; Hos. iv. 1; Zeph. i. 5.—<sup>l</sup> Exodus xx. 3;  
Verse 6.

Matt. iii. 8, 9. *Bring forth fruits meet for repentance, and think not to say, within yourselves, We have Abraham for our father. Amend your ways and your doings*—This implies that there had been much amiss in their ways and doings, but it was a great instance of the goodness of God to them, that he gave them liberty to amend, showed them wherein and how they must amend, and promised to accept them upon their amendment. *And I will cause you to dwell in this place*—Namely, quietly and peaceably. You shall not go into captivity, but a stop shall be put to that which threatens your expulsion. Observe, reader, reformation is the only way, and a sure way to prevent ruin.

Verse 4. *Trust ye not in lying words*—Do not flatter yourselves with an opinion that you can be safe and happy on any other terms than those which God points out. *Saying, The temple of the Lord, &c., are these*—As much as to say, God hath placed his name here, verse 10, and chose these stately buildings as the place of his peculiar residence, and what reason is there to believe that he will ever forsake it, and give it up to be destroyed by strangers and idolaters? Thus, chap. xviii. 18, they express their confidence that *the law would not perish from the priests, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet*. And Micah iii. 11, they are said to *lean on the Lord*, saying, *Is not the Lord among us? No evil can come upon us*. These were the lying words on which they trusted, and against trusting in which the prophet here solemnly cautions them. The Targum intimates that the reason of the three-fold repetition of the words, *The temple of the Lord*, was, because every Jew was obliged to visit the temple thrice a year. But it seems more likely that they are thus repeated, to express the confident and reiterated boasts of the temple, which were in the people's mouths, and their extreme vehemence and unreasonable presumption.

Verses 5-7. *For if ye thoroughly amend your ways, &c.*—In these verses the prophet tells them particularly what the amendment was which was necessary that they might escape destruction. It must be a thorough amendment, a universal, continued, persevering reformation; not partial, but en-

tire; not hypocritical, but sincere; not wavering, but constant. They must *make the tree good, and so make the fruit good*; must amend their hearts and thoughts, and so amend their ways and doings. In particular, 1st, They must be honest and just in all their dealings. They who had power in their hands must *thoroughly execute judgment* between a man and his neighbour, without partiality. They must not, either in judgment, or in matters of contract, *oppress the stranger, the fatherless, or the widow*—Nor countenance or protect those that did oppress them, nor refuse to do them right when they sought for it. They must *not shed innocent blood*—And with it defile the temple, the city, and the land wherein they dwelt. 2d, They must keep close to the worship of the true God only, neither walking after other gods, nor hearkening to those that would draw them into communion with idolaters. *Then will I cause you to dwell in this place, &c.*—Upon this condition I will establish and fix you in this land *for ever and ever*—That is, from age to age, and you shall possess it, as your fathers did before you, from the days of Joshua until now.

Verses 8-11. *Behold, ye trust in lying words*—Uttered by your false prophets, who promise you peace, and sooth you up in your impenitence. *Will ye steal, murder, &c.*—Jeremiah does not charge them with the transgression of the ritual law of Moses, but with the breach of the weightier matters of the moral law. Thus the prophets showed the Jews a more excellent way of serving God than by relying upon external ceremonies of their worship, which might have prepared their minds for the reception of the gospel. *And come and stand before me, &c.*—Will ye be guilty of the vilest immoralities, even such as the common interest, as well as the common sense, of mankind must reprobate? *Will ye swear falsely?*—A crime which all nations have always held in abhorrence? *Will ye burn incense to Baal?*—A dunghill deity, that sets up as a rival with the great Jehovah; and, not content with that, will you *walk after other gods too, whom ye know not*—And by all these crimes put a daring affront upon the Lord of hosts? Will you exchange a God, of whose power and goodness you

A. M. 3392. 29 The bellows are burned, the lead is consumed of the fire; the founder melteth in vain: for the wicked are not plucked away.

Isa. i. 22.

separate the silver from the other substances with it. Thus Pliny, Nat. Hist., lib. xxxi. "Excoqui (argentum) non potest, nisi cum nigro, aut cum vena plumbi." The founder in vain—Or, as Houbigant reads it, heo. in vain. For the wicked are not plucked rather, The dross of iniquity is not. The word בָּרָא, meaning here, it separates the ingredients among the metals; the scales and habits, which prevail.

30

Now unto my place Shiloh, where I set the first, and see what because ye have LORD, and I and speak

iii. 31.—; Cha

vc

The People who...

A new prophecy begins: Judah and Jerusalem also some...

Shows them, idolatry, the for their continu... 16-20... of... you should say, We are delivered to do all these... in so many words, yet their actions spoke it aloud. God had many times delivered them, as they could not but acknowledge, and had been a present help to them when otherwise they must have perished. By these means he designed to bring them to himself; by his goodness to lead them to repentance; but they, resolving notwithstanding to persist in their abominations, said, in effect, in direct contradiction to God's true intent, in showing them this kindness, that he had delivered them to put them again into a capacity of rebelling against him. Will ye, says the prophet, interpret the deliverances God hath formerly vouchsafed you, as so many licenses to commit new crimes? Or, do you think, when you offer your propitiatory sacrifices, that they will wipe away the guilt of all your past offences, and that you may securely return to your former wicked practices, having such a certain and easy method of obtaining pardon? Is this house, &c., become a den of robbers in your eyes?—Do you think it was built, not only to be a rendezvous of, but a place of shelter to, the vilest malefactors; who perform an outward service to me there, that they may continue the more securely in their sins? Mark well, reader, those that think to excuse themselves in unchristian practices, with the Christian name, and sin the more boldly and securely, because there is a sin-offering provided, do in effect make God's house of prayer a den of thieves; as the priests did in Christ's time, Matt. xxi. 13. But could they thus impose upon God? no, Behold, I have seen it, saith the Lord—Have seen the real iniquity through the counterfeit and dissem-

But go ye now... where, upon the first... into Canaan, the tabernacle, in which... ark of God's presence, was set up; and there continued for a long space of time, even until the death of Samuel. It was during this period that the Israelites, as a punishment of the iniquitous and scandalous lives of the priests and people, received that signal defeat from the Philistines, when the ark of God was taken, as related 1 Sam. iv. 10, &c., the pathetic description of which disaster, given by the psalmist, Psa. lxxviii. 60-64, has caused it to be generally believed, that an allusion to it was likewise designed here by Jeremiah. "But a due consideration of the context," Blaney thinks, "will lead us rather to conclude that the prophet refers to a more recent event, the vestiges of which were still fresh to be seen. Shiloh was in the tribe of Ephraim, and this place, once so favoured and sanctified by God's particular residence, had shared the fate of the rest of the kingdom of Israel, and was become a scene of misery and ruin. This they might literally go and see at present; and this, says God, have I done because of the wickedness of my people Israel. In which words Israel, meaning the ten tribes, is acknowledged to have been God's people no less than Judah; and Shiloh, it is observed, had once enjoyed the same privileges, which now belonged to the temple at Jerusalem. But as God spared not Shiloh, but made it the victim of his wrath, so he says he would do to Jerusalem and her temple; and would cast off Judah for their wickedness from being his people, in like manner as he had already cast off their brethren, whom he distinguishes by the name of the children of Ephraim."

Verses 13-15. And now, because ye have done all these works—Either the same, or as bad, or worse than Israel did when the tabernacle was at Shiloh; and particularly those mentioned verse 9. And I spake unto you, rising up early, &c.—A metaphor taken from persons who, being diligent in their business, are wont to rise up early; as if he had said, I not only spoke to you by my prophets, but they, in my name, made all possible haste, and used all possible diligence to reclaim you, continually and carefully preventing you with remonstrances; employing with all possible attention severity and softness, promises and threats; but all to no purpose. Therefore, &c



A. M. 3404. LORD: *do they not provoke themselves to the confusion of their own faces?* B. C. 600.

20 Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Behold, mine anger and my fury shall be poured out upon this place, upon man, and upon beast, and upon the trees of the field, and upon the fruit of the ground; and it shall burn, and shall not be quenched.

21 ¶ Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; <sup>f</sup> Put your burnt-offerings unto your sacrifices, and eat flesh.

22 <sup>g</sup> For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, <sup>h</sup> concerning burnt-offerings or sacrifices:

23 But this thing commanded I them, saying, <sup>i</sup> Obey my voice, and <sup>j</sup> I will be your God, and ye shall be my people: and walk ye in all the

<sup>f</sup> Isaiah i. 11; Chapter vi. 26; Amos v. 21; Hosea viii. 13. <sup>g</sup> 1 Sam. xv. 22; Psa. li. 16, 17; Hos. vi. 6.—<sup>h</sup> Heb. *concerning the matter of*.—<sup>i</sup> Exod. xv. 26; Deut. vi. 3; Chap. xi. 4, 7. <sup>j</sup> Exod. xix. 5; Lev. xxvi. 12.—<sup>k</sup> Psa. lxxxii. 11; Chap. xi. 8. <sup>l</sup> Deut. xxix. 19; Psa. lxxxii. 12.

Verse 20. *Therefore thus saith the Lord*—And what he saith he will not unsay, nor can all the world withstand its execution. Hear it therefore and tremble. *Behold, mine anger and my fury shall be poured out upon this place*—As the flood of waters was poured upon the old world, or the shower of fire and brimstone upon Sodom; since they will provoke me, let them feel the effects of their conduct. They shall soon find, 1st, That there is no escaping this deluge of wrath, either by fleeing from it, or fencing against it. It shall be poured out on *this place*—Though it be a holy place, the Lord's house. It shall reach both *man and beast*—Like the plagues of Egypt; and, like some of them, shall destroy the *trees of the field and the fruit of the ground*—Which they had designed and prepared for Baal, and of which they had made *cakes to the queen of heaven*. They shall find, 2d, That there is no extinguishing it: *it shall burn and shall not be quenched*—Prayers and tears, forms and ceremonies of worship, and ritual observances of whatever kind, shall then avail nothing, to prevent that total destruction which it shall produce.

Verses 21–23. *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel*—And let Israel hear when their God speaks—*Put your burnt-offerings unto your sacrifices, and eat flesh*—The burnt-offerings, after they were flayed, were to be consumed wholly upon the altar, Lev. i. 9; whereas, in the sacrifices of the peace-offerings, only the fat was to be burned upon the altar; part of the remainder belonging to the priests, and the rest being the portion of the offerer, to be eaten with his friends in a kind of religious feast. But here the prophet tells the Jews that they

ways that I have commanded you, A. M. 3404. that it may be well unto you. B. C. 600.

24 <sup>k</sup> But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, but <sup>l</sup> walked in the counsels *and* in the <sup>m</sup> imagination of their evil heart, and <sup>n</sup> went <sup>o</sup> backward, and not forward.

25 Since the day that your fathers came forth out of the land of Egypt unto this day, I have even <sup>p</sup> sent unto you all my servants the prophets, <sup>q</sup> daily rising up early and sending *them*:

26 <sup>r</sup> Yet they hearkened not unto me, nor inclined their ear, but <sup>s</sup> hardened their neck: <sup>t</sup> they did worse than their fathers.

27 Therefore <sup>u</sup> thou shalt speak all these words unto them; but they will not hearken to thee: thou shalt also call unto them; but they will not answer thee.

28 But thou shalt say unto them, This is a nation that obeyeth not the voice of the LORD

<sup>k</sup> Or, *stubbornness*.—<sup>l</sup> Heb. *were*.—<sup>m</sup> Chap. ii. 27, 32, 33; Hosea iv. 16.—<sup>n</sup> 2 Chron. xxxvi. 15; Chap. xxv. 4; xxix. 19. <sup>o</sup> Verse 13.—<sup>p</sup> Verse 24; Chapter xi. 8; xvii. 23; xxv. 3. <sup>q</sup> Nehemiah ix. 17, 29; Chapter xix. 15.—<sup>r</sup> Chapter xvi. 12. <sup>s</sup> Ezekiel ii. 7.

may eat the flesh of their burnt-offerings as well as that of their peace-offerings; that he was equally regardless of the one and the other, and would have nothing to do with them; and that he would never accept offerings from people of so disobedient and refractory a disposition; that to be acceptable to him they must be presented with an humble and obedient mind. "This leads plainly to the interpretation of the next verses, which are by no means to be taken separately, as if God had not required burnt-offerings and sacrifices at all; but that he did not insist so much upon them as on obedience to the commands of the moral law; or, at least, that the former derived all their efficacy from the latter." See note on 1 Sam. xv. 22. "Sacrifices," says Dr. Waterland, on this passage, "which were but part of duty, are here opposed to entire and universal obedience. Now the thing which God required, and chiefly insisted upon, was universal righteousness, and not partial obedience, which is next to no obedience, because not performed upon a true principle of obedience. God does not deny that he had required sacrifices: but he had primarily and principally required obedience, which included sacrifices and all other instances of duty as well as that: and he would not accept of such lame service as those sacrifices amounted to; for that was paying him part only in lieu of the whole. Or we may say, that sacrifices, the *out-work*, are here opposed to *obeying God's voice*; that is, the shadow is opposed to the substance, *apparent duty* to real hypocrisy, and empty show to sincerity and truth. Sacrifices separate from true holiness, or from a sincere love of God, were not the service which God required; for hypocritical services are

A. M. 3404. their God, <sup>6</sup> nor receiveth <sup>6</sup> correction :  
B. C. 600. <sup>a</sup> truth is perished, and is cut off from  
their mouth.

29 ¶ <sup>a</sup> Cut off thy hair, O Jerusalem, and cast it away, and take up a lamentation on high places; for the LORD hath rejected and forsaken the generation of his wrath.

30 For the children of Judah have done evil in my sight, saith the LORD: <sup>7</sup> they have set their abominations in the house which is called by my name, to pollute it.

31 And they have built the <sup>a</sup> high places of Tophet, which is in the valley of the son of

Hinnom, to <sup>a</sup> burn their sons and their daughters in the fire; <sup>b</sup> which I commanded *them* not, neither <sup>7</sup> came it into my heart.

32 ¶ Therefore, behold, <sup>c</sup> the days come, saith the LORD, that it shall no more be called Tophet, nor The valley of the son of Hinnom, but The valley of Slaughter: <sup>d</sup> for they shall bury in Tophet, till there be no place.

33 And the <sup>e</sup> carcasses of this people shall be meat for the fowls of the heaven, and for the beasts of the earth; and none shall fray *them* away.

<sup>1</sup> Chap. v. 3; xxxii. 33.—<sup>2</sup> Or, instruction.—<sup>3</sup> Chap. ix. 3. <sup>4</sup> Job i. 20; Isaiah xv. 2; Chapter xvi. 6; xlviii. 37; Mic. i. 16. <sup>5</sup> 2 Kings xxi. 4, 7; 2 Chron. xxxiii. 4, 5, 7; Chapter xxiii. 11; xxxii. 34; Ezek. vii. 20; viii. 5; Dan. ix. 27.

<sup>a</sup> 2 Kings xxiii. 10; Chap. xix. 5; xxxii. 35.—<sup>b</sup> Psa. cvi. 38. <sup>c</sup> Deut. xvii. 3.—<sup>d</sup> Heb. came it upon my heart.—<sup>e</sup> Chap. xix. 6.—<sup>f</sup> 2 Kings xxiii. 10; Chap. xix. 11; Ezek. vi. 5.—<sup>g</sup> Deut. xxviii. 26; Psa. lxxxii. 2; Chap. xii. 9; xvi. 4; xxxiv. 20.

no services, but abominations in his sight: he expected, he demanded, religious devout sacrifices; while his people brought him only outside compliments, to flatter him; empty formalities, to affront and dishonour him. These were not the things which God *spoke of*, or *commanded*: the sacrifices he spake of were pure sacrifices, to be offered up with a clean and upright heart. Those he required, and those only he would accept of as real duty and service.”

Verse 29. *Cut off thy hair, O Jerusalem*—This was commonly practised in the time of great sorrow and mourning. And Jerusalem is here addressed as a woman in extreme misery, and exhorted to take upon her the habit and disposition of a mourner, and to bewail the calamities which were fallen upon her. But some have observed that the Hebrew word נור, which we translate barely the *hair*, signifies something more, namely, votive, or *Nazarite hair*; and they think the prophet alludes to the law concerning Nazarites, (Num. vi. 9,) whereby it was ordered that, if any one should die near them, they should immediately shave off their hair. They suppose, therefore, the sense here is, that so many would be killed in Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, that if there were any Nazarites in the city, they would be all obliged on that account to shave off their hair: by which is signified that a great number of the inhabitants would be slain. *And take up a lamentation on high places*—Or, *for the high places*, as some read it; namely, where they had worshipped their idols, and offered their sacrifices, there they must now bemoan their misery. Or the words may, as some suppose, be intended to signify the cries and lamentations of the watchmen, who were placed on high towers and on hills, to observe the country around; and who are represented as seeing, on this occasion, scenes of calamity and slaughter on every side, and continually fresh subjects of alarm. *For the Lord hath rejected the generation of his wrath*—This sinful generation, who have so highly provoked him. As God is said to *reject* or cast off his

people when he gives them up into the hands of their enemies, so he is said to *choose* them again at their restoration from captivity, Isa. xiv. 1.

Verses 30, 31. *They have set up their abominations, &c.*—They have set up images and altars for idolatrous worship even in my temple, and the courts near it. This seems to be spoken of what was done in the times of Manasseh, or Amon, 2 Kings xxi. 4, 7; 2 Chron. xxxiii. 4. *And they have built the high places of Tophet*—To burn their sons and their daughters in the fire. Concerning this unnatural and cruel custom of burning their children, by way of sacrifice to Moloch, which was derived from the Canaanites, see notes on Lev. xviii. 21; 2 Kings xxiii. 10; Isa. xxx. 33. *Which I commanded them not*—But, on the contrary, expressed the greatest detestation of it, and forbade it under the severest penalties: see Lev. xx. 1–5. The words are spoken by the figure called *meiosis*, by which a great deal less is expressed than is implied; a way of speaking frequent in Scripture. Thus, Deut. xvii. 3, God, speaking of the worship of the host of heaven, adds, *Which I have not commanded*, meaning, which I expressly forbade. So God, reproving the idolatry of the Jews, says, Isa. lxxv. 12, *They choose things wherein I delighted not*, that is, which I utterly abhorred. And Jeremiah (chap. ii. 8) calls idols, *things that do not profit*, meaning, that their worship was not only insignificant, but likewise extremely wicked and destructive. Thus St. Paul expresses the vilest sins, by calling them *things which are not convenient*, Rom. i. 28.

Verses 32–34. *It shall be no more called Tophet, but The valley of Slaughter*—King Josiah first of all defiled this place, as the text speaks, 2 Kings xxiii. 10; that is, polluted it by burying dead bodies in it, by casting filth into it, and scattering there the dust and ashes of the idols which he had broken to pieces and burned. And afterward, when great numbers died in the siege of Jerusalem, and the famine that followed upon it, it became a common burying-place of the Jews: see chap. xix. 6. Whereby was ful-

A. M. 3404. 34 Then will I cause to cease from  
B. C. 600. the cities of Judah, and from the streets  
of Jerusalem, the voice of mirth, and the voice

<sup>f</sup> Isa. xxiv. 7, 8; Ch. xvi. 9; xxv. 10; xxxiii. 11; Ezek. xxvi. 13;

filled that prophecy of Ezekiel, chap. vi. 5, *I will lay the dead carcasses of the children of Israel before their idols. They shall bury in Tophet till there be no place*—Till it be entirely filled, and there be no vacant place left. The Vulgate reads this clause, "They shall be buried in Tophet, because there shall be no place," which reading Houbigant approves. "The time shall come when there shall be so great a slaughter in Jerusalem, that, the graves being insufficient to bury the dead, they shall be forced to throw them into Tophet, and leave them without interment. This prediction received its last and perfect completion in the war of Nebuchadnezzar against the Jews, and that of the Romans against the same people. Josephus informs us, that in this latter war an infinite number of dead bodies were thrown over the walls, and left in the valleys round the city; insomuch, that Titus himself, beholding

of gladness, the voice of the bride- A. M. 3404.  
groom, and the voice of the bride: B. C. 600.  
for <sup>g</sup> the land shall be desolate.

Hos. ii. 11; Rev. xviii. 23.—<sup>g</sup> Lev. xxvi. 33; Isa. i. 7; iii. 26.

this spectacle, could not help lifting up his hands to heaven, and calling God to witness that he had no part in these inhuman practices." In chap. xix., Jeremiah "repeats the same threatenings with more latitude and force; declaring that Tophet shall become the *lay-stall* of Jerusalem, and that Jerusalem herself shall be reduced to the condition of Tophet; that is to say, polluted and filled with dead bodies." And in chap. xxxi. 40, he calls it *the valley of the dead bodies. Then will I cause to cease the voice of mirth, &c.*—All kinds and degrees of mirth shall cease, all places shall be filled with lamentation and wo, their singing shall be turned into sighing, and they shall lay aside all things that are for the comfort of human society. *The voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride*—Persons will have no encouragement to marry when they see nothing but ruin and desolation before their eyes.

## CHAPTER VIII.

*The prophet proceeds in this chapter both to magnify and to justify the destruction that God was bringing upon his people; to show how grievous it would be, and yet how righteous. (1.) He represents the judgments coming as being so very terrible, that, notwithstanding the infamy of their dead bodies being given to the fowls and beasts, many would prefer death to life, 1-3. (2.) He shows the astonishing stupidity and obstinacy of this people, who neither regarded God's oracles, providences, nor their own consciences, but, in the face of desolating judgments, persisted in their wicked practices, without fear or shame, 4-12. (3.) He describes the great confusion and consternation into which the invasion of the Chaldeans would thro' the whole land, 13-17. (4.) The prophet himself bitterly bewails their miserable and hopeless state, 18-22.*

A. M. 3404. **A**T that time, saith the LORD, they  
B. C. 600. shall bring out the bones of the  
kings of Judah, and the bones of his princes,  
and the bones of the priests, and the bones of  
the prophets, and the bones of the inhabitants  
of Jerusalem, out of their graves:

2 And they shall spread them before the sun,

<sup>a</sup> 2 Kings xxiii. 5; Ezek. viii. 16.—<sup>b</sup> Chap. xxii. 19.

### NOTES ON CHAPTER VIII.

Verses 1, 2. *At that time, &c.*—The first three verses of this chapter properly belong to the preceding, and ought not to have been separated from it. *They shall bring out the bones of the kings of Judah*—"The Chaldeans shall regard neither the living nor the dead. They shall put the living to death without remorse; and shall break open and defile the tombs of the dead, in hopes of finding riches deposited there. They shall cast them out of their sepulchres, and leave them upon the ground, without staying to collect them together, and replace them." We learn from Josephus (*Antiq.*, lib. 7, cap.

and the moon, and all the host of A. M. 3404.  
heaven, whom they have loved, and B. C. 600.  
whom they have served, and after whom they  
have walked, and whom they have sought, and  
<sup>a</sup> whom they have worshipped: they shall not  
be gathered, <sup>b</sup> nor be buried; they shall be for  
<sup>c</sup> dung upon the face of the earth.

<sup>e</sup> 2 Kings ix. 36; Psa. lxxxiii. 10; Chap. ix. 22; xvi. 4.

ult.) that King Solomon laid up vast treasures in his father's sepulchre, which remained untouched till the pontificate of Hyrcanus, who, on a public emergency, opened one of the cells, and took out at once three thousand talents of silver. And afterward Herod the Great opened another cell, out of which he also took considerable wealth. That it was no uncommon practice at the sacking of cities to open the monuments of the great, and scatter their bones abroad without concerning themselves to cover them again, the learned reader may see in Horace's 16th Epod. l. 13. *And they shall spread, or expose, them before the sun and the moon, &c.*—The idols which

A. M. 3404. 3 And <sup>d</sup> death shall be chosen rather than life by all the residue of them that remain of this evil family, which remain in all the places whither I have driven them, saith the LORD of hosts.

4 ¶ Moreover, thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the LORD; Shall they fall, and not arise? shall he turn away, and not return?

5 Why *then* is this people of Jerusalem <sup>o</sup> slidden back by a perpetual backsliding? <sup>f</sup> they hold fast deceit, <sup>g</sup> they refuse to return.

<sup>4</sup> Job iii. 21, 22; vii. 15, 16; Rev. ix. 6.—<sup>o</sup> Chapter vii. 24.  
<sup>f</sup> Chap. ix. 6.—<sup>g</sup> Chap. v. 3.

they have worshipped, but which shall not be able to help them in their misery. *Whom they have loved, served, walked after, sought, worshipped*—The prophet multiplies words to express their extraordinary zeal in the service of their idols, and to ridicule the folly and madness of their idolatry. *And they shall not be gathered, &c.*—The bones which shall be thus scattered about shall not be gathered again, or laid up in their sepulchres.

Verse 3. *And death shall be chosen rather than life*—Not through a lively and well-grounded hope of happiness in another life, but through an utter despair of any ease in this life. It denotes the extremity of misery, when men have no comfort left wherewith to alleviate their calamities, or render their lives tolerable. This appears by the next words to be spoken chiefly of the miseries which those should suffer who should survive the siege, and either flee or be carried captive into divers countries.

Verses 4-6. *Moreover, thou shalt say, &c.*—The prophet is here directed to set before the Jews the unreasonableness and folly of their impenitence, which was the thing that brought this ruin upon them. And he represents them as the most stupid and senseless people in the world, that would not be made wise by any of the methods which infinite wisdom took to bring them to a right mind. *Thus saith the Lord, Shall they fall and not arise?*—If men happen to make a false step and fall to the ground, do they not endeavour immediately to rise again? *Shall he*—Shall any traveller; *turn away*—Namely, out of his right road, and not return into it when he is informed of his error? *Why then is this people slidden back by a perpetual backsliding?*—Having fallen into sin, why do they not endeavour to rise again by repentance? Having missed their way, and being clearly shown that they have, why do they not correct their error and return into it? It is “an expostulation,” says Lowth, “implying that men are seldom so far gone in wickedness as not to be touched with some remorse for their evil doings, and make some general resolutions of amendment:” but the Jews were “guilty of one perpetual apostacy, as if they could deceive God by their hypocritical pretences, without taking any steps toward a reformation.” *They hold fast deceit, they refuse*

6 <sup>h</sup> I hearkened and heard, *but they* <sup>A. M. 3404.</sup> <sup>B. C. 600.</sup> spake not aright: no man repented him of his wickedness, saying, What have I done? every one turned to his course, as the horse rusheth into the battle.

7 Yea, <sup>i</sup> the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and <sup>k</sup> the turtle, and the crane, and the swallow, observe the time of their coming; but <sup>l</sup> my people know not the judgment of the LORD.

8 How do ye say, *We are wise,* <sup>m</sup> and the law

<sup>h</sup> 2 Pet. iii. 9.—<sup>i</sup> Isa. i. 3.—<sup>k</sup> Cant. ii. 12.—<sup>l</sup> Chap. v. 4, 5.  
<sup>m</sup> Rom. ii. 17.

*to return*—They have turned aside into a false way, a way in which they promise themselves prosperity, but which will bring them to ruin; their error is demonstrated to them, and yet they refuse to relinquish it: they hold it fast, and proceed forward to destruction. *I hearkened and heard, &c.*—These also are the words of God, expressing himself after the manner of men, who are wont to look and listen diligently after the things they are very desirous of. Thus God represents himself as waiting and looking continually to see marks of the people's repentance, that he might show them mercy, and avert his threatened judgments. *But they spake not aright*—I neither heard a word nor saw an action which manifested any sorrow for their apostacy, or any inclination to return to their duty and allegiance. *No man repented him, saying, What have I done?*—None of them did so much as take the first step toward repentance; they did not even examine into their conduct, and call themselves to an account for their actions. *Every one turned to his course, &c.*—Proceeded on in his accustomed way, committing all wickedness without restraint.

Verse 7. *Yea, the stork knoweth her appointed times*—Of going and returning; *the turtle and the crane, &c., the time of their coming*—The proper season for changing their climate. Taught by natural instinct, they change their quarters as the temper of the air alters, removing to a warmer climate when the winter approaches, and returning when the spring comes on; *but my people know not the judgment of the Lord*—Understand neither their duty nor their happiness; they apprehend not the meaning either of God's mercies or judgments, nor how to accommodate themselves to either so as to answer God's intention therein. They know not how to improve the seasons of grace which God affords them when he sends them his prophets; nor how to make use of the rebukes they are under when *his voice cries in the city*. They discern not the signs of the times, (Matt. xvi. 3,) nor are aware how God is dealing with them. They know not the law which God has prescribed them, though it be written both in their hearts and in their books.

Verse 8. *How do ye say, We are wise?*—As if he had said, These things considered, where is your wisdom? you see the very fowls of the air are not

A. M. 3404. of the LORD is with us? Lo, certainly  
B. C. 600. <sup>1</sup> in vain made he it; the pen of the  
scribes is in vain.

9 <sup>2</sup> The wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken: lo, they have rejected the word of the LORD; and <sup>3</sup> what wisdom is in them?

10 Therefore <sup>o</sup> will I give their wives unto others, and their fields to them that shall inherit them: for every one from the least even unto the greatest is given to <sup>p</sup> covetousness, from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealt eth falsely.

11 For they have <sup>q</sup> healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, <sup>r</sup> Peace, peace; when there is no peace.

<sup>1</sup> Or, the false pen of the scribes worketh for falsehood, Isa. x. 1. <sup>2</sup> Chap. vi. 15.—<sup>3</sup> Or, Have they been ashamed, &c.—<sup>4</sup> Heb. the wisdom of what thing.—<sup>5</sup> Deut. xxviii. 30; Chap. vi. 12; Amos v. 11; Zeph. i. 13.—<sup>6</sup> Isa. lvi. 11; Chap. vi. 13.

so stupid as you are. He speaks not merely to the princes and priests, but to the whole body of the people. And the law of the Lord is with us—They were wont to boast much of the law, as well as of the temple, chap. xviii. 18; Rom. ii. 17–23. Lo, certainly in vain made he it—For any use you make of it, you might as well have been without it. As if he had said, It is to no purpose for you to boast of your wisdom and skill in the knowledge of God's law, if you do not govern your lives by its directions; otherwise it was written and delivered to you in vain. The pen of the scribes is vain—Neither need it ever have been copied out by the scribes. "The title of scribe, as applied to the skill of transcribing or interpreting the law, is first given," in the Scriptures, "to Ezra, (Ezra vii. 6,) who was not merely a copier of the law, but likewise an explainer of the difficulties of it, Neh. viii. 1–13; and it is likely none made it their business to write copies of the law but those who were well versed in the study of it, which would best secure them from committing mistakes in their copies; hence the word, in the New Testament, signifies those who were learned in explaining the law, and answering the difficulties arising concerning the sense of it."—Lowth.

Verse 9. The wise men are ashamed—That is, they have reason to be so, who have not made a better use of their wisdom, and reduced their knowledge to practice. They are confounded and taken—All their wisdom has not served to keep them from those courses that will issue in their ruin. They shall be taken in the same snares that others of their neighbours, who have not pretended to so much wisdom, are taken in, and filled with the same confusion. Those that have more knowledge than others, and yet provide no better than others for their own souls, have reason to be ashamed. They have rejected the word of the Lord—They would not be governed or guided in their conduct by it,

12 Were they <sup>a</sup> ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore shall they fall among them that fall: in the time of their visitation they shall be cast down, saith the LORD.

13 ¶ <sup>4</sup> I will surely consume them, saith the LORD: there shall be no grapes <sup>4</sup> on the vine, nor figs on the <sup>5</sup> fig-tree, and the leaf shall fade; and the things that I have given them shall pass away from them.

14 Why do we sit still? <sup>x</sup> assemble yourselves, and let us enter into the defenced cities, and let us be silent there: for the LORD our God hath put us to silence, and given us <sup>y</sup> water of <sup>5</sup> gall to drink, because we have sinned against the LORD.

<sup>4</sup> Chap. vi. 14.—<sup>5</sup> Ezek. xiii. 10.—<sup>6</sup> Chap. iii. 3; vi. 15. <sup>7</sup> Or, in gathering I will consume.—<sup>8</sup> Isa. v. 1, &c.; Joel i. 7. <sup>9</sup> Matt. xxi. 19; Luke xiii. 6, &c.—<sup>10</sup> Chap. iv. 5.—<sup>11</sup> Chap. ix. 15; xxiii. 15.—<sup>12</sup> Or, poison.

would not act as it directed them, nor comply with their duty as there set forth; and what wisdom is in them?—None to any purpose: none that will yield them comfort in life, support in death, or boldness at the day of final accounts: none that will be found to their praise when God shall bring every work into judgment, how much soever it may exalt them in their own opinion in the present world.

Verses 10–12. Therefore will I give their wives unto others—See on chap. vi. 12; and their fields to them that shall inherit, or possess, them—For the word inherit is sometimes taken for any sort of possession. See Psa. xxxii. 8. So Israel is called the Lord's inheritance, chap. x. 16, and elsewhere. The expression, however, implies that their fields should not only be taken possession of by the victorious Chaldeans, should be ravaged and stripped of their crops and cattle, but that these their enemies should possess their fields as their own, and acquire a property in them which they should transmit to their posterity. For every one is given to covetousness, &c.—For the elucidation of this and the two following verses, see notes on chap. vi. 13–15.

Verse 13. There shall be no grapes on the vine—A figurative expression, to signify that there should be none of them left. And the leaf shall fade, &c.—As both leaves and fruit wither and fade when a tree is blasted or killed, so will I utterly deprive this people of all the blessings I had given them, of those which are for use, as well as those which are for ornament.

Verses 14, 15. Let us enter into the defenced cities—In these verses the prophet seems to turn to and address his countrymen by way of apostrophe; and, as one of the people that dwell in the open towns, advises 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,

A. M. 3404. 15 We <sup>a</sup> looked for peace, but no  
B. C. 600. good came; and for a time of health,  
and behold, trouble!

16 The snorting of his horses was heard from  
<sup>a</sup> Dan; the whole land trembled at the sound  
of the neighing of his <sup>b</sup>strong ones: for they are  
come, and have devoured the land, and <sup>c</sup>all that  
is in it; the city, and those that dwell therein.

17 For behold, I will send serpents, cocka-

<sup>a</sup> Chap. xiv. 19.—<sup>b</sup> Chap. iv. 15.—<sup>c</sup> Judg. v. 22; Ch. xlvii. 3.  
<sup>d</sup> Heb. *the fulness thereof*.—<sup>e</sup> Psa. lviii. 4, 5; Eccles. x. 11.

who had already begun to ravage the country. By this the prophet signifies, that when the Chaldeans should come, there would be no hope of safety left but in fleeing to fortified places, and that none would dare to stay in the open country. He speaks of the thing as already present, because it was soon to happen, and it was represented to him, in his vision, as already present. *Let us be silent there, for the Lord hath put us to silence*—This may mean, that God had suffered the forces of the king of Judah to be so diminished that they were not able to defend the country and open towns, but must of necessity keep themselves cooped up in their fortified cities, and leave the country to be ravaged everywhere by the Chaldeans. *And given us water of gall to drink*—Hath brought us into grievous calamities for the punishment of our sins. *We looked for peace*—We were willing to believe the false prophets, who foretold prosperous times. *For a time of health*—Or, for a time in which we should be cured; that is, for a time of peace, in which we might recover our strength.

Verse 16. *The snorting of his horses was heard from Dan*—Dan was situated in the northern extremity of Palestine, on the side whence the Chaldeans were to come against Jerusalem. Accordingly, Grotius observes, after Jerome, that Nebuchadnezzar, having subdued Phenicia, passed through the tribe of Dan in his way to Judea. When the enemy therefore was advanced so near, it was time for the people of Judah to take the alarm, and to provide for their own safety. *The whole land trembled at the neighing of his strong ones*—The word אַבִּירֵי, here rendered *strong ones*, signifies *horses* in several places, and is so rendered here by Dr. Waterland, (see Judges v. 22; chap. xlvii. 3,) and is so understood by the LXX. By the whole land *trembling* is meant the inhabitants being terrified at the vast number of horses that were in the Chaldean army, the neighing of which they heard; which struck them with great dread, as they had few or no horses in Judea to oppose to them. *For they have devoured the land, and all that is in it*—All the fruits, and all the forage, they have devoured or taken away. It is to be observed, that the prophet speaks of it as already done, because it was so represented to him in his vision. *The city, and those that dwell therein*—Both town and country are laid waste before them, and not only the wealth, but the inhabitants of both

trices, among you, which *will not be* A. M. 3404.  
<sup>a</sup> charmed, and they shall bite you, B. C. 600.  
saith the LORD.

18 ¶ *When I would comfort myself against sorrow, my heart is faint* <sup>7</sup> in me.

19 Behold the voice of the cry of the daughter of my people <sup>8</sup> because of them that dwell in <sup>d</sup> a far country: *is not the LORD in Zion? is not her King in her? Why have they* <sup>e</sup> pro-

<sup>7</sup> Heb. *upon*.—<sup>8</sup> Heb. *because of the country of them that are far off*.—<sup>d</sup> Isa. xxxix. 3.—<sup>e</sup> Deut. xxxii. 21; Isa. i. 4.

are taken or destroyed. Jerusalem is here chiefly meant by *the city*, for, though the taking of other cities was attended with a slaughter of the inhabitants, the sacking of Jerusalem was the greatest of all their calamities, as being the metropolis, and the richest and most populous of all their cities.

Verse 17. *For behold, I send serpents, &c., which shall not be charmed*—Such enemies as you shall not be able to soften by any entreaties you can use. That some persons possessed the faculty of rendering serpents harmless, is a fact too well attested by historians and travellers to admit of contradiction: but by what means this effect was produced is not quite so clear. Pliny speaks of certain herbs which, being carried about, prevented the bite of serpents, *Nat. Hist.*, lib. xx. sec. 16, lib. xxii. sec. 25. Others tell surprising, but not altogether incredible stories, of the influence of musical sounds. See Shaw's *Travels*, p. 429; and Sir John Chardin's MS., cited by Harmer, chap. viii. 14. In this same MS. the author remarks, that "those who know how to tame serpents by their charms are wont commonly to break out their teeth; and supposes this to be alluded to, Psa. lviii. 6, *Break their teeth, O God, in their mouths*." But whatever were the methods commonly practised to charm serpents, the enemies of the Jews are here compared to such serpents as were not to be mollified nor disarmed by any of those means. *They shall bite you, saith the Lord*—See Blaney, and note on Psa. lviii. 5.

Verses 18, 19. *When I would comfort myself, &c.*—"When I would apply comfort to myself, my heart misgives me: I find great reason for my fears, and none for my hopes." Blaney translates the verse, *sorrow is upon me past my remedying; my heart within me is faint*. They seem to be the words of the prophet, who had endeavoured to comfort himself in his trouble by acquiescing in the will of God; but the miseries coming on his countrymen continually occurring to his mind in all their horrors and aggravations, deprived him of all comfort, and rendered him inconsolable. *Behold the voice of the cry*—The bitter cries and lamentations, which methinks I hear; *of the daughter of my people*—To whose welfare I cannot be indifferent; *because of them that dwell in a far country*—Namely, their enemies the Chaldeans, who were coming against them. But the words may be rendered more agreeably to the Hebrew thus, *The voice of the cry of the*

A. M. 3404. voked me to anger with their graven  
B. C. 600. images, *and* with strange vanities?

20 The harvest is past, the summer is ended,  
and we are not saved.

21 <sup>f</sup> For the hurt of the daughter of my peo-

<sup>f</sup> Chap. iv. 19; ix. 1; xiv. 17.—<sup>g</sup> Joel ii. 6; Nah. ii. 10.

daughter of my people from a land afar off. Compare Isa. xxxiii. 17, where the phrase in the original, ארץ כרחוקים, is the same. Thus interpreted, the words express the doleful complaints of the Jews in their state of captivity, as if God had quite forsaken and disowned them. In this light many commentators understand the prophet. He "anticipates," says Blaney, "in his imagination, the captivity of his countrymen in Babylon, a far country; and represents them there as asking, with a mixture of grief and astonishment, if there was no such being as JEHOVAH, who presided in Zion, that he so neglected his people, and suffered them to continue in such a wretched plight. Upon this complaint of theirs, God justly breaks in with a question on his part, and demands why, if they acknowledged such a protector as himself, they had deserted his service, and by going over to idols, with which they had no natural connection, had forfeited all title to his favour."

*Why have they provoked me to anger?*—Some translators, to render the sense more evident, supply here the words, *saieth God*; for it is evident that it is God, and not the prophet, who speaks here, telling them that their sins were the cause of his forsaking them; and that as they provoked him to anger by their idolatries, so he would no longer defend them.

Verse 20. *The harvest is past, &c.*—Here the prophet speaks again in the name of the people, or, rather, represents the people besieged in Jerusalem complaining on account of the length of the siege. Their false prophets had amused them with vain hopes of deliverance, and they had expected the Egyptians to come to their relief; but now the harvest and the summer were past, and yet there was no appearance of succour or deliverance coming to them. Jerusalem began to be besieged in the winter of the year, but was not taken till the end of the summer of the following year.

Verses 21, 22. *For the hurt of the daughter of my people am I hurt, &c.*—These are the words of the prophet, lamenting the miserable condition of his country. The Hebrew is more literally rendered, *For the breach of the daughter of my people am I broken*, that is, *heart-broken*: or, as Houbigant renders it, *I am wounded with the wound of my people. I am black*—I look ghastly, as those who are dying. *Astonishment hath taken hold on me*—I am so stupefied that I know not what to do, or which way to

ple am I hurt; I am <sup>g</sup> black; astonishment hath taken hold on me. A. M. 3404. B. C. 600.

22 *Is there* no <sup>h</sup> balm in Gilead; *is there* no physician there? *why then* is not the health of the daughter of my people <sup>i</sup> recovered?

<sup>h</sup> Gen. xxxvii. 25; xlvi. 11; Ch. xlvii. 11; li. 8.—<sup>i</sup> Heb. *gone up*.

turn. *Is there no balm in Gilead*—*Balm*, or *balsam*, is used with us as a common name for many of those oily, resinous substances, which flow spontaneously, or by incision, from certain trees or plants, and are of considerable use in medicine and surgery, being good, as physicians inform us, to soften, assuage, warm, dissolve, cleanse, dry up, and purge. The Hebrew word here used, צר, is rendered by the LXX., ρητινη, and interpreted *resin* by the ancients in general. For this *balm*, *resin*, or *turpentine*, as the word might be rendered, Gilead was famous from very ancient times. See Gen. xxxvii. 25, where we find Joseph was sold to Ishmaelite merchants, who came from Gilead, and carried it, with sweet spices, into Egypt. This made many physicians and surgeons to resort to Gilead. The prophet applies this metaphorically to the state of the Jews, which was all over corrupted, (compare Isa. i. 6,) and represents God as asking whether there have been no methods used to heal these mortal wounds and distempers? or, if there have, how it comes to pass they should have so little success? As if he had said, Whence comes it that the wounds of my people have not been healed and closed? Have means of healing been wanting? Spiritual medicines or physicians? Have I not sent you prophets, who have admonished, warned, and instructed you? Have I not given you time, and furnished you with helps sufficient to enable you to return to your duty? Why then are not your spiritual disorders cured? Doubtless it is your own fault: it is because you would not make use of the remedies provided, nor follow the prescriptions of the physicians. Thus we may apply the words spoken concerning Babylon, chap. li. 9, to the present case: *we would have healed Babylon, but she is not*, or rather, *she would not, be healed*. The words may likewise be understood of a temporal deliverance. As if he had said, Is this people so forsaken both of God and men, that there is no remedy left to effect their deliverance? Are there no salutary means within reach, or no persons that know how to apply them, for the relief of my country from those miseries with which it is afflicted? Observe, reader, if sinners die of their wounds, their blood is upon their own heads. The blood of Christ is balm in Gilead, his Spirit is the physician there: both are sufficient, all-sufficient, to effect a perfect cure; so that they might have been healed, but would not.

## CHAPTER IX.

Jeremiah continues his lamentation over the Jews; and, (1,) Expresses his great grief for the miseries impending over them, and his detestation of the sins which brought these miseries upon them, 1-11. (2,) He justifies God in the greatness of their approaching destruction, 9-16. (3,) He calls upon others to lament their miserable condition, 17-22. (4,) He shows them the folly and vanity of trusting in their own strength or wisdom, or the privileges of their circumcision, or any thing but God only, 23-26.

A. M. 3404.  
B. C. 600. O<sup>1</sup> THAT<sup>a</sup> my head were waters,  
and mine eyes a fountain of tears,  
that I might weep day and night for the slain  
of the daughter of my people!

2 O that I had in the wilderness a lodging-  
place of wayfaring men; that I might leave  
my people, and go from them! for<sup>b</sup> they

<sup>1</sup> Heb. *Who will give my head, &c.*—Isa. xxii. 4; Chap. iv. 19; xiii. 17; xiv. 17; Lam. ii. 11; iii. 48.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER IX.

Verse 1. *O that my head, &c.*—The prophet sympathizes with the calamities of his people, as before, chap. i. 19; viii. 21; and thereby excites them to a sense of their own misfortunes, that they might humble themselves under the mighty hand of God. The passage is a fine instance of the pathetic, wherein Jeremiah so much excels. *That I might weep day and night for the slain, &c.*—For the multitudes of his countrymen that he foresaw would fall by the sword of the Babylonians. When we hear of great numbers slain in battles and sieges, we ought not to make a light matter of it, but to be much affected with it; yea, though they be not of the daughter of our people—For of whatever people they are, they are of the same human nature with us; and there are so many precious lives lost, as dear to them as ours to us, and so many precious souls gone into eternity.

Verse 2. *O that I had in the wilderness, &c.*—The prophet here wishes that he had a lodging-place, or tent, such as travellers in this country were wont to lodge in when they travelled over the deserts, professing that he would rather pass his days in such a habitation in some desert place, than at Jerusalem, which was filled with wicked men. *That I may leave my people and go from them*—Not chiefly because of the ill usage he met with among them, but rather because his righteous soul was vexed from day to day, as Lot's was in Sodom, with the wickedness of their conversation, 2 Pet. iii. 7, 8. It made him even weary of his life to see them dishonouring God and destroying themselves. Time was when the place where God had chosen to put his name, there were the desire and delight of good men. David, in the wilderness, longed to be again in the courts of God's house; but now Jeremiah, in the courts of God's house, (for there he was when he said this,) wishes himself in a wilderness! Those have made themselves very vile and very miserable, that have made God's people and ministers weary of them, and desirous to get from among them. It may not be improper to observe here, that "travellers in the East are not, nor ever were, accommo-

be all adulterers, an assembly of A. M. 3404.  
treacherous men. B. C. 600.

3 And<sup>c</sup> they bend their tongues like their  
bow for lies: but they are not valiant for the  
truth upon the earth; for they proceed from  
evil to evil, and they<sup>d</sup> know not me, saith the  
LORD.

<sup>b</sup> Chap. v. 7, 8.—<sup>c</sup> Psa. lxxv. 3; Isa. lix. 4, 13, 15.—<sup>d</sup> 1 Sam. ii. 12; Hos. iv. 1.

dated at inns on the road, after the manner of the European nations. In some places indeed there are large public buildings provided for their reception, which they call *caravansaries*; but these afford merely a covering, being absolutely without furniture; and the traveller must carry his own provisions and necessaries along with him, or he will not find any. Nor are even these empty mansions always to be met with; so that if the weary traveller at night comes into a town where there is no *caravansary*, or *πανδοχείον*, as it is called Luke x. 34, he must take up his lodging in the street, unless some charitable inhabitant will be pleased to receive him into his house, as we find Judg. xix. 15. And if he passes through the desert, it is well for him if he can light upon a cave, or a hut, which some one before him may have erected for a temporary shelter. And this last is what I conceive to be here meant by מלון ארץ, a solitary and not very comfortable situation, but yet preferable to the chagrin of living continually in the society of men of profligate manners."—Blaney. *For they be all adulterers*—The expression seems here to be metaphorical, implying that they were apostates from God, to whose service they were engaged by the most solemn covenant, like that which obliges a wife to be faithful to her husband. See note on chap. ii. 2; and compare Matt. xvi. 4; James iv. 4.

Verse 3. *They bend their tongues like their bow*—With a great deal of craft, their tongues are fitted for lying, as a bow which is bent is for shooting. Thus the psalmist compares the tongue to a bow and words of calumny and falsehood to arrows, Psa. xlv. 3, 4. *But they are not valiant for the truth*—They use their tongues in defence of lies rather than of the truths of God; and, in the administration of justice, they have not courage to stand by an honest cause that has truth on its side, if greatness and power be on the other side. Truth is fallen in the land, and they dare not lend a hand to help it up, Isa. lix. 14, 15. *They proceed from evil to evil*—From one sin to another, and from one degree of sin to another. They every day grow more bold in their wickedness, because they escape punishment.

A. M. 3404. 4 \* Take ye heed every one of his  
B. C. 600. 2 neighbour, and trust ye not in any  
brother: for every brother will utterly sup-  
plant, and every neighbour will f walk with  
slanders.

5 And they will 3 deceive every one his neigh-  
bour, and will not speak the truth: they have  
taught their tongue to speak lies, and weary  
themselves to commit iniquity.

6 Thy habitation is in the midst of deceit;  
through deceit they refuse to know me, saith  
the LORD.

7 Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts,  
Behold, 8 I will melt them, and try them; h for  
how shall I do for the daughter of my people?

8 Their tongue is as an arrow shot out; it

\* Chap. xii. 6; Mic. vii. 5, 6.—<sup>3</sup> Or, friend.—<sup>f</sup> Chap. vi. 28.—<sup>2</sup> Or, mock.—<sup>4</sup> Isa. i. 25; Mal. iii. 3.—<sup>h</sup> Hos. xi. 8.  
<sup>1</sup> Psalm xii. 2; cxx. 3; Verse 3.—<sup>k</sup> Psalm xxviii. 3; lv. 21.  
<sup>l</sup> Heb. in the midst of him.—<sup>m</sup> Or, wait for him.

and they enrich themselves by their evil deeds, and so become formidable, defending and maintaining their wickedness by fresh acts of wickedness. *And they know not me, saith the Lord*—And where men have not the true knowledge of God, what but evil can be expected from them? Observe, reader, men's ignorance of God is the cause of all their bad conduct one toward another.

Verses 4-6. *Take ye heed every one of his neighbour*—Or, of his friend, as רעוּ rather signifies; of him who pretends friendship to him, or whom he has befriended. *And trust ye not in a brother*—Against whom you must stand as much upon your guard as if you were dealing with a stranger. *For every brother will utterly supplant*—Will deceive, overreach, and take all possible advantage of his nearest relation; *and every neighbour*—Or friend, rather, as before; *will walk with slanders*—Will not care what ill he says of another, though never so false. The Hebrew, רכיל יורר, is properly, *will go about as a detractor, or calumniator*, namely, carrying slanders with him from house to house. This is a strong description of the falsehood and calumny which universally prevailed among them. *And weary themselves to commit iniquity*—They are so inclined and enslaved to iniquity, that they not only commit it when they can do it easily, but when the commission of it is attended with difficulty; for they take more pains to carry on their ill designs than the practice of truth and integrity would cost them. *Thy habitation is in the midst of deceit*—That is, all about thee are addicted to it, therefore stand upon thy guard. They are God's words to the prophet. If all around us are false and deceitful, it concerns us to beware of them, and to be wise as serpents. *Through deceit they refuse to know me, saith the Lord*—"The knowledge of God, which is true religion, is incompatible with the practice of any wickedness. And therefore it is

speakeh<sup>1</sup> deceit: one speakeh<sup>2</sup> peace- A. M. 3404  
ably to his neighbour with his mouth, B. C. 600.  
but<sup>4</sup> in heart he layeth<sup>6</sup> his wait.

9 ¶<sup>1</sup> Shall I not visit them for these things? saith the LORD: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?

10 For the mountains will I take up a weeping and wailing, and<sup>m</sup> for the<sup>6</sup> habitations of the wilderness a lamentation, because they are<sup>7</sup> burned up, so that none can pass through them; neither can men hear the voice of the cattle: <sup>8</sup> both<sup>2</sup> the fowl of the heavens and the beast are fled; they are gone.

11 And I will make Jerusalem<sup>o</sup> heaps, and<sup>p</sup> a den of dragons; and I will make the cities of Judah<sup>9</sup> desolate, without an inhabitant.

<sup>1</sup> Chapter v. 9, 29.—<sup>m</sup> Chapter xii. 4; xxiii. 10; Hos. iv. 3.  
<sup>6</sup> Or, pastures.—<sup>7</sup> Or, desolate.—<sup>8</sup> Heb. from the fowl even to, &c.—<sup>2</sup> Chap. iv. 25.—<sup>9</sup> Isaiah xxv. 2.—<sup>p</sup> Isaiah xiii. 22; xxxiv. 13; Chap. x. 22.—<sup>3</sup> Heb. desolation.

natural enough for those that are resolved at all events to abide in their evil courses, to endeavour, if possible, to divest themselves of all religious principles, which, if insufficient to restrain, will be sure at least to be very troublesome to them."

Verses 7, 8. *Behold, I will melt them and try them*—I will cast them into the furnace of affliction, that I may purify them from their dross. See note on chap. vi. 29, 30, and on Isa. i. 25. *For how shall I do, &c.*—I have tried all other means, and they have proved ineffectual. *Their tongue is as an arrow, &c.*—It was compared to a bow bent, verse 3, plotting and preparing mischief; here it is *an arrow shot out*, putting in execution what they had projected. Dr. Waterland renders the words, *as a sharp, or killing arrow; it speakeh deceit*—They speak what they do not mean, that they may more easily deceive the credulous: they speak fair when they mean to destroy, as the next words explain it.

Verses 10, 11. *For the mountains will I take up a weeping*—"These words," says Houbigant, "as they now lie, must belong either to Jeremiah or the daughter of Zion; and yet it follows in the next verse, *And I will make*, which are the words of God: therefore this verse should be rendered, by a slight alteration of the text, 'Take ye up a weeping and wailing on the mountains, a lamentation in the dwellings of the wilderness; for they are desolate, because there is no traveller; nor is the voice of cattle heard in them; both the fowl of the heavens and the beast are fled.'" The prophet laments that general desolation which he sees coming upon the whole land, and which would involve all the parts of it, both high and low, in one common destruction. *I will make Jerusalem heaps*—Of rubbish, and lay it in such ruins that it shall be fit for nothing but to be *a den of dragons*—Or serpents, as the word תנינ frequently signifies, or such creatures as are usually found in ruins or desolate places.

A. M. 3404. 12 ¶ <sup>a</sup> Who is the wise man, that  
B. C. 600.

may understand this? and *who is he* to whom the mouth of the LORD hath spoken, that he may declare it, for what the land perisheth *and* is burned up like a wilderness, that none passeth through?

13 And the LORD saith, Because they have forsaken my law which I set before them, and have not obeyed my voice, neither walked therein;

14 But have <sup>r</sup> walked after the <sup>10</sup> imagination of their own heart, and after Baalim, <sup>s</sup> which their fathers taught them:

<sup>a</sup> Psalm cvii. 43; Hosea xiv. 9.—<sup>r</sup> Chapter iii. 17; vii. 24.  
<sup>s</sup> Or, *stubbornness*.—Gal. i. 14.—<sup>t</sup> Psa. lxxx. 5.—<sup>u</sup> Chap. viii. 14; xxiii. 15; Lam. iii. 15, 19.

Verses 12, 13. *Who is the wise man*—Or, *Is there not a wise man, who understands this?*—Is there none of you so well acquainted with the will of God and the methods of his providence, as to be able to declare the reasons why he has given such severe instances of his anger against this land? The question implies, that there are none, or very few, that consider common calamities in the cause of them, but rather impute the divine chastisements to chance, not seeing the hand of God in them. *And the Lord saith, Because they have forsaken my law, &c.*—Here God himself declares the reasons of his judgments by the mouth of his prophet.

Verses 15, 16. *I will feed them, &c., with wormwood*—See on Deut. xxix. 18. The word rendered *wormwood* here, it seems, had better be rendered *wolfsbane*, as signifying an herb which is not only bitter and nauseous, but also noxious. *And give them water of gall to drink*—Or *juice of hemlock*, as some read it; some other herb that is poisonous as well as distasteful. By these expressions is signified not only a scarcity of meat and drink, but the most grievous calamities. *I will scatter them also among the heathen*—They have been corrupted by their intimacy with heathen idolaters, with whom they mingled themselves, and whose works they learned, and now they shall lose themselves among those through whom they lost their virtue. *Whom neither they nor their fathers have known*—They set up gods to worship, which *they had not known*, strange gods, new gods, Deut. xxxii. 17; and now God will scatter them among those people whom *they had not known*, those with whom they can claim no acquaintance, and from whom therefore they can expect no favour. The nations to the east, beyond the Euphrates and Tigris, seem to be chiefly meant here, whom the Jews knew little or nothing of before they were carried into captivity among them. And from that time to this the Jews have been scattered among those people. They are now also scattered through almost all the nations of the earth; so that this prophecy has received its full accomplishment in the most literal sense; for they have indeed been scattered among

15 Therefore thus saith the LORD A. M. 3404  
of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, B. C. 600.  
I will <sup>r</sup> feed them, *even* this people, <sup>a</sup> with wormwood, and give them water of gall to drink.

16 I will <sup>r</sup> scatter them also among the heathen, whom neither they nor their fathers have known: <sup>v</sup> and I will send a sword after them, till I have consumed them.

17 ¶ Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Consider ye, and call for <sup>r</sup> the mourning women, that they may come; and send for cunning *women*, that they may come:

<sup>a</sup> Lev. xxvi. 33; Deut. xxviii. 64.—<sup>v</sup> Lev. xxvi. 33; Chap. xlv. 27; Ezekiel v. 2, 12.—<sup>r</sup> 2 Chron. xxxv. 25; Job iii. 8; Eccles. xii. 5; Amos v. 16; Matt. ix. 23.

those whom neither they nor their fathers *had known*. And what deserves highly to be remarked is, that among none of these nations have they attained to any share of supreme power, but have always lived among them upon courtesy or sufferance. *And I will send a sword after them, &c.*—A judgment threatened by Moses in case of their disobedience, Lev. xxvi. 23, and fulfilled upon several of the Jewish captives in Egypt and elsewhere.

Verse 17. *Consider ye, and call for the mourning women*—Consider the evil circumstances you are in, which call for mourning and lamentation: and since you yourselves are not sufficiently affected with the dangers that threaten you, send for those women whose profession it is to mourn at funerals, and upon other sorrowful occasions, and let their lamentations excite true sorrow in you. The prophet seems here to compare the Jewish state to a person dead, and going to be buried, and therefore calls upon the people to send for those who used to be hired to make lamentations and wailings at funerals. The reader will observe, "it was an ancient custom of the Hebrews, at funerals, and on other like occasions, to make use of hired mourners, whose profession it was to exhibit in public all the signs and gestures of immoderate and frantic grief, and by their loud outcries and doleful songs to excite a real passion of sorrow in others. Women were generally employed in this office, either because it was an office more suitable to the softness of a female mind, or because the more tender passions being predominant in that sex, they succeeded better in their parts; nor were there ever wanting those artists well instructed in the discipline of mourning, and ready to hire out their lamentations and tears on any emergency. It was the chief excellence of other arts to imitate nature; it was likewise esteemed so in this; their funeral dirges, therefore, were composed in imitation of those which had been poured forth by genuine and sincere grief. Their sentences were short, querulous, pathetic, simple, and unadorned; somewhat laboured indeed, because they were composed in metre, and to be sung to the pipe, as we learn from

A. M. 3404. 18 And let them make haste, and  
B. C. 600. take up a wailing for us, that <sup>a</sup>our  
eyes may run down with tears, and our eye-  
lids gush out with waters.

19 For a voice of wailing is heard out of  
Zion, How are we spoiled! we are greatly con-  
founded, because we have forsaken the land,  
because <sup>b</sup>our dwellings have cast us out.

20 Yet hear the word of the LORD, O ye wo-  
men, and let your ear receive the word of his  
mouth, and teach your daughters wailing, and  
every one her neighbour lamentation.

21 For death is come up into our windows,  
and is entered into our palaces, to cut off <sup>c</sup>the  
children from without, and the young men  
from the streets.

<sup>a</sup> Chap. xiv. 17.—<sup>b</sup> Lev. xviii. 28; xx. 22.—<sup>c</sup> Chap. vi. 11.  
<sup>d</sup> Chap. viii. 2; xvi. 4.—<sup>e</sup> Eccles. ix. 11.

Matt. ix. 23; and from Homer," where, speaking of  
Hector's funeral, he says,

————— Παρα δ' εἰσαν αἰοίδες,  
Θρηνων εξαρχες, οἶτε σονοῦσσαν αἰοῖδην,  
Οἱ μὲν ἀρ' ἐθρηνεον, ἐπι δε σεναχοῦντο γυναικες.  
ILIAD, Ω. 720.

A melancholy choir attend around,  
With plaintive sighs, and music's solemn sound;  
Alternately they sing, alternate flow  
Th' obedient tears, melodious in their wo.

See POPE'S IL., book xxiv. verse 900.

Jerome tells us, in his comment on this verse, that  
the practice was continued in Judea down to his  
days; "That women, at funerals, with dishevelled  
hair, and naked breasts, endeavoured, in a modu-  
lated voice, to unite others in lamentation with  
them." Frequent allusions to this custom are to be  
met with in Scripture, particularly 2 Chron. xxxv. 25,  
where the *singing men and singing women* are said  
to have made it a constant rule, after King Josiah's  
death, to commemorate that excellent prince in all  
their future dirges or lamentations, as one in whom  
the public in general had sustained an irreparable  
loss. Such were the *mourners*, mentioned Eccles.  
xii. 5, and said to go about the streets; and those  
whom Amos calls, יִרְעֵי נָחִי, *skilful of lamentation*;  
Amos v. 16. And such no doubt were the *minstrels*  
and the people making a noise, οχλον θορυβημενον,  
whom our Saviour found in the house of the ruler of  
the synagogue, whose daughter was just dead; who,  
St. Mark says, wept and wailed greatly, κλαιοντας  
και αλαζοντας πολλα, Mark v. 38. There are espe-  
cially several traces of this custom to be met with in  
the prophets, who frequently delivered their predic-  
tions of approaching calamities in the form of fune-  
ral dirges. The poem before us, from verse 19 to  
22, is both an illustration and confirmation of this,  
and worthy of the reader's frequent perusal, on ac-

22 Speak, Thus saith the LORD, A. M. 3404.  
Even the carcasses of men shall fall B. C. 600.

<sup>d</sup> as dung upon the open field, and as the  
handful after the harvest-man, and none shall  
gather them.

23 ¶ Thus saith the LORD, <sup>e</sup>Let not the wise  
*man* glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty  
*man* glory in his might, let not the rich *man*  
glory in his riches:

24 But <sup>f</sup>let him that glorieth, glory in this,  
that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I  
*am* the LORD which exercise loving-kindness,  
judgment, and righteousness, in the earth:  
<sup>g</sup>for in these things I delight, saith the LORD.

25 ¶ Behold, the days come, saith the LORD,  
that <sup>h</sup>I will <sup>i</sup>punish all them which are cir-

<sup>f</sup> 1 Cor. i. 31; 2 Cor. x. 17.—<sup>g</sup> Mic. vi. 8; vii. 18.—<sup>h</sup> Rom.  
ii. 8, 9.—<sup>i</sup> Heb. *visit upon*.

count of its affecting pathos, moral sentiments, and  
fine images; particularly in verse 21, where *death*  
is described in as animated a prosopopeia as can be  
conceived. See Lowth's *Prelec.*, Calmet, and Blaney.

Verses 23, 24. *Let not the wise man glory in his  
wisdom*—Let not men value themselves on account  
of their wisdom, strength, or riches, which are things  
in themselves of a very uncertain continuance, and  
such calamities are coming, (see verses 25, 26,) in  
which they will stand the owners of them in very  
little stead. The only true, valuable endowment is  
the knowledge of God, not as he is in himself, which  
is too high an attainment for poor mortals to pretend  
to, but with respect to his dealings with men; to  
have a serious sense of his mercies to the penitent,  
of his judgments to the obstinate, and of his truth  
and integrity, in making good his promises and  
threatenings to both. It is in the exercise of these  
attributes God chiefly delights; and it is by these he  
desires to make himself known to the world; and he  
that forms a just and lively apprehension of God,  
chiefly with regard to these his perfections, will al-  
ways demean himself suitably toward him. *Judg-  
ment* and *righteousness* are often equivalent terms,  
but here the former seems to denote God's severity  
against the wicked, and the latter his truth, justice,  
or holiness. See Lowth. Upon the whole, all other  
wisdom is vain and dangerous, except that which  
has God himself for its object, and teaches us to de-  
spise ourselves, to be humbled beneath his mighty  
hand, and to glory in him alone.

Verses 25, 26. *Behold the days come, &c.*—Blaney  
translates these two verses, "Behold, the days are  
coming, saith Jehovah, that I will punish all the cir-  
cumcision with the uncircumcision; Egypt, &c., and  
all those that have their coast insulated, those that  
dwell in the wilderness: for all the nations are  
uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel is uncir-  
cumcised in heart." The Greek word ακροβυσια,  
which properly means *uncircumcision*, is several

A. M. 3404. circumcised with the uncircumcised ;  
B. C. 600. 26 Egypt, and Judah, and Edom,  
and the children of Ammon, and Moab, and  
all that are <sup>12</sup> in the <sup>k</sup> utmost corners, that

dwelt in the wilderness : for all these A. M. 3404.  
nations are uncircumcised, and all B. C. 600.  
the house of Israel are <sup>1</sup> uncircumcised in the  
heart.

<sup>12</sup> Heb. cut off into corners, or, having the corners of their hair  
polled.

<sup>k</sup> Chapter xxv. 23 ; xlix. 32.—<sup>1</sup> Lev. xxvi. 41 ; Ezek. xlv. 7 ;  
Rom. ii. 28, 29.

times used by St. Paul for the persons who are un-  
circumcised, as περιτομή, *circumcision*, is put for  
persons circumcised. See Rom. ii. 26, 27, and iii.  
30. Because the Jews valued themselves so much  
upon their circumcision, God here tells them that,  
when he should send his judgments abroad into the  
world, they should find no more favour than those  
that were not circumcised ; and, accordingly, in  
mentioning the heathen nations whom he would  
punish, he places Judah among them, because they  
were, in effect, uncircumcised as well as the heathen,  
contenting themselves with the outward sign of cir-  
cumcision in the flesh, without seeking that internal  
circumcision, which is of the heart and spirit, and  
the purification and holiness signified thereby. By  
those that have their coast insulated, as Blaney ren-  
ders one of the clauses of verse 26, he supposes the  
Arabians are designed, which he thinks may be  
fairly concluded from the connection in which the  
same words, קצוצי פאה, stand with the context, in  
chap. xlix. 32. Concerning the precise meaning,  
however, of these words, he justly observes, "inter-

preters differ very greatly. Some represent them  
as signifying persons cut off from other people, by  
being thrust into a remote corner ; in which light  
the translators of our Bible appear to have consider-  
ed them, when they rendered them in the text, *All  
that are in the utmost corners*, and in the margin,  
*cut off into corners*. But all the ancient versions  
understand them as expressing the peculiar manner  
in which the Arabians cut the hair of their heads or  
beards," expressed also in our marginal reading ;  
which reading, Dr. Durel says, ought doubtless to be  
received into the text ; the Arabs, who are meant, he  
thinks, by this periphrasis, being accustomed to cut  
their hair short, particularly about the crown of the  
head ; and in respect to their beards, leaving only a  
tuft of hair growing about their chins ; a practice  
which was forbidden to the Jews, Lev. xix. 27. But  
it seems much more probable that the words have a  
respect to the peninsular form of the country, sur-  
rounded on all sides by the sea, excepting only the  
isthmus to the north ; and thus almost insulated, or  
cut off, from any other land.

CHAPTER X.

The former part of this chapter contains an earnest dissuasive from the practice of heathen idolatry, setting forth the vanity of idols in comparison with the true God, 1-16. And this doubtless was designed by way of precaution to the Jews, against the time of their removal out of their own land, to dwell among idolaters, as predicted, 17, 18. The prophet, in the name of Jerusalem, laments the completion of her ruin, and humbly supplicates the intervention of God's mercy, 19-26.

A. M. 3404. **H**EAR ye the word which the LORD  
B. C. 600. speaketh unto you, O house of  
Israel :

2 Thus saith the LORD, <sup>a</sup> Learn A. M. 3404.  
not the way of the heathen, and B. C. 600.  
be not dismayed at the signs of heaven ; for

<sup>a</sup> Leviticus

xviii. 3 ; xx. 23.

NOTES ON CHAPTER X.

Verses 1, 2. *Hear ye the word, &c.*—The prophet continues his remonstrances and exhortations to Judah. He said, at the conclusion of the preceding chapter, that the Lord would punish, without distinction, all the ungodly and unrighteous Jews, as well as Gentiles. He here informs them that if they would avoid this vengeance of the Lord they must quit their idolatries and other impieties, and have nothing to do with the superstitious practices of the Gentile nations. *Learn not the way of the heathen*—Their manner of life or customs. *And be not dismayed at the signs of heaven*—"The Chaldeans, among whom the Jews were destined to live in cap-

tivity, were particularly addicted to astrology, and attributed to the heavenly bodies a considerable influence over human affairs. This naturally tended to beget a religious dread and awe of those objects, from whence so much good or evil was supposed to be derived. The sun, moon, and planets are said indeed to have been set in the firmament for signs, Gen. i. 14. But hereby is meant, that they should serve, as natural marks, to distinguish, by their periodical revolutions and appearances, the various times and seasons ; which, however, is a very different use from that of prognosticating future events, or causing an alteration in the fortunes of men."—Blaney.

A. M. 3404. the heathen are dismayed at them.  
B. C. 600.

3 For the <sup>1</sup>customs of the people are vain: for <sup>b</sup>one cutteth a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the axe.

4 They deck it with silver and with gold; they <sup>c</sup>fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not.

5 They are upright as the palm-tree, <sup>d</sup>but speak not: they must needs be <sup>e</sup>borne, because they cannot go. Be not afraid of them; for

<sup>1</sup> Heb. *statutes, or, ordinances are vanity.*—<sup>b</sup> Isa. xl. 19, 20; xlv. 9, 10, &c.; xlv. 20.—<sup>c</sup> Isa. xli. 7; xlv. 7.—<sup>d</sup> Psalm cxv. 5; cxxxv. 16; Hab. ii. 19; 1 Cor. xii. 2.—<sup>e</sup> Psa. cxv. 7; Isa. xlv. 1, 7.

Verses 3-5. *One cutteth down a tree, &c.*—The prophet here exposes the folly of men's worshipping the work of their own hands, by arguments similar to those which are used by Isaiah, chap. xlv. 10-20; where see the notes. *They are upright, &c.*—*They are like the trunk of the palm-tree*—Houb. "They are inflexible, immovable, fixed, without action or motion, like the trunk of a tree: a comparison which admirably suits the ancient statues seen in Egypt and elsewhere, before the art of sculpture attained the perfection which it afterward did in Greece."—Calmet. Dr. Waterland's translation of this verse is, *They are of just proportion, as a pillar, but they speak not; carried they must be, for go they cannot. Be not afraid of them*—They can do you no more harm than the signs of heaven could do. The heathen worshipped some idols in order that they might do them good, and others, that they might do them no harm: but God tells them here, that as they cannot do evil, so neither is it in them to do good. See note on Isa. xli. 23. They can neither punish nor reward; they can neither hurt their enemies nor help their friends. By this the true God will be distinguished from idols, in that he alone can foretell things to come, and he alone can reward or punish.

Verses 6, 7. *Forasmuch as there is none like unto thee*—This verse would be better rendered, *O Lord, thou art great, so that there is none like unto thee, and thy name is great, because of thy might. Who would not fear thee?*—Rather, who would not reverence, or stand in awe of thee? *For to thee doth it appertain*—That is, as some interpret the phrase, *To thee doth it appertain to be feared and revered;* to these fear and reverence are due. The Hebrew, however, may be rendered, *Who would not fear thee when he shall come, or draw near to thee?* accordingly Blaney translates the verse thus: *Who will not fear thee, O king of nations, when he shall approach unto thee? Forasmuch as among all the wisest of the nations, and in all their kingdoms, there is none like unto thee*—On the clause, *among the wisest of the nations*, he observes, "These words may signify, either all those nations which were most distinguished for the cultivation and improvement of their rational faculties; or else those sage

they cannot do evil, neither also is it in them to do good.

A. M. 3404.  
B. C. 600.

6 Forasmuch as there is none <sup>a</sup>like unto thee, O LORD; thou art great, and thy name is great in might.

7 <sup>b</sup>Who would not fear thee, O King of nations? for <sup>2</sup>to thee doth it appertain: forasmuch as <sup>i</sup>among all the wise men of the nations, and in all their kingdoms, there is none like unto thee.

8 But they are <sup>3</sup>altogether <sup>k</sup>brutish and

<sup>f</sup> Isaiah xli. 23.—<sup>g</sup> Exodus xv. 11; Psalm lxxxvi. 8, 10. <sup>h</sup> Revelation xv. 4.—<sup>i</sup> Or, *it liketh thee.*—<sup>j</sup> Psalm lxxxix. 6. <sup>k</sup> Heb. *in one, or, at once.*—<sup>l</sup> Psalm cxv. 8; Isa. xli. 29; Hab. ii. 18; Zech. x. 2; Rom. i. 21, 22.

individuals among them, from whose learning and philosophy some better notions of God and religion might have been expected than from the rude and illiterate vulgar. And yet the fact was, that all their boasted wisdom and knowledge had failed of leading them to an object of worship, in any degree corresponding with the infinite perfections and majesty of the divine nature."

Verse 8. *But they are altogether brutish*—Or, *all alike brutish.* They that make images, saith the psalmist, Psa. cxv. 8, *are like unto them*, equally stupid and insensible. *The stock is a doctrine of vanities*—Or lies. The use of images in worship is grounded on a false and foolish opinion, that God is like the work of men's hands, and that images have some divine power lodged within them, and in this opinion it has a direct tendency to confirm the ignorant. Hence an image is called by Habakkuk, *A teacher of lies.* Instead of the *stock, &c.*, Dr. Waterland reads, *Vain institutions! very wood!* Blaney, in consistency with his interpretation of the 7th verse, given above, renders this, *But they, when they approach, (namely, to worship, are stupid and sottish, the very wood itself being a rebuker of vanities.* On which he observes, "The contrast is thus strongly marked between the true God, and the objects of heathen superstition. The servants of the former, when they approached him in their devotions, could not but be impressed with a reverential awe of a being so transcendently glorious. But those who drew near to worship the latter, manifested the greatest stupidity, in not discovering what was so obvious to common apprehension, the gross unworthiness of the objects to which their adorations were addressed." On the latter clause, *The very wood itself, &c.*, he remarks, "The true meaning and force of this passage seem to have escaped the notice of all the commentators. מוכר, (which our translators render *doctrine*,) properly signifies *rectifying, or correcting*, a false notion by just reproof; and by *vanities* are meant *idols*, so called from their being of no real use or advantage to those who had recourse to their assistance. And this unprofitableness of the idol, the very dull and senseless matter, says the prophet, out of which it was formed, is ca-

A. M. 3404. foolish: the stock is a doctrine of  
B. C. 600. vanities.

9 Silver spread into plates is brought from Tarshish, and <sup>1</sup> gold from Uphaz, the work of the workman, and of the hands of the founder: blue and purple is their clothing: they are all <sup>a</sup> the work of cunning men.

10 But the LORD is the <sup>4</sup> true God, he is <sup>o</sup> the living God, and an <sup>5</sup> everlasting <sup>p</sup> King: at his

<sup>1</sup> Dan. x. 5.—<sup>a</sup> Psalm cxv. 4.—<sup>4</sup> Heb. *God of truth*, Psalm xxxi. 5.—<sup>o</sup> 1 Timothy vi. 17.—<sup>5</sup> Hebrew, *King of eternity*.  
<sup>p</sup> Psalm x. 16.

pable of demonstrating. But the *rebuke*, strictly speaking, is not directed to the idol, but to those who had not sense to perceive, that all the efforts of human art could never change an inanimate log of wood into an animated being, possessed of power and intelligence far surpassing those of the person from whom its origin was derived. There are, therefore, an energy and pointedness in this short sentence, at least equal to whatever has been said on the same subject by the most spirited writer, whether sacred or profane. Not even the keen raillery of the Roman satirist in those celebrated lines, *olim truncus eram, &c.*, cuts with greater severity." See note on Isa. xlv. 12, &c.

Verse 9. *Silver spread into plates*—To cover the images, and make them appear as if made of massy silver; *is brought from Tarshish*—A port of Spain, to which the merchants of Tyre and Sidon traded; of which place see note on Isa. ii. 16. *And gold from Uphaz*—The Syriac, Chaldee, and Theodotion read, *from Ophir*, which Bochart supposes to be here meant; namely, Ophir in India, near Zeilan, a place famous for gold. *Blue and purple are their clothing*—"The splendour and magnificence of dress seem, among the ancients, to have consisted very much in the richness of the colours; the art of dying which to perfection, was esteemed a matter of great skill, being known and practised by very few. The excellence of the Tyrian purple is celebrated by both sacred and profane authors. And the blue, which from many passages of Scripture we find to have been in great request, was also imported from remote countries as an article of elegant and expensive luxury." *They are all the work of cunning men*—"If, in the preceding verse, the insignificance of the idols was argued from the vile and perishable matter out of which they were composed; the same is inferred in this from their being indebted to the art and labour of man for all their costly ornaments, their splendid outward show. In short, *the whole of them*, says the prophet, internal and external, is *the work of skilful men*. Upon what ground then could the thing formed pretend to a nature more excellent than its former?"—Blaney.

Verse 10. *But the Lord*—Hebrew, *Jehovah, is the true God*—A very different being from these idols. *He is the living God*—Images are dead and senseless things; but Jehovah is life itself, and the author

wrath the earth shall tremble, and <sup>A. M. 3404.</sup>  
the nations shall not be able to abide <sup>B. C. 600.</sup>  
his indignation.

11 <sup>6</sup> Thus shall ye say unto them, <sup>a</sup> The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, *even* <sup>r</sup> they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens.

12 He <sup>8</sup> hath made the earth by his power, he hath <sup>t</sup> established the world by his wisdom,

<sup>6</sup> In the Chaldee language.—<sup>a</sup> Psa. xcvi. 5.—<sup>r</sup> Verse 15; Isa. ii. 18; Zech. xiii. 2.—<sup>8</sup> Gen. i. 1, 6, 9; Psalm cxxxvi. 5, 6; Chap. li. 15.—<sup>t</sup> Psa. xciii. 1.

and fountain of life and understanding; and all creatures that live, live in and by him. *And an everlasting King*—The absolute monarch over all creatures, their owner and ruler, having an incontestable right both to command and to dispose of them. And the counsels of his kingdom were from everlasting, and the continuance of it will be to everlasting. He is the king of eternity. The idols whom they call their kings are but of yesterday, and will soon be abolished; and the kings of the earth, that set them up to be worshipped, will themselves be in the dust shortly; but *the Lord shall reign for ever, thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. At his wrath the earth shall tremble*—Even the strongest and stoutest of the kings of the earth, nay, the earth itself, as firmly as it is fixed, when he pleases, is made to quake, and the rocks to tremble. And the nations, though they join together to contend with him, and unite their force against him, shall be found utterly unable, not only to resist, but even to *abide his indignation*.

Verse 11. *Thus shall ye say unto them*—"This verse is in the Chaldee language, and it appears here as a kind of parenthesis. Houbigant thinks that the most probable reason why it is here inserted in the Chaldee, and not in the Hebrew, is, that Jeremiah prescribes to the Jews what they shall answer in living among idolaters, and using the Chaldee language; hereby prescribing that they should be the captives of the Chaldees."—Dodd. *The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth*—And therefore they are no gods, but the usurpers of the honour due to him only who did make them; *shall perish from the earth, &c.*—Shall perish of course, because they are *vanity*, formed of perishing materials; and shall perish by his righteous sentence, because they are rivals with him who made all things. Here the prophet foretels that there shall be a final period put to idolatry. God hath already blotted out the names of many of the heathen idols, as an earnest of the utter destruction of the rest in his due time.

Verses 12, 13. *He hath made the earth, &c.*—Here follows a noble and lofty description of God's power and providence, whereby he sets forth his infinite pre-eminence above all the dead and senseless idols of the world. *When he uttereth his voice, &c.*—When he gives the word of command, and signifies

A. M. 3404. and <sup>u</sup> hath stretched out the heavens  
B. C. 600. by his discretion.

13 <sup>x</sup> When he uttereth his voice, *there is* a  
<sup>7</sup> multitude of waters in the heavens, and <sup>y</sup> he  
causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends  
of the earth; he maketh lightnings <sup>o</sup> with rain,  
and bringeth forth the wind out of his treas-  
ures.

14 <sup>z</sup> Every man <sup>o</sup> is <sup>a</sup> brutish in his know-  
ledge: <sup>b</sup> every founder is confounded by the  
graven image: <sup>c</sup> for his molten image is false-  
hood, and *there is* no breath in them.

15 *They are* vanity, and the work of errors:  
in the time of their visitation <sup>d</sup> they shall  
perish.

<sup>u</sup> Job ix. 8; Psalm civ. 2; Isaiah xl. 22.—<sup>v</sup> Job xxxviii. 34.  
<sup>7</sup> Or, noise.—<sup>y</sup> Psa. cxxxv. 7.—<sup>o</sup> Or, for rain.—<sup>z</sup> Chap. li.  
17, 18.—<sup>a</sup> Or, is more brutish than to know.—<sup>b</sup> Prov. xxx. 2.  
<sup>c</sup> Isa. xlii. 17; xlv. 11; xlv. 16.—<sup>d</sup> Hab. ii. 18.—<sup>e</sup> Verse 11.  
<sup>f</sup> Psa. xvi. 5; lxxiii. 26; cxix. 57; Chap. li. 19; Lam. iii. 24.

his will and pleasure: see Job xxxviii. 34. Or, when he sends forth his thunder, called in Scripture the *voice of God*, the clouds immediately precipitate in torrents of rain, which, coming upon the ground that was scorched with heat before, not only cools and refreshes it, but renders it fruitful in all kinds of vegetable productions. *He maketh lightnings with rain*—And as he causes the vapours to ascend up in clouds from every quarter of the earth, so he joins two contrary things together, ordaining great flashes of lightning to break forth with the rain; the latter, by its moisture, preventing the ill effects that might otherwise proceed from the heat of the former. *And bringeth forth the winds out of his treasures*—As there is occasion for them, directing them all in such measures, and for such uses, as he thinks fit. In other words, “He makes great and mighty winds to come from unknown places and causes, as if he brought them out of a hidden treasure, or repository, where they had been laid up till he had occasion for them.”—Lowth.

Verses 14, 15. *Every man is brutish in his knowledge*—This is spoken of the makers of idols, whose skillfulness as workmen made them foolish enough to attempt to make gods, and who afterward acted still more foolishly in worshipping them, when they knew they were but the work of their own hands. *The founder is confounded by the graven image*—Or, *ashamed*, as *שׁוּבָה* signifies. For it can afford no help, nor do any good, to those who worship it; and therefore is a disgrace to the workman who pretends to make it a god, that could hear the prayers offered to it, and send help to its worshippers. *His molten image is falsehood*—That is, those are no less deceived who expect help from a molten image, than they who expect it from a false, lying man. *They are the work of errors*—The making of them is owing to men’s erroneous notions of the nature of God. *In the time of their visitation*

16 <sup>o</sup> The portion of Jacob *is* not A. M. 3404.  
like them: for he *is* the former of all B. C. 600.

*things*; and <sup>f</sup> Israel *is* the rod of his inheri-  
tance: <sup>z</sup> The LORD of hosts *is* his name.

17 <sup>q</sup> <sup>b</sup> Gather up thy wares out of the land,  
<sup>o</sup> <sup>10</sup> inhabitant of the fortress.

18 For thus saith the LORD; Behold, I will  
<sup>i</sup> sling out the inhabitants of the land at this  
once, and will distress them <sup>k</sup> that they may  
find *it so*.

19 <sup>q</sup> <sup>1</sup> Wo is me for my hurt! my wound is  
grievous: but I said, <sup>m</sup> Truly this *is* a grief,  
and <sup>n</sup> I must bear it.

20 <sup>o</sup> My tabernacle is spoiled, and all my  
cords are broken: my children are gone forth

<sup>f</sup> Deut. xxxii. 9; Psa. lxxiv. 2.—<sup>g</sup> Isa. xlvii. 4; li. 15; liv.  
5; Chap. xxxi. 35; xxxii. 18; l. 34.—<sup>h</sup> Chap. vi. 1; Ezek.  
xii. 3.—<sup>i</sup> Heb. *inhabitant*.—<sup>j</sup> 1 Sam. xxv. 29; Ch. xvi. 13.  
<sup>k</sup> Ezek. vi. 10.—<sup>l</sup> Chap. iv. 19; viii. 21; ix. 1.—<sup>m</sup> Psalm  
lxxvii. 10.—<sup>n</sup> Mic. vii. 9.—<sup>o</sup> Chap. iv. 20.

*they shall perish*—The time will come when God will execute vengeance upon idolaters, and utterly destroy their idols.

Verse 16. *The portion of Jacob is not like them*—There is no comparison between senseless idols and the great Creator of all things, who has chosen the posterity of Jacob for his peculiar people, and has promised to be their God, and that they should always have an especial interest in his favour, if they continued steadfast in their worship of, and obedience to, him. *The rod of his inheritance*—Is an expression taken from the first division of the land of Canaan, when the inheritance of each tribe and family was meted out with a line or rod.

Verses 17, 18. *Gather up thy wares, &c.*—That is, as some explain it, “Collect to Jerusalem all that you have valuable in the country; flee thither for refuge with your best effects; for the enemy will soon extend himself over all your land, and render it desolate.” Or, rather, the prophet, returning to his former denunciations against Jerusalem, warns her to move her effects, and prepare for going into captivity; for, though she thought herself secure, as dwelling in a place of great strength and well fortified, yet her enemies should prevail and take it: compare Ezek. xii. 3. *Behold, I will sling out the inhabitants at this once*—I will, at one stroke, remove the whole body of this people out of their native country: see 1 Sam. xxv. 29. *And I will distress them that they may find it so*—Or, that they may find my threatenings to be true. This implies, that though they had been often saved by God’s providence from hostile attacks, they would, however, on this occasion, find it otherwise.

Verses 19, 20. *Wo is me for my hurt*—The prophet here again pathetically laments the overthrow of his country, and, either in his own person or in that of his country, bewails the plundering and desolation of the cities and houses, as if they were so

A. M. 3404. of me, and they are not: *there is*  
B. C. 600. none to stretch forth my tent any  
more, and to set up my curtains.

21 For the pastors are become brutish, and have not sought the LORD: therefore they shall not prosper, and all their flocks shall be scattered.

¶ Chap. i. 15; iv. 6; v. 15; vi. 22.

many shepherds' tents, to which he compares them, verse 20. *But I said, This is a grief, and I must bear it*—Blaney thinks the prophet here suggests motives of patience and consolation to his country, in regard to the evils that were coming upon her, putting the words of this and the following verses into her mouth, and making her observe, first, That her affliction, though great, would yet be found tolerable; secondly, That she had less reason to complain of what she suffered, as it was no other than might have been expected from the misconduct of those who had the direction of her affairs, verse 21; and, lastly, That she was not without hope in the mercy of God, who, upon the humble supplication of his people, might be moved to mitigate their chastisement, and to turn his hand against the heathen that oppressed them, verse 24. *My children are gone from me, and are not, &c.*—My inhabitants are gone into captivity, and will return hither no more, so that they are the same to me as if they were dead. *There is none to set up my curtains*—They will never be able to contribute any thing to the restoration of my former state.

Verses 21, 22. *For the pastors are become brutish*—The prophet pursues the foregoing metaphor, and says, that the reason why the tents are destroyed, is because the shepherds, meaning the governors, both civil and ecclesiastical, had, like so many brute creatures, forgotten God and their duty to him, and thereby engaged the people committed to their charge in idolatry, and in all manner of wickedness, which had ended in ruin to themselves and their flocks. *And have not sought the Lord*—Have neither made their peace with him nor addressed their prayers to him; they have had no eye to him and his providence in their management of affairs, have neither acknowledged the judgment nor expected the deliverance to come from his hand. Observe well, reader, those are brutish people that do not seek the Lord, that live without prayer and without God in the world: they are unworthy of the name of rational beings. But the state of a people is indeed deplorable when their pastors, that should feed them *with knowledge and understanding*, are themselves thus brutish. And what is the consequence? *Therefore they shall not prosper*—None of their attempts for the public safety shall succeed. How, indeed, can those expect to prosper who do not take God along with them in their ways? And when the pastors are brutish, what else can be expected but that all their flocks should be scattered? *for if the blind lead the blind both will fall into the ditch. Behold, the noise of the bruit is come*—The word

22 Behold, the noise of the bruit is A. M. 3404.  
come, and a great commotion out of B. C. 600.  
the <sup>p</sup> north country, to make the cities of Judah desolate, and a <sup>q</sup> den of dragons.

23 ¶ O LORD, I know that the <sup>r</sup> way of man is not in himself: *it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.*

¶ Chap. ix. 11.—Prov. xvi. 1; xx. 24.

*bruit* here signifies *noise*, or rumour, which is the meaning of the Hebrew, שְׁבוּעָה. This is explained in the following clause to be that of the tumultuary invasion of the country by the Chaldeans from the north, of which notice had been repeatedly given. Blaney translates the verse, *Hark! a noise! Behold, it advanceth, even a great commotion from the north country. To make the cities of Judah a desolation, a dwelling-place for dragons.*

Verse 23. *O Lord, I know, &c.*—The prophet now turns to God, and addresses himself to him, finding it to little purpose to speak to the people. It is some comfort to poor ministers, that, if men will not hear them, God will; and to him they have liberty of access at all times. Let them close their preaching with prayer, as the prophet here does, and then they will have no reason to complain that they have laboured in vain. *That the way of man is not in himself*—The prophet must here be considered as acknowledging the superintendence and dominion of the divine providence; that by it, and not by their own will and wisdom, the affairs both of nations and particular persons are directed and governed. His words in this verse, taken in connection with the following, may be thus paraphrased: Thy providence, O Lord, superintends all events; all that happens comes to pass through thy permission or appointment. It is not in man to hinder that which has been once resolved on in thy decrees. We know, therefore, that it is not in our power to divert those judgments which are coming upon us, but thou canst moderate and limit them as thou plearest. If, then, it be thy will that we should feel the awful effects of thy justice, chastise us, but spare our weakness; *correct us, but with judgment, not in thine anger, &c.* Theodoret applies this to Nebuchadnezzar, and explains the passage thus: "We know, O Lord, that the prince whom thou sendest against us comes not without thy orders; that the success of his arms, and the good fortune of his enterprise, proceed only from thee: but deliver us, O Lord, from this terrible enemy; and if we have merited chastisement, may we receive it at thy hand. Punish us as a father, and not as a judge." The words, however, are applicable to us all, as well as to Nebuchadnezzar and the Jews. We are not at our own disposal, nor able to direct our own way by our own wisdom, either in matters temporal or spiritual. Nor are we at liberty to choose what line of life we please, or to ensure to ourselves the success and prosperity we may desire. We are under God's government, and at his disposal, and have continual need of his direction, and of the influence of

A. M. 3404. 24 O LORD, 'correct me, but with  
B. C. 600. judgment; not in thine anger, lest thou  
11 bring me to nothing.  
25 'Pour out thy fury upon the heathen 'that

Psa. vi. 1; xxxviii. 1; Chap. xxx. 11.—11 Heb. *diminish me*.  
'Psa. lxxix. 6.

his grace, without which we shall certainly err from the right way, and shall neither choose nor perform what is truly and lastingly good, and for our happiness.

Verse 24. *O Lord, correct me*—I do not entirely deprecate all chastisement; I know we deserve correction, and am willing to accept it; persuaded that it is necessary for our purification and amendment; but let it be *with judgment*—That is, in measure, with moderation, and in wisdom; not more than is necessary; *not in thine anger*—How severe soever the correction be, let it come from thy love, and be designed for our good, and made to work for good; *not to bring us to nothing*, but to bring us to thyself. Let it not be according to the desert of our sins, but according to the designs of thy grace. Blaney justly observes here, that the word כָּסַפְתִּי, translated *judgment*, "properly signifies, that *calm and dispassionate judgment*, which stands opposed to the hasty sallies of anger and furious revenge. And, though the latter cannot actually exist in God, it is sometimes, however, nominally attributed to him, whenever the effects of his displeasure are so violent as to stop nothing short of utter ruin; although such a proceeding may be justifiable upon the most solid

know thee not, and upon the families A. M. 3404.  
that call not on thy name: for they B. C. 600.  
have eaten up Jacob, and 'devoured him, and consumed him, and have made his habitation desolate.

\*Job xviii. 21; 1 Thess. iv. 5; 2 Thess. i. 8.—\* Chap. viii. 16.

principles of reason and equity. As, therefore, to punish *with anger*, implies an unrelenting rigour and severity; so, to correct *with judgment*, admits the use of such moderation as is consistent with the sinner's personal safety, while it promotes his reformation."

Verse 25. *Pour out thine indignation upon the heathen, &c.*—Let thy justice be made known, by bringing an exemplary punishment upon the Chaldeans and their allies, (see chap. i. 15,) who do not acknowledge thy providence, but ascribe all their successes to their idols: *for they have eaten up Jacob, &c.*—See note on chap. vi. 3. This prayer, it must be observed, did not proceed from a spirit of malice or revenge in the prophet, nor was it intended to prescribe to God on whom he should execute his judgments, or in what order; but, 1st, It is an appeal to his justice; as if he had said, Lord, we are a provoking people, but are there not other nations that are more so? And shall we only be punished? 2d, It is a prediction of God's judgments upon all the impenitent enemies of his church and kingdom. *If judgment begin thus at the house of God*, what shall be the end of those that obey not his gospel? 1 Pet. iv. 17.

## CHAPTER XI.

In this chapter God, (1.) Reminds the Jews of the covenant which he had made with their fathers, and in which obedience to his laws had been enjoined under a curse, and enforced as the evidence of their peculiar relation to him, and the ground of his giving them possession of Canaan, 1-7. (2.) He charges it upon them that, in succession to their fathers, and in confederacy among themselves, they had obstinately refused to obey him, 8-10. (3.) He threatens to punish them with utter ruin for their disobedience, especially for their idolatry, assuring them that their idols should not save them, nor their prophets pray for them, 11-14. (4.) He justifies his proceedings herein, they having brought all this mischief upon themselves by their own folly and obstinacy, 15-17. (5.) He discovers to Jeremiah a plot against his life, laid by his fellow-citizens of Anathoth, on account of which he prays against them, and predicts their ruin, 18-23.

A. M. 3396. THE word that came to Jeremiah  
B. C. 608. from the LORD, saying,  
2 Hear ye the words of this covenant, and

3 And say thou unto them, Thus saith the  
A. M. 3396.  
the inhabitants of Jerusalem; B. C. 608.

### NOTES ON CHAPTER XI.

Verse 1. *The word that came to Jeremiah, &c.*—At what time the prophecy, contained in this and the following chapter, was communicated to the prophet, is not expressed; but Blaney and many others assign it to the latter part of the reign of Josiah, "when the people, who, in the eighteenth year of that prince, had solemnly engaged to perform the obligations of the divine covenant, may be supposed to have relapsed, in course of time, into their former disregard and neglect. The prophet, therefore, is sent to recall

them to their duty, by proclaiming the terms of the covenant, and rebuking them sharply for their hereditary disobedience."

Verses 2-5. *Hear ye the words of this covenant*—God speaks here chiefly to Jeremiah, but seems, at the same time, to address, together with him, all those pious persons who were like-minded with him, and who reproved the wicked manners of the people. The covenant here spoken of was the covenant of the law of God, delivered by Moses, to which the people had frequently promised obedience. *And*

A. M. 3396. LORD God of Israel; \* Cursed be the  
B. C. 608. man that obeyeth not the words of  
this covenant,

4 Which I commanded your fathers in the day  
*that* I brought them forth out of the land of  
Egypt, <sup>b</sup> from the iron furnace, saying, ° Obey  
my voice, and do them, according to all which  
I command you: so shall ye be my people, and  
I will be your God:

5 That I may perform the <sup>d</sup> oath which I  
have sworn unto your fathers, to give them a  
land flowing with milk and honey, as *it is* this  
day. Then answered I, and said, <sup>1</sup> So be it,  
O LORD.

6 Then the LORD said unto me, Proclaim all  
these words in the cities of Judah, and in the

\* Deut. xxvii. 26; Gal. iii. 10.—<sup>b</sup> Deut. iv. 20; 1 Kings  
viii. 51.—<sup>c</sup> Lev. xxvi. 3, 12; Chap. vii. 23.—<sup>d</sup> Deut. vii. 12,  
13; Psa. cv. 9, 10.—<sup>1</sup> Heb. Amen, Deut. xxvii. 15-26.

*Speak unto the men of Judah, &c.*—Lay the tenor  
of the covenant before them; and say, *Cursed be  
the man that obeyeth not, &c.*—Deut. xxvii. 26, it is,  
*Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of  
this law to do them: and all the people shall say,  
Amen.* The people's saying *Amen*, testified their  
assent, and made the law a covenant; but they had,  
besides this, formally and explicitly covenanted with  
God, Exod. xxiv. 3-7, with religious rites and cere-  
monies, used in stipulations, and afterward consented  
that God should punish those that violated that  
covenant, Deut. xxvii. 26. *Which I commanded, &c.*  
—Which law, (that you by your restitution made  
a formal covenant,) I, who am the Lord, and so have  
a sovereign power to lay laws upon my creatures,  
commanded your fathers; *in the day that I brought  
them from the iron furnace*—And thus obliged  
them to obedience before I laid my law upon them.  
The use of the *iron furnace* being to melt and purify  
metals, it was a proper representation of that state  
of sore affliction in which the people of God were  
for many ages in Egypt. *Saying, Obey my voice, &c.*  
—For which kindness I required no more of them  
but a gentle service to me, in obeying my voice, as  
to the things of this law which I gave them in  
charge; *so shall ye be my people, &c.*—Nor did I  
only lay my commands upon them, but also encour-  
aged them to obedience, by my gracious promise,  
that if they would obey they should be a people  
whom I would peculiarly protect and bless. *That I  
may, or, rather, might* (for he refers to the time past)  
*perform the oath, &c.*—As if he had said, I required  
their obedience for their own good: for I had sworn  
to their fathers, that I would give their posterity a  
land abounding with plenty of all good things, upon  
condition of their obedience. I have performed that  
oath; I have brought them into such a land, and  
showed myself faithful to them. *Then answered I,  
So be it, O Lord*—God having ended his speech, the  
prophet says, *Amen*, as God had commanded, Deut.

streets of Jerusalem, saying, Hear ye  
the words of this covenant, ° and do  
them.

7 For I earnestly protested unto your fathers  
in the day *that* I brought them up out of the  
land of Egypt, *even* unto this day, <sup>f</sup> rising early  
and protesting, saying, Obey my voice.

8 <sup>s</sup> Yet they obeyed not, nor inclined their ear.  
but <sup>h</sup> walked every one in the <sup>2</sup> imagination of  
their evil heart: therefore I will bring upon  
them all the words of this covenant, which I  
commanded *them* to do; but they did *them*  
not.

9 And the LORD said unto me, <sup>i</sup> A conspiracy  
is found among the men of Judah, and among  
the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

\* Rom. ii. 13; James i. 22.—<sup>f</sup> Chap. vii. 13, 25; xxxv. 15.  
\* Chap. vii. 26.—<sup>h</sup> Chap. iii. 17; vii. 24; ix. 14.—<sup>i</sup> Or, *stub-  
bornness.*—<sup>1</sup> Ezek. xxii. 25; Hos. vi. 9.

xxvii. 26; either asserting the truth of what God had  
said, or expressing his desire that the people would  
do according to their covenant, or even assenting to  
the curse as just and reasonable.

Verses 6-8. *Proclaim all these words in the cities  
of Judah, &c.*—That all may hear, for all are con-  
cerned; saying, *Hear ye the words, &c., and do  
them*—Let it be thy work to call upon this people,  
not only to *hear*, but to *do* the things which I have  
commanded them, and which they have engaged to  
do. *For I earnestly protested*—Hebrew, *in protest-  
ing I protested*; a way of speaking by which the He-  
brews expressed the seriousness and earnestness  
wherewith any thing was done: by *protesting*, he  
means the same with *charging* and *solemnly enjoin-  
ing*, with promises annexed to obedience, and threat-  
enings denounced in case of disobedience. This, God  
says, he had done with a great deal of patience and  
diligence, even from the time that this people were  
brought by him out of the land of Egypt to the  
present period. *Yet they obeyed not*—And, because  
they were resolved not to be subject to God's com-  
mandments, they would not so much as incline their  
ears to them, but walked every one in the imagina-  
tion of his evil heart, following their own inventions;  
and each one acting as his fancy or humour led him,  
both in their devotions and in their conversations.  
*Therefore I will bring upon them all the words of  
this covenant*—That is, all the threatenings contain-  
ed in it. Observe, reader, the words of God's co-  
venant shall not fall to the ground. If we do not by  
our obedience qualify ourselves for the blessings of  
it, we shall, by our disobedience, bring ourselves un-  
der the curses of it.

Verses 9-11. *And the Lord said, A conspiracy is  
found, &c.*—Namely, by him whose eye is upon the  
hidden works of darkness. There is a combination  
formed among them against God and religion, a dan-  
gerous design to overthrow the government of Jeho-  
vah, and to bring in counterfeit deities. In other words,

A. M. 3396. 10 They are turned back to <sup>k</sup> the  
B. C. 608. iniquities of their forefathers, which  
refused to hear my words; and they went after  
other gods to serve them: the house of Israel  
and the house of Judah have broken my cove-  
nant which I made with their fathers.

11 ¶ Therefore thus saith the LORD, Behold,  
I will bring evil upon them which they shall  
not be able <sup>3</sup> to escape; and <sup>1</sup> though they shall  
cry unto me, I will not hearken unto them.

12 Then shall the cities of Judah and inha-  
bitants of Jerusalem go, and <sup>m</sup> cry unto the  
gods unto whom they offer incense: but they  
shall not save them at all in the time of their  
<sup>4</sup> trouble.

13 For according to the number of thy <sup>n</sup> cities  
were thy gods, O Judah; and according to the  
number of the streets of Jerusalem have ye set

<sup>k</sup> Ezek. xx. 18.—<sup>3</sup> Heb. to go forth of.—<sup>1</sup> Psa. xviii. 41;  
Prov. i. 28; Isa. i. 15; Chap. xiv. 12; Ezek. viii. 18; Micah  
iii. 4; Zech. vii. 13.—<sup>m</sup> Deut. xxxii. 37, 38.—<sup>4</sup> Heb. evil.  
<sup>n</sup> Chapter ii. 28.—<sup>5</sup> Heb. shame, Chapter iii. 24; Hos. ix. 10.  
<sup>o</sup> Exod. xxxii. 10; Chap. vii. 16; xiv. 11; 1 John v. 16.

All sorts of people have been alike disobedient, as if  
they had conspired together to break my law. *They  
are turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers*  
—They made some steps toward a reformation in the  
former part of the reign of Josiah, but now they have  
agreed to turn back to their former idolatries.  
*Therefore behold, I will bring evil upon them, &c.*  
—The evil of punishment for the evil of sin, which  
they shall not be able to escape by any eva-  
sion whatsoever. Let us remember, those who  
will not submit to God's government, shall not be  
able to escape his wrath. Evil pursues sinners, and  
entangles them in snares, out of which they cannot  
extricate themselves. *And though they shall cry  
unto me, I will not hearken*—God will not hear  
them crying to him in their adversity, who refuse to  
hear him speaking to them in their prosperity.

Verses 12–14. *Then shall the cities of Judah cry  
unto the gods, &c.*—“When great calamities threaten  
men, their fears suggest all possible ways of seeking  
for succour. Thus, when the Jews found them-  
selves forsaken of God, they betook themselves to  
idols, but found all such applications vain, and to no  
purpose: see 2 Chron. xxviii. 23. *For according  
to the number of thy cities were thy gods, &c.*—See  
note on chap. ii. 28. *Ye have set up altars to that  
shameful thing*—Hebrew, כִּשְׁת, *bosheth, shame*, so  
called, because it was what they had cause to be  
ashamed of, and what would certainly bring them to  
shame and confusion. See note on chap. iii. 24.  
*Therefore pray not thou for this people*—See note  
on chap. vii. 16.

Verse 15. *What hath my beloved to do in my  
house, &c.*—“Why doth this, my chosen and pecu-  
liar people, as they love to call themselves, make  
their appearance before me in my house, since they

up altars to *that* <sup>5</sup> shameful thing, A. M. 3396  
*even altars to burn incense unto Baal.* B. C. 608.

14 Therefore <sup>o</sup> pray not thou for this people,  
neither lift up a cry or prayer for them: for I  
will not hear *them* in the time that they cry  
unto me for their <sup>6</sup> trouble.

15 <sup>p</sup> What <sup>7</sup> hath my beloved to do in my  
house, *seeing* she hath <sup>4</sup> wrought lewdness with  
many, and <sup>r</sup> the holy flesh is passed from  
thee? <sup>8</sup> when thou doest evil, then thou <sup>re</sup> re-  
joicest.

16 The LORD called thy name, <sup>t</sup> A green  
olive-tree, fair, *and* of goodly fruit: with the  
noise of a great tumult he hath kindled fire  
upon it, and the branches of it are broken.

17 For the LORD of hosts, <sup>u</sup> that planted thee,  
hath pronounced evil against thee, for the evil  
of the house of Israel and of the house of

<sup>5</sup> Heb. evil.—<sup>6</sup> Psa. l. 16; Isa. i. 11, &c.—<sup>7</sup> Heb. *What  
is to my beloved in my house.*—<sup>8</sup> Ezekiel xvi. 25.—<sup>re</sup> Haggai  
ii. 12, 13, 14; Titus i. 15.—<sup>u</sup> Or, *when thy evil is.*—<sup>8</sup> Prov.  
ii. 14.—<sup>8</sup> Psalm lii. 8; Romans xi. 17.—<sup>8</sup> Isaiah v. 2;  
Chap. ii. 21.

have gone a whoring after several idols of the na-  
tions round about them, and thereby have disowned  
me, and broken the marriage contract that was be-  
tween us? See note on chap. ii. 2. God calls the  
Jews his beloved people, because they called them-  
selves so, and because they were still *beloved for  
their fathers' sake*, Rom. xi. 18; and he would not  
cast them off utterly, for the sake of the covenant  
he had made with their progenitors.—Lowth. *And  
the holy flesh is passed from thee*—“The flesh of  
thy sacrifices, which thou offerest up to me as an  
atonement for thy sins, does not at all profit thee,  
being rendered unacceptable to me through thy  
many and great provocations, in the commission of  
which thou continuest without remorse.”—Lowth.  
But the words are rendered by some, *The flesh of  
my sanctuary shall pass from thee*, and may mean,  
that the parts of the victims, which by the Mosaic  
law were the portion of the priests, should not be  
given to them, since the temple would be destroyed.  
According to this interpretation the prophet must  
be considered as addressing the priests, of whom  
there were, without doubt, many in Jerusalem.  
*When thou doest evil, thou rejoicest*—Thou gloriest  
in thy wickedness. Or, at a time when thou offend-  
est most against my laws, thou exultest, and behavest  
as if thou didst every thing that is right.

Verses 16, 17. *The Lord hath called thy name, A  
green olive-tree*—Perhaps Jeremiah here alludes to  
Hos. xi. 7, where Israel is compared to an olive-tree.  
The Jewish nation, which, in its flourishing state, is  
often compared by the sacred writers to a *vine*, is  
also sometimes compared to an *olive-tree*, chiefly  
because of the fruits of holiness and righteousness  
which God might justly have expected from them,  
after all the care and pains he had bestowed upon

A. M. 3396. Judah, which they have done against  
B. C. 608. themselves to provoke me to anger in  
offering incense unto Baal.

18 ¶ And the LORD hath given me know-  
ledge of it, and I know it: then thou showedst  
me their doings.

19 But I was like a lamb or an ox that is  
brought to the slaughter; and I knew not that  
they had devised devices against me, saying,

\* Chap. xviii. 18.—<sup>o</sup> Heb. *the stalk with his bread.*—<sup>γ</sup> Psalm  
lxxxiii. 4.—<sup>†</sup> Psa. xxvii. 18; cxvi. 9; cxlii. 5.

them to make them fruitful. *Fair, and of a goodly  
fruit*—Amiable and serviceable, pleasant to the eye,  
and good for yielding food. *With the noise of a  
great tumult he hath kindled a fire upon it, &c.*—  
The words קול הכזזה here rendered *the noise of a  
great tumult*, occur Ezek. i. 24, and are there ex-  
plained to be כחיל כחנה, *like the voice of a host*.  
Here they undoubtedly signify the confused mur-  
mur, noise, and tumult of the Chaldean army, com-  
ing to desolate Jerusalem and its dependances with  
fire and sword, described under the image of an  
olive-tree, whose branches are cut down that they  
may be burned, or which is burned as it stands; its  
branches, or *lofty boughs*, as רליתיו more properly  
signifies, meaning the *priests and princes*. *For the  
Lord that planted thee*—And expected fruit from  
thee in vain; *hath pronounced evil against thee*—  
Hath passed a condemnatory sentence upon thee,  
and marked thee out for destruction. *For the evil  
of the house of Israel and the house of Judah*—The  
evil of whose heinous sins shall now be followed  
with the evil of most dreadful punishments.

Verses 18, 19. *And the Lord hath given me know-  
ledge of it, &c.*—This relates to the ill designs which  
the men of Anathoth had contrived against the pro-  
phet, which he here saith God had revealed to him.  
See the following verses. *But I was like a lamb or  
an ox, &c.*—A proverbial speech, expressing a false  
security, or insensibility of danger. Dr. Waterland,  
in agreement with the Vulgate, Bochart, and Houbi-  
gant, reads this clause, *But I was like a gentle  
lamb*; and Blaney, *For I was like a tame lamb  
that is led to the slaughter*. But Lowth justly ob-  
serves, we may very well admit of the common  
translation. For the word אֵלֶיךָ here used, certainly  
frequently signifies *an ox*, and the disjunctive  
particle, supplied by *or*, is elsewhere often under-  
stood, though not expressed. The meaning here is,  
that the prophet would have met with a fate similar  
to that of a slaughtered lamb or ox, if God had not  
revealed to him the designs of his enemies. Many  
commentators suppose that Jeremiah here speaks of  
his own sufferings as figurative of those of the Mes-  
siah. "All the churches agree," says St. Jerome,  
"that these and the following words respect Jesus  
Christ and his passion. It was against his life that  
they formed their designs: he was the true lamb,  
meek and innocent. Jeremiah is here a figure of  
the divine Saviour; he here suffers from his bre-

Let us destroy <sup>o</sup> the tree with the fruit <sup>A. M. 3396.</sup>  
thereof, <sup>γ</sup> and let us cut him off from <sup>B. C. 608.</sup>

<sup>o</sup> the land of the living, that his name may be  
no more remembered.

20 But, O LORD of hosts, that judgest right-  
eously, that <sup>o</sup> triest the reins and the heart, let  
me see thy vengeance on them: for unto thee  
have I revealed my cause.

21 Therefore thus saith the LORD of the men

\* 1 Sam. xvi. 7; 1 Chron. xxviii. 9; Psa. vii. 9; Chap. xvii. 10;  
xx. 12; Rev. ii. 23.

thren, and represents, in his person, him who was a  
man of grief, and tried by all sorts of afflictions." *Let us  
destroy the tree with the fruit thereof*—Let us not only put  
an end to his prophesying, but to his life. The Hebrew is  
literally, *Let us destroy the tree (or the stock) with the  
bread thereof*; and *bread*, it must be observed, is sometimes  
used for the corn of which bread is made, as chap. v. 17.  
The meaning then is, *Let us destroy the prophet and  
his doctrine*. We have no other mention of this  
conspiracy but this here. It is, however, very plain,  
both from this verse and what follows, that the men  
of Anathoth (which was Jeremiah's own town) were  
offended at his prophesying, and had conspired to  
kill him.

Verse 20. *But, O Lord, thou judgest righteously*  
—It is matter of comfort to us, when men deal un-  
justly with us, that we have a God to go to, who  
doth and will plead the cause of injured innocence,  
and appear against the injurious. God's justice,  
which is a terror to the wicked, is a comfort to the  
godly. *That triest the reins and the heart*—That  
perfectly knowest what is in man, that discernest  
his most secret thoughts, desires, and designs. *Let  
me see thy vengeance on them*—That is, do justice  
between me and them in such a way as thou pleasest.  
"When men continue implacable in their malice,"  
says Lowth, "we may lawfully expect and desire  
that God will plead our cause, and judge us accord-  
ing to our righteousness. For the bringing wicked  
men to condign punishment tends both to the mani-  
festation of God's glory and the good government  
of the world. And to pray against our enemies in  
this sense, namely, not for the satisfying our private  
resentments, but the setting forth of God's justice,  
is not contrary to the spirit of Christianity. So St.  
Paul prayed against Alexander the copper-smith, 2  
Tim. iv. 14." It must be observed, however, that,  
according to the Hebrew text here, the words are  
merely a prediction; אֵרְאֶה נִקְמַתְךָ מֵהֵם, being liter-  
ally, *I shall see thy vengeance on them*; that is, I  
foresee it, and predict it, though I lament they  
should have given occasion for it.

Verse 21. *Thus saith the Lord of the men that  
seek thy life*—That are combined to kill thee; *saying,  
Prophecy not in the name of the Lord*—The  
meaning is, that those men of Anathoth threatened  
that they would kill him if he did not cease to pro-  
phesy such things as he did in the name of the Lord,

A. M. 3396. of Anathoth, <sup>b</sup> that seek thy life, say-  
B. C. 608. ing, <sup>c</sup> Prophecy not in the name of  
the LORD, that thou die not by our hand :

22 Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts,  
Behold, I will <sup>9</sup> punish them : the young men

<sup>b</sup> Chap. xii. 5, 6. — <sup>c</sup> Isaiah xxx. 10; Amos ii. 12; vii. 13, 16;  
Micah ii. 6.

namely, concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, the desolation of Judea, and the carrying away of the people into captivity. For if he had spoken falsely in the name of the Lord, and promised them peace and prosperity, they would have heard him prophesy gladly: they were thus exasperated at him, and opposed his prophesying, because he told them those truths which they had no mind to hear. This passage sufficiently shows that Jeremiah is to be understood in the literal sense here, which, however, does not by any means forbid our considering him in this instance as a type of Christ, and prefiguring, by his sufferings, those of the Redeemer of mankind. It manifests also the usage which the prophets generally met with from their own countrymen, who became their enemies because they told them the truth. The people of their own towns, even their friends and relations, could not bear to hear the solemn warnings which they gave them, and the prediction of those judgments which were coming upon them for their sins.

Verses 22, 23. *Therefore thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will punish them*—Hebrew, בקר עליהם,

shall die by the sword; their sons and their daughters shall die by famine : A. M. 3396. B. C. 608.

23 And there shall be no remnant of them: for I will bring evil upon the men of Anathoth, even <sup>d</sup> the year of their visitation.

<sup>e</sup> Heb. visit upon. — <sup>d</sup> Chapter xxiii. 12; xlvi. 21; xlviii. 44; l. 27; Luke xix. 44.

*I will visit*, namely, this their wicked conduct, upon them; I will inquire into it, and reckon with them for it. *The young men shall die by the sword*—Though they be young priests, not men of war, their sacred office shall be no protection to them. *Their sons and their daughters shall die by famine*—Which is a more grievous death than that by the sword, Lam. iv. 9. Thus two of God's four sore judgments would overwhelm their town in destruction, which should be so entire that there should be no remnant of them—None to be the seed of another generation: they sought Jeremiah's life, and therefore their lives shall be taken: they wished to destroy him, root and branch, that his name might be no more remembered, and therefore there shall be no remnant of them: and herein the Lord is righteous. Thus evil would be brought upon them, even the year of their visitation—And that would be evil sufficient, a recompense according to their deserts. Such is the consequence of opposing the truth and cause of God, and his servants in the execution of their office! Such is the deplorable condition of those that have the prayers of good ministers and good people against them!

CHAPTER XII.

In this chapter we have, (1.) The prophet's humble complaint to God, of the success that the ungodly had in their wicked practices, 1, 2; and his appeal to God concerning his own integrity, with a prayer that God would, for the sake of the public, bring the wickedness of the wicked to an end, 3, 4. (2.) God's rebuke to the prophet for his uneariness at the present troubles, warning him to prepare for greater, 5, 6. (3.) A sad lamentation over the deplorable, desolate, and disappointed condition to which the sins of the Jews would quickly reduce them, 7-13. (4.) An intimation of mercy to God's people in a denunciation of wrath against their enemies, who helped forward their affliction; but with a promise that, if they would at last join themselves with the people of God, they should have a share with them in their privileges, 14-17.

A. M. 3396. **R**IGHTEOUS <sup>a</sup> art thou, O LORD,  
B. C. 608. when I plead with thee: yet <sup>1</sup> let me talk with thee of thy judgments: <sup>b</sup> Where-

<sup>a</sup> Psa. li. 4. — <sup>1</sup> Or, let me reason the case with thee.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XII.

Verse 1. *Righteous art thou, O Lord*—The prophet, being about to inquire into the reasons and meaning of some of the divine dispensations, first recognises a truth of unquestionable certainty, namely, that God is *righteous*, that is, just and holy in all his ways. Thus he arms himself against the temptations wherewith he was assaulted, to envy the prosperity of the wicked, before he begins to

fore doth the way of the wicked prosper? *wherefore* are all they happy that deal very treacherously?

<sup>b</sup> Job xii. 6; xxi. 7; Psa. xxxvii. 1, 35; lxxiii. 3, &c.; Chap. v. 28; Hab. i. 4; Mal. iii. 15.

plead with God concerning it. And, in imitation of him, when we are least able to understand the intent of the divine counsels and proceedings, we must still resolve to retain just thoughts of God, and must be confident of this, that he never did and never will do the least wrong to any of his creatures; that even when his judgments are *unsearchable* as a great deep, and altogether unaccountable, yet his *righteousness* is as conspicuous and immoveable as the great

A. M. 3396. 2 Thou hast planted them, yea, they  
B. C. 608. have taken root: <sup>2</sup> they grow, yea,  
they bring forth fruit: <sup>o</sup> thou art near in their  
mouth, and far from their reins.

3 But thou, O LORD, <sup>d</sup> knowest me: thou  
hast seen me, and <sup>o</sup> tried my heart <sup>3</sup> toward  
thee: pull them out like sheep for the slaughter,  
and prepare them for <sup>l</sup> the day of slaughter.

4 How long shall <sup>e</sup> the land mourn, and the  
herbs of every field wither, <sup>h</sup> for the wickedness  
of them that dwell therein? <sup>i</sup> the beasts are con-

<sup>2</sup> Heb. they go on.—<sup>c</sup> Isa. xxix. 13; Matt. xv. 8; Mark vii. 6.  
<sup>4</sup> Psa. xvii. 3; cxxxix. 1.—<sup>o</sup> Chap. xi. 20.—<sup>3</sup> Heb. with thee.  
<sup>l</sup> James v. 5.—<sup>e</sup> Chap. xxiii. 10; Hos. iv. 3.—<sup>h</sup> Psa. cvii. 34.

mountains, Psa. xxxvi. 6. Yet let me talk with thee  
of thy judgments—Not by way of accusing thee, but  
for my own satisfaction concerning thy dispensa-  
tions in the government of the world. Wherefore  
doth the way of the wicked prosper?—Why are their  
designs and projects successful? Why are all they  
happy that deal very treacherously?—Why are the  
affairs and families of the perfidious and unjust in a  
prosperous state? Why dost thou permit this?  
What end of thy righteous government is to be an-  
swered by it? By all they, he means many of them,  
and is thought to have spoken thus with a special  
reference to the priests at Anathoth, who had con-  
spired against his life. The prosperity of the wicked  
hath, in all ages, been a mystery, and hath served to  
furnish infidels with an objection against the provid-  
ence of God, and, upon that account, hath been a  
source of temptation to many of God's people.

Verses 2, 3. Thou hast planted them—In a rich  
soil, by thy power: they have taken root; they grow  
—Their prosperity seems to be confirmed and settled  
by thy providence. Thou art near in their mouth,  
and far from their reins—They talk of thee, and  
profess piety, but do not believe in and obey thee  
from their hearts; the true character this of hypo-  
crites, who, according to Isaiah, honour God with  
their mouths, but their hearts are far from him, Isa.  
xxix. 13. But thou, O Lord, knowest me—As if he  
had said, Thou knowest, O Lord, it is otherwise with  
me: I am maligned, and my life is hunted after,  
though my heart is upright before thee, and I have  
been faithful in declaring to the people that, and only  
that, which thou didst reveal to me: yet it is for this  
they seek my life. Pull them out like sheep, &c.—  
Or rather, as Dr. Waterland and Houbigant translate  
the clause, "Thou wilt separate them as sheep to be  
sacrificed, and set them apart for the day of slaugh-  
ter."

Verse 4. How long shall the land mourn?—As it  
doth under thy judgments inflicted upon it; for the  
wickedness of them that dwell therein—Lord, shall  
they themselves prosper, who ruin all about them?  
The wickedness of the people is here represented as  
having brought a great calamity upon the land, under  
which all living creatures, even the beasts of the  
earth, and the fowls of heaven, as well as the human

sumed, and the birds; because they A. M. 3396.  
said, He shall not see our last end. B. C. 608.

5 ¶ If thou hast run with the footmen, and  
they have wearied thee, then how canst thou  
contend with horses? and if in the land of  
peace, wherein thou trustedst, they wearied  
thee, then how wilt thou do in <sup>k</sup> the swelling of  
Jordan?

6 For even <sup>l</sup> thy brethren, and the house of  
thy father, even they have dealt treacherously  
with thee; yea, <sup>4</sup> they have called a multitude

<sup>1</sup> Chap. iv. 35; vii. 20; ix. 10; Hos. iv. 3.—<sup>k</sup> Josh. iii. 15;  
1 Chron. xii. 15; Chap. xlix. 19; 1. 44.—<sup>l</sup> Chapter ix. 4; xi.  
19, 21.—<sup>4</sup> Or, they cried after thee fully.

race, were now suffering grievously. This calamity  
was a long drought, or want of rain, which happened,  
it seems, in the latter end of Josiah's, and the begin-  
ning of Jehoiakim's reign. It is mentioned chap.  
iii. 3; and viii. 13; and ix. 10, 12; and more fully  
afterward, chap. xiv. Some of its effects are here  
noticed; namely, that the herbs of every field were  
withered, and the beasts and birds consumed. If  
they would have been brought to repentance by this  
lesser judgment, the greater would have been pre-  
vented. Because they—The wicked men; said,  
He shall not see our last end—Namely, Jeremiah,  
whom these abandoned Jews threatened to kill, as  
if they were not willing he should see the fulfilling  
of his prophecies concerning the calamities to come  
on Judea. Not that they believed what he predicted  
would really come to pass, but they spake thus in a  
sarcastical manner, as much as to say, Be it so, that  
the calamities which thou denoucest against us shall  
come upon us, yet we will take care that thou shalt  
not have the pleasure of seeing them fulfilled upon us.

Verses 5, 6. If thou hast run with the footmen—  
Here God speaks, and applies a proverbial expres-  
sion to the prophet's circumstances, the import of  
which is, that if men find themselves unable to con-  
tend with a less power, it is in vain for them to strive  
with a greater. This sentence, being applied to the  
prophet's case, implies that, if he was so impatient  
that he could not bear the ill usage of his neighbours  
at Anathoth, how would he be able to undergo the  
hardships he must expect to meet with from the  
great men at Jerusalem, who would unanimously  
set themselves against him. And if in the land of  
peace—Where there is little noise or peril; then  
how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan—The  
sense may be the same as in the foregoing sentence,  
though differently expressed. As if he had said, If  
thou art exposed to such persecutions in thy own  
country, and among thy own kindred, who are more  
peaceable, what must thou expect when those in  
power at Jerusalem shall combine against thee?  
whose rage shall be as great and terrible as when  
Jordan suddenly overflows the neighbouring fields  
with violence, and obliges all to seek their safety by  
flight, there being no way of standing against the im-  
petuous torrent. Or, by the swellings of Jordan,

A. M. 3396. after thee : <sup>m</sup> believe them not, though B. C. 608. they speak <sup>s</sup> fair words unto thee.

7 ¶ I have forsaken my house, I have left my heritage ; I have given <sup>6</sup> the dearly beloved of my soul into the hand of her enemies.

8 My heritage is unto me as a lion in the forest ; it <sup>7</sup> crieth <sup>8</sup> out against me : therefore have I hated it.

<sup>m</sup> Proverbs xxvi. 25.—<sup>6</sup> Hebrew, good things.—<sup>6</sup> Hebrew, the love.—<sup>7</sup> Or, yelleth.—<sup>8</sup> Heb. giveth out his voice.—<sup>9</sup> Or, having talons.

may be meant the invasion of the country by the Chaldeans. Thus the words are understood by Blaney, who observes upon them as follows : "The ravages of war and hostile invasions are often represented in Scripture under the image of a river rising rapidly above its banks, and carrying all before it. To these inundations Jordan was very subject ; and on such occasions, as we are told, (Maundrell's *Travels*, p. 81,) several sorts of wild beasts, which are wont to harbour among the trees and bushes by the river side, are forced out of their coverts, and infest the neighbouring plains. This circumstance is particularly alluded to by the prophet, (chap. xlix. 19,) and seems to have been here in his view. For among all the dire effects incident to a country from the approach of a foreign enemy, this is not one of the least formidable, that evil-minded persons, within the state, are emboldened to throw off all legal restraints, and, taking advantage of the general confusion, openly commit the most daring outrages on their fellow-citizens, not only with impunity, but often under a pretence of zeal for the public welfare. *Silent leges inter arma*, is a well-known adage ; and the prophet found it verified to his cost, when even the authority of the king himself, as we learn from the following history, (chap. xxxviii. 4, 5,) was insufficient to protect him from the malice of his persecutors." *Even thy brethren*—The priests of Anathoth ; *and the house of thy father*—Who ought to have protected thee, and pretended to do so ; *even they have dealt treacherously with thee*—Have been false to thee, and, while they pretended friendship, have secretly conspired and devised evil against thee. *Yea, they have called a multitude after thee*—Have endeavoured to bring thee under popular odium, to incense the common people against thee, and, raising a mob upon thee, to expose thee to their rage. Or, as the words may be rendered, *They have pursued thee with a great cry*, as a common malefactor. The sense is, Their former behaviour plainly shows that thou canst not reasonably depend on them for that countenance and support which a man naturally looks for from his friends and relations against the hostilities of strangers.

Verse 7. *I have forsaken my house*—My temple, where I had placed my name. I have already withdrawn my favourable regard and presence from it, and shall withhold those manifestations of my power and goodness, which I have been wont to make to the people who come thither to worship me, and I

9 My heritage is unto me as a A. M. 3396. speckled bird, the birds round about B. C. 608.

are against her ; come ye, assemble all the beasts of the field, <sup>10</sup> come <sup>a</sup> to devour.

10 Many <sup>o</sup> pastures have destroyed <sup>p</sup> my vineyard, they have <sup>a</sup> trodden my portion under foot, they have made my <sup>11</sup> pleasant portion a desolate wilderness.

<sup>10</sup> Or, cause them to come.—<sup>a</sup> Isaiah lvi. 9 ; Chapter vii. 33. <sup>o</sup> Chapter vi. 3.—<sup>p</sup> Isa. v. 1, 5.—<sup>a</sup> Isa. lxiii. 18.—<sup>11</sup> Heb portion of desire.

will shortly give it up to utter desolation. *I have left my heritage*—The whole body of my people, with respect to my special providence over them and care of them, which have been such that, in comparison with them, I might seem to neglect all other countries. *I have given the dearly beloved of my soul, &c.*—That is, that nation, which was once my dearly beloved, precious in my sight, and honourable above any people ; *into the hands of her enemies*—I have determined to deliver her into their power, and they shall tyrannise over, oppress, and enslave her at their pleasure. God terms the Jewish nation his dearly beloved here, to aggravate their sin in returning him hatred for his love, and their folly and misery in throwing themselves out of the favour of one who had such a kindness for them, and was mighty to protect and save them.

Verses 8, 9. *My heritage is unto me as a lion in the forest*—Those that were my lambs and sheep, following me, their chief shepherd, and the guidance of those prophets and pastors whom I set over them, are become like lions in the forest roaring against me, and rending and tearing the prophets whom I send unto them, and who speak to them in my name. *It*—My heritage ; *crieth out against me*—They blaspheme my name, oppose my authority, and bid defiance to my justice. *Therefore have I hated it*—My disposition and conduct are changed toward them, and my heart is alienated from them, because their temper and behaviour are altered, and their hearts and ways alienated from me. *My heritage is unto me as a speckled bird*—Colorata, id est, fœdata sanguine, *died or sprinkled with the blood of her prey*. So R. Salomon interprets the words עֵיט צִבְרָה, here used. Or, as some read it, *Avis digitata, a bird with talons* : so the margin ; that is, *a ravenous bird, uncis unguibus in prædam volans*, says Buxtorf, *flying on its prey with crooked claws*. The meaning is, My people are become wild and savage, and, like a speckled, rapacious bird, are only fit for prey and deeds of violence. And as all the rest of the birds flock about such a one, and are ready to pull it in pieces ; so have I stirred up all the enemies of my people to annoy them on every side ; compared, in the next clause, to so many beasts of prey. See chap. ii. 15 ; Isa. lvi. 9.

Verses 10, 11. *Many pastures have destroyed my vineyard*—*Many eaters, or devourers*, as Dr. Waterland translates רָעִים רָבִים, by which the Chaldee Paraphrast understands the generals of the Chaldean

A. M. 3396. 11 They have made it desolate, and  
B. C. 608. *being desolate* <sup>†</sup> it mourneth unto me ;  
the whole land is made desolate, because <sup>\*</sup> no  
man layeth it to heart.

12 The spoilers are come upon all high places  
through the wilderness: for the sword of the  
LORD shall devour from the *one* end of the land  
even to the *other* end of the land: no flesh  
shall have peace.

13 <sup>†</sup> They have sown wheat, but shall reap  
thorns: they have put themselves to pain, *but*

<sup>\*</sup> Verse 4.—<sup>†</sup> Isa. xlii. 25.—<sup>†</sup> Levit. xxvi. 16; Deut. xxviii.  
38; Mic. vi. 15; Hag. i. 6.

army, an interpretation which seems to be justified  
by the two following verses: though some explain  
it of the rulers of the Jews, who, by their wicked  
government, and equally wicked example, had ru-  
ined their country. God calls Judea his *vineyard*  
and *pleasant portion*, because of the care he took to  
cultivate and improve it, and of the fruit he might  
justly have expected from it: see note on chap. xi.  
16. *Being desolate, it mourneth unto me*—Unto  
God; that is, lying in a neglected and doleful con-  
dition, it becomes a sad spectacle to me, and makes a  
sort of silent complaint, begging to be restored to its  
former prosperity. *Because no man layeth it to  
heart*—The principal cause of this great judgment  
is, that the people do not see and acknowledge my  
hand in the calamities they feel, nor humble them-  
selves under them, but remain in general unaffec-  
ted, stupid, and obstinate.

Verses 12, 13. *The spoilers*—The Chaldean sol-  
diers, described by the metaphor of a *full wind* of  
the high places, chap. iv. 11, *are come upon all high  
places*—Have made themselves masters of all the  
natural fastnesses and artificial fortresses in the  
country. The prophet, as usual, speaks of a thing  
as already done, which was very shortly to be done.  
*For the sword of the Lord shall devour*—Thus  
those people are called, whom God excited to invade  
Judea, as a punishment of the Jews for their sins:  
they were the Lord's sword: *from one end of the  
land even to the other*—The numerous army of the  
invaders shall disperse themselves through the whole  
country, penetrating into every corner of it. *No flesh  
shall have peace*—No rank or order of men shall be  
exempt from the calamity, or able to enjoy any  
tranquillity. *They*—Namely, the inhabitants of the  
land; *have sown wheat, but shall reap thorns*—Have  
taken much pains, and been at much charge, but all  
shall turn to their prejudice. It is a proverbial ex-  
pression, signifying men's loss of time and labour;  
or rather, their receiving only vexation and injury  
as the fruit of those efforts from which they ex-  
pected great advantage. It is here applied to the  
fruitless and destructive endeavours of the Jews to  
save themselves from the evils that threatened them,  
by courting the assistance and alliance of idolaters.  
*They shall be ashamed of your revenues*—Or, in-

shall not profit; and <sup>12</sup> they shall be <sup>A. M. 3396.</sup>  
ashamed of your revenues because of <sup>B. C. 608.</sup>  
the fierce anger of the LORD.

14 ¶ Thus saith the LORD against all mine  
evil neighbours, that <sup>\*</sup> touch the inheritance  
which I have caused my people Israel to inherit;  
Behold, I will <sup>\*</sup> pluck them out of their land,  
and pluck out the house of Judah from among  
them.

15 <sup>†</sup> And it shall come to pass, after that I  
have plucked them out I will return, and have

<sup>12</sup> Or, ye.—<sup>\*</sup> Zech. ii. 8.—<sup>\*</sup> Deut. xxx. 3; Chap. xxxii. 37.  
<sup>†</sup> Ezek. xxviii. 25.

*crease*, as תְּנוּמַת־כִּנּוּן should rather be rendered: it  
alludes to the *reaping of thorns*, mentioned in the  
former part of the verse, as if he had said, You shall  
be ashamed of the small and inconsiderable returns  
you make of all your pains and labours: *because  
of the fierce anger of the Lord*—Which shall make  
all your designs abortive.

Verses 14, 15. *Thus saith the Lord, against, or  
concerning, all mine evil neighbours*—By these are  
meant the *Moabites, Ammonites, Idumeans, and  
Philistines*; against whom Jeremiah prophesies,  
chap. xlvii., xlvi., xlix.; and Ezekiel, chap. xxv.  
These are called *evil neighbours*, because of the  
spite and ill-will which they showed toward the  
Jews on all occasions: *that touch the inheritance,  
&c.*—Who lie near to, and border upon, Judea:  
*Behold, I will pluck them out, &c.*—These people  
were accordingly wasted and spoiled, and part of  
them carried into captivity by the Babylonians.  
*And pluck out the house of Judah, &c.*—Many of the  
Jews were carried captive, or went for safety into  
those neighbouring countries, before the general  
Babylonish captivity, chap. xv. 4, and xi. 11. Of  
these Jews some were carried captive, together with  
the natives of those countries, by the Chaldeans af-  
terward: others went down into Egypt. See chap.  
xliii., xlv. Here is foretold the restoration of the  
Jews from their several dispersions. Compare chap.  
xxxii. 37; Ezek. xxviii. 25, 26. This promise was  
partly fulfilled in the time succeeding the Babylonish  
captivity, Psa. cxlvii. 2; but will be more fully ac-  
complished at the final restoration of that nation,  
when the fulness of the Gentiles will likewise be  
brought into the church, which is foretold in the  
words of the next verse. *And after that I have  
plucked them out*—In justice for the punishment of  
their sins, and in jealousy for the honour of Israel; *I  
will return*—Will change my way, *and have com-  
passion on them*—Though, as being heathen, they  
can lay no claim to the mercies of the covenant made  
with Abraham and his seed, yet they shall have  
benefit by the compassions of the Creator, who will  
look upon them as the work of his hands. *And will  
bring them again every man to his heritage*—Thus,  
after Jeremiah had threatened severe judgments  
upon several countries, he concludes with a general

A. M. 3396. compassion on them, <sup>z</sup> and will bring  
B. C. 608. them again, every man to his heritage,  
and every man to his land.

16 And it shall come to pass, if they will diligently learn the ways of my people, <sup>a</sup> to swear by my name, The LORD liveth; as they taught

<sup>z</sup> Amos ix. 14.—<sup>a</sup> Chap. iv. 2.

promise of their return from their captivity in the latter days; which promise probably relates chiefly to their conversion under the gospel.

Verses 16, 17. *If they will diligently learn the ways of my people*—If they will leave their idolatries, and learn of my people who lived among them to be worshippers of me the true God, and to swear by my name, *The Lord liveth*—That is, pay that homage, which they owe to the Divine Being, to me, the living and true God: *as they taught my people to swear by Baal*—As they drew in my backsliding people to join with them in the service of idols. *Then shall they be built in the midst of my people*—They shall have a portion among my people. The acceptance of the believing Gentiles is here clearly intimated, and their union with the church

my people to swear by Baal; then shall they be <sup>b</sup> built in the midst of my people. A. M. 3396. B. C. 608.

17 But if they will not <sup>c</sup> obey, I will utterly pluck up and destroy that nation, saith the LORD.

<sup>b</sup> Eph. ii. 20, 21; 1 Pet. ii. 5.—<sup>c</sup> Isa. lx. 12.

of God, the middle wall of partition being thrown down. Concerning the actual accomplishment of this prophecy, see Eph. ii. 13–22. *But if they will not obey, I will utterly pluck up, &c.*—But as for those, whether they be Jews or Gentiles, that shall continue in their idolatrous and superstitious practices, or that shall reject the Messiah, and continue in unbelief and disobedience, I will utterly destroy that people. Thus Isa. lx. 12, *The nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish: yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted.* Those that will not be ruled by the grace of God, shall be ruled by the justice of God. And if disobedient nations shall be destroyed, much more shall disobedient churches, from which better things are expected.

### CHAPTER XIII.

*This chapter contains a single and distinct prophecy, which, under two symbols, a linen girdle left to rot, and all vessels being filled with wine, foretels the utter destruction that was destined to fall upon the whole Jewish nation, including the individuals of every rank and denomination, 1–14. An exhortation to humiliation and repentance is subjoined, 15–21. And the cause of all the evils is assigned in the general corruption and profligacy of manners that prevailed without prospect of amendment, 22–27. The particular mention of the joint downfall of the king and queen, 28, seems to justify the opinion which ascribes this prophecy to the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim, whose fate, and that of his queen, is in like manner noticed together, chap. xxii. 18.*

A. M. 3402. **THUS** saith the LORD unto me, Go  
B. C. 602. and get thee a linen girdle, and  
put it upon thy loins, and put it not in water.

2 So I got a girdle, according to the word of the LORD, and put it on my loins.

3 And the word of the LORD came unto me the second time, saying, A. M. 3402. B. C. 602.

4 Take the girdle that thou hast got, which is upon thy loins, and arise, go to Euphrates, and hide it there in a hole of the rock.

#### NOTES ON CHAPTER XIII.

Verses 1, 2. *Thus saith the Lord unto me*—The prophet here begins a new discourse. *Go and get thee a girdle, &c.*—“God explains, at verse 11, what was meant by the symbol of the girdle, or sash, worn about the loins, namely, his people Israel, whom he redeemed of old, and attached to himself by a special covenant; that as a girdle served for an ornament to the wearer, so they should be subservient to the honour and glory of his name. But it is added, *They would not hear*, or conform to his intentions; therefore, being polluted with the guilt of their disobedience, they were, in that state, and on that very account, to be carried into captivity; conformably to which the prophet was commanded not to put the girdle in water, that is, not to wash it, but

to leave it in that state of filthiness which it had contracted in wearing.” *So I got the girdle, according to the word of the Lord*—That is, according to God’s command. *And put it on my loins*—Used it as God directed me, not disputing the reason why God commanded me to do such a thing.

Verse 4. *Arise, go to Euphrates*—God commanded the prophet to go and hide the girdle on the bank of the Euphrates, to signify that the Jews should be carried captive over that river, called the waters of Babylon, Psa. cxxxvii. 1. In the margin of our ancient English Bibles, it is observed, that, “because this river Perath, or Euphrates, was far from Jerusalem, it is evident that this was done in a vision.” And the generality of the best commentators have been of this opinion; it not being probable that the

A. M. 3402. 5 So I went, and hid it by Euphrates, as the LORD commanded me. B. C. 602.

6 And it came to pass after many days, that the LORD said unto me, Arise, go to Euphrates, and take the girdle from thence, which I commanded thee to hide there.

7 Then I went to Euphrates, and digged, and took the girdle from the place where I had hid it: and behold, the girdle was marred, it was profitable for nothing.

8 Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

9 Thus saith the LORD, After this manner <sup>a</sup> will I mar the pride of Judah, and the great pride of Jerusalem.

10 This evil people, which refuse to hear my words, which <sup>b</sup> walk in the <sup>1</sup> imagination of

<sup>a</sup> Lev. xxvi. 19.—<sup>o</sup> Chap. ix. 14; xi. 8; xvi. 12.

prophet should have been sent twice upon a journey of such considerable length and difficulty, to the very great loss of his time, merely upon the errands here mentioned, namely, to carry the girdle to the Euphrates, and to fetch it back, when, it seems, every purpose would have been answered altogether as well if the transaction had been represented in vision. Several things, it must be observed, are related in Scripture as actually done, which yet were certainly only performed in visions. One instance we have chap. xxv. 15-29, where Jeremiah is commanded to take a cup of wine in his hand, and to cause several kings and nations, there enumerated, to drink of it: for it would be a perfect absurdity to believe that he actually went round to all those kings and nations, and made them drink of the contents of his cup. And yet he makes no more distinction in this latter case, than in that now before us, between mental and bodily action. Another remarkable instance we have Gen. xv. 5, where the text says, that God brought Abraham forth abroad, and bid him tell the stars; and yet it appears, by a subsequent verse, that the sun was not then gone down. Indeed, in all these cases, and in many more that might be mentioned of a similar kind, it made no difference as to the end God had in view, whether the transactions related were visionary or real; for either way they served equally to represent the events which it was God's pleasure to make known. See Lowth and Blaney.

Verse 9. *After this manner will I mar the pride of Judah, &c.*—Or, as some translate the verse, "Will I mar the glory of Judah, and the great honour of Jerusalem." I will bring down their pride and stubbornness, by making them slaves and vassals to strangers, Lam. v. 8, 13. Or, alluding to the transaction about the girdle, "I will transport them beyond the Euphrates; I will hide them in Babylon, as in the hole of a rock, whence they cannot come out. They shall be marred in the midst of the nations,

their heart, and walk after other gods, to serve them, and to worship them, shall even be as this girdle, which is good for nothing. A. M. 3402. B. C. 602.

11 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, saith the LORD: that <sup>o</sup> they might be unto me for a people, and <sup>d</sup> for a name, and for a praise, and for a glory; but they would not hear.

12 ¶ Therefore thou shalt speak unto them this word; Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Every bottle shall be filled with wine: and they shall say unto thee, Do we not certainly know that every bottle shall be filled with wine?

<sup>1</sup> Or, stubbornness.—<sup>c</sup> Exod. xix. 5.—<sup>d</sup> Chap. xxxiii. 9.

without temple, without sacrifice, without priests, without external worship. I will humble their presumption, and teach them to acknowledge and adore my mercy."

Verse 11. *For as the girdle cleaveth to the loins of a man*—Here God shows the prophet why he commanded him to put the girdle about his loins. *So have I caused*—Rather, *had I caused*; to cleave unto me the house of Israel—I had betrothed them to myself in righteousness, and entered into a marriage covenant with them, that they might cleave to me as a wife cleaveth to her husband. By the laws I gave them, the prophets I sent among them, and the favours which, in my providence, I showed them, I brought them near to myself, and allowed them access to me, and intercourse with me, above every other nation. *That they might be unto me for a people*—A peculiar people; that they might have the honour of being called by my name; and for a praise and a glory—That I might be glorified by their showing forth my power, goodness, and faithfulness, and all my other glorious perfections to the world, so that I might be honoured and praised through them.

Verse 12. *Therefore*—Because the end intended by my goodness has not been answered upon them; *thou shalt speak unto them this word*—Thou shalt show them the destruction coming upon them by another emblem. *Thus saith the Lord, Every bottle shall be filled with wine*—God's judgments are often represented under the figure of a cup full of intoxicating liquor: see this metaphor pursued at large, chap. xxv. 15, &c. To the same purpose God tells them here that as they have all sinned, so should every one have his share in the punishment. *And they shall say unto thee, &c.*—"God, who knew the profaneness of their hearts, foretels the reply they would make to this threatening, that, taking it in a literal sense, they would make a jest of it, as if the words were intended to encourage intemperance,

A. M. 3402. 13 Then shalt thou say unto them,  
B. C. 602.

Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will fill all the inhabitants of this land, even the kings that sit upon David's throne, and the priests, and the prophets, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, <sup>o</sup> with drunkenness.

14 And <sup>f</sup> I will dash them <sup>2</sup> one against another, even the fathers and the sons together, saith the LORD: I will not pity, nor spare, nor have mercy, <sup>3</sup> but destroy them.

15 ¶ Hear ye, and give ear; be not proud: for the LORD hath spoken.

<sup>o</sup> Isa. li. 17, 21; lxiii. 6; Chap. xxv. 27; li. 7.—<sup>f</sup> Psa. ii. 9.  
<sup>2</sup> Heb. a man against his brother.—<sup>3</sup> Heb. from destroying them.  
<sup>s</sup> Josh. vii. 19.

for either they did not or would not understand the drift of them." Thus Lowth. But Blaney thinks their answer, *Do we not know, &c.*, implies that, by a wilful mistake, they construed his words as "meant to tell them of a plentiful vintage that was coming on, which would fill all their wine-vessels; and of this they claimed to be as good judges as he, from the promising appearance of the vineyards. As if they said, Do you tell us this as a piece of news, or a supernatural discovery? Is it not evident to us as well as to you? The prophet is therefore directed to deal more plainly with them, and to tell them that the wine he meant was not such as would exhilarate, but such as would intoxicate; being no other than what would be poured out of the wine-cup of God's fury, to the subversion of all ranks and orders of men among them."

Verses 13, 14. *Behold, I will fill all the inhabitants with drunkenness*—There is a wine of astonishment and confusion, Psa. lx. 3. With that wine, saith God, I will fill all orders of persons, *kings, priests, prophets*, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem. *And I will dash them one against another*—I will permit an evil spirit of strife and division to arise among them, as Judges ix. 23, so that they shall be set one against another, fathers against their sons, and sons against their fathers, and family against family; so that, having no union among themselves, or friendly co-operation, they shall become an easy prey to their enemies. Thus I will confound and destroy them, as earthen vessels are broken to pieces when they are dashed one against another. The words allude to the earthen bottles which were to be filled with wine, verse 12. *I will not pity nor spare, but destroy, &c.*—For they will not pity, nor spare, nor have mercy, but destroy one another: see Hab. ii. 15, 16. Therefore let them not presume upon my mercy, for I am resolved to show them no mercy, but to bring them to utter ruin, unless a thorough reformation take place.

Verses 15–17. *Hear ye, &c.*—The prophet proceeds to give them good counsel, which, if it had been taken, the desolation and destruction threatened would have been prevented. *Be not proud*—

16 <sup>a</sup> Give glory to the LORD your God, before he cause <sup>b</sup> darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains, and while ye <sup>i</sup> look for light, he turn it into <sup>k</sup> the shadow of death, and make it gross darkness.

17 But if ye will not hear it, my soul shall weep in secret places for *your* pride; and <sup>l</sup> mine eye shall weep sore, and run down with tears, because the LORD's flock is carried away captive.

18 Say unto <sup>m</sup> the king and to the queen

<sup>a</sup> Isa. v. 30; viii. 22; Amos viii. 9.—<sup>b</sup> Isa. lix. 9.—<sup>k</sup> Psa. xlv. 19.—<sup>l</sup> Chapter ix. 1; xiv. 17; Lament. i. 2, 16; ii. 18.  
<sup>m</sup> 2 Kings xxiv. 12; Chap. xxii. 26.

Pride was one of the sins for which God had a controversy with them, verse 9. Let them mortify and forsake this and their other sins, and God will let fall his controversy with them. *Give glory to the Lord your God*—Glorify God by an humble confession of your sins, by submitting yourselves to him, humbling yourselves under his word, and under his mighty hand; *before he cause darkness*—Before he bring upon you the night of affliction, even his great and heavy judgments. Light is the emblem of joy, and happy times are expressed by bright and pleasant days. On the contrary, calamities and troubles are represented by night and darkness, when every thing looks melancholy and dismal. *And before your feet stumble, &c.*—Before the time come when ye shall be forced to flee by night unto the mountains for fear of your enemies. Or, more generally, before you find yourselves overtaken by the pursuing judgments of God, notwithstanding all your endeavours to outrun and escape from them. *And while ye look for light*—That is, for relief and comfort; *he turn it into the shadow of death*—Involve you in most dismal and terrible calamities, out of which you shall be utterly unable to extricate yourselves. *But if ye will not hear*—Will not submit to and obey the word, but continue to be refractory; *my soul shall weep in secret places for your pride*—Your haughtiness, stubbornness, and vain confidence; *and mine eye shall weep sore, &c.*—Not chiefly, nor so much, because my relations, friends, and neighbours are involved in trouble and distress, but *because the Lord's flock*—His people, and the sheep of his pasture; *are carried away captive*—Observe, reader, that should always grieve us most by which God's honour suffers, and the interest of his kingdom is weakened.

Verse 18. *Say unto the king and queen*—That is, to *Jehoiachin*, called also *Coniah*, and his mother, who were carried captives to Babylon at the first coming of Nebuchadnezzar; see chap. xxii. 26; 2 Kings xxiv. 12. Some indeed suppose that Zedekiah and his mother are intended, which does not appear so probable. *Humble yourselves*—By true repentance, and so both give glory to God, and set a good

A. M. 3402. Humble yourselves, sit down: for  
B. C. 602. your 'principalities shall come down,  
even the crown of your glory.

19 The cities of the south shall be shut up,  
and none shall open *them*: Judah shall be carried  
away captive all of it, it shall be wholly  
carried away captive.

20 Lift up your eyes, and behold them <sup>a</sup> that  
come from the north: where *is* the flock *that*  
was given thee, thy beautiful flock?

21 What wilt thou say when he shall <sup>b</sup> punish

<sup>a</sup> Or, *head-tires*.—<sup>b</sup> Ch. vi. 22.—<sup>c</sup> Heb. *visit upon*.—<sup>d</sup> Chap.  
vi. 24.—<sup>e</sup> Chap. v. 19; xvi. 10.

example to your subjects; and *sit down*—Sit down  
and consider what is coming; sit down and lament  
your condition. *For your principalities shall come  
down*—The honour and power by which you value  
yourselves, and in which you confide, *even the crown  
of your glory*—For when you are led away captive,  
where will the badges of your power and pre-emi-  
nence be then? Blessed be God, there is a crown  
of glory which shall never come down, and which  
they who humble themselves before God, in true  
repentance, shall in due time inherit.

Verses 19-21. *The cities of the south, &c.*—The  
cities of Judah, which lay in the southern part of  
Canaan, shall be straitly besieged by the enemy, so  
that there shall be no going in and out; or shall be  
deserted by the inhabitants. Or, as some think, the  
cities of Egypt are intended, from whence the Jews  
expected succour. These should fail them, and they  
should find no access to them. *Lift up your eyes,  
&c.*—He speaks as if their enemies were even then  
upon their march, nay, so near, that if they did but  
lift up their eyes and look, they might see them com-  
ing. *Where is the flock that was given thee?*—He  
speaks to the king, representing him under the idea  
of a shepherd, and the people under that of a flock.  
Or rather, as the pronouns are feminine, he address-  
es the daughter of Judah, that is, the city or state.  
“What wilt thou say, when the Lord shall demand  
of thee an account of the people committed to thy  
trust? What wilt thou answer when the sovereign  
monarch shall see dissipated, diminished, weakened,  
destroyed, *thy beautiful flock*,” or, as תפארתך  
rather signifies, *the flock of thy glory*. *In the multi-  
tude of people*, says Solomon, *is the king's honour*.  
*What wilt thou say when he shall punish thee?*—  
Thou wilt have nothing to say, but be wholly con-  
founded, when God shall visit thee by this sore  
judgment. Or, when Nebuchadnezzar's army, sent  
by God, shall visit thee. *For thou hast taught them  
to be captains, &c.*—Houbigant renders it, “Since  
thou hast made them expert against thee, and hast  
drawn them upon thine own head;” and Blaney,  
more literally, “Seeing it is thou that teachest them  
to be rulers in chief over thee.” “Thou hast fre-  
quently called them to thy succour, and taught them  
the way to thy country, whereof they dreamed not

thee? for thou hast taught them to <sup>A. M. 3402</sup>  
*be captains, and* as chief over thee: <sup>B. C. 602.</sup>  
shall not <sup>o</sup> sorrows take thee, as a woman in  
travail?

22 ¶ And if thou say in thy heart, <sup>p</sup> Where-  
fore come these things upon me? For the  
greatness of thine iniquity are <sup>q</sup> thy skirts dis-  
covered, *and* thy heels <sup>r</sup> made bare.

23 Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the  
leopard his spots? *then* may ye also do good,  
that are <sup>s</sup> accustomed to do evil.

<sup>q</sup> Isa. iii. 17; xlvii. 2, 3; Ver. 26; Ezek. xvi. 37, 38, 39; Nah.  
iii. 5.—<sup>r</sup> Or, *shall be violently taken away*.—<sup>s</sup> Heb. *taught*.

before; and not only thus, but by accumulating  
crimes upon crimes, and filling up the measure of  
thine iniquity, thou hast drawn down the vengeance  
of heaven, and put thyself in the power of the Chal-  
deans.” See Calmet. Some have understood the  
alliances, contracted heretofore with the Assyrians  
by Ahaz, and the conduct of Hezekiah toward the  
ambassadors of the king of Babylon, to be here al-  
luded to. “But I rather think,” says Blaney, “that  
the wicked manners of the people are principally  
designed; which put them out of the protection of  
Almighty God, and rendered them an easy conquest  
to any enemy that came against them. Thus they  
taught their enemies to oppress, and to be lords over  
them; against whom, but for their own faults, they  
might have maintained their security and independ-  
ence.”

Verse 22. *If thou say, Wherefore come these  
things upon me?*—Hypocrites will rarely confess  
their own shame and God's righteousness, but are  
ready to expostulate with him, and to inquire why  
he hath dealt so with them, as if he had treated them  
unjustly. But, saith God, *For the greatness of thine  
iniquity are thy skirts discovered, &c.*—That is,  
thou art carried into captivity, stripped and bare,  
without covering to thy nakedness; it being the bar-  
barous custom of conquerors, in ancient times, to  
treat their captives with such indignities in conduct-  
ing them to the place of their intended residence:  
see note on Isa. iii. 17; and Nahum iii. 5. Lowth  
thinks the words may also allude to the punishment  
that used to be inflicted upon common harlots and  
adulteresses, which was to strip them naked, and ex-  
pose them to the eyes of the world: and thus God  
threatened he would deal with Jerusalem, upon ac-  
count of her spiritual fornication.

Verse 23. *Can the Ethiopian change his skin, &c.*  
—The word *Cushi*, here rendered *Ethiopian*, often  
signifies *Arabian*, in the Scriptures; *Ethiopia* being,  
by ancient writers, distinguished into *Eastern* (the  
same with Arabia) and *Western* Ethiopia. But here  
an inhabitant of the latter, that is, of Ethiopia prop-  
erly so called, seems evidently to be meant, the people  
of that country, which lay south of Egypt, being  
much more remarkable than the Arabians for their  
black colour. It seems hardly necessary to observe

A. M. 3402. 24 Therefore will I scatter them  
B. C. 602. <sup>r</sup> as the stubble that passeth away by  
the wind of the wilderness.

25 <sup>r</sup> This is thy lot, the portion of thy mea-  
sures from me, saith the LORD; because thou  
hast forgotten me, and trusted in <sup>r</sup> falsehood.

26 Therefore <sup>u</sup> will I discover thy skirts upon

<sup>r</sup> Psa. i. 4; Hos. xiii. 3.—<sup>s</sup> Job xx. 29; Psa. xi. 6.—<sup>t</sup> Ch.  
x. 14.—<sup>u</sup> Verse 22; Lam. i. 8; Ezekiel xvi. 37; xxiii. 29;

to the reader, that Jeremiah does not intend to express here the absolute impossibility of a change taking place in the principles and practices of the ignorant and wicked. "To suppose this, would be to contradict the whole tenor of his writings, and to render insignificant and absurd all his invitations to repentance. Nay, it appears from the last verse of this chapter that he did not suppose the reformation even of this people to be an absolute impossibility. We are therefore to understand this as a proverbial expression, which, like many others in Scripture, is not to be taken in the strictness of the letter; the prophet designing only to express the extreme difficulty of a moral change in habitual sinners, and particularly in those presumptuous and obstinate sinners of Israel to whom his discourse is directed."—Dodd.

Verses 24, 25. *Therefore will I scatter them*—Separate them from one another, and disperse them abroad in that strange and remote country to which they are carried captive; *as the stubble, or chaff*, rather, *that passeth away by the wind*—That is dissipated and carried far away by a fierce wind: he adds, *of the wilderness*, to render the declaration the more emphatical, the chaff being more easily and effectually scattered by the wind in an open place, where there are no houses. *This is the portion of*

thy face, that thy shame may appear. A. M. 3402.

27 I have seen thine adulteries, and <sup>B. C. 602.</sup>  
thy <sup>r</sup> neighings, the lewdness of thy whore-  
dom, and thine abominations <sup>r</sup> on the hills  
in the fields. Wo unto thee, O Jerusalem!  
wilt thou not be made clean? <sup>s</sup> when shall  
it once be?

Hos. ii. 10.—<sup>r</sup> Chap. v. 8.—<sup>s</sup> Isa. lxxv. 7; Chap. ii. 20; iii.  
2, 6; Ezek. vi. 13.—<sup>t</sup> Heb. after when yet?

*thy measures from me*—What thou wilt receive of my hand; *because thou hast forgotten me*—The favours I have bestowed upon thee, and the obligations thou art under to me: of these thou hast no sense, no remembrance; *and trusted in falsehood*—In idols, in an arm of flesh, in the self-flatteries of a deceitful heart.

Verses 26, 27. *Therefore will I discover thy skirts*—Lay thee open to shame and disgrace. See on verse 22. *I have seen thine adulteries*—Thy idolatries; thy inordinate desire after strange gods, which thou hast been impatient to gratify: *thy neighings*—A metaphorical expression taken from horses neighing to each other; *the lewdness of thy whoredoms*—Thy impudence and unsatiableness in the worship of idols, *on the hills, in the fields, upon the high places*. *Wo unto thee, O Jerusalem*—Miserable art thou, and greater miseries await thee, as the fruit of such practices. *Wilt thou not be made clean?*—The prophet here expresses, in the strongest manner, his desire for the repentance and reformation of this people. The original, כתי עור, *When once?* is remarkably emphatical. The aposiopesis, as it is called, or form of speech, by which, through a vehement affection, the prophet suddenly breaks off his discourse, is remarkably beautiful and expressive.

CHAPTER XIV.

It is probable that the prophecy contained in this and the following chapter was delivered not long after the foregoing, namely, in the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign, since the subject matter of it seems to agree well with this season. (1.) The prophet foretels great distress that should be caused in Judah by a long drought, 1-6. (2.) In the name of the people he makes a confession of sins, and supplicates the divine mercy, 7-9. (3.) God will not be entreated, but declares his resolution to punish, 10-12. (4.) Jeremiah complains of false prophets, who amused the people with contrary predictions; but whom God disclaims, threatening both them, and the people who listened to them, with sword and famine, 13-18. The prophet renews his supplications in the people's name and behalf, 19-22.

A. M. 3403. THE word of the LORD that came to  
B. C. 601. Jeremiah concerning <sup>1</sup>the dearth.

<sup>1</sup> Heb. the words of the dearths, or, restraint.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XIV.

Verse 1. *The word of the Lord concerning the dearth*—Hebrew, על דברי הוצרות, *respecting the matters of the restraints*, that is, the drought, when the showers were restrained, or, as Moses and Solo-

2 Judah mourneth, and <sup>a</sup> the gates <sup>A. M. 3403.</sup>  
thereof languish; they are <sup>b</sup> black <sup>B. C. 601.</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Isa. iii. 26.—<sup>b</sup> Chap. viii. 21.

mon express it, *when the heaven was shut up, and there was no rain*. See Deut. xi. 17; 1 Kings vii. 35. Thus the LXX., περι της αροχιας, *concerning the want of rain*. So also the Chaldee and Syriac versions: and thus our translators understand the

A. M. 3403. unto the ground; and <sup>c</sup> the cry of  
B. C. 601. Jerusalem is gone up.

3 And their nobles have sent their little ones to the waters: they came to the pits, and found no water; they returned with their vessels empty; they were <sup>d</sup> ashamed and confounded, <sup>e</sup> and covered their heads.

4 Because the ground is chapt, for there was no rain in the earth, the ploughmen were ashamed, they covered their heads.

5 Yea, the hind also calved in the field, and forsook *it*, because there was no grass.

<sup>c</sup> 1 Sam. v. 12.—<sup>d</sup> Psa. xl. 14.—<sup>e</sup> 2 Sam. xv. 30.

word, chap. xvii. 8, rendering it, not *dearth*, as here, but *drought*: a calamity which, however, produced a dearth or famine, similar, it seems, to that in the time of Elijah. At what precise time this great drought took place, we are not informed in the records of history: nor whether it be the same with that of which an intimation is given chap. iii. 3, where see the note. That it was a calamity very incident to the land of Israel, and applied as a punishment of sin, appears from many parts of the Old Testament. The effects of it are described in the next five verses in very elegant and moving language, and afterward earnestly deprecated.

Verse 2. *Judah mourneth*—The people of Judah and Jerusalem, here considered collectively, and represented as a mother oppressed with grief for the miseries which have come upon her children. *And the gates languish; they are black*—"They are in deep mourning:" so Blaney, who observes, "The gates of cities, being places of public resort, where the courts of justice were held, and other common business transacted, seem here to be put for the persons wont to meet there; in like manner as when we say, 'The court is in mourning,' we mean the persons that attend the court. So that by this passage we are to understand, that all the persons who appeared in public were dejected, and put on black, or mourning, on account of the national distress." *And the cry of Jerusalem is gone up*—Namely, to heaven: That is, the cry of the inhabitants of Jerusalem; of their sin and trouble, but not, as it seems, of their confessions, prayers, and supplications.

Verses 3-6. *And their nobles, &c.*—This scarcity of water afflicted not poor persons only, who had not such means of supplying their necessities as the rich; but the greatest among them, who sent *their little ones*, (or *inferiors*, as צעיריהם, seems here rather to signify,) to the places made to receive and retain water; who, finding none, returned with their vessels empty, like persons ashamed, and troubled upon seeing their expectations frustrated. Jerusalem, it must be observed, was supplied with water by two lakes, or pools, termed *the upper pool*, and *the lower pool*; Isa. vii. 3; and xxii. 9; from which the water was conveyed by pipes or conduits, for the use of the city. *Because the ground is chapt*—

6 And <sup>f</sup> the wild asses did stand in <sup>g</sup> the high places, they snuffed up the <sup>h</sup> wind like dragons; their eyes did fail, because <sup>i</sup> there was no grass.

7 ¶ O LORD, though our iniquities testify against us, do thou <sup>j</sup> *it* <sup>k</sup> for thy name's sake: for our backslidings are many; we have sinned against thee.

8 <sup>h</sup> O the hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof in time of trouble, why shouldest thou be as a stranger in the land, and as a wayfaring man *that turneth aside to tarry for a night?*

<sup>f</sup> Chap. ii. 24.—<sup>g</sup> Psa. xxv. 11.—<sup>h</sup> Chap. xvii. 13.

Hebrew, דחור, *broken, bruised, turned into dust. The ploughmen*—*The husbandmen*, as אֲרָמִים, properly signifies; *were ashamed*—Disappointed in their hopes of reaping fruit from their labours. *They covered their heads*—An expression of great affliction and mourning. *The hind also calved and forsook it*—The hinds are loving creatures, and as all creatures, by a natural instinct, love their young, so the hinds especially; but their moisture being dried up, they had not milk for them, but were forced to leave them, and to run hither and thither to seek grass to eat. *And the wild asses, &c.*—The wild asses, wanting water, got upon the high places, or cliffs, where the air was cooler and its current stronger than in lower places, and their sucked in the wind; and this, it is said, they did *like dragons*, which are reputed to delight in cool places, and are said by Aristotle and Pliny to stand frequently upon high places imbibing the cool air. *Their eyes did fail, &c.*—They languished, or pined away for want of food; in which case the natural splendour of the eyes, which is very great in wild asses, grows dull or languid.

Verse 7. *O Lord, &c.*—The prophet, having described their misery both in its cause, the drought, and the effects produced thereby, here applies himself to God, who alone could remove it, confessing that their many and great sins and backslidings had well deserved to be thus severely scourged. *Though our iniquities testify against us*—That thou art righteous in what thou hast done, and make it evident that we have merited the most dreadful judgments thy wrath can inflict; yet *do thou it*—Do thou what we stand in need of; give us rain, though not for our sake, we deserve no such kindness from thee, yet for *thy name's sake*; for the sake of thy word and promise, by which thou engagest to hear the prayers of thy people in their distress, Psa. l. 15, and for thine honour and glory.

Verses 8, 9. *O the hope of Israel*—That is, the object of Israel's hope; the Being in whom alone thy people Israel have been wont to hope, or in whom they have just reason to hope; *the Saviour thereof in time of trouble*—Who hast formerly been their Saviour in their distresses, and who alone canst save them in such times of trouble as thou hast now

A. M. 3403. 9 Why shouldst thou be as a man  
B. C. 601. astonished, as a mighty man <sup>1</sup> that  
cannot save? yet thou, O LORD, <sup>2</sup> art in the  
midst of us, and <sup>2</sup> we are called by thy name;  
leave us not.

10 ¶ Thus saith the LORD unto this people,  
<sup>1</sup> Thus have they loved to wander, they have  
not refrained their feet, therefore the LORD doth  
not accept them; <sup>2</sup> he will now remember their  
iniquity, and visit their sins.

11 Then said the LORD unto me, <sup>2</sup> Pray not  
for this people for *their* good.

12 ° When they fast, I will not hear their cry;  
and ° when they offer burnt-offering and an  
oblation, I will not accept them; but ° I will  
consume them by the sword, and by the famine,  
and by the pestilence.

13 ¶ ° Then said I, Ah, Lord God! behold,  
the prophets say unto them, Ye shall not see  
the sword, neither shall ye have famine; but I  
will give you <sup>3</sup> assured peace in this place.

14 Then the LORD said unto me, ° The pro-  
phets prophesy lies in my name: ° I sent them

not, neither have I commanded them, A. M. 3403.  
neither spake unto them: they pro- B. C. 601.  
phesy unto you a false vision and divination,  
and a thing of naught, and the deceit of their  
heart.

15 Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning  
the prophets that prophesy in my name, and I  
sent them not, ° yet they say, Sword and famine  
shall not be in this land; By sword and famine  
shall those prophets be consumed.

16 And the people to whom they prophesy  
shall be cast out in the streets of Jerusalem,  
because of the famine, and the sword; ° and  
they shall have none to bury them, them, their  
wives, nor their sons, nor their daughters: for I  
will pour their wickedness upon them.

17 ¶ Therefore thou shalt say this word unto  
them; ° Let mine eyes run down with tears  
night and day, and let them not cease: ° for the  
virgin daughter of my people is broken with a  
great breach, with a very grievous blow.

18 If I go forth into ° the field, then behold  
the slain with the sword! and if I enter into

<sup>1</sup> Isaiah lix. 1.—<sup>2</sup> Exodus xxix. 45, 46; Levit. xxvi. 11, 12.  
<sup>3</sup> Heb. *thy name is called upon us*, Dan. ix. 18, 19.—<sup>1</sup> Chap. ii.  
23, 24, 25.—<sup>2</sup> Hosea viii. 13; ix. 9.—<sup>3</sup> Exodus xxxii. 10;  
Chap. vii. 16; xi. 14.—<sup>4</sup> Prov. i. 28; Isa. i. 15; lviii. 3; Chap.  
xi. 11; Ezek. viii. 18; Mic. iii. 4; Zech. vii. 13.

<sup>1</sup> Chap. vi. 20; vii. 21, 22.—<sup>2</sup> Chap. ix. 16.—<sup>3</sup> Chap. iv. 10.  
<sup>4</sup> Heb. *peace of truth*.—<sup>5</sup> Chap. xxvii. 10.—<sup>6</sup> Chap. xxxiii. 21.  
xxvii. 15; xxix. 8.—<sup>7</sup> Chapter v. 12, 13.—<sup>8</sup> Psalm lxxix. 3.  
<sup>9</sup> Chap. ix. 1; xiii. 17; Lam. i. 16; ii. 18.—<sup>10</sup> Chap. viii. 21.  
<sup>11</sup> Ezek. vii. 15.

brought them into; *why shouldst thou be as a  
stranger in the land?*—That is, as one who, having  
no permanent interest in the land, is little concerned  
for its welfare; and as a wayfaring man, &c.—As  
a traveller who enters a place to stay *only for a  
night*, and never inquires, nor takes any care about  
the affairs of it. *Why shouldst thou be as a man  
astonished*—“As a man void of counsel.” so Hou-  
bigant. Or as one in such disorder, through some  
great emotion of mind, that he is able to do nothing.  
As a mighty man, &c.—As a mere man, who, though  
mighty, yet in many cases cannot save; or who,  
through some fear or surprise, is incapacitated to  
make use of his strength. *Yet thou, O Lord, art in  
the midst of us*—Of the whole land, according to  
thy declaration, Num. xxxv. 34, *I the Lord dwell  
among the children of Israel.*

Verses 10-12. *Thus saith the Lord, &c.*—Here  
God returns an answer to the complaints and ex-  
postulations of the prophet, contained in the eight  
preceding verses. *They have loved to wander*—  
They have been fond of their idols; and despising  
the divine succour, have run after that of strangers,  
and they have persisted in their sinful courses, not-  
withstanding all counsels. *Therefore the Lord doth  
not accept them*—He will not accept their own pray-  
ers or humiliations, nor thine intercessions on their  
behalf, but will punish them according to their  
deserts. *When they fast, I will not hear*—It is

likely a public fast had been appointed upon occa-  
sion of this drought, as there was in a like case in  
the Prophet Joel's time. *But I will consume them  
by the sword, famine, and pestilence*—Thus God  
threatens to add to the drought three sore judgments,  
ordinarily accompanying one another, both in God's  
threatenings and in the execution of them.

Verses 13-16. *Ah, Lord God! Behold the pro-  
phets, &c.*—See note on chap. iv. 10. *Thus saith  
the Lord*—And what he saith he will assuredly  
make good; *By the sword and famine shall those  
prophets be consumed*—They shall fall first by those  
very judgments, with the hopes of an exemption  
from which they have flattered others. *And the  
people shall be cast out in the streets, &c.*—The  
people contributed to their own delusions, and read-  
ily hearkened to such false prophets as confirmed  
them in their evil ways: God therefore justly  
threatens to punish them, because they were un-  
willing to know the truth.

Verses 17, 18. *Therefore thou shalt say this word  
unto them*—Either, 1st, The word spoken above; the  
threatenings denounced in the last two verses against  
the false prophets and the people, *the deceivers and  
the deceived*: or, 2d, As the passage is generally in-  
terpreted, and as our translators have understood it,  
the words following, namely, the prophet's lamenta-  
tion and prayer. *Let mine eyes run down with  
tears*—As if he had said, However insensible you are

A. M. 3403. the city, then behold them that are  
B. C. 601. sick with famine! yea, both the prophet and the priest 'go about into a land that they know not.

19 <sup>b</sup> Hast thou utterly rejected Judah? hath thy soul loathed Zion? Why hast thou smitten us, and <sup>c</sup> there is no healing for us? <sup>d</sup> we looked for peace, and there is no good; and for the time of healing, and behold trouble!

20 We acknowledge, O LORD, our wickedness,

<sup>a</sup> Or, make merchandise against a land, and men acknowledge it not, Chap. v. 13.—<sup>b</sup> Lam. v. 22.—<sup>c</sup> Chap. xv. 18.—<sup>d</sup> Chap. viii. 15.

of your own condition, yet God commands me to bewail those calamities which I foresee are coming upon you. *For the virgin daughter of my people*—That is as dear to me as a daughter to her father; *is broken with a great breach*—Much greater than any she has yet sustained. The dissolution of a government, or body politic, is called a breach, by way of allusion to the breaking or disjoining the limbs of a human body. The prophet speaks as if he already saw the miseries attending the invasion of the country by the Chaldeans. *If I go forth into the field, &c.*—Multitudes lie dead in the field, slain with the sword; and in the city multitudes lie dying for want of food: doleful spectacle! *Yea both the prophet and the priest*—Namely, the false prophets, who flattered the people with their lies, and the wicked priests, who persecuted the true prophets, are now expelled their country, and go about into a land they know not—Either as prisoners and captives, whithersoever their conquerors lead them; or, as fugitives and vagabonds, wherever they can find shelter. Some understand it of the true prophets, Ezekiel and Daniel, who were carried to Babylon with the rest. But as the Hebrew word here used, כָּהֵן, properly signifies, to go about on account of traffic, or, merchandise, the sense of the clause may be, "The prophet and the priest carry on a trade against the land, and acknowledge it not." That is, they deceive the people with lying divinations for the sake of gain, and when accused of it, will not own their guilt. Blaney renders it, *They go trafficking about the city*, meaning, "They go about with their false doctrine and lying predictions, as pedlers do with their wares, seeking their own gain," and *take no knowledge*—That is, "pay no regard to the miseries in which their country is involved, but act as if they were totally insensible of them."

Verses 19–22. *Hast thou utterly rejected Judah?*—The prophet again returns to God, and expostulates with him, humbly imploring mercy for his people, which shows that he did not understand God's words to him, (verse 11,) as an absolute prohibition to pray for them. *Hath thy soul loathed Zion?*—Which was formerly thy delight, and the place thou didst choose for thy special residence. *Why hast thou smitten, &c.*—That is, So smitten that there is

and the iniquity of our fathers: for <sup>a</sup> we have sinned against thee. A. M. 3403. B. C. 601.

21 Do not abhor us; for thy name's sake, do not disgrace the throne of thy glory: <sup>f</sup> remember, break not thy covenant with us.

22 <sup>g</sup> Are there any among <sup>h</sup> the vanities of the Gentiles that can cause rain? or can the heavens give showers? <sup>i</sup> Art not thou he, O LORD our God? therefore we will wait upon thee: for thou hast made all these things.

<sup>e</sup> Psalm cvi. 6; Dan. ix. 8.—<sup>f</sup> Psalm lxxiv. 2, 20; cvi. 45. <sup>g</sup> Zech. x. 1, 2.—<sup>h</sup> Deut. xxxii. 21.—<sup>i</sup> Psa. cxxxv. 7; cxlvii. 8; Isa. xxx. 23; Chap. v. 24; x. 13.

*no healing*—Wounded us past recovery; none else can, and thou wilt not heal us. *We looked for peace, &c.*—All our hopes and expectations have been frustrated. *We acknowledge our wickedness*—The accumulated guilt of our land; *and the iniquity of our fathers*—Which we have imitated, and therefore are justly punished for it. We do not cover our sin, in which case we know we should not obtain mercy; we confess it, and hope to find thee faithful and just in forgiving it. *Do not abhor us*—Hebrew, שֶׁל תִּנְאֹץ, do not despise, or reject us. What he deprecates is the judgments come already, and further coming on the people, the famine, sword, and pestilence, with the drought, under the sad effects of which they at present laboured; and he prays for their removal or prevention in these words, in which he implies, that the love of God to a people is the source of all the good which they can expect, and his wrath the source of all evil that can befall them. To enforce his petition he pleads, 1st, God's honour: *For thy name's sake*—That name of thine on which we call, and by which we are called; thy nature and attributes; let not these suffer an eclipse; let it not be said or thought by the heathen that thou art either unable or unwilling to protect and save thy people. *Do not disgrace the throne of thy glory*—The temple, with the ark in it, the especial symbol of thy presence, termed (chap. xvii. 12,) *a glorious high throne from the beginning*. Let not the desolations of it give occasion to idolaters to reproach him that used to be worshipped there, as if he wanted power or inclination to protect it; or, as if the gods of Babylon had been too strong for him. 2d, He pleads God's promise and covenant with Israel: *Remember, break not thy covenant with us*—"Thou hast promised to be our God, and that we should be thy people, chap. xi. 4; that is, That thou wouldst take us under thy protection. We have indeed forfeited all our title to thy promises by our sins, yet we beseech thee still to remember the relation we bear to thee." *Are there any among the vanities of the Gentiles*—The vain idols, the imaginary beings, which have no existence save in the fancies of their worshippers, or the gods made by men's hands; *that can give rain? or can the heavens give showers?*—Without thy providence. Are showers purely owing to natural causes? Dost thou not direct when and where they shall fall? The giving

rain in its season is an argument for God's providence, often insisted upon in the Scriptures: see note on chap. v. 24. And the prophet, imploring from God a removal of the drought, argues from the impossibility of obtaining relief in any other way, neither

the heathen idols, nor the clouds, without God's will, being able to give rain. *Art not thou he, O Lord our God?—Namely, that givest it. Therefore we will wait upon thee—*For this blessing, and for the supply of all our other wants.

## CHAPTER XV.

In this chapter, (1,) God replies to the preceding supplications, by declaring that not even the intercession of his favoured servants, Moses and Samuel, should divert him from executing his purpose of vengeance against Judah; which is denounced in terms of great severity, 1-9. (2,) Jeremiah complains to God of his continued struggle with his persecutors, and is assured of special protection while his enemies should be ruined, 10-14. (3,) He complains that notwithstanding his sincerity, fidelity, and diligence, in the discharge of his prophetic office, and his delight in God's word and will, he had very little comfort in his work, 15-18. (4,) Assurances of protection, security, and aid in the discharge of his office are renewed to him, on condition of obedience and fidelity on his part, 19-21.

A. M. 3403. B. C. 601. **T**HEN said the LORD unto me, <sup>a</sup> Though <sup>b</sup> Moses and <sup>c</sup> Samuel stood before me, yet my mind could not be toward this people: cast them out of my sight, and let them go forth.

2 And it shall come to pass, if they say unto thee, Whither shall we go forth? then thou shalt tell them, Thus saith the LORD; <sup>d</sup> Such as are for death, to death; and such as are for the sword, to the sword; and such as are for the famine, to the famine; and such as are for the captivity, to the captivity.

3 And I will <sup>e</sup> appoint over them <sup>f</sup> four <sup>g</sup> kinds, saith the LORD: the sword to slay, and the dogs to tear, and <sup>h</sup> the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the earth, to devour and destroy.

4 And <sup>i</sup> I will cause them to be <sup>j</sup> removed into all kingdoms of the earth, because of <sup>k</sup> Manasseh the son of Hezekiah king of Judah, for that which he did in Jerusalem.

5 For <sup>l</sup> who shall have pity upon thee, O Jerusalem? or who shall bemoan thee? or who shall go aside <sup>m</sup> to ask how thou doest?

<sup>a</sup> Ezekiel xiv. 14.—<sup>b</sup> Exodus xxxii. 11, 12; Psalm xcix. 6. <sup>c</sup> 1 Samuel vii. 9.—<sup>d</sup> Chapter xliii. 11; Ezek. v. 2, 12; Zech. xi. 9.—<sup>e</sup> Lev. xxvi. 16.—<sup>f</sup> Heb. families.—<sup>g</sup> Chap. vii. 33; Deut. xxviii. 26.

<sup>h</sup> Heb. I will give them for a removing.—<sup>i</sup> Deut. xxviii. 25; Chapter xxiv. 9; Ezekiel xxiii. 46.—<sup>j</sup> 2 Kings xxi. 11, &c.; xxiii. 26; xxiv. 3, 4.—<sup>k</sup> Isaiah li. 19.—<sup>l</sup> Hebrew, to ask of thy peace.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER XV.

Verse 1. *Then said the Lord unto me, &c.*—This is the Lord's answer to the fervent prayers of Jeremiah, contained in the last four verses of the preceding chapter. *Though Moses and Samuel stood before me*—By prayer or sacrifice to reconcile me to them; yet my mind could not be toward this people—Yet I could not be prevailed with to admit them into favour. "As God had forbidden Jeremiah before to intercede for them, because it would be to no purpose; so here he declares, that he would not admit the prayers of any others, though eminent favourites, in their behalf. Moses obtained pardon for the people after their sin in making the golden calf, Ex. xxxii. 34; and again, after their despising the promised land, Num. xiv. 20. Samuel's intercession prevailed for their deliverance out of the hands of the Philistines, 1 Sam. vii. 9. And these two persons are mentioned together, as remarkably prevalent by their prayers, Psa. xcix. 6, 8. But here God says, that if these very persons were alive, and in that near attendance to him which they formerly enjoyed, (for that is the import of the phrase, *To stand before him*,) yet even their prayers should not avert his

judgments from this people."—Lowth. *Cast them out of my sight*—Declare that they shall be cast out, as that which is in the highest degree odious and offensive; or tell them to come no more to me with their supplications, but to go out of my sanctuary. A strong declaration of determined displeasure. Thus the Lord dismisses them with a severity whereof we have few examples in Scripture. See Ezek. xiv. 14, 16.

Verses 2-5. *If they say unto thee, Whither shall we go forth?*—If they ask thee what thou meanest by going forth, and whither they shall go: *thou shalt tell them, Such as are for death to death, &c.*—In general, You shall go forth, saith God, to ruin and destruction; but shall not be all destroyed in one and the same way, but every one shall perish in that way which God hath appointed: some shall be destroyed by the pestilence, (for that is here to be understood by death, Rev. vi. 8, it being death without visible means,) others shall be destroyed by famine, others by the sword of the enemy, others shall go into captivity; but one way or other the greatest part of you shall be consumed. *And I will appoint over them four kinds*—Namely, of destroyers. *The*

A. M. 3103. 6 <sup>k</sup> Thou hast forsaken me, saith  
B. C. 601. the LORD, thou art <sup>l</sup> gone backward :  
therefore will I stretch out my hand against  
thee, and destroy thee ; <sup>m</sup> I am weary with re-  
penting.

7 And I will fan them with a fan in the gates  
of the land ; I will bereave *them* of <sup>4</sup> children,

<sup>k</sup> Chapter ii. 13.—<sup>l</sup> Chap. vii. 24.—<sup>m</sup> Hos. xiii. 14.—<sup>4</sup> Or, whatsoever is dear.—<sup>n</sup> Isa. ix. 13 ; Chap. v. 3 ; Amos iv. 10, 11.

*sword to slay*—And those that are slain by it shall not enjoy the common rites of burial, but their carcasses shall be left a prey to *the dogs, the birds, and the wild beasts*, which last shall both tear their living bodies and their dead carcasses. *And I will cause them to be removed into all kingdoms, &c.*—Though the body of the people were removed into Babylon, yet it is more than probable that many of them became voluntary exiles to avoid the miseries which they saw coming upon their country. And, without doubt, the king of Babylon removed them into several kingdoms belonging to his large empire. These, it must be observed, are the very words of Moses, (Deut. xxviii. 25,) where he threatens the Israelites with a general dispersion over the world, which threatening received its completion, in part, by the Babylonish captivity, but more perfectly after the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. *Because of Manasseh*—In idolatry and other abominations he exceeded all the kings that preceded him : see 2 Kings xxi. 7–11. In his time the public worship of God was wholly suppressed, and idolatry introduced into the very temple ; the law of God was likewise quite laid aside, and, in a manner, forgotten, as appears by the surprise Hilkiah was in when he found the original copy of the law in the house of the Lord. So that his sins filled up the measure of the Jews' iniquities ; and therefore, notwithstanding the reformation wrought afterward by Josiah, the Lord turned not from the fierceness of his wrath kindled against Judah : see 2 Kings xxiii. 26, and xxiv. 3, 4. It must be observed, however, that it was not merely for his sins, or the sins of his times, that God so dreadfully punished the Jews in the days of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah ; but it was also, and especially because they imitated the wicked example which Manasseh had set them, the reformation effected by Josiah being only partial, and of not long continuance. *For who shall, or, who will, have pity upon thee, O Jerusalem*—Thy sins render thee unworthy of pity, and all that see the calamities brought upon thee will acknowledge them to be just. *Who will go aside, &c.*—Who will be so much concerned for thee as to step a little out of his way to inquire after thee ; a common instance of respect between persons in any degree acquainted. Rather they that pass by will insult over thy calamities.

Verses 6, 7. *Thou hast forsaken me, thou art gone backward*—God here, by more expressions of the same import with many that we have before met with, declares his steady resolution to destroy them for their apostacy from him ; and represents him-

I will destroy my people, *since* <sup>n</sup> they A. M. 3403.  
return not from their ways. B. C. 601.

8 Their widows are increased to me above the sand of the seas : I have brought upon them <sup>5</sup> against the mother of the young men a spoiler at noon-day : I have caused *him* to fall upon it suddenly, and terrors upon the city.

<sup>5</sup> Or, against the mother city a young man spoiling, &c., or, against the mother and the young men.

self as an angry prince or parent, that had frequently been provoked by a subject or child whom he had often resolved to punish, but out of his clemency, or upon the mediation of others, had altered his mind, and resolved to spare him ; but afterward had met with so many fresh provocations that his patience was quite tired out, and he was determined to bear no longer. *I will fan them with a fan*—Not a purging fan, to separate the chaff from them, but a scattering fan, to disperse and scatter them to all the winds, as Ezekiel expresses it, Ezek. v. 12. *In the gates of the land*—He alludes to a man standing in the gate of his thrashing-floor to fan and cleanse his corn. *I will deprive them of children*—The words, *of children*, are not in the Hebrew, and are unnecessarily supplied : it may as well be of any, or all their comforts and good things. *I will destroy my people*—The privilege they claim of being my people shall not protect them while they go on in their sinful courses.

Verse 8. *Their widows are increased above the sand of the seas*—A hyperbolical expression. The prophet still speaks of things to come as if present. In Jehoiakim's time we read of no great number of widows, but they were exceedingly multiplied when the city was besieged and taken in Zedekiah's time. *I have brought upon them against the mother, &c.*—Blaney renders this and the next clause, *I have brought against their mother a chosen one, spoiling at noon-day ; I have caused to fall upon her suddenly an enemy and terrors.* By the mother here we are to understand Jerusalem, the mother-city, as she is termed in the margin, against which Nebuchadnezzar, the spoiler, was sent, and who came, not secretly, as a thief by night, but openly, with an army at noon-day. "Nebuchadnezzar might be called a chosen one," says Blaney, "as being selected by God to be the instrument and executioner of his vengeance. In the margin of our Bibles, *בחר* is rendered a young man ; and this also would very properly characterize the same person. For Josephus (*Contra Apion*, lib. i.) cites from Berosus, the Chaldean historian, a passage to the following purport : that 'Nabopolassar, king of Babylon, hearing that the provinces of Egypt, Cælo-Syria, and Phœnicia had revolted, and being himself infirm through age, sent a part of his forces under his son Nebuchadnezzar, then in the prime of youth, *οὐτις ἐτι ἐν ἡλικίᾳ*, by whom those provinces were again reduced.' This was the expedition said to have been undertaken by him in the third year of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, in the course of which, after having

A. M. 3403. 9 ° She that hath borne seven languisheth: she hath given up the ghost; <sup>B. C. 601.</sup> her sun is gone down while *it was* yet day: she hath been ashamed and confounded: and the residue of them will I deliver to the sword before their enemies, saith the LORD.

10 ¶ <sup>¶</sup> Wo is me, my mother, that thou hast borne me a man of strife and a man of contention to the whole earth! I have neither lent on usury, nor men have lent to me on usury;

° 1 Sam. ii. 5.—<sup>¶</sup> Amos viii. 9.—<sup>¶</sup> Job iii. 1, &c.; Chapter xx. 14.

first defeated the Egyptian army at Carchemish, he laid siege to Jerusalem, took and plundered it, carrying away much spoil and many captives to Babylon." See chap. xvi. 2; Dan. i. 1-3; 2 Kings xxiv. 1.

Verse 9. *She that hath borne seven languisheth*—Seven is put for many, (see 1 Sam. ii. 5.) and the multitude of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the mother-city, is here alluded to; the prophet pursuing the metaphor of the former verse, and describing the mother-city under the figure of a woman that had been fruitful, but was now become feeble, and bore no children. He means that the people of Judah, which had been very numerous, were now greatly diminished. *Her sun is gone down while it was yet day*—In the midst of her prosperity she is reduced to this state of misery, being of a sudden overwhelmed with the greatest calamities, when she might have expected a long continuance of happiness. The expression is extremely strong, and denotes a sudden change from the highest dignity to the lowest abasement. *She hath been ashamed and confounded*—The judgments of God oppressed and confounded a part of the Jews before their captivity. *And the residue of them*—The remainder of them, saith God, shall be destroyed by the sword of the enemy.

Verses 10, 11. *Wo is me, my mother*—The prophet here complains of the opposition he met with from his countrymen for speaking unwelcome truths. *Thou hast borne me a man of contention to the whole earth*—Or, *whole land*, rather. I am the object of common hatred; every body takes occasion to quarrel with me, because I speak truths which they do not like to hear. *I have neither lent upon usury, &c.*—“The Jews were forbidden to take usury of their brethren, (Deut. xxiii. 19,) especially of the poor, (Exod. xxii. 25,) which was thought so great an oppression that it made the man who was guilty of it hated and cursed by every one. The prophet says that he had never done this, and yet every body was his enemy, only for delivering those messages which he had received from God.” *The Lord said, Verily it shall be well with thy remnant*—The latter words of this verse expound the former: for by שְׁרִית, *remnant*, or *residue*, is meant the remnant of days that Jeremiah had to live. *Verily,*

*yet every one of them doth curse me.* A. M. 3403. 11 The LORD said, Verily it shall <sup>B. C. 601.</sup>

be well with thy remnant; verily <sup>¶</sup> I will cause <sup>¶</sup> the enemy to entreat thee *well* in the time of evil and in the time of affliction.

12 Shall iron break the northern iron and the steel?

13 Thy substance and thy treasures will I give to the <sup>¶</sup> spoil without price, and *that* for all thy sins, even in all thy borders.

14 And I will make *thee* to pass with thine

° Or, *I will entreat the enemy for thee.*—<sup>¶</sup> Chap. xxxix. 11, 12; xl. 4, 5.—<sup>¶</sup> Psa. xlv. 12; Chap. xvii. 3.

*I will cause the enemy to entreat thee well*—I will by my providence so order it that how cruelly and severely soever the enemy may deal with thy countrymen, yet they shall use thee kindly when they shall take the city. This was accordingly fulfilled: the Chaldeans, when they took Jerusalem, and carried the inhabitants of the land into captivity, treated Jeremiah with great kindness, giving him his choice to go where he pleased, and bestowing gifts upon him, as we read chap. xxxix. 11, and xl. 3, 4.

Verse 12. *Shall iron break the northern iron?*—The northern iron is the hardest of any. “It is here,” says Blaney, “justly supposed to denote, in a primary sense, that species of hardened iron, or steel, called in Greek χαλύψ, from the Chalybes, a people bordering on the Euxine sea, and consequently lying to the north of Judea, by whom the art of tempering steel is said to have been discovered. Strabo speaks of this people as known in former times by the name of Chalybes, but afterward called Chaldæi, and mentions their iron mines, lib. xii. p. 549. These, however, were a different people from the Chaldeans who were united with the Babylonians.” “The words, if applied to Jeremiah, import thus much, that, as common iron cannot contend for hardness with the northern iron, or with steel, so the opposition which the Jews made against him should be easily vanquished and disappointed, because the Lord was *with him to save him*, verse 20. If the words relate to the Jews, as the following verses plainly do, the sense is, that the Chaldeans coming from the north would be as much too hard for them to engage with, as the northern iron was superior in strength to the common metal of that kind.”—Lowth. But perhaps the expression is not merely metaphorical: it is not unlikely that the Babylonians had their armour from the Chalybes, and that therefore it was made of iron much harder, and of much better proof, than that of which the armour of the Jews was formed.

Verses 13, 14. Here God turns his speech from the prophet to the people. *Thy substance and thy treasures will I give to the spoil*—All thy riches and precious things shall be spoiled: there shall be no price taken for the redemption of them. *For all thy sins in all thy borders*—All parts of the country, even those which lay most remote, had contri-

A. M. 3403. enemies <sup>1</sup> into a land *which* thou  
B. C. 601. knowest not: for a <sup>2</sup> fire is kindled in  
mine anger, *which* shall burn upon you.

15 ¶ O LORD, <sup>3</sup> thou knowest: remember  
me, and visit me, and <sup>4</sup> revenge me of my per-  
secutors; take me not away in thy long-suffer-  
ing: know that <sup>5</sup> for thy sake I have suffered  
rebuke.

<sup>1</sup> Chap. xvi. 13; xvii. 4.—<sup>2</sup> Deut. xxxii. 22.—<sup>3</sup> Chap. xii. 3.—<sup>4</sup> Chap. xi. 20; xx. 12.—<sup>5</sup> Psa. lxxix. 7.—Ezek. iii. 1, 3; Rev. x. 9, 10.

buted to the national guilt, and all shall be brought to account. *And I will make thee to pass with thine enemies, &c.*—They shall stay in their own country till they see their estates and all their property ruined, and then they shall be carried into captivity, to spend the remains of a miserable life in slavery. And all this is the fruit of God's wrath; for a fire, says he, *is kindled in mine anger, which shall burn upon you*—And, if not extinguished in time, will burn to eternity.

Verses 15, 16. *O Lord, thou knowest*—Thou knowest my sincerity, how faithfully I have declared thy will: or, thou knowest my sufferings, how wickedly my enemies act toward me. It is matter of comfort to us, that, whatever befalls us, we have a God to go to, before whom we may spread our case, and to whose omniscience we may appeal, as the prophet here does. *Remember me, and visit me*—Think upon me for good, and visit me with thy love, while this people are visited with thy wrath. *Revenge me*—Or, rather, *Vindicate me, from my persecutors*, as the Hebrew, הַנִּקְמָ לִי מִכֹּרְעֵי, may be properly rendered: give judgment against them, and let that judgment be executed so far as is necessary for my vindication, and to compel them to acknowledge that they have done me wrong: see note on chap. xi. 20. *Take me not away in thy long-suffering*—While thou exercisest long-suffering toward my persecutors, and forbearst to vindicate my cause and defend me, let them not prevail to take away my life. Or, as some understand his words, Though I am a sinner, and deserve to be punished as such among the Jews, yet exercise toward me patience and long-suffering, and let me not be taken away into captivity. *Know that for thy sake I have suffered rebuke*—Lord, remember that my reproach, and all that I suffer, is for thy sake, because I have faithfully declared thy truth, and defended thy honour and glory. *Thy words were found, and I did eat them*—The words which, from time to time, thou didst reveal to me, were by me readily received, meditated upon, and inwardly digested. *And thy word was unto me the joy, &c., of my heart*—That is, either, 1st, Though some of thy words were very dreadful, and foretold the ruin of my country, which is very dear to me, and in the ruin of which I cannot but have a deep share, yet, because they proceeded from thee, I was glad to hear them, and be thy instrument to communicate them to thy peo-

16 Thy words were found, and I did <sup>1</sup> eat them; and <sup>2</sup> thy word was unto <sup>3</sup> me the joy and rejoicing of my heart: for <sup>4</sup> I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts.

17 <sup>5</sup> I sat not in the assembly of the mockers, nor rejoiced; I sat alone because of thy hand: for thou hast filled me with indignation.

18 Why is my <sup>6</sup> pain perpetual, and my wound

<sup>1</sup> Job xxiii. 12; Psalm cxix. 72, 111.—<sup>2</sup> Hebrew, *thy name is called upon me.*—<sup>3</sup> Psalm i. 1; xxvi. 4, 5.—<sup>4</sup> Chapter xxx. 15.

ple, all my natural affections being swallowed up in zeal for thy glory. Or, 2d, Thy word of commission, by which I was made thy prophet, was at first very grateful and pleasing to me; and I was glad when thou didst, at any time, reveal thy will to me, and authorize and enjoin me to make it known to the people. For though the execution of this office was not attended with any secular advantages, but, on the contrary, exposed me to contempt and persecution, yet, because I was thereby serving and glorifying thee, and doing good, I was glad to be so employed, and it was my *meat and drink to do thy will*. For I am called by thy name, O Lord God of hosts—I became a prophet by thy authority, and am thy messenger, and thou, *the Lord of hosts*, art able to protect me.

Verses 17, 18. *I sat not in the assembly of the mockers*—Or, *of those that make merry*, as כִּשְׁחָקִים is elsewhere rendered: see chap. xxx. 19, and xxxi. 4. Jeremiah soon found that the joy which he had conceived in being called to the prophetic office, and favoured with extraordinary communications from God, was turned into heaviness, God continually filling his mouth with dreadful messages, and his prophecies containing nothing but terrible denunciations of wrath against a sinful people. Hence his whole prophetic life was to him a time of sorrow and solitude, a time when he sat alone mourning and weeping, in secret, for the indignation of God, revealed to him against his people; *nor rejoiced*—I did not, with the deriders and scorers of thy word, give a loose to joy and mirth at a time when thy severe judgments were denounced, and when the most dreadful calamities hung over the country. *Because of thy hand*—God's hand may be understood of his judgments, which, being denounced by the prophet, might be resembled to a hand stretched out, and just ready to strike; or else of the prophetic impulse which was strong upon Jeremiah, and, in a manner, forced him to be the messenger of evil tidings. God's judgments, as they were represented to the prophets, often raised such dreadful ideas in their minds as affected them in an extraordinary manner, especially if their threatenings concerned their own country, or the church of God. *Why is my pain perpetual, &c.*—These seem evidently to be the words of Jeremiah, complaining of the hard task which God had put upon him, continually filling his mouth with such bitter words of evil against the people as ex-

A. M. 3403. incurable, *which* refuseth to be heal-  
B. C. 601. ed? wilt thou be altogether unto me

• as a liar, and <sup>f</sup>as waters <sup>that</sup> <sup>g</sup>fail?

19 ¶ Therefore thus saith the LORD, <sup>g</sup>If thou return, then will I bring thee again, and thou shalt <sup>h</sup>stand before me: and if thou <sup>i</sup>take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth: let them return unto thee; but return not thou unto them.

• Chapter i. 18, 19.—<sup>f</sup> Job vi. 15, &c.—<sup>g</sup> Heb. *be not sure.*  
<sup>h</sup> Zech. iii. 7.

posed him to their most implacable rage, so that his misery seemed like an incurable wound, attended with excruciating pain, for which there was no remedy but patience. *Wilt thou be altogether to me as a liar, and waters that fail?*—No, I know thou wilt not. God is not a man that he should lie. The fountain of life will never be to his people as waters that fail. The sense is, “Thou hast promised to be my defence against mine enemies; and wilt thou altogether deceive me? like little brooks, which are dried up in summer, when they are most wanted, and so disappoint the thirsty traveller: see Job vi. 15. The prophet here sets down the perplexities he laboured under, by reason of the opposition he continually met with from ungodly men, in the execution of his office; just as the psalmist relates the misgivings of his mind when he was under great troubles and temptations. But then presently he checks such thoughts, calls to mind God’s gracious promises, and encourages himself to rely upon him. And the like encouragements are recorded in the following verses of this chapter.”—Lowth.

Verses 19–21. *Therefore thus saith the Lord*—In these verses we have God’s gracious answer to the preceding expostulation. Though the prophet betrayed much human frailty in his address, yet God vouchsafed to answer him with good and comfortable words, for he knows our frame. *If thou return*—Namely, from thy diffidence and distrust in my providence and promises; *then will I bring thee*

20 And I will make thee unto this A. M. 3403.  
B. C. 601. people a fenced brazen <sup>k</sup>wall: and

they shall fight against thee, but <sup>l</sup>they shall not prevail against thee: for I *am* with thee to save thee and to deliver thee, saith the LORD.

21 And I will deliver thee out of the hand of the wicked, and I will redeem thee out of the hand of the terrible.

<sup>h</sup> Verse 1.—<sup>i</sup> Ezek. xxii. 26; xlv. 23.—<sup>k</sup> Chap. i. 18; vi. 27.  
<sup>l</sup> Chap. xx. 11, 12.

*again, and thou shalt stand before me*—I will restore thee to the former favour thou hadst with me, and thou shalt be my prophet, to reveal my mind to the people. *And if thou take the precious from the vile*—If thou separate the precious truths of God from the vile fancies of men; or rather, if thou preach so as to distinguish good and bad men from each other, encouraging the good, and reproving the wicked, then I will continue thee as my prophet, to speak in my name; and thou wilt answer the character of a true prophet, whose office it is to utter the words that God puts into his mouth, without adding thereto, or diminishing from them. *Let them return unto thee, &c.*—He here charges the prophet to keep his ground, and not to go over to wicked men; but to use his endeavour to reduce them to that obedience which he yielded to God. *And I will make thee unto this people a fenced wall*—Which the storm batters and beats violently upon, but cannot shake; *and they shall fight against thee*—They will still continue their opposition; *but they shall not prevail*—Namely, to drive thee from off thy work, or to cut thee off from the land of the living. *For I am with thee to save thee*—And I have wisdom and power enough to deal with the most formidable enemy. *I will deliver thee out of the hand of the wicked*—The wicked Jews; *and out of the hand of the terrible*—The power of the terrible Chaldeans, into whose hands thou shalt come, but shalt be preserved from any harm by the workings of my providence in thy favour.

## CHAPTER XVI.

The prophecy which begins here is continued to the end of the 18th verse of the next chapter. Nor is there any reason to suspect its being out of its proper place, but that it was delivered, as well as those of the preceding chapters, toward the beginning of Jehoiakim’s evil reign. (1.) The prophet is forbidden to marry or beget children, because of the judgments that were about to fall upon all the inhabitants of the land, both old and young, 1–4. (2.) For the like reasons, he is commanded not to join with any of his neighbours, either in their mourning, or in their convivial mirth, 5–9. (3.) He shows that their calamities were the effect of their apostacy and disobedience, for which God would drive them into exile, and give them no quarter till he had fully requited their wickedness, 10–18. But, (4.) Their future restoration is intermediately foretold, 14, 15; as is also the conversion of the Gentiles, 19–21.

A. M. 3403. **T**HE word of the LORD came also  
B. C. 601. unto me, saying,

2 Thou shalt not take thee a wife, neither shalt thou have sons nor daughters in this place.

3 For thus saith the LORD concerning the sons and concerning the daughters that are born in this place, and concerning their mothers that bare them, and concerning their fathers that begat them in this land :

4 They shall die of <sup>a</sup> grievous deaths ; they shall not be <sup>b</sup> lamented ; neither shall they be buried ; *but* they shall be <sup>c</sup> as dung upon the face of the earth : and they shall be consumed by the sword, and by famine ; and their <sup>d</sup> car-

<sup>a</sup> Chapter xv. 2.—<sup>b</sup> Chap. xxii. 18, 19 ; xxv. 33.—<sup>c</sup> Psalm lxxiii. 10 ; Chap. viii. 2 ; ix. 22.—<sup>d</sup> Psa. lxxix. 2 ; Chapter vii. 33 ; xxiv. 20.—<sup>e</sup> Ezek. xxiv. 17, 22, 23.—<sup>f</sup> Or, mourning feast.

#### NOTES ON CHAPTER XVI.

Verses 1-4. *The word of the Lord came, &c.*—Here begins a new discourse, wherein God forbids Jeremiah to marry, principally with a view to show the miseries of parents, and the confused and ruinous state of things in Judea. "Fruitfulness was promised as a blessing under the law, Deut. xxviii. 4, but ceased to be so in such difficult times as were coming upon the Jewish nation. For parents could not promise to themselves any comfort in their children, who must be exposed to the many miseries that attend a hostile invasion and a conquering army."—Lowth. *They shall die of grievous deaths*—Hebrew כמות חלליים, *mortibus ægritudinum, id est, ægerrimis*, Buxtorf. Literally, *of deaths of sicknesses*, that is, very sorrowful deaths ; meaning, Blaney thinks, epidemical disorders, (such as the pestilence,) terminating in death. It, no doubt, however, also includes death by the sword and by famine.

Verses 5, 6. *Enter not into the house of mourning*—Or, of a *mourning feast*, according to the reading in the margin, the word כרוח, occurring also Amos vi. 7, and being there rendered a *banquet*. The sense seems to be, Do not go to comfort such as mourn for any friends or relations dead ; their feasting on those occasions being upon a consolatory account : those that die are most happy. *For I have taken away my peace from this people*—That is, I have put a full period to their prosperity, and deprived them of every thing wherewith they might comfort themselves and one another ; *even loving-kindness and mercies*—These shall be shut up and restrained, which are the springs from whence all the streams of comfort flow to mankind. *Both the great and the small shall die in this land*—The land of Canaan that used to be called the land of the living. *They shall not be buried, &c.*—So many of all ranks and ages shall die that men shall have no time to bury them, or there shall not be a sufficient number left alive to bury the dead. *Neither shall men lament for them*—Nor shall men have leisure, through

casces shall be meat for the fowls of heaven, and for the beasts of the earth. A. M. 3403. B. C. 601.

5 For thus saith the LORD, <sup>e</sup> Enter not into the house of <sup>1</sup> mourning, neither go to lament nor bemoan them : for I have taken away my peace from this people, saith the LORD, *even loving-kindness and mercies*.

6 Both the great and the small shall die in this land : they shall not be buried, <sup>f</sup> neither shall *men* lament for them, nor <sup>g</sup> cut themselves, nor <sup>h</sup> make themselves bald for them :

7 Neither shall *men* <sup>2</sup> tear themselves for them in mourning, to comfort them for the dead ; neither shall *men* give them the cup of con-

<sup>1</sup> Chapter xxii. 18.—<sup>2</sup> Lev. xix. 28 ; Deut. xiv. 1 ; Chapter xli. 5 ; xlvi. 5.—<sup>3</sup> Isa. xxii. 12 ; Chap. vii. 29.—<sup>4</sup> Or, break bread for them, as Ezek. xxiv. 17 ; Hos. ix. 4 ; Deut. xxvi. 14 ; Job xlii. 11.

their own miseries, to lament for the miseries of others. Or their own calamities shall be so great that they will render them insensible to the calamities of others. *Nor cut themselves, &c.*—The law expressly forbade the Israelites to make any cuttings in their flesh at funeral obsequies, Lev. xix. 28 ; Deut. xiv. 1. Notwithstanding which prohibition, this practice seems to have been adopted by the Jews, among other heathenish customs. Shaving of the head also was a usual expression of mourning, chap. vii. 29.

Verse 7. *Neither shall men tear themselves for them*—According to this translation the phrase alludes to another expression of immoderate grief, which consisted in tearing their flesh with their nails. But according to the marginal reading, the sense is, *Neither shall men break bread for them* ; alluding to the mourning-feast, mentioned verse 5. So the LXX., ου μη κλασθη αρτος εν πνευει αυτων εις παρακλησιν επι τεθνηκοτι, "bread shall by no means be broken in their mourning, for consolation concerning the dead." So also the Vulgate. As to the custom alluded to, Jerome informs us, in his commentary on this place, that "it was usual to carry provisions to mourners, and to make an entertainment, which sort of feasts the Greeks call περιδειπνα, and the Latins *parentalia*." The origin of which custom undoubtedly was, that the friends of the mourner, who came to comfort him, (which they often did in great numbers, as we learn from John xi. 19,) easily concluding, that a person so far swallowed up of grief, as even to forget his own bread could hardly attend to the entertainment of so many guests, each sent in his proportion of meat and drink, in hopes to prevail upon the mourner, by their example and persuasions, to partake of such refreshment as might tend to recruit both his bodily strength and his spirits. To this custom Tobit is thought to refer when, among other exhortations to his son, he directs him to *pour out his bread on the burial of the just*. See Blaney. It must be observed, that among the Hebrews all things

A. M. 3403. solution to <sup>1</sup> drink for their father or  
B. C. 601. for their mother.

8 Thou shalt not also go into the house of feasting, to sit with them to eat and to drink.

9 For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, <sup>1</sup> I will cause to cease out of this place in your eyes, and in your days, the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride.

10 ¶ And it shall come to pass, when thou shalt show this people all these words, and they shall say unto thee, <sup>1</sup> Wherefore hath the LORD pronounced all this great evil against us? or what *is* our iniquity? or what *is* our sin that we have committed against the LORD our God?

11 Then shalt thou say unto them, <sup>m</sup> Because your fathers have forsaken me, saith the LORD, and have walked after other gods, and have

<sup>1</sup> Proverbs xxxi. 6, 7.—<sup>2</sup> Isaiah xxiv. 7, 8; Chapter vii. 34; xxv. 10; Ezekiel xxvii. 13; Hosea ii. 11; Revelation xviii. 23. <sup>1</sup> Deut. xxix. 24; Chapter v. 19; xiii. 22; xxii. 8.—<sup>m</sup> Deut. xxix. 25; Chap. xxii. 9.

eaten were called bread. *Neither shall men give them the cup of consolation for their father, &c.*—They were also wont, on these occasions, to send wine, or some other cheering liquor to drink, that they might forget their sorrows. This is called here *the cup of consolation*. Sir John Chardin, in one of his MSS. tells us, that “the oriental Christians still make banquets of the same kind, by a custom derived from the Jews; and that the provisions spoken of in this verse were such as were wont to be sent to the house of the deceased, where healths were also drunk to the survivors of the family.” God here tells the Jews by his prophet, that the time should come, when so many should die, and so fast, and the rest should be so much upon the brink of the grave, that they should have neither leisure nor heart for using these ceremonies.

Verses 8, 9. *Thou shalt not also go into the house of feasting*—God not only forbade his prophet to go into houses of mourning, but forbade him also to go into houses where people were wont to eat and drink on joyful occasions, because it would be unseasonable, and would not agree with the afflictive dispensations of Providence that were coming on the land and nation. God called aloud for *weeping, mourning, and fasting*, because he was coming forth against them in his judgments, and it was time for them to humble themselves before him. And it well became the prophet, who gave them the warning, to give them an example of taking the warning himself, and complying with it; and so to make it appear that he did himself believe what he declared to them. *For, behold I will cause to cease the voice*

served them, and have worshipped <sup>A. M. 3403.</sup> them, and have forsaken me, and <sup>B. C. 601.</sup> have not kept my law;

12 And ye have done <sup>a</sup> worse than your fathers; for, behold, <sup>o</sup> ye walk every one after the <sup>3</sup> imagination of his evil heart, that they may not hearken unto me:

13 <sup>p</sup> Therefore will I cast you out of this land <sup>q</sup> into a land that ye know not, *neither* ye nor your fathers; and there shall ye serve other gods day and night; where I will not show you favour.

14 ¶ Therefore behold, the <sup>r</sup> days come, saith the LORD, that it shall no more be said, The LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt;

15 But, the LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them: and <sup>s</sup> I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers.

<sup>a</sup> Chapter vii. 26.—<sup>o</sup> Chapter xiii. 10.—<sup>3</sup> Or, *stubbornness*. <sup>p</sup> Deut. iv. 26, 27, 28; xxviii. 36, 63, 64, 65.—<sup>q</sup> Chap. xv. 14. <sup>r</sup> Isaiah xliiii. 18; Chap. xxiii. 7, 8.—<sup>s</sup> Chap. xxiv. 6; xxx. 3; xxxii. 37.

*of mirth, &c.*—In the approaching time of general desolation, all the solemn seasons of mirth and gladness shall cease, as well public as private. The solemn feasts, which were always observed with great expressions of joy, shall be no more celebrated, nor shall nuptial solemnities and other private occasions of rejoicing be any longer observed.

Verse 13. *There shall ye serve other gods day and night*—The opportunities of frequenting the public worship of the true God shall be taken from you, as a just judgment upon you for your neglect of his service in your own country; and you shall be exposed to the peril of being seduced by the Chaldeans to the worship of idols: see Deut. iv. 28, and xxviii. 36, where Moses utters a similar prediction. Compare also 1 Sam. xxvi. 19.

Verses 14, 15. *Therefore, behold the days come, saith the Lord, &c.*—The particle <sup>ל</sup> seems to be very improperly rendered *therefore* here. It evidently sometimes signifies *notwithstanding*, or *nevertheless*; see note on Isa. xxx. 18, and sometimes, *yet surely*, as chap. v. 2, of this prophecy; which sense agrees well with the scope of this place, and connects this verse with the words foregoing. And so it seems it should be rendered, chap. xxx. 16, and xxxii. 36. Blaney, however, thinks that both in this verse and in all these passages, as also chap. xxiii. 7 and Hos. ii. 14, it more properly signifies, *after this*. Accordingly, he translates this clause, *after this, behold the days come, saith Jehovah, &c.*, observing, “that this notice of a future restoration was here inserted on purpose to guard the people, during their exile, from falling into idolatry through despair, by

A. M. 3403. B. C. 601. 16 ¶ Behold, I will send for many <sup>†</sup>fishers, saith the LORD, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks.

17 For mine <sup>‡</sup>eyes are upon all their ways: they are not hid from my face, neither is their iniquity hid from mine eyes.

18 And first I will recompense their iniquity

<sup>†</sup> Amos iv. 2; Hab. i. 15.—<sup>‡</sup> Job xxxiv. 21; Proverbs v. 21; xv. 3; Chap. xxxii. 19.—<sup>§</sup> Isa. xl. 2; Chap. xvii. 18.

letting them see they had still a prospect of recovering God's wonted favour and protection." To which may be added, that he probably intended also, in thus sweetening the dreadful threatenings preceding with this comfortable promise, to prevent such as were pious among them, or should be brought to repentance by these terrible calamities, from being swallowed up of overmuch sorrow. *It shall no more be said, &c.*—The bringing of Israel out of the Egyptian bondage shall not be so much spoken of and celebrated as their deliverance from their captivity in Babylon. In fact, the latter was in several respects more remarkable than the former. Their deliverance from the power of the king of Egypt was extorted from him by terrifying miracles, which scarcely brought him to a compliance; but their deliverance from their captivity in Babylon was voluntarily granted them by Cyrus, a far greater king than the king of Egypt, and attended by a decree extremely honourable to them.

Verses 16-18. *Behold, I will send, &c.*—This may be better rendered, *But now I will send, &c.*—Because here the prophet returns to denounce threatenings; *many fishers, and they shall fish them*—"It is common with the sacred writers to represent enemies and oppressors under the metaphors of *fishers* and *hunters*, because they use all the methods of open force and secret stratagem to make men their prey." By these two characters the same enemies are probably meant, namely, the Chaldeans, who should take different methods, one after another, to destroy them; besieging them in their cities, and taking them like fish, enclosed in a net; and afterward pursuing the scattered parties from place to place, till they got them into their hands; so that one way or other, few, if any, would be suffered to escape. Compare Isa. xxiv. 17, 18, where it is in like manner foretold, that those who escaped from one danger should fall by another. See Blaney. *For mine eyes are upon all their ways*—I mark all their sins, though they commit them never so secretly, and palliate them never so artfully. They have not their eyes upon me; have no regard to me, stand in no awe of me: but I have mine eye upon them, and neither they nor any of their ways are hid from me. *I will recompense their iniquity double*—Not double to what it deserves, but double to what they expect, and to what I have done for-

and their sin <sup>‡</sup>double; because <sup>†</sup>they have defiled my land, they have filled mine inheritance with the carcasses of their detestable and abominable things.

19 O LORD, <sup>‡</sup>my strength and my fortress, and <sup>†</sup>my refuge in the day of affliction, the Gentiles shall come unto thee from the ends of the earth, and shall say, Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and *things* <sup>§</sup>wherein *there is no profit.*

<sup>†</sup> Ezekiel xliii. 7, 9.—<sup>‡</sup> Psalm xviii. 2.—<sup>§</sup> Chapter xvii. 17. <sup>¶</sup> Isa. xlv. 10; Chap. ii. 11; x. 5.

merly. Or, I will recompense it abundantly; they shall now pay for their long reprieve and the divine patience they have abused; *because they have defiled my land*—By their idolatry, blood, cruelty, and other sins; *have filled mine inheritance with the carcasses of their detestable things*—Their idols, which are elsewhere called carcasses, not only because they were without life, but also because of their filthiness and hatefulness in the sight of God: see Lev. xxvi. 30; Ezek. xliii. 7, 9. Or the words may be explained of the human sacrifices which were offered to idols.

Verses 19, 20. *O Lord, my strength*—To support and comfort me; *my fortress*—To protect and shelter me; *and my refuge in the day of affliction*—To whom I may flee for deliverance and consolation; *the Gentiles, the nations, shall come to thee from the ends of the earth*—The prophet, shocked at the apostacy of Israel, and concerned for God's honour, here comforts himself by looking forward to the time when even the Gentiles themselves should become sensible of the absurdity of their hereditary idolatry, and be converted to the acknowledgment of the one living and true God: and this remarkable and desirable event he predicts, the more emphatically to demonstrate the unreasonableness and folly of forsaking him for idols. *And shall say*—That is, the Gentiles shall say, *Surely our fathers, our ancestors, have inherited lies, vanity, &c.*—And did not receive the satisfaction they promised themselves and their children; we are now sensible of the folly and deception of their idolatrous worship, by which they were cheated to their ruin, and therefore we will entirely and for ever renounce it, and in all our wants address ourselves to the true God as our only refuge and protection. *Shall a man make gods unto himself?*—Thus the prophet represents the Gentiles, when enlightened by the truth, as reasoning with themselves. Shall a man be so ignorant and foolish; so perfectly void of reason and discernment, as to make gods to himself, the creatures of his own fancy, the work of his own hands, *which are really no gods?* Can a man be so infatuated, so entirely lost to human understanding, as to expect any divine blessing or favour from that which pretends to no divinity but what it first received from him? Observe, reader, that reformation is likely to be sincere and durable which results from a rational conviction of the gross

A. M. 3403. 20 Shall a man make gods unto  
B. C. 601. himself, and ° they are no gods ?

21 Therefore behold, I will this once cause

° Isa. xxxvii. 19; Chap. ii. 11; Gal. iv. 8.—<sup>d</sup> Exodus xv. 3;

absurdity which there is in sin, and the service of Satan.

Verse 21. *Therefore I will this once*—Or, as הוֹאֵל בְּפֶנֶם הַזֶּה may be rendered, *at this time*, as the same expression is rendered, 2 Sam. xvii. 7. *Cause them to know my hand and my might, &c.*—"The time alluded to is undoubtedly that when the gospel was to be preached to, and embraced by, the Gen-

them to know, I will cause them to A. M. 3403.  
know my hand and my might; and B. C. 601.  
they shall know that ° my name is ° The LORD.

Ch. xxxiii. 2; Amos v. 8.—<sup>d</sup> Or, JEHOVAH, Psa. lxxiii. 18.

tiles; when God promises that he would make such a display of his mighty power as should amply convince them of the truth of his existence and divinity. *They shall know that my name is JEHOVAH*—A name which implies absolute and necessary existence, the real source and origin of all perfection; and they shall know it by the blessings which shall, from my providence, be derived to them."—Blaney.

## CHAPTER XVII.

In this chapter, (1.) *The prophet describes the attachment of the people of Judah to idolatry, and foretels the fatal consequences, 1-4.* (2.) *He contrasts the accursed condition of him that rests his trust on man, with the blessedness of one that trusts in God; and illustrates both by apt and lively comparisons, 5-8.* (3.) *He shows, that, be the human heart ever so false and wicked, God can detect, and will finally punish, its wiles and deceits, 9-11.* (4.) *He acknowledges that sure salvation comes from God, and from him only, 12-14.* And, (5.) *Complaining of those that scoffed at his predictions, he prays for the divine countenance and support against them, 15-18.* (6.) *The prophet, in the name of God, delivers a distinct prophecy relative to the strict observance of the sabbath day, which he was sent to proclaim aloud in all the gates of Jerusalem, as a matter which concerned the conduct of each individual, and the general happiness of the whole, 19-27.*

A. M. 3403. **T**HE sin of Judah is written with  
B. C. 601. a ° pen of iron, and with the  
° point of a diamond: it is ° graven upon the  
table of their heart, and upon the horns of your  
altars;

2 Whilst their children remember their altars

\* Job xix. 24.—<sup>a</sup> Heb. nail.—<sup>b</sup> Prov. iii. 3; 2 Corinthians  
iii. 3.

### NOTES ON CHAPTER XVII.

Verses 1, 2. *The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron*—Many of the Jews, though living in the habitual commission of the grossest crimes, were, nevertheless, self-righteous, and thought they did not deserve that God should enter into judgment with them in any such way as Jeremiah foretold he would do. *Wherefore, said they, hath the Lord pronounced all this great evil against us? What is our iniquity? What is our sin?* chap. xvi. 10. Here the prophet tells them their sin was too plain to be denied, and too bad to be excused: that it was written in indelible characters, not only before God, to whose omniscience it lay continually open, but in their own hearts and consciences; as *if written with a pen of iron*, or an engraving instrument, or *the point of a diamond*; instruments employed to make durable inscriptions on hard substances. As if he had said, *Their sins are as manifest, and the remembrance of them as durable, as the memorable actions which have been engraven on pillars of stone, or tablets of brass, to give them notoriety, and preserve them*

and their ° groves by the green trees A. M. 3403.  
upon the high hills. B. C. 601.

3 O my mountain in the field, ° I will give  
thy substance and all thy treasures to the spoil,  
and thy high places for sin, throughout all thy  
borders.

° Judg. iii. 7; 2 Chron. xxiv. 18; xxxiii. 3, 19; Isa. i. 29; xvii.  
8; Chap. ii. 10.—<sup>d</sup> Chap. xv. 13.

from oblivion. The expression, *it is graven upon the table of their hearts*, may also be intended to signify the rooted affection which they had to sin, especially to the sin of idolatry; that it was woven into their very nature, and was as dear to them as that is to us, of which we say, *It is engraven on our hearts*. In like manner, their idolatrous altars and other monuments of their heathenish superstitions, were undeniable tokens of the corrupt inclinations of their hearts, which were altogether estranged from God and his true worship. Or their sin might be said to be *engraven on the horns of their altars*, because the blood of the sacrifices which they offered to their idols was sprinkled there, or because their altars had some inscription upon them, declaring to what idol each altar was consecrated. *Whilst their children remember their altars*—This shows how inveterate they were in this sin of idolatry, that they taught it to their children.

Verses 3, 4. *O my mountain in the field*—By this expression the prophet is thought, by many interpreters, to intend the temple, which stood on a moun-

A. M. 3403. 4 And thou, even <sup>2</sup> thyself, shalt  
B. C. 601. discontinue from thy heritage that I  
gave thee; and I will cause thee to serve thine  
enemies in <sup>o</sup> the land which thou knowest not:  
for <sup>f</sup> ye have kindled a fire in mine anger,  
*which shall burn for ever.*

5 ¶ Thus saith the LORD; <sup>5</sup> Cursed be the  
man that trusteth in man, and maketh <sup>h</sup> flesh

<sup>a</sup> Heb. in thyself.—<sup>b</sup> Chap. xvi. 13.—<sup>c</sup> Chap. xv. 14.—<sup>d</sup> Isa. xxx. 1, 2; xxxi. 1.—<sup>e</sup> Isa. xxxi. 3.—<sup>f</sup> Chap. xlviii. 6.

tain, called elsewhere, *the mountain of the Lord's house*, (Isa. ii. 2,) and *the holy mountain*. And this, as being the principal part of Jerusalem, is understood as being put, by way of synecdoche, for the whole city. Michaelis paraphrases it thus: "O Jerusalem, which hast long been situate on my chosen mountain, and surrounded by a most fertile country, the land of Canaan." But Cocceius thinks that the Jewish people are hereby enigmatically compared with the rest of the world, as a mountain situated in the midst of a level plain, and distinguished with a glory which did not belong to the world in general. And it must be acknowledged that nations and princes of great power and eminence are often figuratively called mountains, in regard to their strength and elevation: see chap. li. 25; Isa. xli. 15; Zech. iv. 7. Judah, therefore, in general, as well as Jerusalem in particular, may be here styled God's mountain, as having been chosen by him, and thereby raised to a degree of elevation above all other people: see a confirmation of this interpretation, chap. xxxi. 23. *I will give thy substance, and all thy treasures, to the spoil*—Both the products of the country, and the stores of the city, shall be seized by the Chaldeans. Justly are men stripped of that with which they have served their idols, and which has been made the food and fuel of their lusts. *And thy high places for sin*—You have worshipped your idols on the high places, and now they shall be given for a spoil; *in all your borders*—See note on chap. xv. 13. Observe, reader, what we make an occasion of *sin*, God will make a matter of *spoil*; for what comfort can we expect in that wherewith God is dishonoured? *And thou, even thyself, shalt discontinue from thy heritage*—*Shalt intermit the occupation of thy land*, as the word *בטל*, here used, signifies, Exod. xxiii. 11. The prophet undoubtedly alludes to the seventh year of release, enjoined by Moses, Deut. xv. 1, which law the Jews had a long time neglected out of covetousness, and refused to observe, even after a solemn engagement to the contrary, chap. xxxiv. 8, &c. So here the passage implies, that since they would not release their land nor their servants in the sabbatical years, as God had enjoined them, he would dispossess them of the inheritance which he had given them, and *the land shall enjoy her sabbaths*, according to the prescription of the law: see Lev. xxvi. 34. *And I will cause thee to serve thine enemies in the land which thou knowest not*—As a punishment for thy compelling thy ser-

his arm, and whose heart departeth  
from the LORD. A. M. 3403  
B. C. 601.

6 For he shall be <sup>i</sup> like the heath in the desert,  
and <sup>k</sup> shall not see when good cometh; but  
shall inhabit the parched places in the wilder-  
ness, <sup>l</sup> in a salt land and not inhabited.

7 <sup>m</sup> Blessed is the man that trusteth in the  
LORD, and whose hope the LORD is.

<sup>k</sup> Job xx. 17.—<sup>l</sup> Deut. xxix. 23.—<sup>m</sup> Psalm ii. 12; xxxiv. 8; cxxv. 1; cxlvi. 5; Prov. xvi. 20; Isa. xxx. 18.

vants to serve thee in thy own land, when I enjoined thee to set them at liberty. *For ye have kindled a fire in mine anger, &c.*—By your idolatries and other sins you have increased my wrath to such a fire that it shall burn for a long time in terrible judgments upon you in this world, and shall burn all such as remain impenitent *for ever*, in the world to come.

Verses 5, 6. *Cursed be the man that trusteth in man*—Who places that confidence in the wisdom or power, the kindness or faithfulness of any man or number of men, which ought to be placed in God only; that is, miserable is the man that doth so, for he leans upon a broken reed, which will not only fail him, but will *run into his hand and pierce it*. It must be observed, however, that the prophet denounces this curse here chiefly with respect to the confidence which the Jews placed in the assistance of the Egyptians and their other allies, when threatened by the Chaldeans. *And maketh flesh his arm*—Trusts for support or aid in a mere mortal man, termed *flesh*, to show his weakness and frailty, in opposition to the power of the almighty and immortal God. *And whose heart departeth from the Lord*—As the hearts of all do who put their trust in man. They may perhaps draw nigh to God with their mouths, and honour him with their lips, but really their hearts are far from him. *For he shall be like the heath in the desert*—Hebrew, כרעץ like the tamarisk, as some render the word, *virgultum tenue, humile, fragile*, says Buxtorf, *a small, low, and weak shrub*. Sapless and useless; he shall be barren of solid comfort for the present, and destitute of well grounded hopes for the future. *And shall not see when good cometh*—Shall not partake of any good; *but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness*—From whence he can derive no profit or consolation; *in a salt land, &c.*—Barren and unfruitful, Deut. xxix. 23; Judges ix. 45. Observe well, reader, they that trust in their own righteousness and strength, and think they can be saved without the merit and grace of Christ, thus *make flesh their arm*, and their souls cannot prosper either in graces or comforts; they can neither produce the fruits of acceptable obedience to God, nor reap the fruits of saving blessings from him, but *dwell in a dry land*.

Verses 7, 8. *Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord*—That lives in continual obedience to him, and relies entirely upon him for every blessing he wants for his body or soul, for himself or others

A. M. 3403. 8 For he shall be <sup>a</sup> as a tree planted  
B. C. 601. by the waters, and *that* spreadeth out  
her roots by the river, and shall not see when  
heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and  
shall not be careful in the year of <sup>3</sup> drought,  
neither shall cease from yielding fruit.

9 ¶ The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*,  
and desperately wicked: who can know it?

<sup>a</sup> Job viii. 16; Psa. i. 3.—<sup>3</sup> Or, *restraint*.—<sup>1</sup> Sam. xvi. 7;  
1 Chron. xxviii. 9; Psa. vii. 9; cxxxix. 23, 24; Prov. xvii. 3;  
Chap. xi. 20; xx. 12; Rom. viii. 27; Rev. ii. 23.

who, under God, are dependant upon him; and whose hope the Lord is—Who makes the Lord's favour the good he hopes for, and his power the strength he hopes in. Trusting aright in the Lord necessarily implies walking closely with him, and not departing from him in heart. For it is naturally impossible that any one should repose confidence in another for any thing which had been promised under a condition, without a consciousness in himself that he had, at least in some good measure, complied with the condition upon which it was promised. *For he shall be like a tree planted, &c.*—He shall be prosperous and successful in his counsels and undertakings. He may be compared to a tree planted in a fertile soil, on the bank of a river, to which it extends its roots, and from which it derives abundance of sap and nourishment. *And shall not see when heat cometh*—Ου φοβηθησεν οταν ελθη καυμα, say the LXX., shall not fear when heat cometh. They follow the reading of the Hebrew text, which is to be preferred before that of the margin. *And shall not be careful in the year of drought*—Shall not be solicitous for fear it should lack moisture; that is, in a time when the leaves of trees standing on dry mountainous places are parched and withered, it shall retain its verdure, and continue to yield its fruit. Blaney translates the clause, "And it is not sensible when heat cometh; but its leaf is green, and in a year of drought it is without concern; nor doth it decline bearing fruit."

Verses 9, 10. *The heart is deceitful above all things*—This passage, considered in connection with what precedes, may be understood in two points of view: 1st, As assigning a reason why we should not trust in man; namely, because he is not only weak and frail, and therefore may want power to help us in our necessities and distresses, but is also false and deceitful. Or, 2d, As giving us a caution to take care lest we deceive ourselves in supposing we trust in God when really we do not; this being a thing respecting which our own hearts are very apt to deceive us, as appears by this, that our hopes and fears are wont to rise or fall, according as second causes appear to be favourable or adverse. But it is true in the general, that there is greater wickedness in our hearts, by nature, than we ourselves are aware of, or suspect to be there. Nay, and it is a common mistake among mankind to think their own hearts a great deal better than they really are. The heart of man, in his corrupt and fallen state, is

10 I the LORD <sup>o</sup> search the heart, A. M. 3403.  
I try the reins, <sup>p</sup> even to give every B. C. 601.  
man according to his ways, and according to  
the fruit of his doings.

11 As the partridge <sup>4</sup> sitteth on eggs, and  
hatcheth them not; so he that getteth riches,  
and not by right, <sup>q</sup> shall leave them in the  
midst of his days, and at his end shall be <sup>r</sup> a fool.

<sup>p</sup> Psalm lxii. 12; Chapter xxxii. 19; Romans ii. 6.—<sup>4</sup> Or,  
*gathereth young which she hath not brought forth*.—<sup>q</sup> Psa. lv. 23.  
<sup>r</sup> Luke xii. 20.

false and *deceitful above all things*; deceitful in its apprehensions of things, calling evil good and good evil, putting false colours upon things, crying peace to those to whom peace does not belong, and cheating men to their own ruin; deceitful in the hopes and promises which it excites and nourishes, and in the assurances which it gives. *And desperately wicked*—Hebrews דורש ופסול, literally, *and desperate*, or, as Blaney renders it, *it is even past all hope; who can know it?* That is, "humanly speaking, there is no possibility that any one should trace it through all its windings, and discover what is at the bottom of it." In short, it is unsearchable by others, deceitful with reference to ourselves, and abominably wicked; so that neither can a man know his own heart, nor can any one know that of his neighbour. *I the Lord search the heart*—I am perfectly acquainted with it, and with all the wickedness that lodges in it: all its thoughts, counsels, and designs, however secret; all its intentions, affections, and determinations lie open to my inspection: and my piercing eye penetrates into its inmost recesses. *I try the reins*—To pass a true judgment on what I discern, and to give every thing therein its true character and due weight. *I try the heart*, as the gold is tried, whether it be standard weight or not; or, as the prisoner is tried, whether he be guilty or not. And this judgment, which I make of the hearts, is in order to my passing a true judgment upon the man, *even to give to every man according to his ways*—According to the desert and tendency of them; life to those that have walked in the ways of life, and death to those that have persisted in the paths of the destroyer; and according to the fruit of his doings—The effect and influence which his doings have had on others; or according to what is determined by the word of God to be the fruit of men's doings, blessings to the obedient, and curses to the disobedient.

Verse 11. *As the partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not*—Or rather, as the words דגל לא לך may be more literally rendered, *hatcheth eggs which she did not lay; so he that getteth riches, and not by right*—That is, not in a due, regular manner, by the blessing of God upon honest endeavours, but by arts of knavery and injustice; *shall leave them in the midst of his days*—Though he may make them his hope, he shall not have joy in them, nor the true and lasting possession of them; but they shall be soon taken from him, or he from

A. M. 3403. 12 ¶ A glorious high throne from  
B. C. 601. the beginning is the place of our  
sanctuary.

13 O LORD, 'the hope of Israel, 'all that forsake thee shall be ashamed, and they that depart from me shall be 'written in the earth, because they have forsaken the LORD, the 'fountain of living waters.

14 Heal me, O LORD, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved: for 'thou art my praise.

\* Chap. xiv. 8.—† Psalm lxxiii. 27; Isaiah i. 28.—‡ Luke x. 20.—§ Chapter ii. 13.—¶ Deuter. x. 21; Psalm cix. 1; cxlviii. 14.

them. *And at his end shall be a fool*—That is, he shall evidently appear such. He was indeed a fool all along, and doubtless his conscience often told him so; but at his end his folly will be manifest to all men. Bochart, with a great deal of learning, contends that קרפ, here rendered *partridge*, is not that bird, nor any one known in these parts. Blaney gives it the Hebrew name *kore*, observing, "that it is a bird which frequents the mountains, and is of no great value, as may be learned from 1 Sam. xxvi. 20. Here it is said to sit upon and hatch the eggs of birds of another species. This want of distinction is common to many sorts of birds; and the partridge is no way remarkable for it. But where it is so done, the young ones, when fledged, are sure to forsake their supposititious dam, and to join with those of their own feather; in which circumstance the point of comparison seems to lie."

Verse 12. *A glorious high throne, &c.*—"As in the preceding verses was set forth the vain dependance of him who seeks to advance himself by indirect methods; so here we are taught the solid foundation which he builds upon who has recourse to the divine blessing, and seeks to recommend himself to the favour of that Being, to whom Israel was taught to look up for support, and whose kingdom, from all eternity, ruleth over all." The temple at Jerusalem, where God manifested his special presence, where his lively oracles were lodged, where the people paid their homage to their sovereign, and whither they fled for refuge in distress, was *the place of their sanctuary*, and might properly be termed a *glorious high throne*. It was a throne of holiness, which made it *glorious*; it was God's throne, which made it truly high. And it was the honour of Israel that God set up his throne among them. Jeremiah may mention this here partly as a plea with God to show mercy to their land in honour of the throne of his glory; and partly as an aggravation of the sin of the people, in forsaking God, though his throne was among them, and so profaning his crown and *the place of his sanctuary*.

Verse 13. *O Lord, the hope of Israel*—That is, He in whom alone thy true Israel can hope; *all they that forsake thee shall be ashamed*—Those who forsake thy law and that rule which thou hast

15 ¶ Behold, they say unto me, A. M. 3403.  
B. C. 601. 'Where is the word of the LORD?  
let it come now.

16 As for me, 'I have not hastened from *being* a pastor <sup>6</sup> to follow thee: neither have I desired the woful day; thou knowest: that which came out of my lips was *right* before thee.

17 Be not a terror unto me: <sup>b</sup> thou art my hope in the day of evil.

18 'Let them be confounded that persecute

\* Isaiah v. 19; Ezekiel xii. 22; Amos v. 18; 2 Peter iii. 4. † Chap. i. 4.—‡ Heb. after thee.—§ Chap. xvii. 19.—¶ Psa. xxxv. 4; xl. 14; lxx. 2.

given them, whereby to direct their conversation, will sooner or later be ashamed of such their disobedience. Or, as Lowth paraphrases the words, "Thou hast given many gracious promises to thy people, to encourage them to trust in thee; and they that forsake their interest in thy goodness will find all other expectations fail and disappoint them;" and *they that depart from me*—From my love and service, says God, and their reliance upon me, *shall be written in the earth*—Shall have no portion beyond the earth, on which they set their affections. Or, their names and memories shall be soon extinct, like words written in the dust: they shall not be registered among my people, nor shall their names be recorded in the book of life. The expression seems to allude to registers kept of the members of cities or corporations, the privileges of which none can pretend to but they who have their names entered in such registers; *because they have forsaken the Lord, the fountain of living waters*—The only certain relief and comfort of any people, the fountain and origin of all the good they can hope for. See note on chap. ii. 13.

Verse 14. *Heal me, O Lord, &c.*—Most interpreters understand the prophet as addressing God here in his own behalf. He represents himself as a person wounded, or sick, either with a sense of the dishonour done to God by the sins of the people, or with their reproaches poured upon himself, and he begs of God to heal him, God only having power to do it. *Save me, for thou art my praise*—It is from thee only that I expect relief and comfort in all my troubles: and as I acknowledge that all the blessings I enjoy come from thee, so it is to thee I return all thanks and praise.

Verses 15–18. *Behold, they say unto me*—Scoffing at me, as if I had denounced threatenings in thy name, without any order or direction from thee: *Where is the word of the Lord?*—Like the scoffers, mentioned by St. Peter, 2 Pet. iii. 4, saying, *Where is the promise of his coming?* This has been the practice of all wicked men, hardened in their sinful courses, and resolved to go on in them: they put the evil day far from them, and scoff at all denunciations of divine wrath. *Let it come now*—So said these scoffers, daring the vengeance of God, and challenging him to execute the judgments he had

A. M. 3403. me, but <sup>d</sup> let not me be confounded :  
B. C. 601. let them be dismayed, but let not me  
be dismayed : bring upon them the day of evil,  
and <sup>e</sup> destroy <sup>e</sup> them with double destruction.

19 ¶ Thus saith the LORD unto me ; Go and  
stand in the gate of the children of the people,  
whereby the kings of Judah come in, and by  
the which they go out, and in all the gates of  
Jerusalem ;

20 And say unto them, ' Hear ye the word of  
the LORD, ye kings of Judah, and all Judah,  
and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, that enter  
in by these gates :

21 Thus saith the LORD ; <sup>f</sup> Take heed to  
yourselves, and bear no burden on the sabbath  
day, nor bring *it* in by the gates of Jerusalem ;

<sup>d</sup> Psalm xlv. 2.—<sup>e</sup> Hebrew, *break them with a double breach.*  
<sup>e</sup> Chap. xi. 20.—<sup>f</sup> Chap. xix. 3 ; xxii. 2.—<sup>g</sup> Num. xv. 32 ;

threatened. *As for me, I have not hastened, &c.*  
—Dr. Waterland translates this clause, " But as for  
me, I have not forced or intruded myself upon thee  
for a pastor." To the same sense the Geneva trans-  
lation interprets the words. According to which  
reading the prophet solemnly appeals to God that  
he had not intruded himself into the office of a pro-  
phet, nor had been desirous of an employment that  
foreboded so much evil to others, and brought a  
great deal of trouble upon himself. The words in  
the Hebrew, however, are literally as our trans-  
lation expresses them, and may be paraphrased  
thus, " As I did not seek the office of a prophet,  
so when thou wast pleased to call me to it I did  
not decline it." The LXX, render it, *εγω δε εκ  
εκοιτασα κατακοιθητων οπισω σου, I have not been  
weary of following thee. Neither have I desired  
the woful day*—Namely, the day of the accom-  
plishment of his prophecies. Though, when it  
came, it would prove him to have been a true pro-  
phet, which they had questioned, and would be the  
avenging of him upon his persecutors, and therefore,  
on those accounts, he might have been tempted to  
desire it ; yet, as it would be a *woful day* to Jeru-  
salem, he deprecated it, and could appeal to God  
that he wished it might never come. *That which  
came out of my lips was right before thee*—That  
is, it exactly agreed with what I had received from  
thee. *Be not a terror unto me*—Amidst all the  
terrors, with which mine adversaries threaten me,  
let me still find comfort in thee ; and let not any ap-  
prehension of being forsaken by thee be added to  
my other fears. *Let them be confounded, &c.*—  
See notes on chap. xi. 20, and xvi. 18.

Verses 19-24. *Thus saith the Lord, Go, &c.*—  
Here we evidently have a distinct prophecy, which  
the prophet was commanded to deliver most prob-  
ably soon, if not immediately, after the foregoing.  
*Stand in the gate of the children of the people*—By  
which it seems is meant the gate most frequented by

22 Neither carry forth a burden A. M. 3403.  
out of your houses on the sabbath B. C. 601.

day, neither do ye any work, but hallow ye  
the sabbath day, as I <sup>h</sup> commanded your  
fathers.

23 <sup>i</sup> But they obeyed not, neither inclined  
their ear, but made their neck stiff, that they  
might not hear, nor receive instruction.

24 And it shall come to pass, if ye diligently  
hearken unto me, saith the LORD, to bring in  
no burden through the gates of this city on the  
sabbath day, but hallow the sabbath day, to do  
no work therein ;

25 <sup>k</sup> Then shall there enter into the gates of  
this city kings and princes sitting upon the  
throne of David, riding in chariots and on

Neh. xiii. 19.—<sup>h</sup> Exod. xx. 8 ; xxiii. 12 ; xxxi. 13 ; Ezek. xx  
12.—<sup>i</sup> Chap. vii. 24, 26 ; xi. 10.—<sup>k</sup> Chap. xxii. 4.

the people ; being that nearest the palace, where the  
kings of Judah held their most solemn courts of ju-  
dicature, or by which they ordinarily went out of  
the city, and returned into it. *And say, Hear ye the  
word of the Lord, ye kings of Judah*—The word  
of the Lord equally concerns the highest and the  
lowest, the greatest princes as well as the meanest  
subjects. *Thus saith the Lord, Take heed to your-  
selves*—The Hebrew is, *Take heed to your souls*, in-  
timating that the sanctification of the sabbath is an  
important thing, wherein the welfare of men's souls  
is concerned. *Neither carry forth a burden, &c.*—  
See notes on Neh. xiii. 15-22. *Neither do ye any  
work*—Servile work was forbidden to be done upon  
their solemn festivals, Lev. xxiii. 8, 35, much more  
upon the sabbath days. *But hallow ye the sabbath  
day*—The sabbath was instituted as a sign or token  
of God's covenant with his people, Exod. xxxi. 13,  
and the observance of it was the distinguishing  
character of a Jew, whereby he declared himself to  
be a worshipper of the true God, who made heaven  
and earth, and ordained the sabbath day as a memo-  
rial of the creation. So that for the Jews to profane  
the sabbath, was in effect to renounce their share in  
God's covenant."

Verses 25-27. *Then shall there enter into the gates  
of this city, &c.*—" From hence it appears, " says  
Lowth, " that the judgments denounced against Jeru-  
salem, at least as far as they threatened the city  
with utter destruction, were not irreversible. And  
from Jeremiah's advice to Zedekiah, chap. xxxviii.  
17, it may be concluded, that if the king had heark-  
ened to that counsel, the city would not have been  
destroyed, and he himself might have continued a  
tributary king under Nebuchadnezzar. It is true,  
that in several other chapters of this prophecy, God,  
upon foresight of the Jews' impenitence, pronounces  
a peremptory sentence upon them. See note on  
chap. iv. 28." *From the land of Benjamin*—See  
notes on chap. i. 1 ; vi. 1. *And from the plain, and*

A. M. 3403. horses, they and their princes, the  
B. C. 611.

men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem: and this city shall remain for ever.

26 And they shall come from the cities of Judah, and from <sup>1</sup> the places about Jerusalem, and from the land of Benjamin, and from <sup>m</sup> the plain, and from the mountains, and from <sup>n</sup> the south, bringing burnt-offerings, and sacrifices, and meat-offerings, and incense, and bringing

<sup>1</sup> Chap. xxxii. 44; xxxiii. 13.—<sup>m</sup> Zech. vii. 7.—<sup>n</sup> Zech. vii. 7.  
<sup>o</sup> Psa. cvii. 22; cxvi. 17.

from the mountain—"These divisions of the country belonging to the tribe of Judah may be found, Josh. xv. 21, 33, 48; and these, together with the tribe of Benjamin, made up the whole kingdom of Judah, when taken separate from the kingdom of Israel, or of the ten tribes. See the same enumeration chap. xxxii. 44." *Bringing burnt-offerings and sacrifices, &c.*—The sum of these three verses is, that if they would sanctify the Lord's sabbath, observing also all the other parts of God's law, which are doubtless included, they should either continue in, or be restored unto, their ancient, civil, and ecclesiastical state. Their city and temple should be preserved; they should have kings and princes in their

<sup>o</sup> sacrifices of praise, unto the house A. M. 3403.  
of the LORD. B. C. 601.

27 But if ye will not hearken unto me to hallow the sabbath day, and not to bear a burden, even entering in at the gates of Jerusalem on the sabbath day; then <sup>p</sup> will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, <sup>q</sup> and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched.

<sup>p</sup> Chap. xxi. 14; xlix. 27; Lam. iv. 11; Amos i. 4, 7, 10, 12; ii. 2, 5.—<sup>q</sup> 2 Kings xxv. 9; Chap. lii. 13.

former order and splendour, and men should come from all parts of the country bringing their usual sacrifices and offerings to the temple, and those of all sorts. *But if you will not hearken unto me*—Here the Lord denounces a threatening the reverse of the former promise, which should be executed upon their acting contrary to the duty to which that promise was annexed. God would destroy their city by fire; their highest and noblest structures should be burned down, and though the hand of the enemy should do this, yet God should order them to do it; so that it should be a fire of his kindling, and therefore should not be likely to be quenched till it had effected the purpose for which God appointed it.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

In this chapter, (1.) *The prophet is shown, under the type of a potter, God's absolute power over nations and kingdoms, to regulate and alter their condition at his own discretion, 1-10.* (2.) *He is directed to exhort the people to avert the evil threatened them by repentance and reformation; and, upon their refusal, to charge them with the guilt of unprecedented revolt, and to foretel their destruction, 11-17.* (3.) *They conspire against him, and he protests against their unmerited and ungrateful persecution of him, and calls for justice against them, 18-23.*

A. M. 3419. THE word which came to Jeremiah  
B. C. 605.

from the LORD, saying,

2 Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words.

<sup>1</sup> Or, frames, or, seats.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER XVIII.

Verses 1-4. *The word which came to Jeremiah, &c.*—We have here the beginning of a new discourse of Jeremiah, which, if introduced in its proper place, as we have reason to think it is, was probably also, as well as the foregoing, delivered in some part of the first three years of Jehoiakim's reign. *Arise, and go down to the potter's house*—Some well-known place where pots were made; and *there I will cause thee to hear my words*—I will further reveal my mind to thee, that thou mayest make it known to this people. God has frequently condescended to teach us his will by very familiar and striking images. *Then I went, &c.*—Not being disobedient to

3 Then I went down to the potter's A. M. 3419.  
house, and behold, he wrought a work B. C. 605.  
on the <sup>1</sup> wheels.

4 And the vessel <sup>2</sup> that he made of clay was

<sup>2</sup> Or, that he made was marred, as clay in the hands of the potter.

the heavenly vision. *And behold he wrought a work on the wheels*—Hebrew, על המנני, literally, upon the stones. Thus also the LXX., ἐπι των λιθων. "There can be no doubt," says Blaney, "that the machine is intended on which the potters formed their earthen vessels; and the appellation, οὐ λιθοί, the stones, will appear very proper, if we consider this machine as consisting of a pair of circular stones placed one upon another like millstones; of which the lower was immovable, but the upper one turned upon the foot of a spindle or axis, and had motion communicated to it by the feet of the potter sitting at his work; as may be learned from Ecclus. xxxviii. 29. Upon the top of this upper stone, which was

A. M. 3419. marred in the hand of the potter: so  
B. C. 605. he <sup>3</sup> made it again another vessel, as  
seemed good to the potter to make it.

5 Then the word of the LORD came to me,  
saying,

6 O house of Israel, <sup>a</sup> cannot I do with you  
as this potter? saith the LORD. Behold, <sup>b</sup> as  
the clay *is* in the potter's hand, so *are* ye in my  
hand, O house of Israel.

7 At what instant I shall speak concerning a  
nation, and concerning a kingdom, to <sup>c</sup> pluck  
up, and to pull down, and to destroy it:

8 <sup>d</sup> If that nation against whom I have pro-  
nounced, turn from their evil, <sup>e</sup> I will repent of  
the evil that I thought to do unto them.

<sup>a</sup> Heb. returned and made.—<sup>b</sup> Isaiah xlv. 9; Romans ix. 20, 21.  
<sup>c</sup> Isa. lxi. 8.—<sup>d</sup> Ch. i. 10.—<sup>e</sup> Ezek. xviii. 21; xxxiii. 11.

flat, the clay was placed, which the potter, having given the stone the due velocity, formed into shape with his hand." And the vessel that he made of clay—Hebrew, כרסר, *as clay*, that is, *while it was yet clay*, was marred, was spoiled in the potter's hand, so that he did not think fit to go on with his design, as to the form of the vessel, but turned the same clay into a vessel of another form, as he judged best. Nothing can more strongly represent the absolute dominion God has over us than this image of the potter fashioning his clay into what form or vessel he pleased.

Verse 6. *Cannot I do with you as this potter?*—Have I not as absolute an authority and power over you? Nay, God has an infinitely clearer title to dominion over us than the potter has over the clay, for the potter only gives the clay its form; whereas we have both matter and form from God. As the work of his hands, made and preserved by him, and yet more as sinners redeemed by him, we are entirely in his hands, and at his disposal, and he has an undoubted right to do with us what he pleases. But as a being infinitely holy, just, and gracious, in all his conduct toward his intelligent, free, and immortal offspring, he acts by fixed rules of perfect equity and infinite goodness. He frequently dispenses favours, indeed, to individuals, families, and nations, in a way of sovereignty, but never punishes by arbitrary power. *Strong is his hand, and high is his right hand*, (Psa. lxxxix. 13,) but, as it there follows, *justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne*. He asserts his absolute power, and tells us what he might do; but at the same time assures us that he will act as a merciful and righteous judge.

Verses 7, 8. *At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, &c.*—God speaks thus concerning nations and kingdoms in his word, and by his prophets and ministers. Thus he told Jeremiah, chap. i. 10, that he had set him *over the nations, to root out and pull down*—That is, to declare they should be rooted out and pulled down, or to make known the divine pur-

9 And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it;

10 If it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, where-with I said I would benefit them.

11 ¶ Now therefore go to, speak to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the LORD; Behold, I frame evil against you, and devise a device against you: 'return ye now every one from his evil way, and make your ways and your doings good.

12 And they said, \* There is no hope: but we will walk after our own devices, and we

<sup>a</sup> Chap. xxvi. 3; Jonah iii. 10.—<sup>b</sup> 2 Kings xxvii. 13; Chapter vii. 3; xxv. 5; xxvi. 13; xxxv. 15.—<sup>c</sup> Chap. ii. 25.

poses concerning them. *If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn, &c., I will repent, &c.*—Repentance in man produces repentance in God. The threatenings of God being conditional, when they are suspended by his long-suffering and mercy, or prevented by the amendment of the persons against whom they are denounced, he is said, in Scripture, to repent; not that the phrase implies that there is any change in him, but that there is a change in us; and that his conduct toward us, provided his denunciations were not conditional, is the same as if he repented or changed his mind. But the reader is desired to see what is said on this subject, Gen. vi. 6.

Verses 9, 10. *If I shall speak concerning a nation to build and to plant*—That is, To advance and establish all the true interests of it; *if it do evil in my sight, &c.*—If it lose its piety and virtue, and become profane and vicious; *then will I repent of the good, &c.*—I will not proceed with the good work which I was performing in its behalf, but it shall be intermitted; and what favours were further designed it shall be withheld. Thus God changed his purpose concerning Eli's house, 1 Sam. ii. 30; and hurried Israel back into the wilderness, when he had brought them within sight of Canaan; and thus he rejected those *lost sheep of the house of Israel* who refused to embrace the gospel, notwithstanding the general promises he had made to that people, and even after he had sent his Son to *seek and save them*. In like manner neither can any particular Christians, nor Christian churches, lay any claim to God's general promise of preserving and finally saving them, any further than they keep close to that rule of faith and manners which he hath prescribed to them in the New Testament.

Verses 11, 12. *Now therefore speak to the men of Judah*—The Lord now commands his prophet to make a particular application of the more general doctrine which he had before delivered. *Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I frame evil against you*—I have a work upon the wheel, which, when finished, will effect your ruin; it is therefore your wisdom now to

A. M. 3419. will every one do the imagination of  
B. C. 605. his evil heart.

13 Therefore thus saith the LORD; <sup>h</sup> Ask ye now among the heathen, who hath heard such things: the virgin of Israel hath done <sup>i</sup> a very horrible thing.

14 Will a man leave <sup>k</sup> the snow of Lebanon which cometh from the rock of the field? or shall the cold flowing waters that come from another place be forsaken?

15 Because my people hath forgotten <sup>k</sup> me,

<sup>h</sup> Chapter ii. 10; 1 Cor. v. 1.—<sup>i</sup> Chapter v. 30.—<sup>k</sup> Or, my fields for a rock, or, for the snow of Lebanon? shall the running waters be forsaken for the strange cold waters?—<sup>k</sup> Chap. ii. 13, 32; iii. 21; xiii. 25; xvii. 13.

return from your evil ways, and make your doings good. And they said, There is no hope—Thou dost but labour in vain in talking to us. We will walk after our own devices—We will proceed forward in our old course; and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart—It cannot be supposed that they would call the imaginations of their hearts evil; nor does the prophet mean that they actually expressed themselves in these words; but this was the language of their conduct. They gave evident proof that they were determined to continue in their sins.

Verses 13, 14. Ask ye now among the heathen—Such an apostacy as you are guilty of (see verse 15) is not to be paralleled among the heathen. Compare chap. ii. 10. Who hath heard such things—When did people ever behave toward their idols, which yet were no gods, as my people have behaved toward me? The virgin of Israel—That people who were dedicated to me as a chaste virgin, have since corrupted themselves, and gone a whoring after idols.

Will a man leave the snow of Lebanon, &c.—“The two similitudes in this verse are evidently designed to illustrate the unnatural and absurd conduct of the Jewish nation in deserting their own God, and adopting the superstitions of a strange idolatry, in preference to the good old paths which God had ordained for them to walk in. As to the first, Lebanon, it must be observed, was the highest mountain in Israel, lying to the north of it, and having its summit almost always covered with snow; from the whiteness of which it is supposed to have derived its name.” See *Ancient Univ. Hist.* vol. i. book i. p. 570, fol. The same circumstance is also recorded by Tacitus, *Hist.* lib. v. c. 6. “Præcipuum montium Libanum erigit, mirum dictu, tantos inter ardores opacum fidumque nivibus.” If we follow the translation in our text, the sense is, It is as strange and unreasonable for men to forsake the true God for idols, as it would be for a thirsty traveller to forego the cold refreshing streams that come in his way, flowing from the melting snows of Lebanon, or the clear waters issuing from a pure spring, in order that he might drink of the stagnant waters of some muddy pool. But, it is to be observed, the words a man, and which

they have burned incense to <sup>l</sup> vanity, A. M. 3419. and they have caused them to stumble <sup>m</sup> in their ways from the <sup>n</sup> ancient paths, to walk in paths, in a way not cast up;

16 To make their land <sup>n</sup> desolate, and a perpetual <sup>o</sup> hissing; every one that passeth thereby shall be astonished, and wag his head.

17 <sup>p</sup> I will scatter them <sup>q</sup> as with an east wind before the enemy; <sup>r</sup> I will show them the back, and not the face, in the day of their calamity.

<sup>l</sup> Chapter x. 15; xvi. 19.—<sup>m</sup> Chapter vi. 16.—<sup>n</sup> Chapter xix. 8; xlix. 13; l. 13.—<sup>o</sup> 1 Kings ix. 8; Lamentation ii. 15. Micah vi. 16.—<sup>p</sup> Chap. xiii. 24.—<sup>q</sup> Psa. xlviii. 7.—<sup>r</sup> Chap. ii. 27.

cometh, are not in the Hebrew, but supplied by our translators, and considerably alter the sense, which literally is, Will the snow of Lebanon cease from the rock of the field? That is, Will it cease to flow, &c. And by the rock of the field, may be meant the rocks on the level ground on the very top of Lebanon; from which the snow, being melted, flowed down into the vales at the bottom of the mountain. Or, shall the cold overflowing waters, running down, fail? The Vulgate translates the verse to exactly the same sense, “Nunquid deficiet de petra agri nix Libani; aut evelli possunt aquæ, erumpentes frigidae, et defluentes?” And the LXX. to nearly that sense, Μη εκλειψουσιν απο πετρας μαςοι, η χιων απο τη Λιβανου; μη εκκλινη υδωρ βιαιως ανεμω φερομενον; Shall the breasts (that is, the springs) fail from the rock, or snow from Lebanon? Shall water, borne along violently by the wind, turn aside? The sense of the verse seems to be, that the Jews ought no more to have failed in their adherence to the true God, and his service, than the snow on mount Lebanon, or the waters which flow from that mountain into the fields under it, ever fail; in other words, That, as the works of nature preserve their order, and fail not of answering the ends for which they were appointed; so the Jews ought not to have failed of performing their duty to, and showing forth the praises of, Him who chose them to be his peculiar people, and conferred singular privileges upon them in order to these very ends.

Verses 15–17. Because my people have forgotten me—The fountain of living waters; have forgotten what I am in myself, and what I have been, and am still ready to be to them; have lost their knowledge of me, and their remembrance of what I have done for them; they have burned incense to vanity—To vain idols, the products of men’s vain imaginations, and serving no good purpose whatever; and they have caused them to stumble, &c.—“The worship of idols hath perverted them from following the old, beaten track, plainly set forth in the law of Moses, and in the examples of former ages; (see chap. vi. 16;) and hath engaged them in such new and untried ways of worship as will end in their ruin.”—Lowth. To make their land desolate—Though the Jews did not practise idolatry and other sins with this view,

A. M. 3419. 18 ¶ Then said they, "Come, and B. C. 605. let us devise devices against Jeremiah; for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet. Come, and let us smite him with the tongue, and let us not give heed to any of his words.

19 Give heed to me, O LORD, and hearken to the voice of them that contend with me.

20 "Shall evil be recompensed for good? for they have digged a pit for my soul. Remember that I stood before thee to speak good for them, and to turn away thy wrath from them.

21 Therefore deliver up their children to the

\* Chap. xi. 19.—† Lev. x. 11; Mal. ii. 7; John vii. 48, 49.  
 † Or, for the tongue.—‡ Psalm cix. 4, 5.—§ Psalm xxxv. 7; lvii. 6; Verse 22.

for they wished nothing less than the desolation of their country; yet they acted as if they wished it, and God had sufficiently warned them it was an effect which would follow upon their conduct. *And a perpetual hissing*—To be hissed at perpetually by way of insult and scorn, by those who pass by. *I will scatter them as with an east wind, &c.*—The east wind, being dry and blasting, is commonly used to express the calamities of war, and such like wasting judgments. But the words may perhaps be more intelligibly rendered, *As the east wind the stubble, so will I scatter them before the enemy. And I will show them the back and not the face*—I will manifest the same aversion from them which they have shown from me; I will not favour but be against them. The metaphor is taken from the custom of kings and princes, which is, to turn their backs on, or go away from, those supplicants whose petitions they will not grant.

Verse 18. *Then said they, Come, &c.*—Namely, after they had heard from Jeremiah what God had ordered him to say to them concerning their destruction; for this seems to be understood. *Let us devise devices against Jeremiah*—Let us accuse him of being a false prophet; *for the law shall not perish from the priest, &c.*—For his threatenings plainly contradict God's promises made to his people. "They seem to have been incensed against him on much the same ground as the Jews, in aftertimes, were against our Saviour and his apostles. They had persuaded themselves, that God had intended for them a perpetual establishment; and would accordingly provide them with a constant succession of men, in all departments, to preserve and maintain the general welfare; namely, priests to direct in all matters of law and religion; wise statesmen to manage their civil concerns; and prophets to make known to them the immediate will of God on all important and extraordinary occasions. Upon this presumption they inferred, that Jeremiah, who foretold the contrary, was a false prophet, and, as such, they determined to punish him."—Blaney. *Let us smite him with the tongue*—Let us calumni-

famine, and pour out their blood by the force of the sword; and let their wives be bereaved of their children, and be widows; and let their men be put to death; let their young men be slain by the sword in battle.

22 Let a cry be heard from their houses, when thou shalt bring a troop suddenly upon them: for they have digged a pit to take me, and hid snares for my feet.

23 Yet, LORD, thou knowest all their counsel against me to slay me: forgive not their iniquity, neither blot out their sin from thy sight, but let them be overthrown before thee; deal thus with them in the time of thine anger.

¶ Psalm cix. 9, 10.—\* Heb. pour them out.—† Verse 20.  
 † Heb. for death.—‡ Psalm xxxv. 4; cix. 14; Chapter xi. 20; xv. 15.

ate and disparage him, traducing him as an enemy to his country. Let us accuse him of crimes against the state, and by that means take away his life; then all his prophecies will die with him. In the margin we read, *for the tongue*, which may signify, "Let us punish him for his malignant speeches." "But I rather think," says Blaney, "we should render it, *Let us smite him on the tongue*, that is, on the offending part; alluding to a very significant mode of inflicting punishment, by directing it to that particular member which had the most immediate share in the offence, although here it may possibly carry this general import only, 'Let us punish him so as effectually to silence him.'"

Verses 19–23. *Give heed to me, O Lord*—The people had determined not to give heed to any of his words, (verse 18,) nor to admit any of his complaints, nor take the least notice of his grievances; therefore he appeals to God, as an impartial judge, that would hear both sides, as every judge ought to do. It is a matter of comfort to faithful ministers that, if men will not give heed to their preaching, yet God will give heed to their praying. *And hearken to the voice of them that contend with me*—Hear what they have to say against me, and for themselves, and then make it appear that thou sittest upon the throne judging right. *Shall evil be recompensed for good?*—And shall it go unpunished? Wilt not thou recompense me good for that evil? see 2 Sam. xvi. 12. "To render good for good," says Henry, "is human, evil for evil is brutish, good for evil is Christian, but evil for good is devilish; it is so very absurd and wicked a thing that we cannot think but God will avenge it." *They have digged a pit for my soul*—That is, They have laid snares for me as for a wild beast; for pits are digged for wild beasts to fall into, that so they may be taken. Therefore the sense is, They have formed a design against my life, and that not in a generous way, by an open assault, against which I might have had an opportunity of defending myself; but in a base, cowardly, clan-

destine way. Such was the evil they did or devised against him. But see how great the good was which he had done for them: *Remember*, he says, *that I stood before thee to speak good for them*—That is, in the execution of my prophetic office, I always interposed, with my prayers, in their behalf, to avert those judgments which, by thy command, I denounced against them. *Therefore deliver up their children, &c.*—Since they are thus incorrigible, I shall not any more intercede for them, but let those calamities of famine and sword, with which thou hast threatened them, overtake them. *Let a cry be heard from their houses, &c.*—When they are unex-

pectedly assaulted by a troop of their enemies, that come to plunder and destroy them. *Yet Lord, or, rather, For Lord, thou knowest all their counsel against me, to slay me; forgive not their iniquity, &c.*—Compare chap. xi. 20; xv. 15; Psa. lix. 5; on which passages see the notes. Although it redounds to the glory of God's justice that incorrigible sinners should meet with exemplary punishment; yet these strong imprecations are not to be considered as the effusions of an unholy zeal, but as simple prophecies, in which light, we have shown, in our commentary on the Psalms, many similar expressions occurring there are to be considered.

## CHAPTER XIX.

In this chapter, (1.) Under the type of breaking a potter's vessel, Jeremiah, in the presence of the elders, priests, and people, foreshows the ruin and desolation of Judah and Jerusalem, for their sins, 1–13. (2.) He repeats the like denunciations in the court of the temple, 14, 15.

A. M. 3399. B. C. 605. **T**HUS saith the LORD, Go and get a potter's earthen bottle, and take

of the ancients of the people, and of the ancients of the priests;

2 And go forth unto <sup>a</sup> the valley of the son of Hinnom, which is by the entry of <sup>1</sup> the east gate, and proclaim there the words that I shall tell thee.

3 <sup>b</sup> And say, Hear ye the word of the LORD, O kings of Judah, and inhabitants of Jerusalem; Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will bring evil upon this

place, the which whosoever heareth, A. M. 3399. his ears shall <sup>o</sup> tingle. B. C. 605.

4 Because they <sup>d</sup> have forsaken me, and have estranged this place, and have burned incense in it unto other gods, whom neither they nor their fathers have known, nor the kings of Judah, and have filled this place with <sup>e</sup> the blood of innocents;

5 <sup>f</sup> They have built also the high places of Baal, to burn their sons with fire for burnt-offerings unto Baal, <sup>g</sup> which I commanded not, nor spake it, neither came it into my mind:

<sup>a</sup> Joshua xv. 8; 2 Kings xxiii. 10; Chapter vii. 31.—<sup>1</sup> Heb. the sun gate.—<sup>b</sup> Chap. xvii. 20.—<sup>c</sup> 1 Sam. iii. 11; 2 Kings xxi. 12.

<sup>d</sup> Deut. xxviii. 20; Isa. lxxv. 11; Chap. ii. 13, 17, 19; xv. 6; xvii. 13.—<sup>e</sup> 2 Kings xxi. 16; Chap. ii. 34.—<sup>f</sup> Chap. vii. 31, 32; xxxii. 35.—<sup>g</sup> Lev. xviii. 21.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER XIX.

Verses 1, 2. *Go and get a potter's earthen bottle*—The meaning of this emblem is fully explained in the subsequent verses; and indeed the whole chapter requires little more comment than a reference to the passages in the margin. *And take of the ancients of the people*—Or, *take with thee some of the ancients, &c.* By these, men of reputation and eminence are meant, probably such as were members of the Sanhedrim. *And of the ancients of the priests*—The heads of the four and twenty courses: see 1 Chron. xxiv. 4. Such were the most proper to be witnesses of those things which the prophet was about to say and do. *And go unto the valley of the son of Hinnom*—A most noted valley, to the east of Jerusalem; which is by the entry of the east gate—By which men entered into the temple; from whence they had a prospect of the valley of Hinnom, which lay south-east of the temple, Josh. xv. 8. The Hebrew is שַׁעַר הַחַרְסִית, the gate Harsith, which some interpret, the dung gate, mentioned Neh. ii. 13;

others, the potters' gate; the potters' field being near the temple: see Zech. xi. 13.

Verses 3–5. *Say, Hear, &c., O kings of Judah*—See note on chap. xvii. 20. *Behold, I will bring evil upon this place*—That is, upon Judah and Jerusalem, so surprising and so dreadful that whosoever heareth, his ears shall tingle—The very report of it shall astonish the hearers. *Because they have estranged this place*—From me, should be supplied to make the sense clearer; the meaning, it seems, being that, by their worshipping other gods, and committing all sorts of crimes, they had caused God not to look any longer upon their city and country as his, but quite foreign from him. Or, as some interpret the expression, They had strangely abused, and alienated from their intended purposes both Jerusalem, the holy city, and the temple, God's holy house, which were designed for his honour and the support of his kingdom among men. *And have filled this place with the blood of innocents*—Of the children sacrificed to Moloch: see note on chap. ii.

A. M. 3399. 6 Therefore, behold, the days come, B. C. 605. saith the LORD, that this place shall no more be called Tophet, nor <sup>h</sup>The valley of the son of Hinnom, but The valley of Slaughter.

7 And I will make void the counsel of Judah and Jerusalem in this place; <sup>i</sup>and I will cause them to fall by the sword before their enemies, and by the hands of them that seek their lives: and their <sup>k</sup>carcasses will I give to be meat for the fowls of the heaven, and for the beasts of the earth.

8 And I will make this city <sup>l</sup>desolate, and a hissing: every one that passeth thereby shall be astonished and hiss because of all the plagues thereof.

9 And I will cause them to eat the <sup>m</sup>flesh of their sons and the flesh of their daughters, and they shall eat every one the flesh of his friend in the siege and straitness wherewith their enemies, and they that seek their lives, shall straiten them.

<sup>h</sup> Josh. xv. 8.—<sup>i</sup> Lev. xxvi. 17; Deut. xxviii. 25.—<sup>k</sup> Psa. lxxix. 2; Chap. vii. 33; xvi. 4; xxxiv. 20.—<sup>l</sup> Chap. xviii. 16; xlix. 13; i. 13.—<sup>m</sup> Levit. xxvii. 29; Deut. xxviii. 53; Isa. ix. 20; Lam. iv. 10.

34; and Isa. xxx. 33. *They have built also, rather, they have even built the high places of Baal*—For the same sin is here expressed which was mentioned in the latter part of the foregoing verse, and the copulative particle, *vau*, is sometimes used by way of explication; *to burn their sons with fire unto Baal*—From this, as well as from some other places, it is plain that they slew and burned human victims to Baal as well as to Moloch, if these two names were not promiscuously given, as some suppose they were, to one and the same idol. *Which I commanded not, &c.*—It seems from this that there were not wanting some who maintained that human sacrifices were pleasing to God.

Verses 6-9. *Therefore, behold, the days come*—And are at no great distance; *that this place shall no more be called Tophet, &c.*—In Joshua's time it was called *The valley of the son of Hinnom*; in after ages, it had the name of *Tophet*, from the noise of drums and tabrets sounding there while children were burning. Here it is foretold that it should have a new name and be called, *The valley of Slaughter*. See note on chap. vii. 32, 33. *I will make void the counsel, &c., in this place*—They shed innocent blood in this place, and in this place God would discomfit them, and cause their blood to be shed by the hands of the Chaldeans. *And I will cause them to eat the flesh of their sons and daughters*—A terrible judgment threatened by Moses, Deut. xxviii. 53; and actually fulfilled in the siege of Jerusalem. See Lam. iv. 10.

Verses 10-13. *Then shall thou break the bottle,*

10 <sup>a</sup>Then shalt thou break the A. M. 3399  
bottle in the sight of the men that B. C. 605  
go with thee,

11 And shalt say unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; <sup>o</sup>Even so will I break this people and this city, as *one* breaketh a potter's vessel, that cannot <sup>2</sup>be made whole again: and they shall <sup>p</sup>bury *them* in Tophet, till *there be* no place to bury.

12 Thus will I do unto this place, saith the LORD, and to the inhabitants thereof, and *even* make this city as Tophet:

13 And the houses of Jerusalem, and the houses of the kings of Judah, shall be defiled <sup>q</sup>as the place of Tophet, because of all the houses upon whose <sup>r</sup>roofs they have burned incense unto all the host of heaven, and <sup>s</sup>have poured out drink-offerings unto other gods.

14 Then came Jeremiah from Tophet, whither the LORD had sent him to prophesy; and he stood in <sup>t</sup>the court of the LORD's house; and said to all the people,

<sup>a</sup> Chapter li. 63, 64.—<sup>o</sup> Psalm ii. 9; Isaiah xxx. 14; Lam. iv. 2.—<sup>p</sup> Heb. *be healed*.—<sup>q</sup> Chapter vii. 32.—<sup>r</sup> 2 Kings xxiii. 10.—<sup>s</sup> 2 Kings xxiii. 12; Chapter xxxii. 29; Zeph. i. 5.—<sup>t</sup> Chapter vii. 18.—<sup>u</sup> 2 Chron. xx. 5.

&c.—This was intended to be a symbolical representation of the ruin threatened against them, used in order to strike the beholders more powerfully than mere words could do. Of such symbolical actions as these there are several instances in the Scriptures. *Thus saith the Lord, Even so will I break this people*—That is, as Jeremiah breaketh the bottle: *That cannot be made whole again*—That is, the ruin of Jerusalem shall be an utter ruin: no hand can repair it but his that broke it; and if they return to him, though he has torn, he will heal. In fact, Jerusalem was so utterly destroyed by the Chaldeans that there was little left standing of it. So that after their captivity they were obliged to build a new city in the place of the former. *And they shall bury them in Tophet*—These words are omitted by the LXX.; *till there be no place to bury*—Till there is no room to bury more; for the meaning is, that the whole valley of Tophet should be so filled with dead bodies, that there should be no room to lay any more there; by which is expressed the greatness of the slaughter. *And even make this city as Tophet*—A place of slaughter. *And the houses of Jerusalem shall be defiled as Tophet*—Namely, polluted with dead bodies. *Because of the houses upon whose roofs they have burned incense*—The houses of the Jews were built with flat roofs, Deut. xxii. 8, and there they dedicated altars to the host of heaven, where they could have a full view of them.

Verses 14, 15. *He stood in the court of the Lord's house*—The great court, called the *outer court*, Ezek. xli. 21, supposed to be the same with the *new court*,

A. M. 3399. 15 Thus saith the LORD of hosts,  
B. C. 605. the God of Israel; Behold, I will bring  
upon this city and upon all her towns all the evil

that I have pronounced against it, A. M. 3399.  
because <sup>1</sup> they have hardened their <sup>2</sup> necks,  
B. C. 605. that they might not hear my words.

<sup>1</sup> Chapter vii.

26; xvii. 23.

mentioned 2 Chron. xx. 5, as having been built since Solomon's time. *And said to all the people*—Confirming, and probably repeating to them, who had not heard it, what he had said to the ancients in the valley of Tophet. Thus saith the *Lord of hosts*—Who is well able to make his words good; *I will bring upon this city, and upon all her towns*—All the cities of Judah and Benjamin are meant which acknowledged Jerusalem for their metropolis, and were subordinate to her. *All the evil that I have pro-*

*nounced against it*—As if he had said, Flatter not yourselves with a conceit that God will be better to you than his word. Whatever you may suppose to the contrary, the execution of the divine threatening will fully answer the prediction, and the former will be found, by experience, to be as terrible as the latter represents it to be; *because they have hardened their necks*—And would not bend them to the yoke of God's commands; *and would not hear his words*—Would not heed and yield obedience to them.

CHAPTER XX.

*We have in this chapter, which is a continuation of the foregoing, (1.) An account of Jeremiah's being beaten and imprisoned by Pashur, captain of the temple; against whom, on his release, he pronounces a terrible sentence, and also against his friends, foretelling their being carried away captives with all Judah unto Babylon, where Pashur, and all that belonged to him, should die in exile, 1-6. (2.) The prophet complains of the mockery of his enemies, and their malicious attempts to hurt him; but professes his trust, that God would still defeat their purposes and avenge his wrongs; and celebrates his deliverance with a song of praise, 7-13. (3.) He bitterly laments his being born to a life of so much sorrow and disquietude, 14-18.*

A. M. 3399. NOW Pashur the son of <sup>1</sup>Immer  
B. C. 605. the priest, who was also chief  
governor in the house of the LORD, heard that

Jeremiah prophesied these things. A. M. 3399.  
2 Then Pashur smote Jeremiah <sup>2</sup>  
B. C. 605. the prophet and put him in the stocks that

<sup>1</sup> 1 Chron.

xxiv. 14.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XX.

Verse 1. *Pashur the son of Immer*—Pashur was not the immediate son of Immer, but of Melchiah, as is expressly mentioned 1 Chronicles ix. 12, and hereafter, chapter xxi. 1. Immer was one of his predecessors, and head of the sixteenth sacerdotal class, 1 Chron. xxiv. 14. Pashur was not high-priest, as some of the ancients have thought, but only *captain, or overseer* of the temple. In this capacity he had power to arrest and put in prison the false prophets, and those who caused any disturbance in the temple. This matter is further explained, by Blaney, thus: "The priests being distributed, by David, into twenty-four courses, under as many heads of families, and each of these courses officiating by turns in the temple service; the heads of each course were *governors of the sanctuary*; or, according to our translation, *of the house of God*. The meaning then will be, that these heads of the courses had not only the chief ordering of the service of the sanctuary, but were invested also with authority, at least within the precincts of the temple, to maintain peace and good order there. These persons I consider as being the same with those who in the New Testament are styled *αρχιερείς, chief priests*, being next in dignity and power to the high-priest. Pashur, it seems, was the head of the course of Immer. So

that, if the course of Immer was at that time upon duty, Pashur was at the same time the acting ruler or commander in the temple. And this I conceive to be implied in the words here used, נָגִיד, implying his authority to command, and מַשְׁפִּיךְ, that he was then in the exercise of it; and by virtue of that authority he took upon him to punish Jeremiah as a disturber of the peace. I have given this officer, or magistrate," (namely, in his translation,) "the military title of *commanding officer*, because it was usual to consider the temple as a kind of garrison, held by high-priests under military subordination. And for this reason, no doubt, we find him called by the name of *στρατηγός τῆς ἑστῆς, captain of the temple*, Acts iv. 1, and v. 24, 26. In Luke xxii. 52, *captains, στρατηγοί*, are spoken of, in the plural number; which may perhaps be thus accounted for. As on the great festivals, not only the priests of the ordinary course, but the whole body of priests, were called upon to assist in the sacrifices; so on account of the multitudes that flocked to the temple at these times, the guards were also necessarily doubled, and, of course, a greater number of *captains* were on constant duty; and many, if not all these, came to assist in apprehending Jesus, as on a service which might be esteemed hazardous, on account of the number of his disciples."

Verse 2. *Then Pashur smote Jeremiah, &c.*—He

A. M. 3399. were in the high gate of Benjamin,  
B. C. 605. which was by the house of the LORD.

3 And it came to pass on the morrow, that Pashur brought forth Jeremiah out of the stocks. Then said Jeremiah unto him, The LORD hath not called thy name Pashur, but <sup>1</sup>Magor-missabib.

4 For thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will make thee a terror to thyself, and to all thy friends: and they shall fall by the sword of their enemies, and thine eyes shall behold it: and I will give all Judah into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall carry them captive into Babylon, and shall slay them with the sword.

5 Moreover I <sup>b</sup>will deliver all the strength of this city, and all the labours thereof, and all the

<sup>1</sup> That is, fear round about, Psa. xxxi. 13; Verse 10; Chap. vi. 25; xlvii. 5; xlix. 29.—<sup>b</sup> 2 Kings xx. 17; xxiv. 12-16; xxv. 13, &c.; Chap. iii. 24.

thought, no doubt, that Jeremiah's speaking so plainly of the overthrow of Jerusalem, and of the miseries which should befall it, deserved that he should be arrested and put in confinement, to prevent his speaking thus freely: and accordingly he treats him as they treated, or rather, ought to have treated, the false prophets. *And put him in the stocks*—The word הַכְּרֵכֶת, here translated the stocks, is rendered the prison by Houbigant, and the house of correction by Blaney. It occurs twice besides, namely, chap. xxix. 26, and 2 Chron. xvi. 10, in both which places it is rendered simply a prison, and is mentioned as a punishment due to, or inflicted on, one who assumed the character of a prophet, without a proper call, or was presumed to have behaved unbecomingly as such. The word which properly signifies the stocks, is כָּר: see Job xiii. 27, and xxxiii. 11. It is very natural to understand here that Pashur, having caused Jeremiah to be beaten, or scourged, ordered him into confinement afterward; from whence he released him the next day.

Verses 3-5. *Jeremiah said, The Lord hath not called—Rather, doth not call thyn name Pashur; but Magor-missabib*—That is, *Terror on every side*, or, *Terror to all around*, as the name is explained in the next verse. God's giving him this name, signifies his changing the circumstances or condition of the person so named, agreeably to the meaning of the name given him, or that he would render him such as he called him. So when God called Abram by the new name of Abraham, he assigns the reason, "For a father of many nations have I made thee," Gen. xvii. 5. *I will deliver all the strength of this city*—All its wealth, the word כֶּסֶף, here used, being frequently translated treasures: see Prov. xv. 6; Ezek. xxii. 25. It may also include whatever strengthened and defended it, especially the men of war; and all the labours thereof—Or, all the workmanship thereof; that is, all the fruit of the people's labours; all

precious things thereof, and all the A. M. 3399.  
treasures of the kings of Judah will B. C. 605.

I give into the hand of their enemies, which shall spoil them, and take them, and carry them to Babylon.

6 And thou, Pashur, and all that dwell in thy house, shall go into captivity: and thou shalt come to Babylon, and there thou shalt die, and shalt be buried there, thou, and all thy friends, to whom thou hast <sup>c</sup>prophesied lies.

7 ¶ O LORD, thou hast deceived me, and I was <sup>2</sup>deceived: <sup>d</sup>thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed: <sup>e</sup>I am in derision daily, every one mocketh me.

8 For since I spake, I cried out, <sup>f</sup>I cried violence and spoil; because the word of the LORD

<sup>c</sup> Chapter xiv. 13, 14; xxviii. 15; xxix. 21.—<sup>d</sup> Or, enticed.  
<sup>e</sup> Chapter i. 6, 7.—<sup>f</sup> Lamentation iii. 14.—<sup>g</sup> Chapter vi. 7.

their fine buildings, or whatever its artificers had erected with labour and cost; and all the precious things thereof—Whatever was valuable in the eyes of the greatest persons among them; will I give into the hands of their enemies—The Babylonians shall spoil and make a prey of them all.

Verse 7. *O Lord, thou hast deceived me, &c.*—This is a very harsh and improper translation of the prophet's words, פְּתִיתִי וְאָמַרְתָּ, which properly and literally signify, *Thou hast persuaded me, and I was persuaded*. Some, to make the sense more clear, supply a few words, and make the whole sentence stand thus; *O Lord, thou hast persuaded me to carry thy commands to thy people, and I was persuaded: thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed*—That is, "It was sore against my will, that I undertook the prophetic office, which I would gladly have declined, chap. i. 6. But thy commands and inspiration did, in a manner, constrain me to it." The occasion of the words was this: "The prophet had met with a large share of ill usage, from an ungrateful people, in return for the faithful discharge of his prophetic office. Under these his calamitous circumstances he looks up to God, and appeals to him, the searcher of hearts, as his witness, that it was not through any ambition of his own that he had entered upon that invidious office; nor had he taken upon him, of his own accord, to reprove his countrymen: but he had done all in pure obedience to the divine command. He would gladly have declined the office, but God would not suffer him: wherefore, hereupon he says, speaking to the Almighty, *Thou hast persuaded me, &c.* The passage carries in it a lively idea of the prophet's great modesty, and profound humility, in not affecting high things or shining offices; but submitting, however, to the burden of them, in obedience to the will of God." See *Waterland's Script. Vind.*, part iii. page 84.

Verses 8, 9. *For since I spake, I cried out, I cried*

A. M. 3399. was made a reproach unto me, and  
B. C. 605. a derision, daily.

9 Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But *his word* was in my heart as a <sup>ε</sup> burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and <sup>h</sup> I could not *stay*.

10 ¶ <sup>i</sup> For I heard the defaming of many, fear on every side. Report, *say they*, and we will report it. <sup>3</sup> All <sup>k</sup> my familiars watched for my halting, *saying*, Peradventure he will be enticed, and we shall prevail against him, and we shall take our revenge on him.

<sup>ε</sup> Job xxxii. 18, 19; Psa. xxxix. 3.—<sup>h</sup> Job xxxii. 18; Acts xviii. 5.—<sup>i</sup> Psalm xxxi. 13.—<sup>3</sup> Heb. *every man of my peace*.  
<sup>k</sup> Job xix. 19; Psa. xli. 9; lv. 13, 14; Luke xi. 53, 54.

*violence and spoil*—Or, rather, as Houbigant renders it, *For since I spake, and cried against iniquity, and denounced desolation, the word of the Lord, &c.*—Blaney's translation is nearly to the same sense: *For as often as I speak, whether I cry out against injustice or proclaim devastation, the word of Jehovah is turned against me into matter of reproach and derision continually.* The prophet means that, upon account of declaring what God had revealed to him, he was reckoned an enemy to his country, and a false prophet. *Then I said*—Namely, within myself, for he did not speak this to any one; *I will not make mention of him*—Or, of it, namely, the word of God, or the message God had appointed him to deliver; *nor speak any more in his name*—I resolved no more to declare what God had revealed to me concerning the calamities which he was about to bring on Judah and Jerusalem. *But his word was in my heart as a burning fire*—It glowed inwardly, and must have vent: I found myself so pressed in spirit, felt such a burning ardour within my breast, such an immediate and powerful impulse of the prophetic spirit constraining me to speak, that I could no more be easy without executing God's commands, than if a burning fire had been shut up in my bones. The conviction of his own mind that he ought to speak, his zeal for the glory of God, his indignation at the sins of the people, and his compassion for their souls, would not suffer him to rest, or allow him to forbear declaring God's message.

Verses 10, 11. *For I heard the defaming of many*—The slanderous, injurious reports that were raised concerning me; *fear on every side*—Hebrew, *magor-missabib*; as if he had said, The name given to Pashur would have suited me; fear, or cause for fear, was on every side of me. These words are found verbatim in the original. (Psa. xxxi. 13.) where the sense of them seems to be exactly the same as here, namely, from the slanderous reports raised upon him, he had reason to apprehend some evil design against his life, as well from treacherous friends as from open enemies. *Report, say they, &c.*—This seems to be spoken of the enemies of the

11 But <sup>l</sup> the LORD is with me as a A. M. 3399.  
mighty terrible one: therefore my per- B. C. 605.  
secutors shall stumble, and they shall not <sup>m</sup> prevail; they shall be greatly ashamed; for they shall not prosper: *their* <sup>n</sup> everlasting confusion shall never be forgotten.

12 But, O LORD of hosts, that <sup>o</sup> triest the righteous, and seest the reins and the heart, <sup>p</sup> let me see thy vengeance on them: for unto thee have I opened my cause.

13 Sing unto the LORD, praise ye the LORD: for <sup>q</sup> he hath delivered the soul of the poor from the hand of evil-doers.

<sup>l</sup> Chapter i. 8, 19.—<sup>m</sup> Chap. xv. 20; xvii. 18.—<sup>n</sup> Chapter xxiii. 40.—<sup>o</sup> Chap. xi. 20; xvii. 10.—<sup>p</sup> Psa. liv. 7; lix. 10.  
<sup>q</sup> Psa. xxxv. 9, 10; cix. 30, 31.

prophet, exciting one another to accuse him of being in the interest of the Babylonians against his country. Blaney joins this clause with the preceding, thus: *Report ye terror all around, and we will report it: all my familiar friends watch for my halting; perhaps, say they, he may be drawn aside, so that we may prevail against him, and we may take our revenge of him.* But, &c.—The prophet, having given vent to his painful apprehensions in the preceding gloomy reflections, begins here to rise above his fears, and to encourage himself in his God. *The Lord is with me*—Is on my side, to take my part against my enemies, and to defend me from their malicious designs upon me; *as a mighty and terrible one*—Mighty to defend, support, and save me, and *terrible* to confound and avenge me of them! The Lord had said to him, when he first undertook the prophetic office, (chap. i. 8,) *Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee.* This promise he now recollects, and confiding in the power, love, and faithfulness of God to make it good, he concludes that though he had many enemies who pursued after his life, he should be protected, and they should fail of accomplishing their wicked purpose. *Therefore my persecutors shall stumble*—In their ways of violence, and *not prevail* against me. *They shall be greatly ashamed*—Of what they have done, or shall be brought to shame for it. *Their everlasting confusion*—That is, their ignominy and disgrace; *shall never be forgotten*—They shall not forget it themselves, but it shall be to them a constant and lasting vexation whenever they think of it; and others shall not forget it, but it shall leave upon them an indelible reproach.

Verses 12, 13. *But, O Lord, that triest the righteous*—That triest their faith and patience, in order to the farther purification of their souls, and the increase of these and all their other graces; or, who takest cognizance of them, and of every cause in which they are interested; and who dost not judge in their favour with partiality, but *searchest the reins and the heart; let me see thy vengeance on them*—See note on chap. xi. 20. *For unto thee have I opened my cause*—As to a just judge, who wilt not

A. M. 3399. 14 ¶ <sup>r</sup> Cursed be the day wherein  
B. C. 605. I was born: let not the day wherein  
my mother bare me be blessed.

15 Cursed be the man who brought tidings to my father, saying, A man-child is born unto thee; making him very glad.

16 And let that man be as the cities which the LORD <sup>r</sup>overthrew, and repented not: and

<sup>r</sup> Job iii. 3; Chap. xv. 10.—<sup>r</sup> Gen. xix. 25.—<sup>r</sup> Ch. xviii. 22.

fail to do me justice. *Sing unto the Lord*—The prophet here rises higher, from prayer to praise. The clouds of darkness and doubt which enveloped his mind are dispersed, and his complaints silenced and turned into thanksgivings. He has now an entire confidence in that God whom (verse 7) he was distrusting, and stirs up himself to praise that name which he had almost resolved (verse 9) no more to make mention of. And it was the lively exercise of faith in the word and promise of God that made this happy change in his mind, that scattered the gloom which surrounded it, and turned his sorrow into joy. *For he hath delivered the soul of the poor, &c.*—He means especially himself, his own poor soul: he hath delivered me formerly when I was in distress, and now of late out of the hand of Pashur; and he will continue to deliver, 2 Cor. i. 10; *from the hand of evil-doers*—So that they have not yet gained, and will not be able to gain, their ends.

Verse 14. *Cursed be the day, &c.*—If the reader be surprised at this sudden change of the prophet's discourse, from joyful thanks for deliverance to bitter complaints, he must observe that the order of time is not strictly observed in the prophetic writings, nor does the discourse always go on in a regular series. Therefore, though these complaints are placed immediately following a thanksgiving, it does not follow that they were pronounced immediately after it. In the following chapters of Jeremiah, it is very evident the order of time is not kept; and it is not unlikely that these words of complaint were uttered before the foregoing, which are expressive of confidence in God and gratitude for deliverance; namely, at a time when his sense of present evils, or his prospect of those just at hand, produced in his mind the most pungent grief and the greatest perturbation. They represent, it seems, the melancholy thoughts which oppressed him while he was struggling with the malice of his enemies, and, as Lowth justly observes, are to be considered, not as expressions of indignation and malice, but rather of mourning and sorrow; or, as a lamentation written in a poetical strain, like a *Lessus*, *Nenia*, or mournful ditty, such as the mourning women used to sing, (see note on chap. ix. 17,) wherein strong poetical figures were wont to be used, and all the circumstances brought in, which were calculated to raise the passions, but which it would be extremely wrong to interpret in a strict and literal sense. The expressions here used are so similar to those in Job. iii.,

let him <sup>r</sup>hear the cry in the morning, A. M. 3399  
and the shouting at noon-tide; B. C. 605.

17 <sup>r</sup> Because he slew me not from the womb, or that my mother might have been my grave, and her womb *to be* always great *with me*.

18 <sup>r</sup> Wherefore came I forth out of the womb to <sup>r</sup>see labour and sorrow, that my days should be consumed with shame?

<sup>r</sup> Job iii. 10, 11.—<sup>r</sup> Job iii. 20.—<sup>r</sup> Lam. iii. 1.

that they seem to have been borrowed from thence; and the reader is referred to the notes on that chapter for our views of them. Bishop Lowth has cited other similar instances of grief, discharging itself in invectives and bitter wishes against objects equally blameless and undeserving with those which our prophet has singled out. Among the rest is the following exclamation in David's celebrated lamentation over Saul and Jonathan, 2 Sam. i. 21, "Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew, neither rain upon you, nor fields of offering." Upon which the bishop thus descants: "All which if you were to bring to the standard of cool and dispassionate reason, what could appear more absurd? But, if you have an eye to nature, and the ordinary flow of the passions, what more genuine, more exact? The falling upon a wrong cause, instead of the right, though a fault in logic, is sometimes an excellence in poetry; because the leading principle in the former is right reason, in the latter it is passion."—*De Sacr. Poes. Heb. Prælect. 23. Let not the day, wherein my mother bare me be blessed*—Let it not be celebrated with those good wishes and expressions of joy which are wont to be used on birth-days.

Verses 15–18. *Cursed be the man, &c.*—As in the forms of rejoicing upon a birth-day they blessed every person and thing concerned in the birth, and said, *Blessed be the womb that bare thee*, and the like, and he that brought the joyful news was always rewarded, so in the forms of sorrow for the miserable they used quite the contrary expressions. *Let that man be as the cities, &c.*—Namely, Sodom and Gomorrah; let him be looked upon as a sad spectacle. *Let him hear the cry in the morning, &c.*—By these expressions he means the cries, shouts, and noises that enemies make when they break in upon a place in a hostile manner. *Because he slew me not, &c.*—Or, *because I was not slain; from the womb. Wherefore came I forth to see*—That is, to experience; *labour and sorrow?*—Seeing being frequently put to express any sensation. As if the prophet had said, "I speak thus in the bitterness of my soul; when I consider how much better it would have been that I had never been born, or that I had given up the ghost immediately on my birth, than to lead a life of continual sorrow and misery." These various expressions show us to what a height the tide of perturbation swelled at this time in this good man's heart, and what need we have to pray to be delivered from the power of our own passions

## CHAPTER XXI.

From the first two verses of this chapter we learn that the predictions and warnings contained in it were delivered in answer to a message sent by King Zedekiah, when Nebuchadnezzar was coming to make war against him. By this circumstance, and others of a similar kind, it evidently appears that the prophecies and discourses of this book are not placed therein in the same order in which they were delivered, for there are several chapters after this which concern Jehoiakim, and Jeconiah, who all reigned before Zedekiah. We have here, (1.) The message which Zedekiah sent to the prophet, to desire him to inquire of the Lord for them, 1, 2. (2.) In answer to that message, Jeremiah, in the name of God, foretels the certain and inevitable ruin of the city, and the fruitlessness of their attempts for its preservation, 3-7. (3.) He advises the people to make the best they could of their situation, by surrendering themselves to Nebuchadnezzar in due time, 8-10. (4.) He advises the king and his family to repent of their wickedness, and execute just judgment, and not to trust to the strength of Jerusalem, which should certainly be destroyed, 11-14.

A. M. 3414. THE word which came unto Jeremiah from the LORD, when King Zedekiah sent unto him <sup>a</sup> Pashur the son of Melchiah, and <sup>b</sup> Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah the priest, saying,

2 <sup>c</sup> Inquire, I pray thee, of the LORD for us; for Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon maketh war against us; if so be that the LORD will deal with us according to all his wondrous works, that he may go up from us.

3 ¶ Then said Jeremiah unto them, Thus shall ye say to Zedekiah:

4 Thus saith the LORD God of Israel; Behold, I will turn back the weapons of war that

are in your hands, wherewith ye fight against the king of Babylon, and against the Chaldeans, which besiege you without the walls, and <sup>d</sup> I will assemble them into the midst of this city.

5 And I myself will fight against you with an <sup>e</sup> outstretched hand and with a strong arm, even in anger, and in fury, and in great wrath.

6 And I will smite the inhabitants of this city, both man and beast: they shall die of a great pestilence.

7 And afterward, saith the LORD, 'I will deliver Zedekiah king of Judah, and his servants, and the people, and such as are left in this city

<sup>a</sup> Chapter xxxviii. 1.—<sup>b</sup> 2 Kings xxv. 18; Chapter xxix. 25; xxxvii. 3.

<sup>c</sup> Chapter xxxvii. 3, 7.—<sup>d</sup> Isaiah xlii. 4.—<sup>e</sup> Exodus vi. 6. <sup>f</sup> Chap. xxxvii. 17; xxxix. 5; lli. 9.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER XXI.

Verse 1. *The word which came to Jeremiah, when King Zedekiah sent unto him*—The occasion of Zedekiah's sending the message here mentioned to Jeremiah, has, by some commentators, been founded with that in chap. xxxvii. "But I think," says Blaney, "they are clearly and undeniably distinct one from the other. From the reply given to that in chapter xxxvii., it is manifest that the Chaldeans, who had been besieging Jerusalem for some time had already raised the siege, and were gone to meet the Egyptian army, leaving the Jews in great hopes that they would never return again. But the terms of this message seem to imply, that the king of Babylon had but just commenced his hostilities against Judah, of which Zedekiah informs the prophet, as of a matter that might not yet have come to his certain knowledge; and desires him to intercede with God, that he would divert the storm by some such extraordinary interposition as he had been wont to manifest in favour of his people. The answer likewise takes no notice of any siege or operations past; but simply regards the future, which it is declared should end unhappily, because God would take an active part against the inhabitants of Judah, and would deliver both their city, and also the king and his people, into the hands of their merciless enemies. The time of this transaction, therefore, I conceive to be the ninth year of Zedekiah, previous to the siege of Jerusalem, which began in the tenth month of that year."

Verse 2. *Inquire, I pray thee, of the Lord for us*—As Zedekiah was not one of the best, so he was not one of the worst of the kings of Judah. Having some reverence for God, he sends the prophet to inquire of him. Or, as the word *רָרַר*, signifies, to seek or apply to God by prayer and supplication: see Isa. lv. 6. *If so be the Lord will deal with us, &c.*—If he will show his wonderful power, in giving us a total deliverance from the hands of our enemies, the Chaldeans. If they had attended to the predictions of the prophets they would not have made this inquiry of Jeremiah; for all the things which had happened to them already, had been predicted by the prophets. But perhaps they flattered themselves that all God's threatenings would not be executed; or that they had been executed already, in great numbers of them being carried into captivity, first in the reign of Jehoiakim, and afterward in that of Jehoiachin.

Verses 4-7. *Behold, I will turn back the weapons, &c.*—Instead of doing execution upon your enemies, they shall hurt yourselves, and be the occasion of your own destruction. God will as visibly appear against you as if a miraculous wind were to drive back your own darts and arrows, and turn them upon yourselves. *And I myself will fight against you*—By the executioners of my wrath, the sword, the famine, and the pestilence. I will plainly appear on your enemies' side, by the success I will give to their arms. *And I will smite the inhabitants of this city*—I the Lord will do it, and it shall evidently appear

A. M. 3414. from the pestilence, from the sword, B. C. 590. and from the famine, into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, and into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of those that seek their life: and he shall smite them with the edge of the sword; <sup>s</sup> he shall not spare them, neither have pity, nor have mercy.

8 ¶ And unto this people thou shalt say, Thus saith the LORD; Behold, <sup>h</sup> I set before you the way of life, and the way of death.

9 He that <sup>i</sup> abideth in this city shall die by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence: but he that goeth out, and falleth to the

<sup>s</sup> Deuteron. xxviii. 50; 2 Chron. xxvi. 17. — <sup>h</sup> Deuteron. xxx. 19. — <sup>i</sup> Chap. xxxviii. 2, 17, 18. — <sup>h</sup> Chap. xxxix. 18; xlv. 5. Lev. xvii. 10; Chap. xlv. 11; Amos ix. 4.

to be my work; both man and beast—Even the beasts shall perish, both those that are for food, and those that are for service in war. *They shall die of a great pestilence*—Which shall rage within the walls, while their enemies are encamped about them. Though the walls and gates of Jerusalem may for a time keep out the Chaldeans, they cannot keep out God's judgments. His arrows of pestilence can reach those that think themselves safe from other arrows. *And I will deliver Zedekiah, &c.*—The king himself, and all the people that escape the sword, famine, and pestilence, shall fall into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar and the Chaldeans. *And he shall smite them with the edge of the sword*—Zedekiah himself was not put to death, but carried to Babylon, where he died: see chap. xxiv. 5. But his sons and his great men were slain by the command of Nebuchadnezzar, 2 Kings xxv. 7, 8. "It is common in all writers to express that indefinitely which is true of the greater part of the persons concerned."—Lowth. *He shall not spare, neither have pity nor mercy*—These three synonymous terms are used by way of emphasis, to express the severe revenge the Babylonians would take of them. The inhabitants of Jerusalem must indeed have been sensible at last, that they could expect little or no mercy, since they had rebelled three times against the king of Babylon.

Ver. 8–10. *And unto this people thou shalt say, &c.*—By the civil message which the king sent to Jeremiah it appeared that both he and the people began to have respect for him; but the reply which God obliged him to make was sufficient to crush that little respect, and to exasperate them against him more than ever. *Behold, I set before you the way of life, and the way of death*—Both the law and the prophets had often set before them life and death in another sense; life, if they would obey the voice of God; death, if they should persist in disobedience, Deut. xxx. 19. But they had slighted that way of life which would have made them truly happy; to upbraid them with which the prophet here uses similar expressions, which signify, not as those of

Chaldeans that besiege you, he shall <sup>A. M. 3414.</sup> live, and <sup>B. C. 590.</sup> his life shall be unto him for a prey.

10 For I have <sup>1</sup> set my face against this city for evil, and not for good, saith the LORD: <sup>m</sup> it shall be given into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall <sup>n</sup> burn it with fire.

11 ¶ And touching the house of the <sup>B. C. 590.</sup> king of Judah, say, Hear ye the word of the LORD;

12 O house of David, thus saith the LORD; <sup>o</sup> Execute <sup>1</sup> judgment <sup>p</sup> in the morning, and deliver *him that is* spoiled out of the hand of the

<sup>m</sup> Chapter xxxviii. 3. — <sup>n</sup> Chapter xxxiv. 2, 22; xxxvii. 10; xxxviii. 18, 23; lii. 13. — <sup>o</sup> Chapter xxii. 3; Zechariah vii. 9. <sup>1</sup> Heb. Judge. — <sup>p</sup> Psa. ci. 8.

Moses, a fair proposal, but a melancholy dilemma, advising them, of two evils, to choose the least. And that lesser evil, a shameful and wretched captivity, is all the life now left for them to propose to themselves. *He that abideth in this city*—And trusts to it to secure him; *shall die by the sword*—Without the city; or *by the famine, or pestilence* within it. *But he that goeth out, and falleth to the Chaldeans*—Giving up his vain hopes of safety in the city, and bringing his spirit down to his condition; *shall live*—God had declared it to be his purpose to give up Judea and the neighbouring countries to the dominion of the Chaldeans: so they who would comply with his declared will should have their lives spared, the rest should be destroyed as fighting against God. *And his life shall be unto him for a prey*—That is, he shall save his life with as much difficulty and hazard as a prey is taken from the mighty: he shall escape but very narrowly. Or, he shall think himself a considerable gainer by escaping with his life in so general a destruction. *For I have set my face against this city*—To lay it waste and not to protect it; *for evil*—Which shall have no good mixed with it, no mitigation, or merciful allay; and, therefore, you have no way of safety, but begging quarter of the Chaldeans, and surrendering yourselves prisoners of war. In vain did Rabshakeh persuade the Jews to do this, while they had God for them, Isa. xxxvi. 16. But it was the best course they could take now, God being against them.

Verses 11, 12. *And touching the house of the king of Judah, &c.*—The house of Zedekiah, the court, or those who were magistrates. *Hear ye the word of the Lord*—These, how great soever, are not excused from the common obligations which lie upon all to listen to and obey the revelations of the divine will. *Execute judgment in the morning*—Do it diligently, do it quickly, and do not delay to do justice upon appeals made to you, and tire out your poor petitioners as you have done. Those magistrates that would fill their places well, and do their duty, must rise early. This is so expressed because it was usual for kings and judges to sit for the administra-

A. M. 3414.  
B. C. 590. oppressor, lest my fury go out like fire,  
and burn that none can quench it,  
because of the evil of your doings.

13 Behold, <sup>1</sup> I am against thee, O <sup>2</sup> inhabitant of the valley, and rock of the plain, saith the LORD; which say, <sup>3</sup> Who shall come down

<sup>1</sup> Ezekiel xiii. 8.—<sup>2</sup> Heb. *inhabitant*.—<sup>3</sup> Chapter xlix. 4.  
<sup>2</sup> Heb. *visit upon*.

tion of justice in a morning. *Lest my fury go out like fire*—Many commentators have been of opinion that this prophecy, from the 11th verse, belongs to the same subject with chapter xxii., and relates to the time of Jehoiakim. And from these words, *lest my fury, &c.*, they infer, that it was antecedent to the prophecy at the beginning of the chapter, and to that peremptory decree published against the king's house, mentioned verse 7 of this chapter. "But I cannot help thinking," says Blaney, "that this latter part is but a continuation of the same prophecy with which the chapter begins; for the house of David was still to be visited with more calamities than those which had befallen it in the days of Jehoiakim. And how peremptory soever the decree may sound, (verse 7,) we must remember the rule laid down concerning such decrees, (chap. xviii. 7, 8,) none of which, it seems, are irreversible on the condition of a change of conduct. And, though God may well be supposed to know when no such ground of reversal will take place, yet it is agreeable to the justice of his providence repeatedly to admonish sinners of the means by which his judgments may be avoided, that they may have none to blame but themselves when the threatened vengeance overtakes them."

against us? or who shall enter into our habitations? A. M. 3414.  
B. C. 590.

14 But I will <sup>3</sup> punish you according to the <sup>4</sup> fruit of your doings, saith the LORD: and I will kindle a fire in the forest thereof, and <sup>5</sup> it shall devour all things round about it.

<sup>3</sup> Proverbs i. 31; Isaiah iii. 10, 11.—<sup>4</sup> 2 Chronicles xxxvi. 19; Chap. lii. 13.

Verses 13, 14. *Behold, I am against thee, O inhabitant of the valley, and rock of the plain*—A description of Jerusalem, which was built in part upon the rocky mountain of Zion, but a great part of it was in the valley; and the higher mountains about mount Zion made that mountain itself, in comparison with them, to appear as a valley. *Which say, Who shall come down against us?*—They confided in the strength of their situation, as the Jebusites, the ancient inhabitants of the place, had formerly done. "Yet how many times," says Bishop Newton, "was Jerusalem taken, though it was a very strong place and wonderfully fortified, both by nature and art! It was taken by Shishak king of Egypt, by Nebuchadnezzar, by Antiochus Epiphanes, by Pompey, by Socius, and Herod, before its final destruction by Titus." *I will kindle a fire in the forest thereof*—The word *forest* is often metaphorically taken for a city in the prophetic writings. See chap. xxii. 7; Ezek. xx. 46; Zech. xi. 1. Or it may mean the forest of Lebanon, or their houses made of wood cut out of that forest, especially those of the royal family, or their idolatrous groves. *And it shall devour all things round about it*—And this fire shall not end in the destruction of this city, but shall totally destroy all the adjacent country.

## CHAPTER XXII.

In this chapter we have, (1.) An address to the king of Judah, his servants and people, recommending an inviolable adherence to right and justice, as the only means of establishing the throne, and preventing the ruin of both prince and people, 1-9. (2.) The captivity of Shallum is declared to be irreversible, 10-12. (3.) Jehoiakim is severely reprov'd for his tyrannical oppressions, and his miserable end foretold, 13-19. (4.) His family is threatened with a continuance of the like calamities; the fall and captivity of his son Jeconiah are explicitly set forth, and the perpetual exclusion of his seed from the throne, 20-30.

A. M. 3395.  
B. C. 609. **T**HUS saith the LORD; Go down to the house of the king of Judah, and speak there this word,

<sup>1</sup> Chap.

2 And say, <sup>2</sup> Hear the word of the LORD, O king of Judah, that sittest upon the throne of David, thou, and thy ser-

xvii. 20.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER XXII.

Verses 1, 2. *Thus saith the Lord*—The prophecy which follows to chap. xxiii. 9, was evidently delivered in the reign of Jehoiakim; for it speaks of his immediate predecessor as already gone into captivity, and foretels the death of Jehoiakim himself. Blaney thinks it followed immediately after what is said

in the sixth and xxth chapters to have passed in the temple precincts, from whence, as from a higher ground, he supposes the prophet is ordered to go down to the house of the king of Judah. *Hear, &c., O king of Judah*—Namely, Jehoiakim, (verse 18,) who was established upon the throne by the king of Egypt, in the place of Jehoahaz, in the year of the

A. M. 3395. vants, and thy people that enter in  
B. C. 609. by these gates :

3 Thus saith the LORD ; <sup>b</sup> Execute ye judgment and righteousness, and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor : and <sup>c</sup> do no wrong, do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless, nor the widow, neither shed innocent blood in this place.

4 For if ye do this thing indeed, <sup>d</sup> then shall there enter in by the gates of this house kings sitting <sup>1</sup> upon the throne of David, riding in chariots, and on horses, he, and his servants, and his people.

5 But if ye will not hear these words, <sup>e</sup> I swear by myself, saith the LORD, that this house shall become a desolation.

<sup>b</sup> Chap. xxi. 12.—<sup>c</sup> Verse 17.—<sup>d</sup> Chap. xvii. 25.—<sup>1</sup> Heb. for David upon his throne.—<sup>e</sup> Heb. vi. 13, 17.

world 3394, according to Archbishop Usher. *That sittest on the throne of David*—Thus the prophet puts him in mind of the promises God had made to David's family, if they would live in obedience to his will, 1 Kings viii. 25. *Thou, and thy servants, and thy people*—Thy courtiers and other officers, who attend continually on thee, comprehending likewise all the people of the city : all whom this word of the Lord concerned ; *that enter in by these gates*—Namely, the gates of the palace, whereby they went in to the king. The king was evidently at the gate of his palace, with his principal officers, when Jeremiah presented himself before him.

Verses 3-5. *Thus saith the Lord, Execute ye judgment, &c.*—That is, administer justice to all your subjects. The *stranger*, the *fatherless*, and the *widow* are particularly named, as persons who have the fewest friends, and therefore are the most exposed to the tyranny, injustice, and oppression of the great. *And do no wrong, do no violence, &c.*—Compare verse 17, where we find Jehoiakim charged with these sins. *For if ye do this thing indeed*—If ye will, not in pretence, but reality, do what is just and right to every one, and see that inferior magistrates, acting under you do so too ; *then shall there enter, &c.*—See the note on chap. xvii. 25, where, instead of *the gates of this house*, the text reads, *the gates of this city*. And the context here shows, that the prophecy is directed, not only to the king's court in particular, but likewise to the whole city of Jerusalem, one part of which was called the city of David ; and the whole looked upon as a royal city, and the place of their king's residence. *Kings sitting upon the throne of David, &c.*—There shall then be a succession of kings, and that uninterrupted, reigning in Judah, of David's line, kings who shall enjoy a perfect tranquillity, and live in great state and dignity. *But if ye will not hear these words*—That is, if ye will not so hear as to obey them. *I swear by myself, saith the Lord*—That is, I resolve absolutely upon it ; for God is not in Scripture said to swear,

6 For thus saith the LORD unto the A. M. 3395  
king's house of Judah ; Thou art B. C. 609.  
Gilead unto me, and the head of Lebanon : yet surely I will make thee a wilderness, and cities which are not inhabited.

7 And I will prepare destroyers against thee, every one with his weapons : and they shall cut down <sup>f</sup> thy choice cedars, <sup>g</sup> and cast them into the fire.

8 And many nations shall pass by this city, and they shall say every man to his neighbour, <sup>h</sup> Wherefore hath the LORD done thus unto this great city ?

9 Then they shall answer, <sup>1</sup> Because they have forsaken the covenant of the LORD their God, and worshipped other gods, and served them.

<sup>f</sup> Isa. xxxvii. 24.—<sup>g</sup> Chapter xxi. 14.—<sup>h</sup> Deut. xxix. 24, 25 ; 1 Kings ix. 8, 9.—<sup>1</sup> 2 Kings xxii. 17 ; 2 Chron. xxxiv. 25.

unless as speaking after the manner of men, and according to the actions of men ; so that whenever this expression is employed, it is only to signify, that God would not revoke the thing spoken of, but that it should be immutable. Here, therefore, it implies that the sentence pronounced should certainly be executed, and that nothing could reverse it but the people's sincere repentance, which condition is expressed in the foregoing part of the verse. See Heb. vi. 17. *This house shall become a desolation*—This palace of the kings of Judah shall fare no better than other habitations in Jerusalem, sin as certainly effecting the ruin of the houses of princes as those of mean men.

Verses 6-9. *For thus saith the Lord unto, or, concerning, the king's house : Thou art Gilead unto me, &c. ; yet surely, &c.*—“Though thou wert never so precious in my sight, as valuable for riches and plenty as the fat pastures of Gilead, and thy buildings as beautiful for their stateliness as the tall cedars of Lebanon, yet unless thy princes and people reform, thou shalt become nothing but ruin and desolation.” Thus Lowth. But Blaney translates the verse, *Gilead art thou through me, O summit of Lebanon ; surely I will make thee a desert, cities not inhabited*. Which he interprets as follows. “Lebanon was the highest mountain in Israel, and was therefore an apt emblem of the reigning family advanced to the highest rank of dignity in the state. Gilead was the richest and most fertile part of the country. The meaning then is plainly this, By my providence thou art not only supreme in rank, but hast been rendered exceedingly wealthy and flourishing. But the same power that raised will likewise be exerted in reducing thee to the lowest state of indigence and distress.” *And I will prepare*—Hebrew, וקראתי, *I will sanctify destroyers against thee*—That is, I will solemnly appoint and set them apart for the work of destroying thee. *And they shall cut down thy choice cedars*—Having compared the king's palace, or the city of Jerusalem, to Leba-

A. M. 3395. B. C. 609. 10 ¶ Weep ye not for <sup>k</sup> the dead, neither bemoan him: *but* weep sore for him <sup>l</sup> that goeth away: for he shall return no more, nor see his native country.

11 For thus saith the LORD touching <sup>m</sup> Shallum the son of Josiah king of Judah, which reigned instead of Josiah his father, <sup>n</sup> which went forth out of this place; He shall not return thither any more:

12 But he shall die in the place whither they have led him captive, and shall see this land no more.

13 ¶ <sup>o</sup> Wo unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by

wrong; <sup>p</sup> that useth his neighbour's A. M. 3395. B. C. 609. service without wages, and giveth him not for his work;

14 That saith, I will build me a wide house and <sup>q</sup> large chambers, and cutteth him out <sup>r</sup> windows; and *it is* ceiled with cedar, and painted with vermilion.

15 Shalt thou reign, because thou closest *thyself* in cedar? <sup>s</sup> did not thy father eat and drink, and do judgment and justice, *and then* <sup>t</sup> *it was* well with him?

16 He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then *it was* well with *him*: *was* not this to know me? saith the LORD.

<sup>k</sup> 2 Kings xxii. 20.—<sup>l</sup> Verse 11.—<sup>m</sup> 1 Chronicles iii. 15; 2 Kings xxiii. 30.—<sup>n</sup> 2 Kings xxiii. 34.—<sup>o</sup> 2 Kings xxiii. 35; Ver. 18.—<sup>p</sup> Lev. xix. 13; Deut. xxiv. 14, 15; Mic. iii. 10; Hab.

ii. 9; James v. 4.—<sup>q</sup> Hebrew, *through aired*.—<sup>r</sup> Or, *my windows*.—<sup>s</sup> 2 Kings xxiii. 25.—<sup>t</sup> Psalm cxxviii. 2; Isaiah iii. 10.

non, verse 6, pursuing the metaphor, he threatens to destroy them and their most beautiful edifices by the Chaldean army. *And many nations*—Persons of many nations; *shall pass by this city, &c.*—Namely, when on their travels; *and they shall say, Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this great city*—They who have heard that this had been a very strong, rich, and populous city, and that it had been called the city of God, and the place of his especial residence, would be astonished to find it, through his judgments, a scene of ruin and desolation, and would inquire how such an effect came to be produced. Thus was fulfilled that threatening of Moses, Deut. xxviii. 37, that God would make the Jews an astonishment to other nations. See likewise 1 Kings ix. 8. *Then shall they answer*—Some shall answer, or they shall answer one another. The reason is so obvious that it shall be ready in every man's mouth. *Because they have forsaken the covenant of Jehovah their God; have revolted from their allegiance to him, and from the duty which they had solemnly covenanted to perform, and worshipped other gods and served them*—In contempt of him; and therefore he gave them up to this destruction.

Verse 10. *Weep ye not for the dead*—This seems to be spoken of King Josiah, killed in battle with the Egyptians: see 2 Kings xxiii. 29, 30, concerning whom the prophet here says that he was rather to be rejoiced over than lamented, since, by being taken soon out of life, he escaped the terrible evils which came upon his country. *But weep sore for him that goeth away, for he shall return no more*—Namely, Jehoahaz, who was carried captive into Egypt by Pharaoh-necho, and never more returned to his country. He is called *Shallum* in the next verse, but in all other places Jehoahaz. It seems probable that *Shallum* was his name before he ascended the throne, and that he changed it for Jehoahaz, as his brothers Eliakim and Mattaniah also assumed the names of Jehoiaikim and Zedekiah on the like occasion, 2 Kings xxiii. 34; xxiv. 17.

Verses 13-16. *Wo unto him that buildeth his*

*house by unrighteousness, &c.*—“The prophet proceeds to denounce God’s judgments against Jehoiaikim, (see verse 18,) who, it seems, built himself a stately palace in those calamitous times, and took no care to pay the wages of the workmen; but maintained his own luxury by the oppression of those who were to live by their labour: a crying sin, and too common among the great men of the world, severely prohibited both in the Old and New Testament.”—Lowth. See Deut. xxiv. 14, 15; James v. 4. *That saith, I will build me a wide house and large chambers*—Hebrew, עליות כרומים, *chambers to the wind*; that is, exposed, or open, to wind on every side. They used to enjoy the cool air in these chambers; the windows being so placed that they might receive the wind from whatever quarter it came. *Shalt thou reign because thou closest thyself in cedar?*—Will a house, finely adorned and furnished, be a fortress and defence to thee against thy enemies, that come to deprive thee of thy kingdom? *Did not thy father eat and drink, and do justice, &c.*—Did not Josiah live, and enjoy comfort in life as well as thou dost, though he did not indulge himself in such delicacies, and had not such magnificent apartments? Did he not live in sufficient plenty, and in a state suitable to his character, and yet strictly observed justice, both in his private and public capacity, and not betake himself to such sordid methods of injustice and oppression for the support of his grandeur? He did no wrong to any of his subjects, never oppressed them, or put any hardship upon them, but was careful to preserve to all their just rights and properties. Nay, he not only did not abuse his power for the support of wrong, but used it for the maintaining of right; *he judged the cause of the poor and needy*—Was ready to hear the cause of the meanest of his subjects, and do them justice; *and then it was well with him*—The blessing of God was upon him as the reward of his justice and integrity. He was comfortable in himself, and was useful to and respected by his subjects, and prospered in all that he put his hand to. *Was*

A. M. 3395. 17 \* But thine eyes and thy heart  
B. C. 609. are not but for thy covetousness, and  
for to shed innocent blood, and for oppression,  
and for \* violence, to do it.

18 Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning  
Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah ;  
\* They shall not lament for him, saying, \* Ah  
my brother ! or, Ah sister ! they shall not lament  
for him, saying, Ah lord ! or, Ah his  
glory !

\* Ezekiel xix. 6.—\* Or, *incursion*.—† Chapter xvi. 4, 6.  
‡ 1 Kings xiii. 30.

not this to know me, saith the Lord?—Did he not hereby make it appear, that he rightly knew, worshipped, and served me, and consequently was known and owned by me ? Observe, reader, the right knowledge of God implies the doing our duty to our fellow-creatures, as well as to God, particularly that duty which our place and station in the world require us to perform.

Verse 17. *But thine eyes and thy heart are not but for thy covetousness*—They are for that, and for nothing else. For this cause Jehoiakim is compared to a lion, by the Prophet Ezekiel, chap. xix. 6. Observe, reader, in covetousness *the heart walks after the eyes*, Job xxxi. 7 ; it is therefore called *the lust of the eye*, 1 John ii. 15 : and the eyes and the heart are then for covetousness when the aims and affections are set upon the wealth of this world ; and when they are so the temptation is strong to fraud, oppression, and all manner of violence and villany, even, as it is here said, *to shed innocent blood*.

Verses 18, 19. *They shall not lament for him, saying, Ah my brother ! &c.*—“The prophet here repeats part of the funeral ditty or song which the public mourners used to sing at funerals, (see note on chap. ix. 17, and xx. 14, and compare 1 Kings xiii. 30,) signifying, that neither Jehoiakim, nor his queen or family, should be buried with those solemn lamentations with which the memory of his predecessors, particularly that of his father, had been honoured : see 2 Chron. xxxv. 25. *Saying, Ah Lord ! or, Ah his glory !*—That is, how is his glory departed and vanished ! another burden or chorus of the funeral song. *He shall be buried with the burial of an ass*—None attending him to his grave, none mourning over him. Or, the meaning is, he shall have no burial : for the carcasses of asses are not buried. *Drawn and cast forth, &c.*—The expression seems to be taken from the custom of dogs to draw about a carcass before they tear and devour it. Jehoiakim, having been advanced to the kingdom by Pharaoh-necho, king of Egypt, 2 Kings xxiii. 34, followed the fortune of that king, and upon the conquest of Egypt by the Chaldeans, chap. xlvi. 2, after three years' reign, was taken prisoner by Nebuchadnezzar, and put into irons, Dan. i. 2 ; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 6. But afterward, it seems, the king of Babylon released him, and made him a tributary king. After three

19 \* He shall be \* buried with the A. M. 3395  
B. C. 609. burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth  
beyond the gates of Jerusalem.

20 ¶ Go up to Lebanon, and cry ; and lift up  
thy voice in Bashan, and cry from the passages :  
for all thy lovers are destroyed.

21 I spake unto thee in thy \* prosperity ; but  
thou saidst, I will not hear. \* This hath been  
thy manner from thy youth, that thou obeyedst  
not my voice.

\* 2 Chron. xxxvi. 6 ; Chap. xxxvi. 30.—\* Fulfilled, B. C. 599.  
‡ Heb. *prosperities*.—† Chap. ii. 7 ; iii. 25 ; vii. 23.

years' obedience, however, Jehoiakim rebelled, in confidence of assistance from Egypt. Soon after which Nebuchadnezzar's army overran Judea, besieged Jerusalem, and probably took Jehoiakim prisoner in some sally that he made upon them, and killed him, and then cast out his dead body into the highway, denying him the common rites of burial : see 2 Kings xxiv. 1–6. Accordingly, he is said to have slept with his fathers, but not to have been buried with them : see also *Joseph. Antiq.*, lib. x. cap. 7, 8.

Verse 20. *Go up to Lebanon, and cry, &c.*—The verbs here being in the feminine gender, the city of Jerusalem, or the land of Judea, seems to be addressed and called upon ironically to go to the tops of the high mountains, and to the frontiers of the country, and cry aloud for help to the neighbouring powers, but in vain, since all those who had any inclination to favour her, the Egyptians in particular were themselves disabled and crushed by the arms of Nebuchadnezzar. *Cry from the passages*—Hebrew, כְּעֵבְרֵי, *from the borders*, or rivers, which are the bounds of your country. For the word signifies, not only the *fords*, or *passages* of a river, but the parts along each bank, and the confines or extremities of a country. *For all thy lovers are destroyed*—Or *broken*, as נִשְׁבְּרוּ signifies : all thy foreign allies, whose friendship and assistance thou hast sought, and whom thou hast courted, by complying with their idolatries, are humbled.

Verse 21. *I spake unto thee in thy prosperity*—Spake by my servants the prophets, in reproofs, admonitions, counsels ; *but thou saidst, I will not hear*—Didst manifest by thy conduct that thou wouldest not obey. Such is too often the effect of prosperity. It puffs men up with pride and high-mindedness, and makes them despise the word of God, thinking themselves too wise to stand in need of advice, and therefore they defer attending to it, till they are in extremities, when it becomes of little or no benefit to them. The word שְׁלוּחָה, however, which we translate *prosperity*, properly signifies *security*, and may be spoken of the false security in which the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem lived in times when they were threatened with the most grievous calamities, and which had been denounced to them by the prophets, from the time of Hezekiah,

A. M. 3395. B. C. 609. 22 The wind shall eat up all <sup>a</sup> thy pastors, and <sup>a</sup> thy lovers shall go into captivity: surely then shalt thou be ashamed and confounded for all thy wickedness.

23 O <sup>a</sup> inhabitant of Lebanon, that makest thy nest in the cedars, how gracious shalt thou be when pangs come upon thee, <sup>b</sup> the pain as of a woman in travail!

24 As I live, saith the LORD, <sup>c</sup> though Coniah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah <sup>d</sup> were the signet upon my right hand, yet would I pluck thee thence;

25 <sup>e</sup> And I will give thee into the hand of them that seek thy life, and into the hand of *them* whose face thou fearest, even into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, and into the hand of the Chaldeans.

<sup>a</sup> Chapter xxxiii. 1.—<sup>b</sup> Verse 20.—<sup>c</sup> Hebrew, *inhabitant*. <sup>d</sup> Chap. vi. 24.—<sup>e</sup> 2 Kings vi. 8, 24; 1 Chron. iii. 16; Chap. xxxvii. 1.—<sup>f</sup> Hag. ii. 23.—<sup>g</sup> Chap. xxxiv. 20.—<sup>h</sup> 2 Kings xxi. 15; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 10.

on account of the idolatries and various other acts of wickedness of their kings and people; who nevertheless continued in their vices without any amendment. *This hath been thy manner from thy youth*—From thy being first formed into a people. See the margin.

Verse 22. *The wind shall eat up all thy pastors*—Thy kings, princes, priests, and false prophets, who have presided over thy civil and religious affairs, shall be destroyed by my judgments, as plants are blasted by winds. God's judgments are often compared to a scorching and blasting wind. *Thy lovers shall go into captivity*—Thy allies shall themselves be made captives by the Chaldeans, and shall not be able to preserve themselves, much less to give any assistance to thee.

Verse 23. *O inhabitant of Lebanon*—O thou that inhabitest the city which for pleasantness and delight may be compared to Lebanon. Or he alludes to the stately buildings of Jerusalem, elsewhere compared to the tall cedars of a forest: see note on chap. xxi. 14. *That makest thy nest in the cedars*—Who livest in houses built of cedars. *How gracious shalt thou be*—Or rather, how *humble*, or *suppliant*, wilt thou be, when pangs come upon thee—Those pangs of affliction which shall suddenly oppress thee, whereas before thou wast too proud to hearken to any advice that was offered. The Hebrew, נחנת, is rendered by Buxtorff, *quam gratulaberis tibi*, *How wilt thou gratulate thyself when pangs, &c.*, understanding it as spoken ironically.

Verses 24–28. *As I live, saith the Lord, though Coniah were the signet, or, rather, the ring, upon my right hand*—By Coniah he means Jehoiachin, whose name was Jeconiah, 1 Chron. iii. 16, (for all Josiah's sons had two names, and so had his grandchild Jeconiah,) here, in contempt, called Coniah; yet would I pluck thee thence—Though he were

26 <sup>f</sup> And I will cast thee out, and thy mother that bare thee, into another country, where ye were not born; and there shall ye die.

27 But to the land whereunto they <sup>g</sup> desire to return, thither shall they not return.

28 *Is this man Coniah a despised broken idol? is he <sup>h</sup> a vessel wherein is no pleasure? wherefore are they cast out, he and his seed, and are cast into a land which they know not?*

29 <sup>b</sup> O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the LORD.

30 Thus saith the LORD, Write ye this man <sup>i</sup> childless, a man *that* shall not prosper in his days: for no man of his seed shall prosper, <sup>k</sup> sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah.

<sup>1</sup> Heb. *lift up their mind*, Chap. xlv. 14.—<sup>2</sup> Psa. xxxi. 12; Chap. xviii. 38; Hos. viii. 8.—<sup>3</sup> Deut. xxxii. 1; Isaiah i. 2, xxiv. 1; Micah i. 2.—<sup>4</sup> 1 Chronicles iii. 16, 17; Matt. i. 12. <sup>k</sup> Chap. xxxvi. 30.

never so near and dear to me, as dear as a signet, or ring, which every man keeps safe, yet his wickedness would make him forfeit all my favour toward him. "The ring was anciently worn as a mark of sovereignty. When Alexander was dying, he gave his ring to Perdiccas, thus, as it were, marking him out for his successor." *And I will cast thee out, and thy mother that bare thee*—We are informed, (2 Kings xxiv. 15,) that Nebuchadrezzar carried away Jehoiachin, that is, Jeconiah or Coniah, to Babylon, and his mother, and his wives, &c. *Is this man Coniah a despised broken idol, &c.*—Blaney renders the verse more literally, thus: "A contemptible, broken idol is this man Coniah? Or a vessel in which none delighteth? Wherefore are they cast forth, he and his seed, and thrown upon a land which they knew not?" As if he had said, "Would any one have thought that this man, who was invested with royal dignity, should be rendered no better than a broken image of royalty, a mere potsherd, utterly contemptible and useless?"

Verses 29, 30. *O earth, &c.*—The word *earth*, or *land* rather, as ארץ may be properly rendered, is repeated three times by way of emphasis, to engage the deeper attention. The prophet speaks to the land of Judea, which he commands to write down the following prediction, that it might be remembered by them, and the truth of it be thereby made manifest. *Write ye this man childless*—Hebrew, עירי, *solitary, deprived, destitute*. The LXX. render it εκκηρυκτον ανθρωπον, *an ejected, or expelled man; a man that shall not prosper in his days*—This latter clause seems explanatory of the former; and that again is further explained in the following: "For no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah." That Jeconiah had children appears both from this verse and verse 28; but according to this prophecy,

no man of his seed sat upon the throne of David. This seems the true exposition of this passage, which has been considered as attended with considerable difficulty. "I cannot," says Blaney, "agree with the generality of commentators, who suppose that God hereby declares it as a thing certain, and, as it were, orders it to be inserted among the public acts of his government, that Jeconiah should die absolutely childless. Other parts of Scripture positively assert him to have had children, 1 Chron. iii. 17, 18; Matt. i. 12. Both verse 28, and the subsequent part of this verse, imply that he either had, or should have, seed. But the historians and chroniclers of the times are called upon, and directed to set him down childless; not as being literally so,

but yet the same to all intents and purposes of public life, for he was to be the last of his race that should sit upon the throne of David; and his descendants were no more to figure as kings, but to be reduced to the rank and obscurity of private persons. And in this sense the prophecy was actually fulfilled; for, allowing Zerubbabel, who is called governor of Judah, (Hag. i. 1,) to have been a lineal descendant of Jeconiah, yet he could not be said to sit upon the throne of David, and reign, or rule, in Judah, seeing he was but a provincial governor, a mere servant of the king of Persia, in whom the sovereignty resided; nor were any of those persons kings who afterward reigned in Judah, even of the family of David, until the time of Christ."

CHAPTER XXIII.

In this chapter we have, (1.) Threatenings of just punishment to careless princes, or pastors of the people, 1, 2. (2.) Promises of future blessings; of the return of the Jews from captivity, and of happier times under better governors and pastors; of the glorious establishment of the Messiah's kingdom; and of the subsequent restoration of all the dispersed Israelites, to dwell once more in their own land, 3-8. (3.) Jeremiah testifies the horror he felt within him on contemplating the wickedness of the priests and prophets of Judah, and the vengeance which God was about to execute upon them, for the corruption which had been diffused through the whole land, by the influence of their evil doctrine and example, 9-15. (4.) He exhorts the people not to listen to the words of the prophets that prophesied of peace, when evil was determined, and would infallibly take place; and charges those prophets with speaking from themselves, and not from the divine commission, 16-22. (5.) God asserts his omnipresence and omniscience; and reproves the audaciousness of the false prophets, who affected to place their own idle dreams on a level with the all-powerful and efficacious word of divine revelation; declaring himself against the several species of those impostors, 23-32. (6.) He requires all sorts of persons to desist from an indecency in common use, of styling his word a burden; and threatens severely to punish those who, in defiance of this command, should continue to cast such a slur upon it, 33-40.

A. M. 3405. **WO** <sup>a</sup> be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! saith the LORD.

2 Therefore thus saith the LORD God of Israel against the pastors that feed my people; Ye have scattered my flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them: <sup>b</sup> behold, I

<sup>a</sup> Chapter x. 21; xxii. 22; Ezekiel xxxiv. 2.—<sup>b</sup> Exodus xxxii. 34.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XXIII.

Verse 1. *Wo be unto the pastors*—Or, as <sup>ו</sup> is by some rendered, *Alas for the pastors!* or, *Ho the pastors!* For it may be a particle of calling, as the LXX. and Syriac represent it, and not of commination, as in our translation. The word *pastors* comprehends both civil and ecclesiastical governors: see note on chap. ii. 8. This acceptance of the word agrees with the prophet's complaint elsewhere, that their rulers, as well as their priests and prophets, were rather corrupters than reformers of the people's manners. And the Messiah himself, whose coming is foretold, verse 5, for the rectifying of these disorders, was both a king and a priest.

Verses 2-4. *Therefore thus saith the Lord against the pastors that feed my people*—That undertake

will visit upon you the evil of your doings, saith the LORD. A. M. 3405. B. C. 599.

3 And <sup>a</sup> I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase.

4 And I will set up <sup>d</sup> shepherds over them,

<sup>c</sup> Chap. xxxii. 37; Ezek. xxxiv. 13.—<sup>d</sup> Chap. iii. 15; Ezek. xxxiv. 23.

the care of my people, though they do not faithfully execute their trust. God calls them *his people, his flock, the sheep of his pasture*, with respect to the ancient covenant which he had made with their fathers. They are said to have *fed* this people, because it was their duty to have done so. *Ye have scattered my flock*—Namely, by acts of violence and oppression, driving them from their places to seek more safe and quiet abodes. Or, instead of looking after them, you have suffered them to be dispersed, and through your ill example they have gone astray to idolatry, and that, with your other sins, has brought upon them their expulsion from their own land and a general dispersion. *Behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings*—Will deal with you as your sins have deserved. They would not visit the flock

a. M. 2405. which shall feed them : and they shall  
B. C. 599.

fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the LORD.

5 ¶ Behold, <sup>o</sup>the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, <sup>f</sup>and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.

6 <sup>e</sup>In his days Judah shall be saved, and

<sup>e</sup> Isa. iv. 2; xi. 1; xl. 10, 11; Chap. xxxiii. 14, 15, 16; Dan. ix. 24; Zech. iii. 8; vi. 12; John i. 45.—<sup>f</sup> Psa. lxxii. 2; Isa. xxxii. 1, 18; ix. 7.

in the way of duty, and therefore God will visit them in a way of vengeance. *And I will gather the remnant of my flock*—Though there be but a remnant of my flock, a little remnant left, that has narrowly escaped destruction, I will gather that remnant; will find them out wherever they are, and will find out ways and means to bring them back out of all countries whither I have driven them. It was the justice of God for the sins of their shepherds that dispersed them, but the mercy of God shall gather them when the shepherds that betrayed them are cut off. And being brought to their former habitations, as sheep to their folds, there they shall be fruitful, and increase in numbers. *And I will set up shepherds over them*—Who shall make it their business, not only to rule, but also to feed them, namely, with knowledge and understanding. *They shall fear no more*—As they formerly did, when they were continually exposed to the oppressions of their rulers at home, or the invasions and assaults of their enemies from abroad; but they shall be preserved in peace and safety, and none of them shall be lacking. Though the times may have been long bad with the church, it does not follow that they will be always so. Such pastors as Zerubbabel and Nehemiah, though they did not live in such pomp as Jehoiakim and Jeconiah lived in, nor made such a figure, were as great blessings to the people as the others were plagues to them. The peace and prosperity of the church are not connected with, much less do they depend upon, the pomp of her rulers.

Verses 5, 6. *I will raise unto David a righteous branch*—The house of David seemed to be quite sunk and ruined by the threatening pronounced against Jeconiah, (chap. xxii. 30,) that none of his seed should ever sit upon the throne of David: but here we have a promise which effectually secures the honour of the covenant made with David, notwithstanding that threatening; for by it his house will be raised out of its ruins to a greater lustre than ever, and shine brighter than it did even in the days of Solomon. We have not so many prophecies of Christ in this book as we had in that of the Prophet Isaiah. But here we have a very illustrious one. Of him, doubtless, the prophet here speaks, and of no other person. Even the Jewish doctors, as well as Christian interpreters, understand this as a pro-

Israel <sup>b</sup> shall dwell safely : and <sup>i</sup> this <sup>A. M. 2405.</sup>  
<sup>B. C. 599.</sup> is his name whereby he shall be called, <sup>1</sup> THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

7 Therefore, behold, <sup>k</sup> the days come, saith the LORD, that they shall no more say, The LORD liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt;

8 But, The LORD liveth, which brought up and

<sup>k</sup> Deuteron. xxxiii. 28; Zech. xiv. 11.—<sup>b</sup> Chap. xxxii. 37. <sup>i</sup> Chapter xxxiii. 10; 1 Cor. i. 30.—<sup>1</sup> Heb. *Shevah-tsidkenu.* <sup>k</sup> Chap. xvi. 14, 15.

phesy of the Messiah, who is called *the branch*, Isa. iv. 2, and liii. 2; and *the man the branch*, Zech. iii. 8. And here he is termed *the righteous branch*, not only because he himself was righteous, but because he makes his people righteous; and a king that shall reign and prosper—Not like kings that now were of the house of David, going backward in all their affairs, but one that shall set up a kingdom in the world, which shall be victorious over all opposition; one to whose hands the good pleasure of the Lord shall be committed, and under whose care and management it shall prosper; one who shall execute judgment and justice in the earth—All the world over, Psa. xvi. 13. The present kings of David's line were unjust and oppressive, and their affairs therefore did not prosper; but this king shall break the usurped power of Satan, institute a perfect rule of holy living, and in due time make all the world righteous. *In his days*—That is, under his dominion, when his kingdom shall be set up and established upon earth; *Judah shall be saved, &c.*—The people of God, typified by Judah and Israel, shall be saved with a spiritual and eternal salvation, a salvation from the guilt and power of sin, into the favour and image of God here, and into the kingdom of his glory hereafter. At which kingdom, till they arrive, God will be a special protection to them, their refuge and strength, and very present help in trouble; so that they shall dwell safely—Confiding in the care of their strong helper, and preserved in perfect peace. *And this is his name whereby he shall be called*—Namely, by his people, and by God; the name whereby he shall be known, and which shall at once be descriptive both of his person and office. THE LORD, Hebrew, JEHOVAH OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS—Though of the seed of David according to the flesh, he shall indeed be JEHOVAH, God in human nature, and OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS; namely, justifying us by his merits, sanctifying us by his Spirit, and directing us in every part of our duty by his doctrine and example; *the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth* in him with a faith that worketh by love.

Verses 7, 8. *Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord*—Here the prophet proceeds to foretell one very important, although remote, consequence of God's raising up the righteous branch to David, namely, the great salvation which should thereby

A. M. 3405. which led the seed of the house of B. C. 599. Israel out of the north country, <sup>1</sup> and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land.

9 ¶ My heart within me is broken because of the prophets; <sup>m</sup> all my bones shake; I am like a drunken man, and like a man whom wine

<sup>1</sup> Isaiah xliii. 5, 6; Verse 3.—<sup>m</sup> Hab. iii. 16.—<sup>n</sup> Chapter v. 7, 8; ix. 2.

come to the Jews in the latter days of their state, which should be so illustrious as far to outshine their deliverance out of Egypt. *That they shall no more say, The Lord lieth, &c.*—These words we had before, chap. xvi. 14, 15, where see the note. But here the passage seems to point more plainly than it did there to the days of the Messiah, and to compare, not so much the two deliverances themselves, giving the preference to the latter, as the two states to which the church should grow after those deliverances. About four hundred and eighty years after they were come out of Egypt, Solomon's temple was built, 1 Kings vi. 1; and at that time that nation, which was so wonderfully brought out of Egypt, was gradually arrived to its height. And four hundred and ninety years (seventy weeks) after they came out of Babylon, Messiah the Prince set up the gospel temple, which was the greatest glory of that nation that was so wonderfully brought out of Babylon: see Dan. ix. 24, 25. Now the spiritual glory of the second period of that nation, especially as transferred to the gospel church, is much more admirable and illustrious than all the temporal glory of the first period of it, in the days of Solomon; for that was no glory, compared with the glory which excelleth. Add to this, the prophet, it seems, also foretels a second gathering of the Jews from their dispersions, namely, one that should take place after the coming of the Messiah, and the ruin of their city and country by the Romans, and therefore yet future. Now this work of God, whenever it shall be effected, including, as it undoubtedly will, their conversion to Christianity, and perhaps, also, their restoration to their own land, will assuredly appear so wonderful as greatly to outshine every former deliverance wrought for that people, and therefore may well put every other out of remembrance. St. Paul calls this restoration of them, *life from the dead*, (Rom. ix. 25,) meaning that it would be a miracle as surprising as the resurrection of a multitude of dead bodies.

Verse 9. *My heart within me is broken*—This seems to be the beginning of a new discourse against the false prophets, with whom afterward the priests are joined. The first word of it in the Hebrew, לִבִּי נִשְׁבַּר, is rendered by the Vulgate, *Ad prophetas*, To the prophets, as if it were the title of the following prophecy. In this Jeremiah describes the terror and concern which were upon him when he considered the horrible sin of these prophets in pretending a divine mission when they had received none, and

hath overcome, because of the LORD, A. M. 3405. and because of the words of his ho- B. C. 599. liness.

10 For <sup>a</sup> the land is full of adulterers; for <sup>o</sup> because of <sup>2</sup> swearing the land mourneth; <sup>p</sup> the pleasant places of the wilderness are dried up, and their <sup>3</sup> course is evil, and their force is not right.

<sup>o</sup> Hosea iv. 2, 3.—<sup>2</sup> Or, *cursing*.—<sup>p</sup> Chapter ix. 10; xii. 4.  
<sup>3</sup> Or, *violence*.

in uttering as messages from God what were really their own inventions, and in direct opposition to every thing God had spoken. And he declares that, upon a view of their guilt, and of the evils they were bringing on themselves and their country, he was in trouble and agitation, like that of a man who had lost his reason through intoxication.

Verse 10. *For the land is full of adulterers*—Under this term, which properly respects those who violate the marriage-bed, persons offending by any species of uncleanness are comprehended, as also such as by fraud and falsehood circumvented others, and tempted them to join in the commission of those illicit actions which implied breach of faith and duty toward God. *Because of swearing the land mourneth*—By swearing here, it seems, is not only meant false swearing, or perjury, but also profane and idle swearing, or taking the name of God in vain. Compare this verse with Hos. iv. 2. The Hebrew word, נָשָׁא, signifies indifferently *swearing* or *cursing*. The Jewish forms of adjuration, used in their courts of justice for the discovery of the truth, had usually an imprecation joined to them; and the prophet's words here may import, that men ventured to forswear themselves, and incur the imprecation implied in an oath, rather than discover the truth in cases wherein they were called upon to be witnesses. The land is said to *mourn* when it is afflicted with drought, barrenness, or any other uncommon calamity. And the swearing here spoken of is represented by the prophet as one of those crying sins for which God had visited the nation with these and other severe judgments. And the sins here mentioned, which abounded so much among the people, were in a great measure owing to the bad example and corrupt doctrine of the priests and prophets. See verses 11–15. *The pleasant places, or the pastures, of the wilderness*—Or, *of the plain*, as the words may be properly rendered; *are dried up*—The wrath of God is extended to all places, whether more or less inhabited. See note on chap. xii. 4. *And their course is evil, &c.*—This seems to be intended of the prophets and priests, to whom this discourse is chiefly directed, (see verses 9–11,) and it implies that they not only erred in single acts, but that the whole course of their actions was evil, and particularly their power, rule, and government. For they both made use of ill arts to establish their authority over the people, and they employed it, not for the bettering, but rather for the corrupting of their manners.

A. M. 3405. 11 For <sup>a</sup> both prophet and priest are  
B. C. 599. profane; yea, <sup>r</sup> in my house have I  
found their wickedness, saith the LORD.

12 <sup>a</sup> Wherefore their way shall be unto them  
as slippery ways in the darkness: they shall  
be driven on, and fall therein: for I <sup>r</sup> will bring  
evil upon them, even the year of their visitation,  
saith the LORD.

13 And I have seen <sup>a</sup> folly <sup>b</sup> in the prophets  
of Samaria; <sup>a</sup> they prophesied in Baal, and  
<sup>r</sup> caused my people Israel to err.

14 I have seen also in the prophets of Jeru-  
salem <sup>a</sup> a horrible thing: <sup>r</sup> they commit adul-  
tery, and <sup>r</sup> walk in lies: they <sup>a</sup> strengthen also

<sup>a</sup> Chapter vi. 13; viii. 10; Zeph. iii. 4.—<sup>r</sup> Chapter vii. 30;  
xi. 15; xxxii. 34; Ezek. viii. 11; xxiii. 39.—<sup>b</sup> Ps. xxxv. 6;  
Prov. iv. 19; Chapter xiii. 16.—<sup>c</sup> Chapter xi. 23.—<sup>d</sup> Or, an  
absurd thing.—<sup>e</sup> Heb. unsavoury.

Verses 11, 12. *For both the prophet and the priest are profane*—The priests, by their formality and hypocrisy, profaned the ordinances of God which they were appointed to administer; and the prophets, by their lies, false doctrine, and corrupt practice, profaned the word of God, which they pretended to deliver. *Yea, in my house have I found their wickedness, saith the Lord*—Even in my temple, where they assemble under a pretence to worship and do me honour, they say and do many things contrary to my law, and are guilty of various acts of profaneness and immorality. Such profaners of things sacred were formerly Hophni and Phinehas. *Wherefore their way shall be as slippery ways*—In which they shall not walk with any steadiness, safety, or satisfaction: or they shall fail and miscarry in all their designs.

Verses 13, 14. *I have seen*—Rather, *I saw*, namely, formerly, before I cast them out of their own land; *folly*—Hebrew, חפלה, *stupidity, infatuation*. The LXX. render it, ἀνομιματα, *iniquities*, or unlawful actions, and the Vulgate, *fatuitatem, sottishness*; *in the prophets of Samaria*—That is, in those that belonged to the ten tribes, whose chief city was Samaria. *They prophesied in Baal*—Pretending they had their relations from Baal, they caused the people of that kingdom to err—That is, they seduced them from the worship and service of the true God to idolatry. *I have seen also in the prophets of Jerusalem a horrible thing*—Hebrew, עקרורה, *a thing to be detested, an abomination*. He compares the sins of the prophets of Samaria with those of the prophets of Jerusalem, and pronounces the sins of the latter to be more enormous, because they pronounced their false prophecies in the name of the true God, and pretended that he was the author of all their impostures: the wickedness of their lives also reflected great dishonour upon his name and religion. Compare chap. iii. 11. *They commit adultery*—See chap. xxix. 23. *And walk in lies*—Utter what they themselves have feigned, and call their inventions divine visions, and use all manner

the hands of evil-doers, that none doth  
A. M. 3405. return from his wickedness: they are  
B. C. 599. all of them unto me as <sup>b</sup> Sodom, and the inhabitants thereof as Gomorrah.

15 Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts concerning the prophets; Behold, I will feed them with <sup>a</sup> wormwood, and make them drink the water of gall: for from the prophets of Jerusalem is <sup>r</sup> profaneness gone forth into all the land.

16 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Hearken not unto the words of the prophets that prophesy unto you: they make you vain: <sup>d</sup> they speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the LORD.

<sup>a</sup> Chap. ii. 8.—<sup>b</sup> Isaiah ix. 16.—<sup>c</sup> Or, filthiness.—<sup>d</sup> Chap. xxix. 23.—<sup>e</sup> Verse 26.—<sup>f</sup> Ezekiel xiii. 23.—<sup>g</sup> Deut. xxxii. 32; Isaiah i. 9, 10.—<sup>h</sup> Chap. viii. 14; ix. 15.—<sup>i</sup> Or, hypocrisy.—<sup>j</sup> Chap. xiv. 14; Verse 21.

of deceit and fraud. *They strengthen also the hands of evil-doers*—They confirm men in their evil ways, both by their own bad example, and by promising them peace and security, notwithstanding their wicked conduct and ungodly deeds. See verse 17; and Ezek. xiii. 23. *They are all of them unto me as Sodom*—See Deut. xxxii. 32; Isa. i. 10; Ezek. xvi. 46–48.

Verse 15. *Therefore thus saith the Lord concerning the prophets*—The priests also, and all ecclesiastical guides, are included. *Behold, I will feed them with wormwood*—Will afflict them with most bitter calamities. *For from the prophets of Jerusalem is profaneness gone forth*—Or, *hypocrisy*, which seems rather to be the meaning of חנפיה, the word here used. Certain it is, that this was a vice they were generally addicted to. These false prophets affected to be looked upon as pious, while they indulged themselves in various acts of wickedness; and as this could not be totally concealed, the people took example from them, and indulged themselves in vice, while they put on the garb of piety. The Jewish nation continued much in this habit even to the times of Christ, as is sufficiently evident from what is said of the Pharisees in the New Testament.

Ver. 16, 17. *Thus saith the Lord, Hearken not unto the words of the prophets*—People are under no religious obligation to hear what is contrary to the revealed will of God, or to obey those who enjoin things which that does not require. *They make you vain*—Or rather, *they deceive you*, as the words may be properly rendered: or they make you trust to and undertake vain things. The inhabitants of Jerusalem were fed by these false prophets with the vain hopes of being able to drive the Babylonians from their walls, and raise the siege of the city; yea, and of shaking off the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar entirely, and being quite free for the future. *They speak a vision of their own heart*—A pretended vision which they have framed themselves. *They say still*—That is, they persist to say; *unto them that despise me*—That are destitute even of my fear,

A. M. 3405. 17 They say still unto them that  
B. C. 599.

despise me, The LORD hath said,  
• Ye shall have peace; and they say unto every  
one that walketh after the <sup>o</sup> imagination of his  
own heart, <sup>f</sup> No evil shall come upon you.

18 For <sup>e</sup> who hath stood in the <sup>o</sup> counsel of  
the LORD, and hath perceived and heard his  
word? who hath marked his word, and heard  
it?

19 Behold, a <sup>h</sup> whirlwind of the LORD is gone  
forth in fury, even a grievous whirlwind: it  
shall fall grievously upon the head of the  
wicked.

20 The <sup>i</sup> anger of the LORD shall not return,  
until he have executed, and till he have per-

<sup>o</sup> Chap. vi. 14; viii. 11; Ezek. xiii. 10; Zech. x. 2.—<sup>o</sup> Or,  
stubbornness, Chapter xiii. 10.—<sup>f</sup> Mic. iii. 11.—<sup>e</sup> Job xv. 8;  
1 Cor. ii. 16.—<sup>e</sup> Or, secret.—<sup>h</sup> Chap. xxv. 32; xxx. 23.

and therefore slight my authority, and violate my  
commands; *The Lord hath said, Ye shall have  
peace*—Whereas, in truth, I have said the contrary,  
and have assured them, *There is no peace to the  
wicked*—Thus they both make me to patronise sin,  
and to contradict myself.

Verse 18. *For who hath stood in the counsel of  
the Lord?*—These are either the words of God ex-  
pressing that none of these pretended prophets knew  
any thing of his designs, as he had not revealed them  
unto them, and they could not otherwise know  
them; or else they are to be understood as the words  
of these false prophets, who, among other things,  
told the people, that God's counsels were not to be  
absolutely known; and that therefore neither Jerem-  
iah, nor the rest of the prophets, who foretold the  
destruction of Jerusalem, were informed more than  
others of what God intended to do.

Verses 19, 20. *Behold, a whirlwind of the Lord is  
gone forth with fury*—A severe judgment of God,  
that shall resemble a whirlwind for the sudden and  
utter destruction that it shall bring. The same word,  
כַּעֲרָה, is elsewhere translated *a storm*. It is called a  
whirlwind of the Lord, both to denote the greatness  
of it, and to signify that it should come forth from  
God, and be of his sending. *It shall fall grievously  
upon the head of the wicked*—Whatever these flat-  
tering teachers may assert to the contrary. Blaney  
translates the verse, *Behold, the whirlwind of Jeho-  
vah! it goeth forth hot, even a settling whirlwind;*  
(so he translates מתחולל, which we render, *grievous,*)  
*upon the head of the wicked it shall settle*. And he  
observes, "The hot, scorching wind, blowing  
from the south, (see note on chap. iv. 11, 12,) is evi-  
dently here alluded to, that blows, not with a tran-  
sient blast, but exerts a continued force upon the  
head of the unfortunate traveller till it has effectually  
destroyed him:" an emblem this of the consuming  
and insupportable wrath of God. *The anger of the  
Lord shall not return*—The prophet speaks of the  
judgment as of a messenger, which should not return

formed the thoughts of his heart: <sup>k</sup> in A. M. 3405.  
the latter days ye shall consider it <sup>B. C. 599.</sup>  
perfectly.

21 <sup>l</sup> I have not sent these prophets, yet they  
ran; I have not spoken to them, yet they pro-  
phesied.

22 But if they had <sup>m</sup> stood in my counsel, and  
had caused my people to hear my words, then  
they should have <sup>n</sup> turned them from their evil  
way, and from the evil of their doings.

23 *Am I a God at hand, saith the LORD, and  
not a God afar off?*

24 Can any <sup>o</sup> hide himself in secret places  
that I shall not see him? saith the LORD. <sup>p</sup> Do  
not I fill heaven and earth? saith the LORD.

<sup>l</sup> Chap. xxx. 24.—<sup>k</sup> Gen. xlix. 1.—<sup>m</sup> Chap. xiv. 14; xxvii.  
15; xxix. 9.—<sup>n</sup> Verse 18.—<sup>p</sup> Jer. xxv. 5.—<sup>o</sup> Psa. cxxxix.  
7; Amos ix. 2, 3.—<sup>p</sup> 1 Kings viii. 27; Psalm cxxxix. 7.

till it had done its errand, and executed what God  
had resolved it should effect. *In the latter days ye  
shall consider, &c.*—Though you will not now be-  
lieve it, but flatter yourselves with vain hopes, yet  
hereafter, when it shall be too late, you shall consider  
it perfectly, that is, when this judgment hath over-  
taken you, you shall fully believe and understand  
that God did indeed bring it upon you, for the pun-  
ishment of your sins.

Verses 21, 22. *I have not sent these prophets, yet  
they ran*—They were always ready to bring you  
pleasing tidings as from me, though I had given  
them no commission so to do, or revealed any thing  
to them. *But if they had stood in my counsel*—  
Been made acquainted by me with my will and plea-  
sure; *and had caused my people to hear my words*  
—And not their own conceits and inventions; *then  
they should have turned them from their evil way*—  
This was the design of all God's messages by his  
prophets, and therefore all true prophets made this  
their principal aim. And the giving encouragement  
to men to continue in their sinful courses, or in a  
state of carnal security, is often mentioned as a mark  
of a false prophet.

Verses 23, 24. *Am I a God at hand and not a God  
afar off?*—Do these false prophets imagine that I  
am only a God in some particular places, and that I  
cannot see or know things done privately, or at a  
distance from the place where they suppose me to  
be? Do they think to impose upon me, or vent  
their own dreams in my name, and I not discover  
them? As if either distance or secrecy could place  
any thing out of the reach of my power and know-  
ledge. Atheism, or ignorance of God, is generally  
the foundation of a wicked life. Men think God does  
not see, or does not regard them and their actions,  
and will not call them to an account for them, and  
therefore they go on in their trespasses. By a *God  
at hand*, some understand, *in heaven*: as if he had  
said, Do you think my eyes are limited like yours,  
so that I cannot see men's practices though at a dis-

A. M. 3405. 25 I have heard what the prophets  
B. C. 599. said, that prophesy lies in my name,  
saying, I have dreamed, I have dreamed.

26 How long shall *this* be in the heart of the prophets that prophesy lies? yea, *they are* prophets of the deceit of their own heart;

27 Which think to cause my people to forget my name by their dreams which they tell every man to his neighbour, <sup>9</sup> as their fathers have forgotten my name for Baal.

28 The prophet <sup>10</sup> that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What *is* the

chaff to the wheat? saith the LORD. A. M. 3405.  
B. C. 599. 29 *Is* not my word like as a fire?

saith the LORD; and like a hammer *that* breaketh the rock in pieces?

30 Therefore behold, <sup>11</sup> I *am* against the prophets, saith the LORD, that steal my words every one from his neighbour.

31 Behold, I *am* against the prophets, saith the LORD, <sup>12</sup> that use their tongues, and say, He saith.

32 Behold, I *am* against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the LORD, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies, and by

<sup>9</sup> Judg. iii. 7; viii. 33, 34.—<sup>10</sup> Heb. *with whom is*.—<sup>11</sup> Deut.

xviii. 20; Chap. xiv. 14, 15.—<sup>12</sup> Or, *that smooth their tongues*.

tance from the place of my peculiar and glorious residence? Others interpret the particle with respect to time; Am I a god of yesterday, like the idols? Am not I the Ancient of days? the eternal God, of whose majesty, omniscience, and omnipresence you ought to have been sensible? *Can any hide himself in secret places*—Can any man hide his projects or intentions, his thoughts or desires, his words or works, that I shall not see them? Surely not. No arts or concealments can hide any man's practices or even the counsels of his heart from the eye of God, nor in any respect deceive his judgment of them. Do not I fill heaven and earth, namely, by my essential presence, as well as by my universal providence? Am I not continually present, and continually active through all parts of the universe? As I am *above all*, so I am *through all*, and *in all*, Eph. iv. 6.

Verses 25-27. *I have heard what the prophets say, &c.*—I am perfectly acquainted with what these prophets have thought and said, though they think I take no notice of it, and so continue to act the same counterfeit part over again. *Saying, I have dreamed*—I have had a divine vision, or have received information from God in a dream. This, it appears, the false prophets often pretended, when they had received nothing of the kind. *How long shall this be in the heart of the prophets?*—How long shall I bear with them while they prophesy the deceit of their own hearts? while they utter, for prophecies, that which they have feigned or devised themselves? Will they never see what an affront they put upon me, what an abuse they put upon my people, and what judgments they are preparing for themselves? *To cause my people to forget my name by their dreams, &c.*—They act as if they designed to draw my people off from worshipping and serving me, and from all regard to my laws and ordinances and to the true prophets. Indeed, their palming upon the people counterfeit revelations, and fathering their own fancies upon divine inspiration, was the ready way to bring all religion into contempt, and make men turn atheists and infidels.

Verses 28, 29. *The prophet that hath a dream let him tell a dream*—Or, as some render it, let him

*tell it as a dream*. Let him lay no more stress upon it than men do upon their dreams, nor expect any more regard to be paid to it. Or, he that pretends to have a message from God, either by dream, or vision, or voice, or otherwise, let him declare it. *And he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully*—Let him speak it, *as truth*; so some read the clause; let him keep close to his instructions, and you will soon perceive a vast difference between the dreams which the false prophets tell, and the divine oracles which the true prophets deliver, and will easily discern which is of God and which is not. Those that have spiritual senses exercised will be able to distinguish. *For what is the chaff to the wheat*—There is as much difference between my will and their dreams, as there is between the *chaff* and the *wheat*. *Is not my word like fire?*—Quick and powerful, capable of trying men as metals are tried in a furnace, and ready to burn up that which will not bear the trial. *And like a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces*—As a hammer breaks to pieces the hardest rock, so is my word, when properly applied, able to break the hardest and most obstinate heart, and to beat down the confidence of the most hardened sinner.

Verses 30-32. *Behold, I am against the prophets that steal my words, &c.*—“That imitate the true prophets, speaking in my name, as they do, and saying, *Thus saith the Lord*, (see verse 31,) and using their words, but applying them to their own purpose: or, it may be, adding their own inventions to them.” So Lowth. Others paraphrase the verse thus, “That conspire together what to say to deceive the people, and to steal what they say one from another.” Or, perhaps the meaning rather is, That utter, as revelations made to themselves, things which they have learned, and, as it were, stolen from others. *That use their tongues, &c.*—*That take their own tongues*, as Blaney renders it, and say, *He* (the Lord) *hath said*. “The phrase of *taking their own tongue*,” he observes, “is, I think, very easily to be understood of those who, without any inspiration, took upon them to deliver messages to the people, and pretended that they came from God.” *I am against them that prophesy false dreams*—False

A. M. 3405. \* their lightness; yet I sent them not, B. C. 599. nor commanded them: therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the LORD.

33 ¶ And when this people, or the prophet, or a priest, shall ask thee, saying, What is 'the burden of the LORD? thou shalt then say unto them, What burden? \* I will even forsake you, saith the LORD.

34 And as for the prophet, and the priest, and the people, that shall say, The burden of the LORD, I will even <sup>12</sup> punish that man and his house.

35 Thus shall ye say every one to his neighbour, and every one to his brother, What hath the LORD answered? and, What hath the LORD spoken?

36 And the burden of the LORD shall ye mention no more: for every man's word shall

be his burden; for ye have perverted A. M. 3405. the words of the living God, of the B. C. 599. LORD of hosts our God.

37 Thus shalt thou say to the prophet, What hath the LORD answered thee? and, What hath the LORD spoken?

38 But since ye say, The burden of the LORD; therefore thus saith the LORD; Because ye say this word, The burden of the LORD, and I have sent unto you, saying, Ye shall not say, The burden of the LORD:

39 Therefore behold, I, even I, \* will utterly forget you, and † I will forsake you, and the city that I gave you and your fathers, and cast you out of my presence:

40 And I will bring \* an everlasting reproach upon you, and a perpetual shame, which shall not be forgotten.

\* Zeph. iii. 4.—† Mal. i. 1.—‡ Verse 39.—<sup>12</sup> Hebrew,

visit upon.—\* Hos. iv. 6.—† Verse 33.—‡ Chap. xx. 11.

things, under the notion of revelations made to them in their sleep. *And cause my people to err*—To wander from the right way; *by their lies, and by their lightness*—By their groundless assertions, their folly, their rashness and inconsistency with themselves: or, by the flatteries of their preaching, soothing men up in their sins, and by the looseness and lewdness of their conversation encouraging them to persist in them. *Yet I sent them not, &c.*—They are not my messengers, nor is what they say my message. *Therefore they shall not profit this people at all*—All the profit they aim at communicating is to make the people easy, but they shall not be able to do even that; for my providences will be such as will fill them with painful apprehensions and distressing fears. Some read the clause, *They do not profit this people*, considering the words as implying more than they express, namely, that these false prophets not only did the people no good, but did them a great deal of hurt. Observe, reader, none can expect God's blessing upon their ministry who are not called and sent of God. And those that corrupt the word of God, while they pretend to preach it, are so far from edifying the church, that they do it the greatest mischief imaginable.

Verse 33. *When this people, or the prophet, &c., shall ask thee, &c.*—“The remaining part of this chapter is directed against those who called the word of God, spoken by the true prophets, a BURDEN, by way of reproach; meaning that it always portended evil, and never good;” the word נשׂא, a burden, generally signifying a calamitous prophecy. See note on Isa. xiii. 1. “Ahab intended to cast the same slur on the Prophet Micaiah when he represented him as one that never prophesied good con-

cerning him, but evil, 1 Kings xxii. 8.” The false prophets, who said, *Peace, peace*, it seems, derided the true prophets, whose predictions were full of threatenings, as if God's messages were a burden which they were weary of hearing; and made a jest of these words, *The burden of the Lord*, with which God's prophets sometimes prefaced their prophecies. Upon this account God forbade the use of that expression, as in the following verses. See Lowth.

Verse 36. *For every man's word shall be his burden*—You shall be made severely to account for your loose and profane speeches, wherewith you deride and pervert the words and messages of God himself. Or, “Every man shall have most reason to regard his own word as hurtful and prejudicial to him. For the words of God were delivered with a salutary tendency, to warn sinners of the danger of their situation, and to call them to repentance. Those, therefore, who made a right use of them would have no cause to complain. But those who despised and rejected them perverted that which should have been for their wealth into an occasion of falling.”—Blaney.

Verse 39. *Therefore, behold, I will utterly forget you*—The Vulgate renders this clause, *Propterea ecce ego tolami vos portans, Therefore, behold, I will take you away removing you*, (taking the verb נשׂא, *nashah*, in the sense of נשא, *nasa*, as words of a like sound are often of a promiscuous signification,) which makes the sense more pertinent to the foregoing verses. The LXX. interpret the clause to the same purpose, Δια τωτο ιδω εγω λαμβανω και ρασσω υμας, &c. *Therefore, behold I take you, and cast you down, or, dash you, to the ground, and the city which I gave to you and to your fathers.*

## CHAPTER XXIV.

This chapter belongs to the beginning of Zedekiah's reign, probably to the first year of it, the vision contained in it being dated from the carrying away of Jeconiah, and the people with him, into captivity, as from an event which happened but a little before. Here, under the type of good and bad figs, God represents to Jeremiah the different ways in which he would deal with the people already gone into captivity, and Zedekiah, and his subjects that were left behind; showing favour and kindness to the former in their restoration and re-establishment: but pursuing the latter with judgments unto their utter destruction, 1-10.

A. M. 3406. **THE** LORD showed me, and be-  
B. C. 598.

hold, two baskets of figs were set before the temple of the LORD, after that Nebuchadrezzar <sup>b</sup> king of Babylon had carried away captive <sup>c</sup> Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah, and the princes of Judah, with the carpenters and smiths, from Jerusalem, and had brought them to Babylon.

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, <sup>1</sup> they were so bad.

<sup>a</sup> Amos vii. 1, 4; viii. 1.—<sup>b</sup> 2 Kings xxiv. 12, &c.; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 10.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER XXIV.

Verse 1. *The Lord showed me*—Probably in a vision; and *behold two baskets of figs*—Such as used to be offered up for first-fruits; *were set before the temple of the Lord*—Hebrew, כִּוְעָרִים, appointed, offered according to law, as Blaney renders the word; that is, they were brought and placed before the temple for an offering of first-fruits, as the law had directed. *After Nebuchadnezzar had carried away captive Jeconiah*—Concerning which, see 2 Kings xxiv. 11-16. This was in the eighth year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign. *With the carpenters and smiths*—Or, the artificers and armorers, as Blaney translates the words; the former, חַרְשֵׁי, being “a general name for any handicraftsman, whether working in wood or metal;” but the latter, כִּסְנָי, from כָּטַן, to shut in, or enclose, meaning properly, “the armorers who made the coats of mail which enclose the body. And it is reasonable to presume that the king of Babylon would be solicitous to carry all these off, with intent, not to employ them in his own service, but to prevent the Jews, who were left behind, from furnishing themselves with arms in case of a revolt.”

Verse 2. *One basket had very good figs*—Dr. Shaw speaks of three sorts of figs; the first of which he calls “*boccore*, (being those here spoken of,) which come to maturity toward the middle or latter end of June; the second, the *kermex*, or summer fig, which ripens seldom before August; and the third, the winter fig. This is usually of a much longer shape, and dark complexion than the *kermex*, hanging and ripening upon the tree even after the leaves are shed; and, provided the winter proves temperate, is gathered as a delicious morsel in the spring.”—Shaw's *Travels*, p. 370, fol. The doctor thinks that the latter sort were those which our

3 Then said the LORD unto me, A. M. 3406.  
What seest thou, Jeremiah? and I B. C. 598.  
said, Figs; the good figs, very good; and the evil, very evil, that cannot be eaten, they are so evil.

4 ¶ Again the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

5 Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel; Like these good figs, so will I acknowledge <sup>2</sup> them that are carried away captive of Judah, whom I have sent out of this place into the land of the Chaldeans for *their* good.

<sup>c</sup> Chap. xxii. 24, &c.; xxix. 2.—<sup>1</sup> Heb. for badness.—<sup>2</sup> Heb. the captivity.

Saviour expected to find on the fig-tree at the time of the passover in March, Matt. xxi. 19; Mark xi. 13. See Blaney.

Verses 5-7. *Thus saith the Lord God of Israel*—Here the Lord explains the parable of the good figs, the figs *first ripe*. These represented the pious captives who were sent first into captivity, as if they had been first ripe for ruin; but who should prove first ripe for mercy, and their captivity should help to ripen them. Among these were Daniel and his companions, and also Ezekiel. The calamities inseparable from a state of captivity were calculated to humble them, and bring them to repentance, and it seems had that good effect: while those who escaped being carried away became more and more hardened in sin. *Like these good figs so will I acknowledge them*—Namely, for my people, and will favour them accordingly. “The Jews, who were left in their own country,” says Lowth, “thought themselves better beloved of God than their brethren who were carried away captive. To check this vain confidence, God promises to show the latter particular signs of his favour in a strange land, and to show distinguishing marks of his displeasure upon the former: see chap. xxix. 17. *For I will set mine eyes upon them for good*—To order every thing for the best, that all the circumstances of the affliction may concur to the answering of the great intention of it. Accordingly we find that many of these, Daniel and his companions, for instance, found great esteem and honour during their captivity. *And I will bring them again to this land*—Some of them probably returned before the end of the captivity, some at the end of the seventy years. “They were sent abroad,” says Henry, “for improvement awhile under a severe discipline; but they shall be fetched back, when they have gone through their trial there, to their

A. M. 3406. 6 For I will set mine eyes upon  
B. C. 598. them for good, and <sup>d</sup> I will bring them  
again to this land: and <sup>e</sup> I will build them, and  
not pull *them* down; and I will plant them,  
and not pluck *them* up.

7 And I will give them <sup>f</sup> a heart to know me,  
that I *am* the LORD: and they shall be <sup>g</sup> my  
people, and I will be their God: for they shall  
return unto me <sup>h</sup> with their whole heart.

8 ¶ And as the evil <sup>i</sup> figs, which cannot be  
eaten, they are so evil; surely thus saith the  
LORD, So will I give Zedekiah the king of Ju-

<sup>d</sup> Chapter xii. 15; xxix. 10.—<sup>e</sup> Chap. xxxii. 41; xxxiii. 7;  
xlii. 10.—<sup>f</sup> Deuteron. xxx. 6; Chap. xxxii. 39; Ezek. xi. 19;  
xxxvi. 26, 27.—<sup>g</sup> Ch. xxx. 22; xxxi. 33; xxxii. 38.—<sup>h</sup> Chap.  
xxix. 13.—<sup>i</sup> Chap. xxix. 17.

Father's house." *And I will build them, and not pull them down, &c.*—The meaning of these metaphorical expressions is, I will prosper them, and provide for them. And it may be understood, both of the prosperous estate God would give them in the land of their captivity, where they should both build houses and increase their families, (see chap. xxix. 5, 6,) and also of the blessings he would confer upon them and their posterity, after their return to their own land, *ibid.* verse 10. And he engages to prepare them for the temporal blessings which he designed for them, by conferring spiritual blessings upon them. It is this that would make their captivity *for their good*: this would be both the improvement of their affliction and their qualification for deliverance. *I will give them a heart to know me*—I, who at first commanded light to shine out of darkness, will shine into their hearts, to give them the knowledge of my glory; even that true and saving knowledge of me which is eternal life; which is always productive of faith in, and love to, me, 1 John iv. 7, 8; of obedience to my will, 1 John ii. 3, 4; and a conformity to mine image, 2 Cor. iii. 18. They shall become acquainted with me in a higher degree, and to a better purpose, than formerly; and shall learn more of me by my providences and grace in Babylon than they had learned by my oracles and ordinances in Jerusalem. Mark well the expression, reader, *I will give them a heart to know me*; not only the *mind*, but the *heart*; not only the *understanding* and *judgment*, but the will and affections are concerned in the true knowledge of God, which does not consist in mere notions and speculations, but implies the exercise of all spiritual graces and the practice of all divine virtues. And this knowledge is the supernatural gift of God, communicated by the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, Eph. i. 17. The mere natural and unenlightened man has it not: for God and divine things *knoweth no man but by the Spirit of God*, 1 Cor. ii. 11, 14: see also 1 John v. 20. *And they shall be my people*—I will own them for my people as formerly, as well in the discoveries of myself to them, as in my acceptances of their services, and my gracious appearance in their behalf. *And*

A. M. 3406. dah, and his princes, and the residue  
B. C. 598. of Jerusalem, that remain in this land,  
and <sup>k</sup> them that dwell in the land of Egypt:

9 And I will deliver them <sup>l</sup> to <sup>m</sup> be removed  
into all the kingdoms of the earth for *their*  
hurt, <sup>n</sup> to be a reproach and a proverb, a taunt  
<sup>o</sup> and a curse, in all places whither I shall drive  
them.

10 And I will send the sword, the famine, and  
the pestilence, among them, till they be con-  
sumed from off the land that I gave unto them  
and to their fathers.

<sup>k</sup> Chap. xliii.; xlv.—<sup>l</sup> Hebrew, *for removing, or, exaction*.  
<sup>m</sup> Deut. xxviii. 25, 37; 1 Kings ix. 7; 2 Chron. vii. 20; Chap.  
xv. 4; xxix. 18; xxxiv. 17.—<sup>n</sup> Psa. xlv. 13, 14.—<sup>o</sup> Chap.  
xxix. 18, 22.

*I will be their God*—They shall have liberty to own me for their God, both in their prayers and praises offered to me, and their expectations from me. *For they shall return unto me with their whole heart*—They shall be so thoroughly changed in heart and life that they shall make my will their rule, and my glory their end, in all their intentions, affections, and actions, and my service their chief and most delightful business from day to day. This follows upon the former: for they that have a heart to know God aright will not only turn to him, but turn with their whole heart: while those who are either lukewarm in their services, or formal and hypocritical in their religion, may be truly said to be unacquainted with him.

Verses 8–10. *As the evil figs—so will I give Zedekiah*—Or rather, *so will I make Zedekiah*, as *יִצְחָק* should be rendered here, and as the same verb is rendered chap. xxix. 17. *And them that dwell in the land of Egypt*—Whither, it is probable, many of the Jews had fled upon the coming, or the report of the coming, of the king of Babylon: see chap. xliii., xlv. *I will deliver them to be removed into all the kingdoms, &c.*—The Lord, by his prophet, uses the words of Moses, wherewith to express those tremendous judgments which he designed to bring upon this wicked prince and people, as well because the Jews had, or professed to have, great reverence for that man of God, how little soever they had for Jeremiah, as to let them see that what the Lord here threatened, and soon would bring to pass, was but an accomplishment of what he foretold by Moses should befall them in case of their disobedience, by which predictions they ought to have taken warning. *To be a reproach, and a proverb, and a taunt*—To be made a jest of and a by-word: see Dan. ix. 16. *And a curse in all places whither I shall drive them*—Men shall use this phrase as a form of execration, "God make thee like Zedekiah, and those who remained with him;" compare chap. xxix. 22. On the contrary, to make a man a blessing, implies that his name should be mentioned as a signal instance of God's favour: see Gen. xlviii. 20; Zech. viii. 13. *Till they be consumed from off the land*—My judgments shall follow them so closely that neither they

nor any of their posterity shall ever enjoy any possession or property in their own country. This seems to be spoken of those miserable remains of the Jews

who, when the rest were carried into captivity, were, either by secreting themselves, or some other means, left in the desolated country.

## CHAPTER XXV.

*In this chapter, which seems to come next in succession to chap. xxii., xxiii., (1.) The prophet reproves the Jews for their disregard of the divine calls to repentance, 1-7. (2.) He foretels their subjugation, together with that of the neighbouring nations to the king of Babylon for seventy years, and the fall of the Babylonish empire at that period, 8-14. (3.) The same is foreshown under the symbol of the cup of God's wrath, with which Jeremiah is sent, probably in a vision, unto divers nations, to make them drink of it, to their utter subversion, 15-29. (4.) The like prophecy is the third time repeated in a strain of sublime and poetic imagery, 30-38.*

A. M. 3397. **T**HE word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah \* in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, that was the first year of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon ;

2 The which Jeremiah the prophet spake unto all the people of Judah, and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying,

From B. C. 629-606. 3 <sup>b</sup> From the thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon king of Judah, even unto this day, that is the three and twentieth year, the word of the LORD hath

come unto me, and I have spoken unto you, rising early and speaking ;  
A. M. 3397. B. C. 607. <sup>c</sup> but ye have not hearkened.

4 And the LORD hath sent unto you all his servants the prophets, <sup>d</sup> rising early and sending them; but ye have not hearkened, nor inclined your ear to hear.

5 They said, <sup>e</sup> Turn ye again now every one from his evil way, and from the evil of your doings, and dwell in the land that the LORD hath given unto you and to your fathers for ever and ever :

\* Chap. xxxvi. 1.—<sup>b</sup> Chap. i. 2.—<sup>c</sup> Chap. vii. 13 ; xi. 7, 8, 10 ; xiii. 10, 11 ; xvi. 12 ; xvii. 23 ; xviii. 12 ; xix. 15 ; xxii. 21.

<sup>d</sup> Chapter vii. 13, 25 ; xxvi. 5 ; xxix. 19.—<sup>e</sup> 2 Kings xvii. 13 ; Chap. xviii. 11 ; xxxv. 15 ; Jonah iii. 8.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER XXV.

Verse 1. *The word that came to Jeremiah in the fourth year of Jehoiakim*—It is probable this revelation was made to the prophet in the early part of that year ; for the defeat of the Egyptians at Carchemish, and the subsequent taking of Jerusalem, are both placed in the same year : but from verse 9 it appears that Nebuchadrezzar had but just entered upon his expedition when the Lord sent this word to Jeremiah, and had not yet carried into execution any of those designs for which God there says he would take and send him. The reader will observe, the fourth year of Jehoiakim was seven years and some months before Jeconiah was carried into captivity, as appears from 2 Kings xxiii. 36, and xxiv. 8-15, and eighteen years before the taking of the city and the more general captivity ; which shows that this prophecy was delivered at least six or seven years before that in the preceding chapter. *That was the first year of Nebuchadrezzar*—That is, according to the Jewish mode of computing his reign, from the time of his being associated with his father in the empire before he set out on his Syrian expedition. But the Babylonians do not reckon his reign to have begun till two years after, upon his father's death.

Verses 2, 3. *Which Jeremiah spake to all the people of Judah*—That is, the word which he spake

concerned them all, and he spake it to as many of them as he met with in any public assembly at Jerusalem or elsewhere. *From the thirteenth year of Josiah*—In which year, as we read, chap. i. 2, Jeremiah began to prophesy ; Josiah reigned thirty-one years, 2 Kings xxii. 1 ; so that, taking in the thirteenth year, he prophesied nineteen years during the life of Josiah, to which the four years of Jehoiakim's reign being added, make the number twenty-three. These twenty-three years, says the prophet, I have been a preacher to you, and I have not been negligent in my work, but, like men that rise early in the morning to despatch their business, I have been attentive and laborious in the discharge of my prophetic office.

Verses 4-7. *And the Lord hath sent unto you all his servants, &c.*—Nor am I the only prophet whom the Lord hath sent you, and whom you have neglected and despised. God hath sent you many more, and you have despised as many as he hath sent. This contempt of the Lord's messengers is made the proximate cause of God's wrath coming upon this people, till there was no remedy, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16. *They said, Turn ye again now, &c.*—The substance, both of their and my sermons, hath been to persuade you to abandon those sinful courses, wherein you have lived, and which you might have amended, by virtue of that grace which God did not

A. M. 3397. 6 And go not after other gods to  
B. C. 607. serve them, and to worship them, and  
provoke me not to anger with the works of your  
hands; and I will do you no hurt.

7 Yet ye have not hearkened unto me, saith  
the LORD; that ye might <sup>f</sup> provoke me to anger  
with the works of your hands to your own  
hurt.

8 ¶ Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts;  
Because ye have not heard my words,

9 Behold, I will send and take <sup>g</sup> all the fami-  
lies of the north, saith the LORD, and Nebu-

<sup>f</sup> Deut. xxxii. 21; Chap. vii. 19; xxxii. 30.—<sup>g</sup> Chap. i. 15.  
<sup>h</sup> Chapter xxvii. 6; xliiii. 10; Isa. xlv. 28; xlv. 1; Chap. xl. 2.  
<sup>i</sup> Chap. xviii. 16.

deny you. We have not differed in our doctrine, to  
the practice of which you have also been encour-  
aged, both by them and me, with an assurance from  
God, that, if you obeyed it, you should enjoy this  
good land which the Lord promised, and gave to you  
and your fathers, and which you have now possessed  
for many ages. *And go not after other gods*—  
Though the Jews were guilty of many other sins,  
yet their most heinous sin was idolatry, as it was a  
direct renouncing of God's authority, who had, by  
so many miracles of mercy, set them apart for him-  
self and his own service, and had bestowed so many  
signal privileges and blessings upon them. *And  
provoke me not with the works of your hands*—By  
worshipping, as gods, the images which your own  
hands have made, or with any works which are con-  
trary to my law. *And I will do you no hurt*—You  
shall yet enjoy your own land and prosper. *Yet ye  
have not hearkened unto me*—Ye heard me, and  
other the Lord's prophets, thus speaking to you, but  
you have not obeyed; *that ye might provoke me,  
&c.*—As if you had disobeyed with a design to in-  
cense me against you; *to your own hurt*—For the  
sinful actions of men do not affect or injure me, but  
are to the hurt of those who do them.

Verses 8, 9. *Therefore, because ye have not heard*  
—That is, because ye have not hearkened to, nor  
obeyed my words, *Behold, I will send and take all  
the families of the north, &c.*—All those kings  
whose territories lie northward of Judea, and par-  
ticularly Nebuchadnezzar, who, in this work, shall  
be my servant; *and will bring them against this  
land, &c.*—I will lead, as commander in chief, them  
and their armies up against this people; and I will  
deprive you of all hopes of safety from your alliances  
with other nations, for the king of Babylon shall first  
subdue them. See 2 Kings xxiv. 7. *And will ut-  
terly destroy them, and make them an astonishment*  
—Will make these countries, and their inhabitants,  
the objects of men's scorn and reproach. See note  
on chap. xxiv. 9. *And a perpetual desolation*—It is  
often observed, that the Hebrew word עלמ, here  
rendered *perpetual*, does not always imply eternity,  
or perpetuity, in a strict sense; but is sometimes

chadrezzar the king of Babylon, <sup>h</sup> my A. M. 3397.  
servant, and will bring them against B. C. 607.  
this land, and against the inhabitants thereof,  
and against all these nations round about, and  
will utterly destroy them, and <sup>i</sup> make them an  
astonishment, and a hissing, and perpetual des-  
olations.

10 Moreover <sup>1</sup> I will take from them the  
<sup>k</sup> voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the  
voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the  
bride, <sup>l</sup> the sound of the millstones, and the  
light of the candle.

<sup>1</sup> Heb. *I will cause to perish from them.*—<sup>k</sup> Isa. xxiv. 7; Chap.  
vii. 34; xvi. 9; Ezek. xxvi. 13; Hosea ii. 11; Rev. xviii. 23.  
<sup>l</sup> Eccles. xii. 4.

taken for such a duration as had a remarkable period  
to conclude it. Thus it is said of a servant, in a cer-  
tain case, Exod. xxi. 6, *That he shall serve his  
master for ever*—Which the Jews interpret as mean-  
ing, "till the next jubilee." So here the sense of the  
word is to be restrained to the period of seventy  
years, mentioned verse 11.

Verse 10. *Moreover, I will take from them the  
voice of mirth, &c.*—See the note on chap. vii. 34;  
xvi. 9. *The sound of the millstones and the light  
of the candle*—There shall be no longer any marks  
of trade carried on, even respecting the common ne-  
cessaries of life, such as the grinding of corn; and  
there will be no use of candles, where the inhabitants  
are dispersed and destroyed; nor will there be occa-  
sion for such illuminations as are usual on festival  
solemnities, in the time of general desolation, verse  
11. See the like expressions used, Rev. xviii. 22;  
where we may observe that St. John exactly follows  
the Hebrew text; whereas the LXX., in this place,  
instead of *the sound of the millstones*, read *οσμην  
μυρου*, *the smell of ointment*. From which, and several  
other places of the New Testament, it appears  
that the apostles and evangelists did not implicitly  
follow the Greek translation, but only when they  
thought it consistent with the original text. See  
Lowth. Mr. Harmer has an excellent observation  
on this place, which the reader will be glad to see.  
"The time for grinding their corn is in the morning;  
which consideration makes the prophet's selecting  
the noise of millstones, and the lighting up of can-  
dles, as circumstances belonging to inhabited places,  
appear in a view which no commentators, that I have  
examined, have taken any notice of. I am indebted  
to Sir John Chardin's MS. for the knowledge of this  
fact. It informs us that 'in the East they grind their  
corn at break of day; and that when one goes out in  
a morning, he hears everywhere the noise of the  
mill, and that it is the noise that often awakens peo-  
ple.' It has been commonly known that they bake  
every day; and that they usually grind their corn  
as they want it; but this passage informs us, that it  
is the first work done in a morning, as well as that  
this grinding of their mills makes a considerable

A. M. 3397. 11 And this whole land shall be a  
B. C. 607. desolation, and an astonishment; and  
these nations shall serve the king of Babylon  
seventy years.

Beginning 12 ¶ And it shall come to pass,  
B. C. 606. when <sup>2</sup>seventy years are accomplish-  
ed, that I will <sup>3</sup>punish the king of Babylon,  
and that nation, saith the LORD, for their in-  
iquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, <sup>2</sup>and  
will make it perpetual desolations.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Chronicles xxxvi. 21, 22; Ezra i. 1; Chapter xxix. 10; Daniel ix. 2.—<sup>3</sup> Beginning B. C. 606, 2 Kings xxiv. 1, ending B. C. 536, Ezra. i. 1.—<sup>3</sup> Hebrew, *visit upon*.

noise, and attracts every ear; and as the lighting up of candles begins the evening, there is an agreeable contrast observable in these words, *I will take from thee, &c., the sound of millstones and the light of the candle. And their whole land shall be a desolation*—Gloomy shall be the silence of the morning, melancholy the shadows of the evening; no cheerful noise to animate the one, no enlivening ray to soften the gloom of the other. Desolation shall every where reign. A land may abound with habitations, and furnish an agreeable abode, where the voice of mirth is not heard; none of the songs, the music, and the dances of nuptial solemnities; but in the East, where no millstones are heard in the morning, no light seen in the evening, it must be a dreary, dismal solitude.—Chap. iv. obs. 4. See also chap. iii. obs. 18.

Verse 11. *These nations shall serve the king of Babylon*—That is, Nebuchadnezzar and his successors, collectively considered; *seventy years*—“This period of the nation’s servitude must be computed from the defeat of the Egyptians at Carchemish, in the same year that this prophecy was given, when Nebuchadnezzar reduced the neighbouring nations of Syria and Palestine, as well as Jerusalem, under his subjection. This was near two years before the heathen chronologers in general begin his reign, his father being still living. After his father’s death, according to Ptolemy’s canon, he reigned forty-three years; Ilverodamus, or Evil-merodach, his son two, Neriglissar four, and Nabonadius, supposed to be Belshazzar, the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar, seven-teen; to which, if we add two years of Darius the Mede, who is said, Dan. ix. 1, to have been made king over the realm of the Chaldeans, we shall find the nations to have continued all that time, nearly seventy years, in subjection, more or less, to the king of Babylon. But after the accession of Cyrus, who put an end to the Babylonish monarchy, the nations could serve the king of Babylon no longer, because there was no longer a king of Babylon to serve; for the kings of Persia were never called kings of Babylon; but Babylon became itself a subject and dependant province, under a subordinate governor, and began from that instant to experience, in some degree, those divine visitations which terminated at length in what is so justly called, in the next verse,

13 And I will bring upon that land A. M. 3397  
all my words which I have pronounced B. C. 607:  
against it, even all that is written in this book,  
which Jeremiah hath prophesied against all the  
nations.

14 ° For many nations <sup>2</sup>and great kings shall  
<sup>2</sup>serve themselves of them also: <sup>1</sup>and I will  
recompense them according to their deeds, and  
according to the works of their own hands.

15 ¶ For thus saith the LORD God of Israel

<sup>2</sup> Isa. xiii. 19; xiv. 23; xxi. 1, &c.; xlvii. 1; Chap. i. 3, 13, 23, 39, 40, 45; li. 25, 26.—<sup>1</sup> Chap. i. 9; li. 27, 28.—<sup>2</sup> Chap. i. 41; li. 27.—<sup>3</sup> Chap. xxvii. 7.—<sup>1</sup> Chap. i. 29; li. 6, 24.

*perpetual desolations.*—Blaney. See notes on chap. xxix. 10; and Ezra i. 1.

Verses 12–14. *When seventy years are accomplished, I will punish the king of Babylon*—“God often punishes the persons whom he makes instruments of his vengeance upon others for those very things which they did by his appointment, because their intention was merely to carry on their own ambitious and cruel purposes, and not at all to fulfil God’s will, or advance his glory. So that the evil they did was altogether their own, and the good that was brought out of it was to be ascribed solely to God.”—Lowth. See notes on Isa. x. 5–7. *And that nation for their iniquity*—For their pride, ambition, luxury, tyranny, and cruelty, as well as for their various idolatries, which, after Daniel’s interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar’s dreams, and the miracles wrought by the God of Israel, in favour of Shadrach and his companions, not to mention the testimony borne to the true religion by many other pious Jews, were greatly aggravated, and without all excuse. *And the land of the Chaldeans, and make it perpetual desolations*—Chaldee was not reduced to desolation immediately upon the taking of Babylon, and the conquest of the country by the Medes and Persians, but its power was then broken, and the sources of its prosperity greatly diminished, and by degrees the country was turned into a solitude. Of the steps whereby this was effected, see notes on Isa. xiii. 19–22, and chap. i. 40. *All that is written in this book, which Jeremiah hath prophesied against all nations*—Those prophecies are meant which are to be found all together from chap. xvi. to chap. li. inclusively; and which the LXX. have introduced in this place. *For many nations, &c., shall serve themselves of them also*—Namely, the nations and kings who were confederates with Cyrus. Houbigant renders the clause, *For powerful people, and mighty kings, shall reduce even those nations to servitude, and so, &c.* And Blaney to nearly the same sense, thus: *For of them, even of these, shall many nations and great kings exact service; and I will render, &c.*

Verses 15, 16. *Thus saith the Lord, Take the wine-cup of this fury, &c.*—“Those circumstances which constitute the good and evil of human life are often represented in Scripture as the ingredients of

A. M. 3397. unto me; Take the <sup>a</sup> wine-cup of  
B. C. 607. this fury at my hand, and cause all  
the nations, to whom I send thee, to drink it.

16 And <sup>a</sup> they shall drink, and be moved, and  
be mad, because of the sword that I will send  
among them.

17 Then took I the cup at the LORD's hand,  
and made all the nations to drink, unto whom  
the LORD had sent me :

18 *To wit*, Jerusalem, and the cities of Judah,  
and the kings thereof, and the princes thereof,  
to make them <sup>a</sup> a desolation, an astonishment,  
a hissing, and <sup>a</sup> a curse; as *it is* this day;

<sup>a</sup> Job xxi. 20; Psalm lxxv. 8; Isa. li. 17; Revelation xiv. 10.  
<sup>b</sup> Chap. li. 7; Ezek. xxiii. 34; Nah. iii. 11.—<sup>c</sup> Verses 9, 11.  
<sup>d</sup> Chap. xxiv. 9.—<sup>e</sup> Chap. xvi. 2, 25.—<sup>f</sup> Verse 24.

a cup, which God, as master of a feast, mixes up, and distributes to the several guests as he thinks fit. Hence, when our Saviour asks James and John, whether they were able to *drink of the cup which he was to drink of*, he means, whether they had resolution and patience to undergo the like sufferings as his Father had allotted for him. And in the like sense he prays, *If it be possible let this cup pass from me*. Accordingly, by this image of the wine-cup of God's wrath, we are to understand those dreadful judgments which an incensed God was about to inflict on the objects of his displeasure. And Jeremiah the prophet, who announced them, is considered as acting the part of a cup-bearer, carrying the cup round to those who were appointed to drink of it; the effects of which were to appear in the intoxication, that is, the terror and astonishment, the confusion and desolation, that should prevail among them.—Blaney. See notes on Psa. xi. 6, and lxxv. 8; Isa. li. 21.

Verse 17. *Then took I the cup*—It is not to be imagined that Jeremiah went round in person to all the nations and kings here enumerated, with a cup of wine in his hand, but, doubtless, what is here related passed in a vision, in which it was represented to his view. This, either by writing, or by some special messenger, he communicated to the several kings and nations to which God ordered him to publish it. Or, he himself actually did what is figuratively designed, that is, he publicly announced the judgments of God severally against them, as we find in the chapters mentioned in the note on verse 13.

Verses 18-21. *To wit, Jerusalem and the cities thereof*—The Jews are mentioned first, because Jeremiah, as well as the rest of the prophets, was in the first place sent to them, and they were to have the greatest share in the judgments denounced. *As it is this day*—This clause speaks of the desolation of Judah and Jerusalem; when all that Jeremiah had foretold against them was fulfilled; and therefore must have been added either by Baruch, his amanuensis, or else by Ezra: or whoever it was that collected Jeremiah's prophecies into one volume, who,

19 <sup>a</sup> Pharaoh king of Egypt, and <sup>a</sup> A. M. 3397.  
his servants, and his princes, and all <sup>a</sup> B. C. 607.  
his people;

20 And all <sup>a</sup> the mingled people, and all the  
kings of <sup>a</sup> the land of Uz, <sup>b</sup> and all the kings  
of the land of the Philistines, and Ashkelon,  
and Azzah, and Ekron, and <sup>c</sup> the remnant of  
Ashdod,

21 <sup>d</sup> Edom, and <sup>e</sup> Moab, and the children of  
<sup>f</sup> Ammon,

22 And all the kings of <sup>a</sup> Tyrus, and all the  
kings of Zidon, and the kings of the <sup>b</sup> isles  
which *are* beyond the <sup>b</sup> sea,

<sup>a</sup> Job i. 1.—<sup>b</sup> Chap. xlvii. 1, 5, 7.—<sup>c</sup> Isa. xx. 1.—<sup>d</sup> Chap.  
xlix. 7.—<sup>e</sup> Chapter xlviii. 1.—<sup>f</sup> Chapter xlix. 1.—<sup>g</sup> Chap.  
xlvii. 4.—<sup>h</sup> Or, *region by the sea-side*.—<sup>i</sup> Chap. xlix. 23.

it is likely, added the fifty-second chapter. *Pharaoh king of Egypt*—Whose army Nebuchadnezzar overcame before he took Jerusalem. *And all the mingled people*—Or, *intermingled*, as Blaney translates הערר, joining the expression with the preceding verse, and understanding thereby all the foreigners resident in Egypt, who had, by intermarriages, formed connections with the Egyptians. St. Jerome takes the word in the same sense. Our translators, however, seem to have understood by it a mixture of several nations, dwelling either upon the coasts of the Mediterranean, or of the Red sea. *And all the kings of the land of Uz*—This was the country of Job; but concerning its situation different opinions are entertained. It was most probably on the confines of Idumea, if not a part of it. The daughter of Edom is said to dwell in the land of Uz, Lam. iv. 21: see note on Job i. 1. Those who were leaders, or governors of different tribes or families, seem to have had the name of kings: they are now called emirs. *And all the kings of the Philistines*—The princes of the different districts, or cities, into which Philistia was divided, namely, Ashkelon and Azzah, &c. *And the remnant of Ashdod*—Or Azotus, which had been very much ruined by two sieges in which it was taken, the one by Tartan, the Assyrian general, mentioned Isa. xx. 1; the other by Psammitichus, king of Egypt, who retook it after the longest siege that had even been known in those times: Herodot. lib. ii. c. 157. The prophecy respecting the Philistines is contained in chap. xlvii. *Edom*—Or rather, *And Edom*—As the LXX. Syr. and Vul. read, with seven MSS. For the prophecies concerning Edom, Moab, and the Ammonites, see chap. xlviii. and xlix. 1-22.

Verses 22-24. *And all the kings of Tyrus and Zidon*—The nobles, or chief men of each city, seem to be meant by kings here, for neither of these cities had more than one king. *And the kings of the isles, which are beyond the sea*—Cyprus, &c., which Nebuchadnezzar subjected. Or, as the Hebrew, 'דוּם כַּעֲבֵר הַיָּם, is rendered in the margin, *The region by the sea-side*. For that 'א, rendered *isle* in the

A. M. 3397. 23 <sup>1</sup> Dedan, and Tema, and Buz,  
B. C. 607. and all <sup>2</sup> that are in the utmost  
corners,

24 And <sup>3</sup> all the kings of Arabia, and all the  
kings of the <sup>4</sup> mingled people that dwell in the  
desert,

25 And all the kings of Zimri, and all the  
kings of <sup>5</sup> Elam, and all the kings of the Medes,

26 <sup>6</sup> And all the kings of the north, far and

<sup>1</sup> Chapter xlix. 8.—<sup>2</sup> Hebrew, cut off into corners, or, having the corners of the hair polled, Chapter ix. 26; xlix. 32.  
<sup>3</sup> 2 Chron. ix. 14.

text, does not always signify an island, properly so called, is manifest from many passages. *Dedan, and Tema, and Buz*—A person called *Dedan* was descended from Abraham by Keturah, Gen. xxv. 3. Probably he founded the city *Dedan*; which, however, in process of time, seems to have been annexed to *Edom*: see chap. xlix. 8; Ezek. xxv. 13. *Tema* was one of the sons of Ishmael, Gen. xxv. 15, and a city, or district, called after him, was situate near the mountains which separate Arabia from Chaldaea.—*An. Univ. Hist.*, vol. vii. p. 230, fol. *Buz* was the brother of Uz, Gen. xxii. 21, and settled, most probably, in his neighbourhood. Elihu, the wisest of Job's friends, was a Buzite, Job xxxii. 2. *And all that are in the utmost corners*—Or, *all that have the coast insulated*, as Blaney translates it: see note on chap. ix. 26. These, he supposes, to be the inhabitants of the peninsula of Arabia, especially those situate toward the bottom, or narrow part of it. *And all the kings of Arabia*—“The whole country to which we give the general name of Arabia seems to have been thrown, in Scripture, into two great divisions, one of which is called properly עֲרָבָה, *Arabah*, the other קֶדֶם, *Kedem*, according to their respective situations; *Arabah*, signifying the west, as *Kedem* does the east. Each of these had their subdivisions; the first, comprehending that which geographers have distinguished by the name of *Arabia Petraea*, and also, perhaps, those parts along the western coast of the Red sea bordering upon Egypt. The other part, called *Kedem*, comprehended *Arabia Felix*, and *Arabia Deserta*; the former of which the Scripture seems to have distinguished by the name of קְצוֹצֵי פֶתַח, *those that have their coast insulated*, mentioned in the preceding verse; and the latter in this verse, by the mingled race of those that dwell in the desert, meaning such as inhabited the great desert country, lying between Mesopotamia and Palestine. These may have been so called from the manner of inhabiting the desert promiscuously and in common, without any fixed property or abode, settling, for a time, where they found pasture, and then removing with their flocks to another place; or, from their being made up of people of different descents.”—Blaney.

Verses 25, 26. *All the kings of Zimri*—Those descended from Zimran, one of Abraham's sons, by

near, one with another, and all the A. M. 3397.  
kingdoms of the world, which are B. C. 607.  
upon the face of the earth: <sup>7</sup> and the king of  
Sheshach shall drink after them.

27 Therefore thou shalt say unto them, Thus  
saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel;  
<sup>8</sup> Drink ye, and <sup>9</sup> be drunken, and spew, and  
fall, and rise no more, because of the sword  
which I will send among you.

<sup>1</sup> Verse 20; Chap. xlix. 31; 1. 37; Ezek. xxx. 5.—<sup>2</sup> Chap. xlix. 34.—<sup>3</sup> Chapter 1. 9.—<sup>4</sup> Chap. li. 41.—<sup>5</sup> Hab. ii. 16.  
<sup>6</sup> Isa. li. 21; lxiii. 6.

Keturah; all of whom he sent to settle in the east country, Gen. xxv. 2, 6. It is probable that these descendants of Zimran were the same that Pliny mentions among the inhabitants of Arabia, by the name of Zamareni. *And all the kings of Elam*—Namely, of Persia. *And all the kings of the Medes*—Who were descended from Madai, the son of Japhet. The Medes and Persians were commonly confederates and partakers of the same prosperity or adversity. *And all the kings of the north far and near*—“By the kings of the north that were near, the kings of Syria are probably meant: see chap. xlix. 23. Those that were *afar off* may mean the Hyrcanians and Bactrians, who are reckoned in Xenophon's *Cyropædia*, lib. i., among them that were subjected or oppressed by the king of Babylon, and perhaps others besides of the neighbouring nations that were compelled to submit to the Babylonian yoke. All these lay to the north of Judea, and at a great distance.” *And all the kingdoms of the world, &c.*—It is justly observed by Blaney, that this must be understood with a limitation to that part of the continent with which the Jews had some correspondence, or acquaintance; just as *Πασα η οικουμενη* stands for the whole Roman empire, Luke ii. 1. “The ambition of a prince like Nebuchadnezzar, who aimed at universal monarchy, could not but occasion great confusion and distress, both among those who felt, and among those who dreaded, the power of his arms.” *And the king of Sheshach shall drink after them*—Here the speech of Jehovah is resumed, which was broken off at the end of verse 16. That *Sheshach* means Babylon, appears clearly from chap. li. 41. “But, among the reasons that have been assigned for this name,” says Blaney, “I have met with none that I think satisfactory. שֶׁשַׁךְ, signifies to *subside*, and *sink down*; and may perhaps allude to the low situation of Babylon, which did not derive its strength from being built, like many other great cities, upon the heights of a rock, but stood upon a large flat, or plain, covering, as it were, amidst the waters that surrounded it, and by which it was rendered in some parts inaccessible to an enemy.”

Verses 27–29. *Drink ye and be drunken*—The imperative is here put for the future: see the like mode of speaking, Isa. ii. 9; vi. 9; xxiii. 16. The *cup* being metaphorically put for calamity, to be *drunken* with

A. M. 3397. 28 And it shall be, if they refuse to  
B. C. 607. take the cup at thy hand to drink,  
then shalt thou say unto them, Thus saith the  
LORD of hosts; Ye shall certainly drink.

29 For lo, I begin to bring evil on the city  
which is called by my name, and should ye  
be utterly unpunished? Ye shall not be un-  
punished: for I will call for a sword upon all  
the inhabitants of the earth, saith the LORD of  
hosts.

30 Therefore prophesy thou against them all  
these words, and say unto them, The LORD  
shall roar from on high, and utter his voice  
from his holy habitation; he shall mightily  
roar upon his habitation; he shall give a  
shout, as they that tread the grapes, against

<sup>a</sup> Proverbs xi. 31; Chapter xlix. 12; Ezekiel ix. 6; Obadiah  
16; Luke xxiii. 31; 1 Peter iv. 17.—<sup>b</sup> Heb. upon which my  
name is called.—<sup>c</sup> Daniel ix. 18, 19.—<sup>d</sup> Ezekiel xxxviii. 21.  
<sup>e</sup> Isaiah xlii. 13; Joel iii. 16; Amos i. 2.—<sup>f</sup> Psalm xi. 4;  
Chap. xvii. 12.

it, and fall, &c., must signify extreme calamity, or de-  
struction. *If they refuse to take the cup, &c.*—“If  
they either do not believe thy threatenings, or dis-  
regard them, as thinking themselves sufficiently  
provided against any hostile invasion, thou shalt let  
them know that the judgments denounced against  
them are God’s irreversible decree,” which shall cer-  
tainly be executed, and that it will be in vain for  
them to hope to escape the threatened ruin. *For  
lo, I bring evil on the city called by my name, &c.*  
—“Judgment often begins at the house of God, for  
the correction of his people, and to be a warning to  
others; but the heaviest strokes of it are reserved for  
the ungodly;” see Lowth, and chap. xlix. 12; 1 Pet. iv.  
17, 18. *And should ye be utterly unpunished?*—No: *if  
this be done in the green tree, what shall be done  
in the dry?* If they that have some good in them  
smart so severely for the evil that is found in them,  
can they expect to escape that have worse evils and no  
good found among them? If Jerusalem be punished  
for learning idolatry of the nations, shall not the na-  
tions be punished of whom they learned it? No doubt  
they shall; for, says the Lord, *I will call for a sword  
upon all the inhabitants of the earth*—For they  
have helped to corrupt the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

Verses 30–33. *The Lord shall roar from on high*  
—Shall manifest his anger from heaven. God speaks  
by his judgments, and those, when they are very  
terrible, may be fitly compared to the roaring of a  
lion, which strikes a consternation into those that  
hear it. *He shall mightily roar upon his habitation*  
—He shall pronounce and execute a terrible judg-  
ment upon his temple, the place on earth which he  
hath chosen for his residence: see 1 Kings viii. 29.  
*He shall give a shout as they that tread the grapes*  
—That is, *He shall utter his voice before his army*,  
as Joel expresses it, chap. ii. 11. Like a leader or  
general, he shall encourage them to give the onset

all the inhabitants of the earth. A. M. 3397.

31 A noise shall come even to the  
ends of the earth; for the LORD hath a con-  
troversy with the nations, he will plead with  
all flesh; he will give them that are wicked  
to the sword, saith the LORD.

32 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Behold,  
evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a  
great whirlwind shall be raised up from the  
coasts of the earth.

33 And the slain of the LORD shall be at  
that day from one end of the earth even unto  
the other end of the earth: they shall not be  
lamented, neither gathered, nor buried; they  
shall be dung upon the ground.

34 Howl, ye shepherds, and cry; and

<sup>a</sup> 1 Kings ix. 3; Psalm cxxii. 14.—<sup>b</sup> Isaiah xvi. 9; Chap.  
xlviii. 33.—<sup>c</sup> Hosea iv. 1; Micah vi. 2.—<sup>d</sup> Isaiah lxvi. 16;  
Joel iii. 2.—<sup>e</sup> Chap. xxiii. 19; xxx. 23.—<sup>f</sup> Isaiah lxvi. 16.  
<sup>g</sup> Chap. xvi. 4, 6.—<sup>h</sup> Psa. lxxix. 3; Chap. viii. 2; Rev. xi. 9.  
<sup>i</sup> Chap. iv. 8; vi. 26.

upon their enemies, which is usually performed with  
a shout, as great as that which the treading of grapes  
use at the time of the vintage. *A noise shall come  
to the ends of the earth*—The report of these calami-  
ties and confusions shall reach the most distant  
countries. *For the Lord hath a controversy with  
the nations*—God enters into judgment with men for  
their impieties, as being so many injuries to his hon-  
our, for which he demands satisfaction, Hos. iv. 1;  
Micah vi. 2. *He will plead with all flesh*—Namely,  
with fire and sword, as Isaiah expresses it, chap.  
lxvi. 16. *He will give the wicked to the sword*—His  
quarrel with men is for their wickedness, for their  
contempt of him, of his authority over them, and  
kindness to them. They have provoked him to an-  
ger, and thence comes all this destruction. *Behold,  
evil shall go forth from nation to nation*—As the cup  
of God’s wrath goes round, every nation shall have  
its share, and take its turn, because one doth not take  
warning, by the calamities of another, to repent and  
reform. *A great whirlwind shall be raised up, &c.*  
—The Chaldean army shall come like a hurricane,  
raised in the north, and thence carried forward with  
incredible fierceness and swiftness, bearing down all  
before it. God’s vengeance is often compared to a  
whirlwind, and is here said to come from the coasts,  
or sides of the earth, because Chaldea was, at that  
time, thought to be one of the most remote regions.  
*And the slain of the Lord, &c.*—Multitudes shall fall  
by the sword of the merciless Chaldeans, so that the  
dead shall be everywhere found, here termed, *the  
slain of the Lord*, because slain by commission from  
him, and sacrificed to his justice. *They shall not be  
lamented*—They shall fall in such great numbers  
that the usual funeral rites and lamentations shall not  
be paid them, and many of them will lie unburied.

Verses 34, 35. *Howl, ye shepherds, and cry*—The  
imperative is here also put for the future: see ver. 27.

A. M. 3397. wallow yourselves *in the ashes*, ye  
B. C. 607. principal of the flock: for <sup>7</sup> the days  
of your slaughter and of your dispersions are  
accomplished; and ye shall fall like <sup>8</sup> a plea-  
sant vessel.

35 And <sup>9</sup> the shepherds shall have no way to  
flee, nor the principal of the flock to escape.

36 A voice of the cry of the shepherds, and a  
howling of the principal of the flock, *shall be*

<sup>7</sup> Hebrew, *your days for slaughter.*—<sup>8</sup> Hebrew, *a vessel of desire.*

*Shepherds* are here the same with kings, princes, or generals. In pursuance of the same metaphor, by the *principal of the flock* are meant the great and rich men of each nation. Though such are wont to be the most courageous and secure, yet of these it is foretold, that their hearts should so fail them that they should *howl*, and *cry*, and *wallow in ashes*. Seeing themselves utterly unable to make head against the enemy, and seeing their country, which they had the charge of, and for the protection and prosperity of which they were concerned, inevitably ruined, they should abandon themselves to despair, sorrow, and lamentation. *For the days of your slaughter, &c., are accomplished*—The time fixed in the divine counsel for the slaughter of some, and the dispersion of the rest, is fully come. *And ye shall fall like a pleasant vessel*—Ye shall be utterly destroyed, as a crystal glass when it is dashed against the ground. *The shepherds shall have no way to flee, &c.*—The enemy will be so numerous, so furious, so sedulous, and the extent of their army so vast, that it will be impossible to avoid falling into their hands.

heard: for the LORD hath spoiled  
their pasture.

37 And the peaceable habitations are cut  
down because of the fierce anger of the  
LORD.

38 He hath forsaken <sup>h</sup> his covert, as the lion:  
for their land is <sup>10</sup> desolate because of the fierce-  
ness of the oppressor, and because of his fierce  
anger.

<sup>9</sup> Heb. *flight shall perish from the shepherds, and escaping from,* &c., Amos ii. 14.—<sup>h</sup> Psal. lxxvi. 2.—<sup>10</sup> Heb. *a desolation.*

Verses 36-38. *A voice of the cry of the shepherds*—Those are great calamities indeed that strike such a terror upon great men, and put them into this mighty consternation. *For the Lord hath spoiled their pasture*—In which they fed their flock, and out of which they fed themselves; the spoiling of this makes them cry out thus. Carrying on the metaphor of a lion roaring, the prophet alludes to the great fright into which shepherds are put when they hear a roaring lion coming toward them, and find that neither they nor their flocks can escape. *And the peaceable habitations are cut down*—Those that used to be quiet and not molested, who had long dwelt in peace and safety, shall now be exposed to all the calamities of war, and shall be thereby destroyed; or, those that used to be peaceable, and not to molest any of their neighbours, nor give provocation to any, shall yet not escape. This is one of the direful effects of war, that even those that are most harmless and inoffensive, often suffer hard things. Blessed be God, there is a peaceable habitation above for all the sons of peace, which is out of the reach of fire and sword.

CHAPTER XXVI.

In this chapter, (1,) by God's direction, Jeremiah faithfully warns the assembled Jews that, if they did not speedily repent and reform, their city and temple should be destroyed, 1-7. (2,) Being on this account prosecuted for his life, by the priests and false prophets, he boldly avows the divine authority for what he had done, and his good intent in doing it, and warns them that, if they murdered him, it would be at their peril, 8-15. (3,) By the prudence of the civil rulers he is protected, (as Micah had been by Hezekiah,) even while King Jehoiakim murdered Urijah, who was less bold, 16-24.

A. M. 3397. **I**N the beginning of the reign of  
B. C. 607. Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king

of Judah came this word from the LORD, saying,

A. M. 3397.  
B. C. 607.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XXVI.

Verse 1. *In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim, &c.*—The preceding chapter is dated in the fourth year of the reign of Jehoiakim, but ascribed, with probability, to the early part of that year. This chapter is dated in the beginning of the same reign. Hence it has been concluded, that this must have preceded the former in order of time. "But the con-

clusion," says Blaney, "will not hold, if we consider that, (chap. xxviii. 1,) the *beginning* of Zedekiah's reign is expressly declared to mean the fourth year and the fifth month of it. The same therefore may be the case here," and this chapter may be allowed to speak of events subsequent to those of the foregoing one, though taking place immediately after them.

A. M. 3397. 2 Thus saith the LORD; Stand in  
B. C. 607. <sup>a</sup> the court of the LORD's house, and  
speak unto all the cities of Judah, which come  
to worship in the LORD's house, <sup>b</sup> all the words  
that I command thee to speak unto them;  
<sup>c</sup> diminish not a word:

3 <sup>d</sup> If so be they will hearken, and turn every  
man from his evil way, that I may <sup>e</sup> repent me  
of the evil, which I purpose to do unto them  
because of the evil of their doings.

4 And thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith  
the LORD, <sup>f</sup> If ye will not hearken to me to  
walk in my law, which I have set before you,

5 To hearken to the words of my servants  
the prophets, <sup>g</sup> whom I sent unto you, both  
rising up early, and sending *them*, but ye have  
not hearkened;

6 Then will I make this house like <sup>h</sup> Shiloh,  
and will make this city <sup>i</sup> a curse to all the na-  
tions of the earth.

7 So the priests and the prophets and all the  
people heard Jeremiah speaking these words in  
the house of the LORD.

<sup>a</sup> Chap. xix. 14.—<sup>b</sup> Ezek. iii. 10; Matt. xxviii. 20.—<sup>c</sup> Acts  
xx. 27.—<sup>d</sup> Chap. xxxvi. 3.—<sup>e</sup> Chap. xviii. 8; Jonah iii. 8, 9.  
<sup>f</sup> Lev. xxvi. 14; Deut. xxviii. 15.—<sup>g</sup> Chap. vii. 13, 25; xi. 7.

Verses 2, 3. *Stand in the court of the Lord's house*  
—The great court where both men and women ordi-  
narily worshipped, says Dr. Lightfoot, when they  
brought no sacrifice; for when they did so, they  
were to bring it into the inner court, otherwise called  
the court of Israel, or of the priests, as the same  
learned author has observed in his treatise concern-  
ing the temple service. *And speak unto all the cities  
of Judah*—Here it is evident that *they*, *cities*, are put  
for their inhabitants; and we may conjecture from  
hence, that this transaction passed at one of the great  
festivals, when the people of Judah were assembled,  
out of all their cities, to worship at Jerusalem. *All  
the words that I command thee*—Not in the least vary-  
ing from them, either to please men or to save  
thyself harmless. *Diminish not a word*—Either out  
of fear, favour, or flattery: declare not only the  
truth, but the whole truth, and give them faithful  
warning. Thus must all God's ambassadors keep  
close to their instructions, and neither add to, nor di-  
minish from, the word of the truth of the gospel,  
but must faithfully make known the whole counsel  
of God. *If so be they will hearken and turn, &c.*—  
Not that God was ignorant of their obstinacy, or did  
not foreknow that they would harden their hearts,  
and remain impenitent; yet it was for the glory of  
his justice, mercy, and holiness, to afford them both  
time for, and the means of, repentance. And he did  
give them *time*, for it was at least six years after this  
before the captivity of Jehoiakim, and seventeen be-

8 ¶ Now it came to pass, when <sup>A. M. 3397.</sup>  
Jeremiah had made an end of speak- <sup>B. C. 607.</sup>  
ing all that the LORD had commanded *him* to  
speak unto all the people, that the priests and  
the prophets and all the people took him, say-  
ing, Thou shalt surely die.

9 Why hast thou prophesied in the name of  
the LORD, saying, This house shall be like  
Shiloh, and this city shall be desolate without  
an inhabitant? And all the people were ga-  
thered against Jeremiah in the house of the  
LORD.

10 When the princes of Judah heard these  
things, then they came up from the king's  
house unto the house of the LORD, and sat  
down <sup>1</sup> in the entry of the new gate of the  
LORD's house.

11 Then spake the priests and the prophets  
unto the princes and to all the people, saying,  
<sup>2</sup> This man *is* worthy to die; <sup>3</sup> for he hath pro-  
phesied against this city, as ye have heard with  
your ears.

12 ¶ Then spake Jeremiah unto all the

<sup>1</sup> 1 Samuel iv. 10, 11; Psalm lxxviii. 60; Chapter vii. 12, 14.  
<sup>2</sup> Isa. lxxv. 15; Chap. xxiv. 9.—<sup>3</sup> Or, *at the door*.—<sup>4</sup> Heb. *The  
judgment of death is for this man*.—<sup>5</sup> Chap. xxxviii. 4.

fore that of Zedekiah took place; and as for *means*,  
God favoured them not only with such as were ordi-  
nary, but such as were extraordinary, namely, with  
the ministry of this prophet.

Verse 7. *So the priests and the prophets*—Namely,  
the false prophets; they who pretended to be pro-  
phets, though they had received no divine commis-  
sion. *And all the people*—Who were present at  
that time; *heard Jeremiah, &c., in the house of the  
Lord*—That is, "In the court before the Lord's  
house. The outer courts, being holy ground, and  
dedicated to God's worship, are called by the name  
of the temple. So the treasury, where Christ  
preached, is called the temple, (John viii. 20.) though  
it stood in the outer court of it. And St. Paul is said  
to have entered into the temple, Acts xxi. 26, &c.;  
that is, into the court of the temple, and the Jews to  
have laid hold on him there."<sup>2</sup>—Lowth.

Verses 8-10. *The priests and prophets took him,*  
&c.—As a disturber of the government, and a dis-  
courager of the people from defending their country  
against the enemy, in prophesying that the temple and  
city of Jerusalem should become a desolation. *When  
the princes of Judah heard these things*—That is,  
the king's counsellors, or chief officers of the state,  
who were also members of the great court of the  
sanhedrim, first instituted Num. xi. 16, and revived  
by Jehoshaphat, 2 Chron. xix. 8. *They came and  
sat in the entry of the gate, &c.*—This was built by  
Jotham, as we read 2 Kings xiii. 35. The intelligent

A. M. 3397. B. C. 607. princes, and to all the people, saying,

The LORD sent me to prophesy against this house and against this city all the words that ye have heard.

13 Therefore now <sup>1</sup>amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the LORD your God; and the LORD will <sup>2</sup>repent him of the evil that he hath pronounced against you.

14 As for me, behold, <sup>3</sup>I am in your hand: do with me <sup>3</sup>as seemeth good and meet unto you:

15 But know ye for certain, that if ye put me to death, ye shall surely bring innocent blood

upon yourselves, and upon this city, and upon the inhabitants thereof: for of a truth the LORD hath sent me unto you to speak all these words in your ears.

16 ¶ Then said the princes and all the people unto the priests and to the prophets; This man is not worthy to die: for he hath spoken to us in the name of the LORD our God.

17 ° Then rose up certain of the elders of the land, and spake to all the assembly of the people, saying,

18 ° Micah the Morasthite prophesied in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, and spake to all the people of Judah,

<sup>1</sup> Chap. vii. 3.—<sup>2</sup> Verses 3, 19.—<sup>3</sup> Ch. xxxviii. 5.—<sup>4</sup> Heb.

as it is good and right in your eyes.—<sup>o</sup> Acts v. 34.—<sup>p</sup> Mic. i. 1.

reader will observe a great similarity between the conduct of these priests and false prophets toward Jeremiah, and that of the priests, the scribes, and Pharisees toward Jesus Christ, of whom Jeremiah was a type: see particularly Mark xiv. 58; Matt. xxvi. 61.

Verses 13-16. *Amend your ways, and the Lord will repent, &c.*—It appears here again that God's determination to give up Jerusalem to destruction was conditional: see note on chap. xviii. 7-10. If the people had repented of their sins, and reformed their conduct, their ruin would have been prevented, and they would have enjoyed a continuance of peace and prosperity. *As for me, behold I am in your hand*—I have neither any power, nor can make any interest to oppose you; *do with me as seemeth good in your sight*—I am content even to lose my life, if God be pleased to permit you to take it. *But know ye for certain, &c.*—Be fully assured; *if you put me to death*—Who, as you well know, am not guilty of any crime; *ye shall surely bring innocent blood upon yourselves, and upon this city, &c.*—You may think that by killing the prophet you will defeat the accomplishment of the prophecy, but you will find yourselves wretchedly deceived: such an act will at once greatly add to your guilt, and aggravate your ruin. Their own consciences could not but tell them that if Jeremiah was (as certainly he was) sent of God to bring them this message, it was at their utmost peril if they treated him for it as a malefactor. *For of a truth the Lord hath sent me unto you, &c.*—Such is Jeremiah's justification of himself. He reduces all to this, that God had sent him; and his adversaries were able to make no reply. "If God hath sent me, you can have nothing to say against me." It is upon this that he is declared innocent in the following verse, *This man is not worthy to die*—Which was the sentence pronounced by the princes and all the people: for the people, who before were forward to condemn him, now, upon hearing his apology, were as forward to acquit him.

Verses 17-19. *Then rose up certain of the elders*—Either the princes before mentioned, or the more

intelligent men of the people, stood up, and put the assembly in mind of a former case, as is usual with us in giving judgment, the wisdom of our predecessors being a direction to us. The case referred to is that of Micah, the book of whose prophecies we have among those of the minor prophets. Was it thought strange that Jeremiah prophesied against this city and the temple? Micah did so before him, even in the reign of Hezekiah, that reign of reformation, verse 18. Micah said as publicly, as Jeremiah had now spoken to the same purpose, *Zion shall be ploughed like a field*—The buildings shall be all destroyed, so that nothing shall hinder but it may be ploughed; *Jerusalem shall become heaps*—Of ruins; *and the mountain of the house*—On which the temple is built; *shall be as the high places of the forest*—Overrun with briars and thorns. This Micah not only spoke, but wrote, and left it upon record, chap. iii. 12. *Now did Hezekiah and all Judah put him to death?*—Did the people come together in a body to accuse Micah, and demand sentence against him, as they had now done in the case of Jeremiah? Did they and their king make an act to silence him, or take away his life? No: on the contrary, they took the warning he gave them. Hezekiah, that renowned prince, set a good example before his successors; *for he feared the Lord, as Noah, who, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, was moved with fear. He besought the Lord*—To turn away the judgment threatened, and to be reconciled to them; and he found it was not in vain to do so; *for the Lord repented him of the evil*—Returned in mercy to them, and even sent an angel, who routed the army of the Assyrians that then threatened to destroy Jerusalem. These elders conclude, that it would be of dangerous consequence to the state if they should gratify the importunity of the priests and prophets in putting Jeremiah to death; saying, *Thus we might procure great evil against our souls*—Observe, reader, it is well to deter ourselves from sin, with the consideration of the mischief we should certainly do to ourselves by it, and the irreparable damage we should thereby bring upon our own souls.

A. M. 3397. saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts ;  
B. C. 607.

“ Zion shall be ploughed like a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest.

19 Did Hezekiah king of Judah and all Judah put him at all to death ? \* did he not fear the LORD, and besought “ the LORD, and the LORD \* repented him of the evil which he had pronounced against them ? ‘ Thus might we procure great evil against our souls.

20 And there was also a man that prophesied in the name of the LORD, Urijah the son of Shemaiah of Kirjath-jearim, who prophesied against this city and against this land, according to all the words of Jeremiah :

“ Mic. iii. 12.—“ 2 Chron. xxxii. 26.—“ Heb. *the face of the LORD*.—“ Exod. xxxii. 14 ; 2 Sam. xxiv. 16.

Verses 20-23. *And there was also a man*—There are three different opinions respecting the following passage. The first ascribes it to an opposite party, who, by a contrary precedent to the foregoing, urged the condemnation of Jeremiah, a precedent in which the speaking such words as he had spoken was adjudged treason. But against this view of the passage it is objected that such a transition of the speakers would have had some mark of distinction prefixed. Others suppose that this instance was alleged by the same persons that adduced the former, and with an intent to mark the different consequences that had ensued, and to caution the people and government against taking another step of a similar kind, and thereby adding sin to sin. As if he had said, Hezekiah, who had protected Micah, prospered ; but did Jehoiakim, who slew Urijah, prosper ? No : they all saw the contrary : one prophet had been slain already, let them not fill up the measure of national iniquity by slaying another. But Blaney thinks the least exceptionable opinion is, “ that the elders concluded their speeches verse 19, and that the writer of the narrative goes on here to observe, in his own person, that notwithstanding the precedent of Micah, there had been a later precedent in the present reign, which might have operated very unfavourably to the cause of Jeremiah, but for the influence and authority of Ahikam the son of Shaphan, which was exerted to save him.”

*Who prophesied against this city, &c., according to all the words of Jeremiah*—The prophets of the Lord agreed in their testimony, and one would have supposed that this circumstance should have caused their word to be regarded. *And the king sought to put him to death*—Being, with his courtiers, greatly exasperated against him on account of the faithful testimony which he bore, and the true predictions of approaching judgments which God commissioned him to utter. *But when Urijah heard it, he was afraid, and fled*—In this, it seems, he was faulty,

21 And when Jehoiakim the king, with all his mighty men, and all the princes, heard his words, the king sought to put him to death : but when Urijah heard it, he was afraid, and fled, and went into Egypt ;

22 And Jehoiakim the king sent men into Egypt, *namely*, Elnathan the son of Achbor, and *certain* men with him into Egypt.

23 And they fetched forth Urijah out of Egypt, and brought him unto Jehoiakim the king ; who slew him with the sword, and cast his dead body into the graves of the “ common people.

24 Nevertheless, “ the hand of Ahikam the son of Shaphan was with Jeremiah, that they should not give him into the hand of the people to put him to death.

“ Acts v. 39.—“ Heb. *sons of the people*.—“ 2 Kings xxii. 12, 14 ; Chap. xxxix. 14.

and that through the weakness of his faith : he was too much under the power of that fear of man which brings a snare, and did not sufficiently confide in the power of God to protect him in the faithful execution of his office. *And Jehoiakim sent men into Egypt, &c.*—One would have thought Jehoiakim’s malice might have been satisfied with driving him out of the country ; but they are *blood-thirsty* that *hate the upright*, Prov. xxix. 10. It was the life, the precious life, that Jehoiakim hunted after, and nothing less would satisfy him. So implacable is his revenge, that he sends a party of soldiers into Egypt, (there being a strict alliance between him and Pharaoh-nechoh,) some hundreds of miles, and they bring him back by force of arms *unto Jehoiakim, who slew him with the sword*—Some think, even with his own hands, but this appears improbable. Neither did even this satisfy the king’s insatiable malice, but he loads the body of the good man with infamy, would not allow it the decent respects usually and justly paid to the remains of persons of distinction, but *cast it into the graves of the common people*—As if he had not been a prophet of the Lord. Thus Jehoiakim hoped both to ruin Urijah’s reputation with the people, that no heed might be given to his predictions, and to deter others from prophesying in like manner : but in vain. Jeremiah bears the same testimony. There is no contending with the word of God. Herod thought he had gained his point when he had cut off John the Baptist’s head, but found himself deceived when, soon after, he heard of Jesus Christ, and said in a fright, *This is John the Baptist ; he is risen from the dead.*

Verse 24. *Nevertheless, the hand of Ahikam, &c., was with Jeremiah*—Both he and his father Shaphan were chief ministers under Josiah, 2 Kings xxii. 12-14. And the brothers of Ahikam, Gemariah, Elasah, and Jaazaniah were considerable men in those days, with Ahikam, and members of the great council ; Jer. xxix. 3 ; Ezek. viii. 11. So Ahikam

made use of his interest with them to deliver Jeremiah from the danger that threatened him. Thus God wonderfully preserved Jeremiah, though he did not flee as Urijah did, but stood his ground. Ord-

nary ministers may use ordinary means, provided they be lawful ones, for their preservation; but they that have an extraordinary mission may expect an extraordinary protection.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

*Ambassadors having come to Zedekiah from the kings of Edom, Moab, and other neighbouring nations, probably to solicit him to join with them in a confederacy against the king of Babylon, Jeremiah is here ordered to put bands and yokes about his neck, and to send them afterward to the before-mentioned kings, declaring the sovereignty of Nebuchadnezzar and his successors to be of divine appointment, and promising peace and protection to such as submitted quietly, but menacing evil in case of resistance, 1-11. A like admonition is delivered to Zedekiah, advising him not to expose himself and his people to certain ruin, by listening to the suggestions of false prophets, and revolting from the service of the king of Babylon, 12-15. The priests and all the people are also warned not to give credit to the false prophets, who taught them to expect a speedy restoration of the vessels which had been carried to Babylon together with Jeconiah. Instead of which it is foretold, that the remaining vessels in the house of God, and in the king's house at Jerusalem, should be carried after the other, and should not return till the appointed period of Judah's captivity was at an end, 16-22.*

A. M. 3408. **I**N the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah <sup>a</sup> king of Judah came this word unto Jeremiah from the LORD, saying,

2 Thus <sup>1</sup> saith the LORD to me; Make thee bonds and yokes, <sup>b</sup> and put them upon thy neck,

3 And send them to the king of Edom, and to the king of Moab, and to the king of the Ammonites, and to the king of Tyrus, and to the king of Zidon, by the hand of the messengers which come to Jerusalem unto Zedekiah king of Judah;

<sup>a</sup> Verses 3, 12, 19, 20; Ch. xxviii. 1.—<sup>1</sup> Or, *hath the LORD said.*—<sup>b</sup> Chap. xxviii. 10, 12; So Ezek. iv. 1; xii. 3; xxiv. 3.  
<sup>2</sup> Or, *concerning their masters, saying.*

## NOTES ON CHAPTER XXVII.

Verse 1. *In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim*—Instead of Jehoiakim here, Dr. Waterland, Houbigant, Blaney, and many others, read *Zedekiah*, because it is difficult, if not impossible, to reconcile the common reading with what follows. Lowth also, in his commentary upon the place, gives it as his opinion, that “the least forced way of solving the difficulty is, to say that *Jehoiakim* has crept into the text by the negligence of the scribes, (who might have their eyes fixed upon the beginning of the last chapter or section,) instead of *Zedekiah*. This emendation is confirmed by comparing this verse with the 3d, 12th, and 20th verses of this chapter, and with the beginning of the next. Such little verbal mistakes must be allowed by all impartial readers to have sometimes happened in transcribing the Holy Scriptures, as well as in other books, and may easily be corrected, by comparing the suspected reading with other parts of the sacred text, which admit of no difficulty or uncertainty.”

Verses 2, 3. *Make thee bonds and yokes, &c.*—The prophets were frequently ordered to foreshow future events by actions as well as by words. Thus Isaiah was commanded to go *naked and barefoot*, Isa. xx. 3.

4 And command them <sup>2</sup> to say unto <sup>A. M. 3408.</sup> their masters, Thus saith the LORD <sup>B. C. 596.</sup> of hosts, the God of Israel; Thus shall ye say unto your masters;

5 ° I have made the earth, the man and the beast that *are* upon the ground, by my great power and by my outstretched arm, and <sup>d</sup> have given it unto whom it seemed meet unto me.

6 ° And now have I given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, <sup>f</sup> my servant; and <sup>g</sup> the beasts of the field have I given him also to serve him.

<sup>c</sup> Psa. cxv. 15; cxlvi. 6; Isa. xlv. 12.—<sup>d</sup> Psa. cxv. 16; Dan. iv. 17, 25, 32.—<sup>e</sup> Chap. xxviii. 14.—<sup>f</sup> Chap. xxv. 9; xliiii. 10; Ezek. xxix. 18, 20.—<sup>g</sup> Chap. xxviii. 14; Dan. ii. 38.

Ezekiel, in like manner, was ordered to prophesy by signs, Ezek. iv. 1; xii. 3; and xxiv. 17-19. In making these yokes, putting them upon his neck, and fastening them on with bands, Jeremiah was intended to be a type both to his own people, and also to the people afterward mentioned, that they should be brought under subjection to the king of Babylon. *And send them to the king of Edom, &c.*—These nations were near to the Jews, and their princes had their ambassadors resident at Jerusalem. They were also some of those countries which God had declared that he had given into the hand of the king of Babylon: see chap. xxv. 21, 24. *By the hand of the messengers, &c.*—The business of these messengers seems to have been, to engage Zedekiah to join in a league with the nations from which they came, against the king of Babylon.

Verse 6. *I have given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar*—“God is the sole lord and proprietor of the world; and, by virtue of his absolute sovereignty and dominion, has a right to give the kingdoms of the earth to whomsoever he pleases, Dan. iv. 17, and he exercises this authority by *changing times and seasons*, by *removing kings, and setting up kings*, Dan. ii. 21. *The king*

A. M. 3408. 7 <sup>h</sup> And all nations shall serve him, B. C. 596. and his son, and his son's son, <sup>i</sup> until the very time of his land come: <sup>k</sup> and *then* many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of him.

8 And it shall come to pass, *that* the nation and kingdom which will not serve the same Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, and that will not put their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, that nation will I punish, saith the LORD, with the sword, and with the famine, and with the pestilence, until I have consumed them by his hand.

9 Therefore hearken not ye to your prophets, nor to your diviners, nor to your <sup>3</sup> dreamers, nor to your enchanters, nor to your sorcerers, which speak unto you, saying, Ye shall not serve the king of Babylon :

10 <sup>1</sup> For they prophesy a lie unto you, to remove you far from your land; and that I should drive you out, and ye should perish.

11 But the nations that bring their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him,

those will I let remain still in their own land, saith the LORD; and they shall till it, and dwell therein. A. M. 3408. B. C. 596.

12 ¶ I spake also to <sup>m</sup> Zedekiah king of Judah according to all these words, saying Bring your necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him and his people, and live.

13 <sup>n</sup> Why will ye die, thou and thy people, by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence, as the LORD hath spoken against the nation that will not serve the king of Babylon ?

14 Therefore hearken not unto the words of the prophets that speak unto you, saying, Ye shall not serve the king of Babylon; for they prophesy <sup>o</sup> a lie unto you.

15 For I have not sent them, saith the LORD, yet they prophesy <sup>a</sup> a lie in my name; that I might drive you out, and that ye might perish, ye, and the prophets that prophesy unto you.

16 ¶ Also I spake to the priests and to all this people, saying, Thus saith the LORD;

<sup>h</sup> 2 Chronicles xxxvi. 20.—<sup>i</sup> Chap. xxv. 12; 1. 27; Dan. v. 26.  
<sup>k</sup> Chap. xxv. 14.—<sup>3</sup> Heb. *dreams*.—<sup>1</sup> Verse 14.

<sup>m</sup> Chap. xxviii. 1; xxxviii. 17.—<sup>n</sup> Ezek. xviii. 31.—<sup>o</sup> Chap. xiv. 14; xxiii. 21; xxix. 8, 9.—<sup>a</sup> Heb. *in a lie*, or, *lyingly*.

of Babylon, my servant—One whom I have made use of as an instrument to execute my purposes in inflicting punishment on many nations: see note on chap. xxv. 9. *And the beasts of the field have I given him*—This is a hyperbolical way of speaking, to signify the most ample authority and dominion.

Verses 7, 8. *All nations shall serve him, his son, and his son's son*—His son was Evil-merodach, and his son's son Belshazzar, in whom his kingdom ended. Then the time of reckoning with his land came, when the tables were turned; and *many nations and great kings*—Incorporated in the empire of the Medes and Persians, *served themselves of him*. *The nation, &c., that will not put their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon*—That will not submit to that servitude, represented by the yoke, mentioned verses 2, 3; *will I punish with the sword, &c.*—With one judgment after another, until they are wasted and ruined. Nebuchadnezzar was very unjust and barbarous in invading the rights and liberties of his neighbours, and forcing them into a subjection to him; yet God had just and holy ends in view in permitting it, namely, to punish those nations for their idolatry and gross immoralities. They that would not serve the God that made and preserved them, were justly made to serve their enemies that sought to ruin them.

Verses 9–11. *Hearken not ye to your prophets, nor to your diviners*—These nations, it must be observed, had their prophets as well as the Jews, or rather persons that pretended to foretell future events by consulting the stars, by dreams, and various arts

of divination; and they, to please their patrons, flattered them with assurances that they should not be brought into subjection and servitude by the king of Babylon. By these means they designed to animate them to a vigorous resistance: and though they had no ground for such an expectation, they hoped hereby to do them service. But Jeremiah here tells them, that it would prove to their destruction; for by resisting they would provoke the conqueror to deal severely with them, to *remove them* from their land, and to *drive them out* into a miserable captivity, in which they should be buried in oblivion, and *perish*. *But the nations that bring their neck under the yoke, &c.*—That, upon the first summons, or without making any hostile opposition, shall yield themselves subjects to the king of Babylon, shall continue in their own country and possessions, being only made tributaries to that king.

Verses 12, 13. *I spake also to Zedekiah, &c.*—What the prophet here says to Zedekiah has a particular weight in it, because he was made king of Judea by Nebuchadnezzar, and had taken an oath to be faithful to him, and never to resist his authority. *Why will ye die, thou and thy people?*—That is, why wilt thou wilfully ruin, not only thyself, but thy people, by the sword, the famine, and the pestilence? by which judgments the Lord hath declared, that all nations who will not willingly yield to the king of Babylon shall be destroyed.

Verses 16–18. *Also I spake to the priests and to all this people*—The prophet, being God's true servant, spared none, but gave faithful warning to all sorts

A. M. 3408. Hearken not to the words of your  
B. C. 596. prophets that prophesy unto you, say-  
ing, Behold, <sup>p</sup> the vessels of the LORD's house  
shall now shortly be brought again from Baby-  
lon: for they prophesy a lie unto you.

17 Hearken not unto them; serve the king of  
Babylon, and live: wherefore should this city  
be laid waste?

18 But if they *be* prophets, and if the word  
of the LORD be with them, let them now make  
intercession to the LORD of hosts, that the ves-  
sels which are left in the house of the LORD,  
and *in* the house of the king of Judah, and at  
Jerusalem, go not to Babylon.

19 ¶ For thus saith the LORD of hosts <sup>a</sup> con-  
cerning the pillars, and concerning the sea,

<sup>p</sup> 2 Chron. xxxvi. 7, 10; Chap. xxviii. 3; Dan. i. 2.—<sup>a</sup> 2 Kings  
xxv. 13; Chap. lii. 17, 20, 21.—<sup>r</sup> 2 Kings xxiv. 14, 15; Chap.

of persons, to take heed of being deceived by the  
false prophets, who undertook to foretel that the  
vessels of the temple, carried away in the time of  
Jehoiakim and his son Jeconiah, (of which we read  
2 Chron. xxxvi. 7, 10,) should be brought back again  
to Jerusalem in a short time: see chap. xxviii. 3.  
*Hearken not unto them*—Believe them not, but ac-  
quiesce in God's providence with respect to you, and  
be content to be subject to the king of Babylon, that  
so your lives may be given you for a prey. *Where-  
fore should this city be laid waste?*—If you do not  
comply with God's will in this instance, your city  
will certainly be destroyed, and why should you  
pull down such a judgment upon your own heads?  
*But if they be prophets, &c.*—If they be true pro-  
phets, and have any power with God, instead of  
foretelling the bringing back of the vessels carried  
away, let them apply to him in prayer to prevent  
the carrying away of the vessels that yet remain,  
whether in the house of the Lord, or in the king's  
house, or in Jerusalem, which can be done no other  
way than by pleading with God to turn away his  
wrath, and not proceed in inflicting those sore judg-  
ments which he is most certainly bringing upon  
you.

and concerning the bases, and con- A. M. 3408.  
cerning the residue of the vessels that B. C. 596.  
remain in this city,

20 Which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon  
took not, when he carried away <sup>r</sup> captive Jeco-  
niah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah from  
Jerusalem to Babylon, and all the nobles of  
Judah and Jerusalem;

21 Yea, thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God  
of Israel, concerning the vessels that remain *in*  
the house of the LORD, and *in* the house of the  
king of Judah and of Jerusalem;

22 They shall be <sup>a</sup> carried to Babylon, and  
there shall they be until the day that I <sup>r</sup> visit  
them, saith the LORD; then <sup>a</sup> will I bring them  
up, and restore them to this place.

xxiv. 1.—<sup>r</sup> 2 Kings xxv. 13; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 18.—<sup>a</sup> 2 Chron.  
xxxvi. 21; Chap. xxix. 10; xxxii. 5.—<sup>r</sup> Ezra i. 7; vii. 19.

Verses 19–22. *Thus saith the Lord concerning  
the pillars, &c.*—These were all parts of the temple,  
or vessels used in it: see 1 Kings vii. *And all the  
nobles, &c.*—Concerning the persons and things  
which the king of Babylon carried away, see 2  
Kings xxiv. 13–15. *Yea, thus saith the Lord*—The  
prophet enlarges the divine threatening, and repre-  
sents it as extending to all other vessels of value in  
the houses of the king, the nobles, or more wealthy  
citizens. *They shall be carried to Babylon, and  
there shall they be*—See an historical account of the  
fulfilment of this prophecy, 2 Kings xxv. 13–16;  
and 2 Chron. xxxvi. 18; and that they abode in  
Babylon till the end of the captivity, appears from  
Dan. v. 2, where we read of Belshazzar's sending  
for them, to drink wine in at his fatal feast; *until  
the day that I visit them*—That is, until the expira-  
tion of the time of the Jewish captivity, which was  
seventy years. *Then will I restore them to this  
place*—Of the fulfilling of which part of the pro-  
phesy we have an account Ezra i. 7–9. So punctu-  
ally was Jeremiah's prophecy in this place fulfilled,  
and so exactly does one part of holy writ agree  
with another, which are irrefragable proofs of the  
divine authority of the sacred Scriptures.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

*In the foregoing chapter Jeremiah had charged those prophets with speaking lies who foretold the speedy breaking  
of the yoke of the king of Babylon, and the speedy return of the vessels of the sanctuary; now here we have his con-  
test with a particular prophet upon those heads. (1.) Hananiah, in contradiction to Jeremiah, pretends to foretel  
that, within two years, the Babylonian yoke should be broken, and the vessels which had been carried to Babylon  
by Nebuchadnezzar, together with all the captives, should within that time be restored, 1–4. (2.) Jeremiah con-  
sents to allow of Hananiah's pretensions to the character of a true prophet, in case his prediction should be accom-  
plished, 5–9. (3.) Hananiah, in confirmation of what he had foretold, breaketh off the yoke from Jeremiah's neck,  
10, 11. (4.) Jeremiah is ordered to declare, that the king of Babylon's yoke, instead of wood, should be made of  
iron, 12–14. (5.) He foretels the death of Hananiah within the year; and he dies accordingly two months after,  
15, 17.*

A. M. 3408.  
B. C. 596. **AND** <sup>a</sup>it came to pass the same year, in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the fourth year, *and* in the fifth month, *that* Hananiah the son of Azur the prophet, which *was* of Gibeon, spake unto me in the house of the LORD, in the presence of the priests, and of all the people, saying,

2 Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saying, I have broken <sup>b</sup>the yoke of the king of Babylon.

3 <sup>c</sup>Within <sup>1</sup>two full years will I bring again into this place all the vessels of the LORD's house, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon took away from this place, and carried them to Babylon.

4 And I will bring again to this place Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah, with all the <sup>2</sup>captives of Judah, that went into Babylon, saith the LORD; for I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon.

5 ¶ Then the Prophet Jeremiah said unto

<sup>a</sup> Chapter xxvii. 1.—<sup>b</sup> Chapter xxvii. 12.—<sup>c</sup> Chapter xxvii. 16.

#### NOTES ON CHAPTER XXVIII.

Verses 1-4. *And it came to pass the same year*—Namely, the same in which the preceding prophecy was delivered; for the words manifestly refer to the time specified at the beginning of the foregoing chapter, and confirm the conjecture there made, that Jehoiakim is put there, by a mistake in the copies, for Zedekiah: see note on chap. xxvi. 1, where the fourth year of Jehoiakim's reign is termed the beginning of it. *Hananiah the son of Azur the prophet*—That is, a pretended prophet. Being of Gibeon, a city belonging to the priests, it is probable he was a priest as well as Jeremiah; *spake unto me in the house of the Lord*—Delivered publicly, and solemnly, and in the name of the Lord, what he wished to be considered as a true prediction; *in the presence of the priests and of the people*—Who probably were expecting to have some message from Heaven. In delivering this feigned prophecy, Hananiah designed to confront and contradict Jeremiah. His prediction is, that the king of Babylon's power, at least over Judah and Jerusalem, should be speedily broken; that *within two full years* the vessels of the temple should be brought back, and Jeconiah, and all the captives that were carried away with him, should return; whereas Jeremiah had foretold that the yoke of the king of Babylon should be bound on yet faster, and that the vessels and the captives should not return for seventy years.

Verses 5-9. *The Prophet Jeremiah said, Amen: the Lord do so!*—Thereby expressing his hearty concern for the good of his nation, and wishing that God would repent him of the evil wherewith he

the Prophet Hananiah in the presence of the priests, and in the presence of all the people that stood in the house of the LORD,

6 Even the Prophet Jeremiah said, <sup>d</sup>Amen: the LORD do so: the LORD perform thy words which thou hast prophesied, to bring again the vessels of the LORD's house, and all that is carried away captive, from Babylon into this place.

7 Nevertheless, hear thou now this word that I speak in thine ears, and in the ears of all the people;

8 The prophets that have been before me and before thee of old, prophesied both against many countries, and against great kingdoms, of war, and of evil, and of pestilence.

9 <sup>e</sup>The prophet which prophesieth of peace, when the word of the prophet shall come to pass, *then* shall the prophet be known, that the LORD hath truly sent him.

10 ¶ Then Hananiah the prophet took the

<sup>1</sup> Heb. *two years of days*.—<sup>2</sup> Heb. *captivity*.—<sup>3</sup> 1 Kings i. 36.  
<sup>d</sup> Deut. xviii. 22.

had threatened them by his ministry; for such an affection had he for them, and so truly desirous was he of their welfare, that he would have been content to lie under the imputation of being a false prophet so that their ruin might have been prevented. *Nevertheless, hear thou now this word*—As if he had said, The word which I am about to speak concerns thee, and not thee alone, but all the people, therefore do thou mark it well, and let them observe it also. *The prophets that have been before me and before thee*—Namely, Joel, Amos, Hosea, Micah, Zephaniah, Nahum, Habakkuk, and others; *prophesied both against many countries and great kingdoms, &c.*—“Jeremiah offers two reasons in defence of his own prophecies, and against those of Hananiah. 1st, That many other prophets agreed with him in prophesying evil against the Jews, and other neighbouring countries; whereas Hananiah, being single in his predictions, nothing but the perfect answering of the event to them could give him the authority of a true prophet. 2d, That, considering the general corruption of the people's manners, it was highly probable that God would punish their iniquities. To this the Jews add a third explication of the words, namely, that when any prophet foretold peace and prosperity, (namely, unconditionally and absolutely, as Hananiah here did,) his prophecy must certainly be fulfilled to prove him to be a true prophet; whereas, when a prophet foretold evil, which was Jeremiah's case, the event might be suspended by the repentance of the persons concerned.”—Lowth.

Verses 10-14. *Then Hananiah took the yoke from off Jeremiah's neck*—Thus it appears that Jeremiah

A. M. 3408. <sup>f</sup> yoke from off the Prophet Jeremiah's neck, and brake it. B. C. 596.

11 And Hananiah spake in the presence of all the people, saying, Thus saith the LORD; Even so will I break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon <sup>g</sup> from the neck of all nations within the space of two full years. And the Prophet Jeremiah went his way.

12 ¶ Then the word of the LORD came unto Jeremiah the prophet, after that Hananiah the prophet had broken the yoke from off the neck of the Prophet Jeremiah, saying,

13 Go and tell Hananiah, saying, Thus saith the LORD; Thou hast broken the yokes of wood; but thou shalt make for them yokes of iron.

14 For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the

God of Israel; <sup>h</sup> I have put a yoke of iron upon the neck of all these nations, that they may serve Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; and they shall serve him: and <sup>i</sup> I have given him the beasts of the field also.

15 ¶ Then said the Prophet Jeremiah unto Hananiah the prophet, Hear now, Hananiah; The LORD hath not sent thee; but <sup>k</sup> thou makest this people to trust in a lie.

16 Therefore thus saith the LORD; Behold, I will cast thee from off the face of the earth: this year thou shalt die, because thou hast taught <sup>l</sup> rebellion <sup>m</sup> against the LORD.

17 So Hananiah the prophet died the same year in the seventh month. B. C. 596.

<sup>f</sup> Chap. xxvii. 2.—<sup>g</sup> Chap. xxvi. 7.—<sup>h</sup> Deuteron. xxviii. 48; Chap. xxvii. 4, 7.—<sup>i</sup> Chap. xxvii. 6.

<sup>k</sup> Chap. xxix. 31; Ezek. xiii. 22.—<sup>l</sup> Deuteron. xiii. 5; Chap. xxix. 32.—<sup>m</sup> Heb. revolt.

wore this yoke, agreeably to the command given him by God, as a symbol of that subjection to the king of Babylon to which he admonished the Jews and other neighbouring nations to submit, in order that they might prevent the extreme evil which would otherwise fall upon them: and this yoke Hananiah took off the prophet's neck, and broke it, by way of a symbolical sign that the Jews, and these other nations, should be freed from the Babylonian yoke within two years. *And the Prophet Jeremiah went his way*—Quietly and patiently, knowing that it would answer no good end to contend with one whose mind was heated, and in the midst of the priests and people that were violently set against him. Doubtless he expected that God would soon send a special message to Hananiah, and he would say nothing till he received it. It is often our wisdom and duty to yield to violence, to bear revilings with patience, and to retreat rather than contend. *Then the word of the Lord came unto Jeremiah*—To ratify and confirm the prophecy he had lately uttered; saying, *Go and tell Hananiah, Thou hast broken the yokes of wood, &c.*—Which were light and easy; but thou shalt make for them yokes of iron—Such as no human strength can break; that is, thou shalt bring a heavier and more grievous yoke upon them

than they otherwise would have had, by persuading them not to submit to Nebuchadnezzar.

Verses 15–17. *Then said Jeremiah, Hear now, Hananiah*—Jeremiah, being a second time confirmed in the truth of what he had foretold, and having likewise a special revelation relating to this false prophet, comes and calls him by his name, and tells him his doom, that he should die within a year, because he had *taught rebellion against the Lord*—Had taught people to believe and trust to what was false, contradicting God's will revealed by Jeremiah, and encouraging and exciting the people to hold out against Nebuchadnezzar, and not quietly to yield to this dispensation of God. "Thus, as Hananiah had limited the accomplishment of his prophecy to the space of two years, to gain credit with the people by such a punctual prediction, so Jeremiah confines the trial of his veracity to a much shorter time, and the event, exactly answering to the prediction, evidently showed the falsehood of Hananiah's pretences."—Lowth. *So Hananiah died the same year in the seventh month*—Two months after he had uttered this false prophecy, as appeareth from verse 1. So dangerous a thing it is for those who speak in the name of God to teach people contrary to his revealed will!

## CHAPTER XXIX.

In the preceding chapter we had Jeremiah's contest with a false prophet, face to face; here is another, carried on by letters. In the letter which Jeremiah wrote to the captives in Babylon, 1–3, (1.) He directs them how to make their captivity as easy as they could, 4–7. (2.) He cautions them to give no credit to their false prophets, who promised them a speedy relief, 8, 9. (3.) He assures them that, after seventy years, the Lord would mercifully restore them to their own land, 10–14. (4.) He foretels that those Jews who remained in Canaan should, after manifold grievous disasters, be brought captives to Babylon, 15–19. (5.) He foretels the ruin of two false prophets at Babylon, who, by their bad example and flattering seductions, encouraged them to wickedness, 20–23. In resentment, Shemaiah, a false prophet at Babylon, wrote to the priests at Jerusalem, to persecute Jeremiah as a villain or madman, 22–29: and thereby drew upon himself and family a prediction of ruin by Jeremiah, 30–32.

A. M. 3406.  
B. C. 598. **N**OW these are the words of the letter that Jeremiah the prophet sent from Jerusalem unto the residue of the elders which were carried away captives, and to the priests, and to the prophets, and to all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar had carried away captive from Jerusalem to Babylon ;

2 (After that <sup>a</sup> Jeconiah the king, and the queen, and the <sup>1</sup> eunuchs, the princes of Judah and Jerusalem, and the carpenters, and the smiths, were departed from Jerusalem ;)

3 By the hand of Elasah the son of Shaphan, and Gemariah the son of Hilkiah, (whom Zedekiah king of Judah sent unto Babylon to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon,) saying,

<sup>a</sup> 2 Kings xxiv. 12, &c. ; Chapter xxxii. 26 ; xviii. 4.

#### NOTES ON CHAPTER XXIX.

Verse 1. *Now these are the words of the letter*—Hebrew רב־י הכֹּתֵב, *the words of the book, or writing*, as both the LXX. and the Vulgate translate it. Although this title announces but one, Blaney gives it as his opinion that this chapter undeniably contains the substance of two writings sent at different times, which, he says, "is evident from comparing verse 28 with verses 4, 5, and that the distinction between them is at the end of verse 20. For in the first the prophet exhorts the captives to accommodate themselves to their present circumstances, under an assurance that their captivity would last to the end of seventy years; after which period, and not before, God would visit and restore them. And to prevent their listening to any false suggestions that might flatter them with hopes of a speedier return, he informs them of what would happen to their brethren that were left behind at Jerusalem, for whom a harder fate was reserved than for those that had been carried away. After this, finding, as it should seem, upon the return of the messengers, the little credit the first message had met with, he sends a second to the same persons, denouncing the divine judgments against three of their false prophets, by whose influence chiefly the people had been prevented from hearkening to his good advice." The time when one or both of these written declarations of the divine will was sent to Babylon is not known, but it is thought to have been at the beginning of Zedekiah's reign. By the *residue of the elders*, Lowth thinks that the remnant of the members of the Sanhedrim is intended, who were carried away captive in the third year of Jehoiakim's reign, (Dan. i. 3,) or in Jeconiah's captivity, (see 2 Kings xxiv. 14,) many of whom might die by the hardships they suffered in their transportation. These, being persons of authority, were more likely to influence the rest of the people, and induce them to hearken to the prophet's advice. Houbigant, however, not content with this interpretation, renders it, *Unto the principal elders*. Instead

4 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, unto all that are carried away captives, whom I have caused to be carried away from Jerusalem unto Babylon ;

5 <sup>b</sup> Build ye houses, and dwell in them ; and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them ;

6 Take ye wives, and beget sons and daughters ; and take wives for your sons, and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters ; that ye may be increased there, and not diminished.

7 And seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, <sup>c</sup> and pray unto the LORD for it : for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *chamberlains*.—<sup>b</sup> Verse 28.—<sup>c</sup> Ezra vi. 10 ; 1 Tim. ii. 2.

of prophets, here the LXX. read ψευδοπροφητας, *false prophets*: but the Chaldee understands by the word the scribes or doctors of the law ; while others again think that Ezekiel, (carried away with Jeconiah,) Daniel, and other prophets of the captivity, may be meant.

Verses 2, 3. *After that Jeconiah and the queen, &c.*—By the queen is meant Jeconiah's mother: see 2 Kings xxiv. 12–15, where an account is given of this captivity. *And the eunuchs*—Or *court-officers*, as Dr. Waterland renders it ; and the *princes of Judah and Jerusalem*—Men of authority and influence among the people. *By the hand of Elasah, &c.*—Zedekiah having some occasion to send two messengers to Babylon, Jeremiah, knowing that as there were false prophets at Jerusalem who fed the people with hopes of a speedy return, so there were some with them in Babylon, writes and sends the following prophecy by these two messengers, to quiet the people's minds, disturbed by these false prophets, and excited to vain hopes, for which there was no ground at all.

Verses 4–7. *Thus saith the Lord, Build ye houses, and plant gardens, &c.*—It appears by the advice which the prophet here gives, that many of the captive Jews neglected to cultivate and plant the places allotted to them about Babylon ; because they were not willing to bestow cost and pains for the advantage of others ; since they flattered themselves that they were soon to return into Judea : and therefore Jeremiah here admonishes them that their continuance in their captivity would be long enough for them their sons and their grandsons, to enjoy the fruit of their labours there ; and that, therefore, if they regarded their own ease and accommodation, they should set about making the places of their captivity as convenient and agreeable to them as they could. *And seek the peace of the city, &c.*—Pray and desire, and do all that lies in your power, that Babylon may enjoy peace, and remain in safety, because you yourselves must be partakers of its prosperity or adversity, as it is appointed by God for you to remain there

A. M. 3406. 8 ¶ For thus saith the LORD of  
B. C. 598. hosts, the God of Israel; Let not your  
prophets and your diviners, that be in the midst  
of you, <sup>d</sup> deceive you, neither hearken to your  
dreams which ye cause to be dreamed.

9 \* For they prophesy <sup>2</sup> falsely unto you in  
my name: I have not sent them, saith the  
LORD.

B. C. 598. 10 ¶ For thus saith the LORD, That  
after <sup>f</sup> seventy years be accomplished  
at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my  
good word toward you, in causing you to return  
to this place.

11 For I know the thoughts that I think to-  
ward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace,

<sup>d</sup> Chap. xiv. 14; xxiii. 21; xxvii. 14, 15; Eph. v. 6. — Verse 31. — <sup>e</sup> Heb. in a lie. — <sup>f</sup> 2 Chron. xxxvi. 21, 22; Ezra i. 1; Ch. xxv. 12; xxvii. 22; Dan. ix. 2. — <sup>g</sup> Heb. end and expectation.

seventy years. The word *peace* here, as elsewhere, signifies safety and plenty of all things. Observe here, reader, it is the duty of all private persons to submit to the government that protects them, and to pray for the prosperity of it: see Ezra vi. 10; 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2. And if the governing powers are persecutors or enemies to the truth, it must be left to God to execute upon them the judgments he has denounced against tyrants and oppressors; which judgments the Jews expected that God would execute upon Babylon in due time, Psa. cxxxvii. 8, 9.

Verse 8. *For thus saith the Lord of hosts*—The prophet continues to speak by the authority of God; *Let not your prophets, &c., deceive you*—Suffer not yourselves to be deluded by them. While we have the word of God, by which to try the spirits, it is our own fault if we be deceived; for by it we may be directed. *Neither hearken to your dreams which ye cause to be dreamed*—The LXX. render this clause, *καὶ μὴ ἀκροῦτε εἰς τὰ ἐνυπνία υμῶν, ἃ υμεῖς ἐνυπνιαζέσθε, hearken not, or attend not, to your dreams which you dream.* Thus also the Vulgate. Blaney, however, prefers translating the words, *Neither hearken ye to your dealers in dreams, whom ye cause to dream*; observing, “These dreamers might be said to be made, or encouraged, to dream, by the easy credit given to their impostures, and the reputation and respect they thereby acquired.” Some have thought it probable that those who interpreted dreams (which sort of people abounded in Babylon) used to interpret all the dreams of Jews, on which they were consulted, to signify their speedy return to their own country; as they knew that this was what the Jews earnestly wished for, and would be glad to hear, and consequently be induced to consult these interpreters the more frequently; who therein found their profit.

Verses 10-14. *After seventy years be accomplished at Babylon*—Hebrews, *לפי כלאח שבעים שנה*, literally, *At the mouth of the accomplishment of seventy years.* “And as the mouth of a river, me-

and not of evil, to give you an <sup>3</sup> ex- A. M. 3406.  
pected end. B. C. 598.

12 Then shall ye <sup>a</sup> call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you.

13 And <sup>b</sup> ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me <sup>1</sup> with all your heart.

14 And <sup>c</sup> I will be found of you, saith the LORD: and I will turn away your captivity, and <sup>1</sup> I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the LORD; and I will bring you again into the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive.

<sup>a</sup> Dan. ix. 3. — <sup>b</sup> Lev. xxvi. 39, 40; Deut. xxx. 1. — <sup>c</sup> Chap. xxiv. 7. — <sup>d</sup> Deut. iv. 7; Psalm xxxii. 6; xli. 1; Isaiah lv. 6. <sup>1</sup> Chap. xxiii. 3, 8; xxx. 3; xxxii. 37.

taphorically, denotes the extremity of its course, where it discharges its waters into the sea; so, by a farther metaphor drawn from hence, *לב* seems to denote being at the full end of a certain period or limited course of time, where it is just going to lose itself in, and mix with, the ocean of eternity. Here therefore we are to understand that, ‘at the very instant of, or immediately upon, the completion of seventy years,’ the restoration of the Jews should take place.”—Blaney. These seventy years of the captivity, it appears, are to be computed from the fourth year of Jehoiakim, which, in the Scripture account, is the first year of Nebuchadnezzar’s reign: see note on chap. xxv. 1. *I will visit you and perform my good word*—My promise, in causing, rather, of causing you to return, &c.—There were but few, comparatively speaking, of those captives that returned in person into their own country, Ezra iii. 12. Therefore, this promise was chiefly fulfilled in their posterity; and it is common in Scripture to speak of blessings bestowed upon the children, as if they had been actually fulfilled to their progenitors. *For I know the thoughts that I think toward you*—And God’s works agree exactly with his thoughts; for he doeth all things according to the counsel of his own will. *Thoughts of peace, or good, and not of evil*—Even that which seems evil is designed for good, and will at last appear to have actually wrought for good: *to give you an expected end*—Hebrew, *אחורית ותקוה*, literally, *to give you an end and expectation*, or, as Blaney translates it, *to make your latter end even an object of hope*: see chap. xxxi. 17. *Then shall ye call upon me*—That is, when you place your hope in me only, and that with assurance, and not wavering; *and I will hearken unto you*—A sure token of God’s favour chap. xxxiii. 3, as his rejecting men, and casting them off, is expressed by his hiding his face and refusing to hear their prayers, chap. xiv. 12; Lam. iii. 8, 44. *And ye shall seek me and find me*—According to my promises made Lev. xxvi. 40-45; Deut. xxx.

A. M. 3406. 15 ¶ Because ye have said, The  
B. C. 598. LORD hath raised us up prophets in  
Babylon ;

16 *Know* that thus saith the LORD of the king that sitteth upon the throne of David, and of all the people that dwelleth in this city, and of your brethren that are not gone forth with you into captivity ;

17 Thus saith the LORD of hosts ; Behold, I will send upon them the <sup>m</sup> sword, the famine, and the pestilence, and will make them like <sup>n</sup> vile figs, that cannot be eaten, they are so evil.

18 And I will persecute them with the sword, with the famine, and with the pestilence, and

<sup>o</sup> will deliver them to be removed to A. M. 3406.  
all the kingdoms of the earth, <sup>4</sup> to be B. C. 598.

<sup>p</sup> a curse, and an astonishment, and a hissing, and a reproach, among all the nations whither I have driven them :

19 Because they have not hearkened to my words, saith the LORD, which <sup>q</sup> I sent unto them by my servants the prophets, rising up early and sending *them* ; but ye would not hear, saith the LORD.

20 ¶ Hear ye therefore the word of the LORD, all ye of the captivity, whom I have sent from Jerusalem to Babylon :

21 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of

<sup>m</sup> Chapter xxiv. 10.—<sup>n</sup> Chap. xxiv. 8.—<sup>o</sup> Deut. xxviii. 25 ;  
2 Chron. xxix. 8 ; Chap. xv. 4 ; xxiv. 9 ; xxxiv. 17.

<sup>4</sup> Hebrew, *for a curse*.—<sup>p</sup> Chapter xxvi. 6 ; Chapter xlii. 18.  
<sup>q</sup> Chap. xxv. 4 ; xxxii. 33.

2, 3 ; Psa. xxxii. 6. *When ye shall search for me with all your heart*—Observe, reader, in *seeking* God, we must *search* for him, that we may find him ; must search for directions in seeking him, &c., for encouragements to our faith and hope : we must continue, and take pains in seeking him, namely, in seeking his favour, his image, and communion with him ; and this we must do *with our heart*—That is, in sincerity and uprightness, and with all our heart, that is with vigour and fervency, putting forth *all that is within us* in prayer : and those who thus *seek* God shall *find* him, and know, by experience, that he is their bountiful rewarder, Heb. xi. 6, for he never said to such, *Seek ye me in vain*.

Verse 15. *Because ye have said, &c.*—The LXX. have transposed this verse, and placed it “where,” says Blaney, “it undoubtedly ought to stand,” immediately before verse 21 ; “this emendation,” says he, “I have adopted, as by it a due order and connection are restored, both in the place from whence the verse is removed, and in that to which it is transferred, a sufficient proof of its authenticity.” *The Lord hath raised us up prophets in Babylon*—This is meant of the false prophets who foretold nothing but peace and prosperity. The reader will easily observe how properly this sentence, as Blaney has just observed, would follow verse 20, and precede verse 21, and how well it would connect with both.

Verses 16–19. *Thus saith the Lord of the king and all the people, &c.*—See chap. xxiv. 8–10 ; *that dwell in this city*—Namely, the city of Jerusalem, which is the city spoken of. *I will make them like vile figs*—Rather like *sour figs, that cannot be eaten*—The meaning is, I will deal with them as men deal with bad figs. They have made themselves vile and hateful, and I will use them accordingly. This refers to the vision, chap. xxiv. and the prophecy which we had there upon it. *And I will deliver them to be a curse, &c.*—A more severe punishment is denounced upon these than upon those of the two former captivities ; because though warned by the example of Jehoiakim and Jeconiah, who suffered heavily for their perfidy, they yet again, a third

time, broke the faith which they had pledged to the king of Babylon in the name of God, and despised all the admonitions and counsels of God by Jeremiah, as is observed in the next verse.

Verses 20–23. *Hear all ye of the captivity whom I have sent, &c.*—These phrases, *I have sent, I have driven, &c.*, should be well observed by us. There is no evil or punishment in cities or nations, but, whoever be the instruments in bringing it on, God is the author of it. *Thus saith the Lord of Ahab and of Zedekiah*—Of these two persons we read no more in holy writ. That they pretended to be prophets, and to reveal God’s will, although he had not called them to any such office, nor had made known his will to them, and that therefore they had abused God’s name, we learn in this verse, and that they came to a miserable end we find in verse 22. *He shall slay them before your eyes*—As persons that disturbed the minds of the Jews, his subjects, and made them unwilling to submit to his government, by giving them hopes of a speedy deliverance from under it : see verses 7, 8. *And of them shall be taken up a curse*—That is, an imprecation shall be used, namely, *The Lord make thee like Zedekiah, &c.*, or, *May thou meet with punishment similar to that which these persons met with. Whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire*—Casting persons into the fire was a punishment used in that country, as appears from the history of Shadrach and his companions, Dan. iii. There was likewise in use a way of roasting persons by a gentle fire, to make them die by a more lingering death, such as Antiochus practised upon the seven brethren, 2 Mac. vii. 5. The word here properly denotes this sort of punishment. *Because they have committed villany in Israel, &c.*—The Jewish rabbins, as Grotius here observes, have a traditional notion, that these were the two elders who attempted the chastity of Susannah ; the story of which they think to be true in part, though not altogether such as it is represented in the Greek. Some translate the words, *Because they had committed villany, or, evil in Israel, and had committed adultery, &c.*, understanding them

A. M. 3406. Israel, of Ahab the son of Kolaiah, B. C. 598. and of Zedekiah the son of Maaseiah, which prophesy a lie unto you in my name; Behold, I will deliver them into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon; and he shall slay them before your eyes;

22 And of them shall be taken up a curse by all the captivity of Judah which are in Babylon, saying, The LORD make thee like Zedekiah and like Ahab, whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire;

23 Because they have committed villany in Israel, and have committed adultery with their neighbours' wives, and have spoken lying words in my name, which I have not commanded them; even I know, and am a witness, saith the LORD.

24 ¶ Thus shalt thou also speak to Shemaiah the Nehelamite, saying,

25 Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saying, Because thou hast sent letters in thy name unto all the people that are at Jerusalem, and to Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah the priest, and to all the priests, saying,

26 The LORD hath made thee priest in the stead of Jehoiada the priest, that ye should be

\* officers in the house of the LORD, A. M. 3406. for every man that is mad, and maketh himself a prophet, that thou shouldst put him in prison, and in the stocks. B. C. 598.

27 Now therefore why hast thou not reproved Jeremiah of Anathoth, which maketh himself a prophet to you?

28 For therefore he sent unto us in Babylon, saying, This captivity is long: build ye houses, and dwell in them; and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them.

29 And Zephaniah the priest read this letter in the ears of Jeremiah the prophet.

30 ¶ Then came the word of the LORD unto Jeremiah, saying,

31 Send to all them of the captivity, saying, Thus saith the LORD concerning Shemaiah the Nehelamite; Because that Shemaiah hath prophesied unto you, and I sent him not, and he caused you to trust in a lie:

32 Therefore thus saith the LORD; Behold, I will punish Shemaiah the Nehelamite, and his seed: he shall not have a man to dwell among this people; neither shall he behold the good that I will do for my people, saith the LORD; because he hath taught rebellion against the LORD.

† Gen. xviii. 20; Isa. lxx. 15.—† Dan. iii. 6.—† Ch. xxiii. 14.  
\* Or, dreamer.—\* 2 Kings xxv. 18; Ch. xxi. 1.—\* Ch. xx. 1.

† 2 Kings ix. 11; Acts xxvi. 24.—\* Chap. xx. 2.—\* Verse 5.  
\* Chap. xxviii. 15.—\* Chap. xxviii. 16.—\* Heb. revolt.

as assigning the cause why Nebuchadnezzar had roasted these persons alive, namely, because they had committed adultery, it being a custom among some of the eastern nations, and they suppose also among the Babylonians, to punish that crime in the most severe manner.

Verses 24–28. *Thus shalt thou speak to Shemaiah the Nehelamite*—Or, *the dreamer*, as the word הנחלם is rendered in the margin: see verse 8. The termination, however, rather shows it to be a word expressing Shemaiah's family or country, and we find such a place as *Helam* mentioned, 2 Sam. x. 16, 17. The prophet, it seems, was commanded to send this message to Shemaiah after the messengers who delivered the forementioned writing to the captives at Babylon were returned home, who brought along with them Shemaiah's letter, mentioned in the following verse. *Because thou hast sent letters to Zephaniah*, (see chap. xxi. 1,) *saying, The Lord hath made thee priest*—Shemaiah directs his letter to Zephaniah in the first place, as being next in order to the high-priest, and therefore called the *second priest*, chap. lii. 24, and tells him that God has appointed him to supply the place of the high-priest, being probably absent at that time, who was either Azariah, or Seraiah his son. But who then, it may be asked, was Jehoiada? "Perhaps," says Blaney,

"he was one that had been superseded in his office of second priest, for being remiss in his duty; and therefore Zephaniah may have been here reminded of him, by way of intimation that, as they had been both appointed for the same purposes, so Zephaniah might expect the same fate as his predecessor, if he copied the example of his negligence. The second priest officiated as substitute of the high-priest, in case of absence or indisposition, and perhaps was always invested with subordinate authority." *That ye should be officers, &c., for every man that is mad, &c.*—The prophets and inspired persons were often accused of madness, or of being possessed with an evil spirit, by their enemies. See the margin. *For therefore, rather, because, he sent unto us in Babylon*—See verse 5.

Verse 32. *He shall not have a man to dwell among his people, &c.*—None of his posterity shall remain to see my people restored to their own land again. See verse 11. *Because he hath taught rebellion*—Or, *prevarication*, as Blaney translates כרד, observing, "It properly signifies a declining, or turning aside from the straight path, the path of truth and right. Here, and chap. xxviii. 16, it means the presumption of uttering, as a revelation from God, what the man who uttered it knew to be not so."

## CHAPTER XXX.

This and the following chapter contain general promises of God's mercy to the Jews, and assurances that he would never forget the covenant which he had made with their fathers. These promises were partly fulfilled in their restoration under Cyrus, but were more fully to be accomplished in the times of the Messiah, and by the gracious terms of that new covenant which he would establish with the spiritual Israel. In this chapter, (1.) After a short preface, in which the prophet is commanded to commit to writing the matters revealed to him, it is promised that Israel and Judah should be delivered from captivity, and restored to their own land, though they were now in great distress and terror, 1-7; and though their enemies were very strong, 8, 9. (2.) They are encouraged to confide in the divine assurances of restoration and protection; though other nations should be utterly destroyed, 10, 11; though all means of relief should long appear as cut off; though God had justly punished them; and though their case seemed utterly desperate, 12-17. (3.) It is promised that after their restoration they should have a happy settlement; their cities and temples should be rebuilt, 18; their numbers increased, and their religious ordinances observed, 19, 20; their government established, especially in the hands of Christ, and God's covenant with them renewed, 21, 22; and their enemies destroyed, 23, 24.

A. M. 3410. THE word that came to Jeremiah  
B. C. 594. from the LORD, saying,

2 Thus speaketh the LORD God of Israel, saying, Write thee all the words that I have spoken unto thee in a book.

3 For lo, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel and Judah, saith the LORD: and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it.

4 ¶ And these are the words that the LORD

<sup>a</sup> Verse 18; Chap. xxxii. 44; Ezek. xxxix. 25; Amos ix. 14, 15.  
<sup>b</sup> Chap. xvi. 15.—<sup>c</sup> Or, there is fear and not peace.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER XXX.

Verse 1. *The word that came to Jeremiah, &c.*—“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 was natural and easy to the more glorious and general restoration that 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 strongest and most satisfactory 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.”—Blaney.

Verses 2, 3. *Thus speaketh the Lord, Write thee all the words that I have spoken, &c.*—The following words contain a promise of the restoration of God's people. These God commands to be committed to writing for the use of posterity, to be a support to the Jews, an encouragement to them to trust in God, and a proof of his prescience and overruling providence when the event foretold should be brought about. *I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel and Judah*—The people that returned from Babylon were only, or at least chiefly, the peo-

spake concerning Israel, and con- A. M. 3410.  
cerning Judah. B. C. 594.

5 For thus saith the LORD; We have heard a voice of trembling, <sup>1</sup> of fear, and not of peace.

6 Ask ye now, and see whether <sup>2</sup> a man doth travail with child? wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, <sup>3</sup> as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness?

7 <sup>d</sup> Alas! for that day is great, <sup>e</sup> so that none

<sup>2</sup> Heb. a male.—<sup>c</sup> Chapter iv. 31; vi. 24.—<sup>d</sup> Joel ii. 11, 31; Amos v. 18; Zeph. i. 14, &c.—<sup>e</sup> Dan. xii. 1.

ple of Judah, who had been carried away captive by Nebuchadnezzar; but here it is foretold, that not the captivity of Judah only should be restored, but that of Israel also, or of those ten tribes that were carried away before by Shalmaneser, king of Assyria; and who still remain in their several dispersions, having never returned, at least in a national capacity; but the terms of this 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, not of a few only. The reunion also of Judah and Israel, after their restoration, seems to be here clearly foretold.

Verses 4-7. *And these are the words that the Lord spake*—And which God ordered to be written: and those promises, which were written by his order, are as truly his word as the ten commandments, which were written with his finger. *We have heard a voice of trembling*—Such a one as discovers great fears and apprehensions of impending evils. *Ask ye now and see, &c.*—Make diligent inquiry, and ask every one, whether they ever knew or heard of any such thing as a man's travailling with child? *Wherefore then do I see every man with his hands on his loins*—As if he were going to bring forth, and felt all the pains of a woman in travail? *Alas! for that day is great*—The word day in Scripture often comprehends a succession of time, in which a whole series of events is transacted: so it here contains the whole time of the siege and taking of Jerusalem, the

A. M. 3410. *is like it: it is even the time of*  
B. C. 594. *Jacob's trouble, but he shall be saved*  
out of it.

8 For it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD of hosts, *that I will break his yoke from off thy neck, and will burst thy bonds, and strangers shall no more serve themselves of him:*

9 But they shall serve the LORD their God, and <sup>f</sup>David their king, whom I will <sup>g</sup>raise up unto them.

<sup>f</sup> Isaiah lv. 3, 4; Ezekiel xxxiv. 23; xxxvii. 24; Hosea iii. 5.  
<sup>g</sup> Luke i. 69; Acts ii. 30; xiii. 23.

destruction of the city and temple, and the carrying away of the people captive. This is described as a time of great tribulation, in which it was an earnest of the day of judgment, *the great and terrible day of the Lord.*

Verses 8, 9. *It shall come to pass in that day*—In the day when Jacob shall be saved out of all his troubles, verse 7. The phrase *that day* often denotes an extraordinary or remarkable time for some signal events of Providence: see Isa. iv. 2. *That I will break his yoke from off thy neck*—This promise was in part fulfilled when Cyrus set the Jews free from the Babylonish yoke, and gave them liberty to return to their own country. *And strangers shall no more serve themselves of him*—In this latter part of the sentence the Jewish state, or rather that of Israel and Judah, is spoken of in the third person, *him*; in the foregoing part in the second person, *thy neck*. *But they shall serve the Lord their God*—They shall live in subjection and obedience to the one living and true God, and to *David their king*—That is, the Messiah, who is often called by the name of David in the prophets, as the person in whom all the promises made to David were to be fulfilled. See the margin. Here it is promised that, after this restoration, the Jews and Israelites “should no more fall under the dominion of foreigners, but be governed by princes and magistrates of their own nation, independent of any but God and David their king. But this was not the case with the Jews that 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 dependance upon the Persian monarchy. And when the Grecian monarchy succeeded, they changed their masters only, but not their condition; till, at length, under the Asmonæan 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 predict-

10 ¶ Therefore <sup>h</sup>fear thou not, O <sup>A. M. 3410.</sup>my servant Jacob, saith the LORD; <sup>B. C. 594.</sup>  
*neither be dismayed, O Israel: for lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed <sup>i</sup>from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and shall be in rest, and be quiet, and none shall make him afraid.*

11 For I *am* with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee: <sup>k</sup>though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, <sup>l</sup>yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will cor-

<sup>h</sup> Isa. xli. 13; xliii. 5; xlv. 2; Chap. xlvi. 27, 28.—<sup>i</sup> Chap. iii. 18.—<sup>k</sup> Amos ix. 8.—<sup>l</sup> Chap. iv. 27.

ed concerning it will, no doubt, be verified by a distinct and unequivocal accomplishment.”—Blaney. *Whom I will raise up unto them*—An expression elsewhere used by the holy writers when they speak of the coming of Christ. See the margin. Hence this prophecy must be considered as implying the conversion of the Jews to the Christian faith, God, according to his promises, having constituted Christ the Prince and the Saviour to whom every knee must bow, and whom every tongue must confess.

Verses 10, 11. *Fear thou not, O my servant Jacob*—As if God had utterly forsaken thee or cast thee off. See the margin. *For, lo, I will save thee from afar*—I will restore you from your captivity, though you should be dispersed into the most distant countries. And though this be not accomplished in the Jews of the present age, it shall be made good to their posterity, who are beloved for their fathers' sake, as St. Paul speaks, Rom. xi. 28. *And Jacob shall be in rest and quiet, &c.*—Shall enjoy peace and safety. *Though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee*—Such as the Assyrians, Chaldeans, Egyptians; *yet will I not make a full end of thee*—The Jews to this day continue a remarkable monument of the truth and immutability of God's promises. Where now are all the nations which carried them into captivity, and trod them under foot? All, all are perished; their kingdoms overturned, their laws and languages abolished, their very names, as nations, extinct; not the least footsteps remaining of their having ever been a people: for God had determined to make *a full end of them*. But the people of the Jews, though carried into captivity, slain by the sword, destroyed by pestilence and famine, and every other method of destruction, do yet remain a people: under all the revolutions and changes of kingdoms, languages, and people, they still exist unmixed; and, though for their heinous sins they are scattered abroad among all nations, they still preserve their name, language, and most of their ancient ceremonies and customs, for God has promised not to make *a full end of them*. *But I will correct thee in measure*—Or, according to judgment, as *לכשפט* signifies, that is, with discretion, not more than thou deservest, nay, not more than thou canst well bear. God's afflicting his people is in a way of correction, and that correction is always moderated,

A. M. 3410. rect thee <sup>m</sup> in measure, and will not  
B. C. 594. leave thee altogether unpunished.

12 For thus saith the LORD, <sup>a</sup> Thy bruise is incurable, and thy wound is grievous.

13 *There is none to plead thy cause,* <sup>3</sup> that thou mayest be bound up: <sup>o</sup> thou hast no healing medicines.

14 <sup>p</sup> All thy lovers have forgotten thee; they seek thee not; for I have wounded thee with the wound <sup>q</sup> of an enemy, with the chastisement <sup>r</sup> of a cruel one, for the multitude of thine iniquity; <sup>s</sup> because thy sins were increased.

15 Why <sup>t</sup> criest thou for thine affliction? thy sorrow is incurable for the multitude of thine iniquity: because thy sins were increased, I have done these things unto thee.

<sup>m</sup> Psalm vi. 1; Isaiah xxvii. 8; Chapter x. 24; xlv. 28. <sup>n</sup> 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16; Chap. xv. 18.—<sup>3</sup> Heb. for binding up, or, pressing.—<sup>o</sup> Chap. viii. 22.—<sup>p</sup> Lam. i. 2.—<sup>q</sup> Job xiii. 24; xvi. 9; xix. 11.

and always proceeds from love. *And will not leave thee altogether unpunished*—As thou art ready to think I should do because of thy relation to me. Observe, reader, a profession of religion, though never so plausible, will be far from securing to us impunity in sin. God is no respecter of persons, but will show his hatred of sin wherever he finds it, and he always hates it most in those that are nearest to him.

Verses 12–15. *Thy bruise is incurable*—In all human appearance. The state that the Jews should be in would be so miserable that it would be incurable from any hand except that of God. *There is none to plead thy cause*—There is none that, by the reformation of their lives, or their intercessions with God, endeavour to avert his displeasure. Or, as the words may be rendered, *There is none to judge thy cause*, none that knows the true nature of thy malady, or what medicines are proper to be applied to it. Their calamitous state is compared to a distempered body; (see verse 17, and chap. viii. 22; Isa. i. 5, 6;) and the false prophets, instead of applying proper remedies, have healed thy wound slightly. Or the words may mean, *There is none to intercede for thee with thy victors and oppressors. All thy lovers have forgotten thee*—All the nations whose alliance they had solicited, and whose idolatries they had imitated, and who had professed much friendship for them, had neglected and forgotten them, and desired no farther connection with them. *They seek thee not*—Seek not thy welfare, but abandon thee to ruin. *For I have wounded thee with the wound of an enemy, &c.*—Thy iniquities have provoked me to punish thee with that severity which appears like cruelty, and as if I had declared myself an utter enemy to thee. *Why criest thou for thine affliction?*—Why shouldst thou expostulate with me, as if I had dealt unjustly with thee, whereas, if thy condition seem desperate, it is owing to thine own iniquities, which

16 Therefore all they that devour thee <sup>a</sup> shall be devoured; and all thine

adversaries, every one of them, shall go into captivity; and they that spoil thee shall be a spoil, and all that prey upon thee will I give for a prey.

17 <sup>r</sup> For I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the LORD; because they call thee an Outcast, saying, This is Zion, whom no man seeketh after.

18 ¶ Thus saith the LORD, Behold, <sup>v</sup> I will bring again the captivity of Jacob's tents, and <sup>w</sup> have mercy on his dwelling-places; and the city shall be builded upon her own <sup>x</sup> heap, and the palace shall remain after the manner thereof.

<sup>a</sup> Job xxx. 21.—<sup>r</sup> Chap. v. 6.—<sup>t</sup> Chap. xv. 18.—<sup>u</sup> Exod. xxxiii. 22; Isaiah xxxiii. 1; xli. 11; Chap. x. 25.—<sup>v</sup> Chapter xxxiii. 6.—<sup>w</sup> Verse 3; Chap. xxxiii. 7, 11.—<sup>x</sup> Psa. cii. 13. <sup>y</sup> Or, little hill.

have still been increased with new aggravations of guilt.

Verses 16, 17. *Therefore*—Or rather, *yet surely*, as לכן should be rendered; (see note on chap. xvi. 14;) *all they that devour thee shall be devoured*—The Egyptians, Philistines, Midianites, Ammonites, Edomites, Syrians, Assyrians, Chaldeans, and others, who have afflicted and oppressed you, shall be extirpated, while you shall be restored and re-established. See note on verse 11. Though God chastises his own people with severity, according to the nature and quality of their faults, yet he does it so as never utterly to destroy them. The Assyrians, who afflicted Israel and Judah, were so destroyed by the Babylonians, Medes, and Persians, that mention is no more made of their empire. The monarchy of the Chaldeans, who destroyed Jerusalem, and carried the Jews into captivity, was overthrown by the Persians, and never recovered itself. The empires of the Persians and Egyptians were destroyed by Alexander. The Grecian, or Syro-Macedonian kingdom, which, especially under Antiochus Epiphanes, cruelly persecuted them, was destroyed by the Romans. And the Roman empire, powerful as it was, after being made the instrument of bringing greater calamities on the Jewish nation than they had ever suffered from any other power, was broken to pieces by the incursions of the northern nations on the one hand, and by the Saracens and Turks on the other. But the Jewish people, who have repeatedly appeared to be almost destroyed and annihilated in their dispersions, have reappeared, and sprung up again, as it were, from their ashes, and become as numerous and powerful as before.

Verses 18–22. *Behold, I will bring again the captivity of Jacob's tents*—The expression alludes to the ancient custom of dwelling in tents. This promise was, in some degree, fulfilled under Zerubbabel. *And the city shall be builded upon her own heap*

A. M. 3410.  
B. C. 594. 19 And <sup>a</sup> out of them shall proceed thanksgiving and the voice of them that make merry: <sup>b</sup> and I will multiply them, and they shall not be few; I will also glorify them, and they shall not be small.

20 Their children also shall be <sup>c</sup> as aforetime, and their congregation shall be established before me, and I will punish all that oppress them.

21 And their nobles shall be of themselves, <sup>d</sup> and their governor shall proceed from the midst of them; and I will <sup>e</sup> cause him to draw near, and he shall approach unto me: for who

<sup>a</sup> Isa. xxxv. 10; li. 11; Chap. xxxi. 4, 12, 13; xxxiii. 10, 11.  
<sup>b</sup> Zech. x. 8.—<sup>c</sup> Isa. i. 26.—<sup>d</sup> Gen. xlix. 10.—<sup>e</sup> Numbers xvi. 5.

Upon her ruins, which were cleared away, that new houses might be built. *And the palace shall remain*—Rather, the palace shall be inhabited; *after the manner thereof*—By ארמון, here rendered *palace*, Dr. Waterland and some others understand the temple, and render the clause, *The temple shall stand, or, abide after the manner thereof*. *Their children also, and their congregation, &c.*—Their church and commonwealth shall be restored to their former state. Or rather, *His children and his congregation*, as Blaney translates it; that is, Jacob's children and congregation, the pronouns both in this and the following verse being in the singular number. *And their nobles shall be of themselves*—Hebrew, ככני, literally, *his prince, or, his mighty one, shall be of him*. *And his governor shall proceed from the midst of him*—Some understand this of Zerubbabel, who, by the permission of Cyrus, had the government over the Jews whom he led into Judea to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple. Others interpret it of the Messiah, who, they think, is plainly marked out by the two names of *Prince, or Mighty One, and Governor*, in this verse. Thus the Targum understands it. *I will cause him to draw near, &c.*—Says the Lord; that is, "he shall have a near attendance upon me; for I will make him a priest as well as a king," according to the prophecy in *Psa. cx. 4*. *For who is this that engaged his heart, &c.*—Who is there so entirely devoted to my service as the Messiah? The words in the original, כִּי מִי הוּא זֶה,

is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me? saith the LORD. A. M. 3410.  
B. C. 594.

22 And ye shall be <sup>f</sup> my people, and I will be your God.

23 ¶ Behold, the <sup>g</sup> whirlwind of the LORD goeth forth with fury, a <sup>h</sup> continuing whirlwind: it shall <sup>i</sup> fall with pain upon the head of the wicked.

24 The fierce anger of the LORD shall not return, until he have done *it*, and until he have performed the intents of his heart: <sup>j</sup> in the latter days ye shall consider it.

<sup>f</sup> Chap. xxiv. 7; xxxi. 1, 33; xxxii. 38; Ezek. xi. 20; xxxvi. 28; xxxvii. 27.—<sup>g</sup> Chapter xxiii. 19, 20; xxv. 32.—<sup>h</sup> Heb. cutting.—<sup>i</sup> Or, remain.—<sup>j</sup> Gen. xlix. 1.

*who is this, &c.*, have the emphasis which cannot be expressed in another language, and are spoken by way of admiration. See Lowth. Blaney translates the verse, "And his prince shall be of his own race, and his governor shall go forth out of the midst of him; and I will draw him that he may come near unto me; for who is he that hath set his heart to draw near unto me? saith Jehovah." *Ye shall be my people, &c.*—You shall continually adhere to my religion and worship, and I will take you into my favour, and under my protection.

Verses 23, 24. *Behold, the whirlwind of the Lord goeth forth with fury*—Rather, *with anger*, the word *fury* being manifestly improper when applied to God. These two verses occur with some slight variations, chap. xxiii. 19, 20, where see the note. *In the latter days ye shall consider it*—*The latter days* here may signify the time to come; but they commonly imply the times of the gospel, that being the last dispensation, and what should continue till the end of the world. Thus understood, the words import, "When all these evils are come upon you, which God has threatened for your disobedience, and particularly for your heinous crime of rejecting the Messiah, and you have found the denunciations verified in the several captivities you have undergone, then you will understand the import of this and several other prophecies, and the event will perfectly instruct you in their meaning."—Lowth.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

*This chapter contains the second and third parts of the prophecy begun in the preceding chapter, embellished with a variety of beautiful scenes and images. (1.) God here announces the renewal of his ancient love for Israel, and promises them a speedy restoration of their privileges and happiness, 1-5. (2.) Watchmen, or heralds, are represented as proclaiming on mount Ephraim the arrival of the joyful day; summoning the people to reassemble once more in Zion; and promulgating, by special command, the glad tidings of salvation which God had accomplished for them, 6, 7. (3.) God himself declares his readiness to conduct home the remnant of Israel, to compassionate and relieve their infirmities, and to provide them with all necessary accommodations by the way, 8, 9. (4.) 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 supplying them with all good things, 10-14. (5.) Rachel, bewailing the loss of her children, is comforted, and assured her sorrow for them shall be at an end, 15-17. And Ephraim, lamenting his past disobedience and obstinacy, acknowledging that he had been justly chastised, and praying earnestly to be converted, is accepted as a child, and brought home again, 18-20. (6.) The virgin of Israel is exhorted to hasten the preparations for her return, and encouraged with the prospect of having a signal miracle wrought in her favour, 21, 22. (7.) The vision closes with a promise that the divine blessing should again rest upon the land of Judah, and that God's people should once more dwell there, cultivating it according to the simplicity of ancient institutions, and fully discharged from every want, 23-26. (8.) Several gracious promises are annexed by way of appendix to the vision: That God would be as diligent to restore as he had ever been to destroy them; and would not any more visit the offences of the fathers upon the children, 27-30. That he would make with them a better covenant than he had made with their forefathers, 31-34. That they should continue his people by an ordinance as firm and lasting as that of the heavens, 35-37; and that Jerusalem should again be built, enlarged in its extent, and secure from future desolation, 38-40.

A. M. 3410. B. C. 594. **A**T<sup>a</sup> the same time, saith the LORD, <sup>b</sup>will I be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people.

2 Thus saith the LORD, The people *which were left of the sword* found grace in the wilderness; even Israel, when <sup>c</sup>I went to cause him to rest.

<sup>a</sup> Chapter xxx. 24.—<sup>b</sup> Chapter xxx. 22.—<sup>c</sup> Num. x. 33; Deut. i. 33; Psa. xcvi. 11; Isaiah lxiii. 14.—<sup>d</sup> Heb. from afar. <sup>e</sup> Mal. i. 2.

3 The LORD hath appeared <sup>1</sup>of old unto me, *saying*, Yea, <sup>d</sup>I have loved thee with <sup>e</sup>an everlasting love: therefore <sup>2</sup>with loving-kindness have I <sup>f</sup>drawn thee.

4 Again <sup>g</sup>I will build thee, and thou shalt be built, O virgin of Israel: thou shalt again be adorned with thy <sup>h</sup>tabrets, <sup>3</sup>and shalt go

<sup>1</sup> Romans xi. 28, 29.—<sup>2</sup> Or, have I extended loving-kindness unto thee.—<sup>3</sup> Hosea xi. 4.—<sup>4</sup> Chap. xxxiii. 7.—<sup>5</sup> Exod. xv. 20; Judg. xi. 34; Psa. cxlix. 3.—<sup>6</sup> Or, timbrels.

#### NOTES ON CHAPTER XXXI.

Verse 1. *At the same time, saith the Lord*—Namely, in the latter days, mentioned chap. xxx. 24. *I will be the God of all the families of Israel*—Not of the two tribes only, but of all the tribes; not of the house of Aaron only and the families of Levi, but of all the families. *And they shall be my people*—I will favour them, and do them good, and they shall be subject to, and shall worship and obey me. "This second part of the prophecy," says Calmet, "principally respects the return of the ten tribes. And I have shown, in a particular dissertation, that not only Judah, Benjamin, and Levi, but also the twelve tribes returned into their own country." Doubtless, many individuals of the ten tribes returned with the Jews from Babylon, having been incorporated among them in the several places where they were settled; yet this seems to have been only a very partial accomplishment of this prophecy, which, as Blaney observes, "points out circumstances that certainly were not fulfilled at the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, nor have hitherto had their completion." But, in the latter days, when the fulness of the Gentiles are brought in, *all Israel shall be saved*; for, as Isaiah and St. Paul testify, *there shall come out of Zion the deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob*. Isa. lix. 19; Rom. xi. 26-29. See note on chap. xxx. 10.

Verse 2. *The people that were left of the sword*—That sword of Pharaoh with which he cut off the male children as soon as they were born, and that sword with which he threatened to cut them off when he pursued them to the Red sea. *Found grace in the wilderness*—Though in the wilderness, where they seemed to be lost and forgotten, as these latter Jews and Israelites were now in a strange land, yet they found grace in God's sight, were owned, and

highly honoured by him, and blessed with wonderful instances of his peculiar favour. *And he went to cause them to rest*—Went before them in a pillar of cloud, to mark out the places for them where they should pitch their tents, and conducted them to the land that he had provided for them. And after such evidences of his kindness to them, why should they doubt of the continuance of his favours?

Verses 3, 4. *The Lord hath appeared of old unto me*—The prophet here personifies the Jewish nation, the people spoken of in the foregoing verse, who are introduced as calling to mind how God, in times of old, had manifested himself to the fathers of their nation, and appeared for their deliverance. *Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love*—These are evidently the words of God addressed to Zion or Jerusalem. As if he had said, The mercies I promised you, as a nation, when I made a covenant with your fathers, shall never fail. My love was not a temporary love, manifested merely to a single generation, but it is an everlasting love, and will continue through all generations. *Therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee*—I have shown my benignity toward you, by taking all opportunities of doing you good, and preventing you, by acts of grace and goodness, to draw you to myself, as your God, from all the idols to which you had turned aside. I have ever dealt graciously with them who fear me, and who hope in my mercy, and will always continue so to do. *Again I will build thee, O virgin of Israel*—"Thy inhabitants shall be again restored to thee, who shall rebuild their cities and habitations that lay desolate during the time of their captivity." Perhaps the Jews have the title of *virgin of Israel* bestowed upon them to imply that, in consequence of their repentance and reformation, "they should be washed from the stains of their

A. M. 3410. forth in the dances of them that  
B. C. 594. make merry.

5 <sup>1</sup>Thou shalt yet plant vines upon the mountains of Samaria: the planters shall plant, and shall <sup>4</sup>eat *them* as common things.

6 For there shall be a day, *that* the watchmen upon the mount Ephraim shall cry, <sup>1</sup>Arise ye, and let us go up to Zion unto the LORD our God.

<sup>1</sup>Isaiah lrv. 21; Amos ix. 14.—<sup>4</sup>Heb. *profane* them, Deut. xx. 6; xxviii. 30.

former idolatries, so often compared to whoredom in the Scriptures.”—Lowth. *Thou shalt again be adorned with thy tabrets*—“All the signs, both of religious and civil joy, shall be restored to thee.” That it was usual for the women of Israel to go forth with tabrets and dancing in times of public rejoicing and prosperity, see Exod. xv. 20; Judges xi. 34; 1 Sam. xviii. 16. These times were now to be renewed.

Verses 5. *Thou shalt yet plant vines*—Building and planting are commonly joined together; *upon the mountains of Samaria*—Samaria, being the metropolis of the ten tribes, seems to be put for the kingdom of Israel, as it is distinct from that of Judah. According to which interpretation the mountains of Samaria are equivalent to the mountains of Israel, and therefore the words imply, that the deliverance here spoken of should extend to Israel as well as Judah. *The planters shall plant, and shall eat them as common things*—After they have planted them they shall eat the fruits thereof, according to the promise contained in the parallel texts, (Isa. lrv. 21; Amos ix. 14,) whereas, God had threatened as a curse, that, in case of their disobedience, when they had planted their vines, another should eat the fruit, Deut. xxviii. 30. The verb *אכלו*, translated, *eat them as common things*, alludes to the law that forbade the fruit of any young trees to be eaten till the fifth year of their bearing. For the first three years they were to be considered as in a state of uncircumcision or uncleanness. In the fourth year the fruit was holy to the Lord. But after that time it became free for the owner's use, Lev. xix. 23–25. See also Deut. xx. 6; and xxviii. 30; where the same verb is used for eating of the fruit of a plantation without restraint. Here, therefore, a promise is given directly opposite to the above-mentioned threat, namely, That the persons who planted the vineyards on the hills of Samaria should not be compelled to give up the fruit of their labours to others, but should themselves remain in the land, and enjoy the produce of their plantations unmolested.

Verses 6, 7. *For there shall be a day, that the watchmen shall cry*—By the watchmen are meant God's prophets, or the ministers of his word, giving notice of his dispensations, and calling upon men to act suitably under them. The first reference may be to the leaders and teachers of the Jews, returning from Babylon, or to the general summons through-

7 For thus saith the LORD; <sup>1</sup>Sing A. M. 3410. with gladness for Jacob, and shout B. C. 594. among the chief of the nations: publish ye, praise ye, and say, O LORD, save thy people, the remnant of Israel.

8 Behold, I will bring them <sup>m</sup>from the north country, and <sup>n</sup>gather them from the coasts of the earth, *and* with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that tra-

<sup>1</sup> Isa. ii. 3; Mic. iv. 2.—<sup>1</sup> Isa. xii. 5, 6.—<sup>m</sup> Chap. iii. 12, 19; xxiii. 8.—<sup>n</sup> Ezek. xx. 34, 41; xxxiv. 13.

out all the ten tribes, for which Ephraim is put, to repair to Jerusalem, and join themselves to the true church, from which they had been so long separated; but, doubtless, in the full completion of the prophecy, by watchmen the preachers of the gospel are to be understood. The phrase, *crying upon mount Ephraim*, alludes to the custom of persons that had to publish any proclamation ascending to the top of some high hill, from whence their voice might be heard a great way off. See Judges ix. 7; 2 Chron. xiii. 4; Isa. xl. 9. The phrase, *Arise ye, let us go up to Zion, &c.*, alludes to the Jewish custom of going in companies to Jerusalem at their three annual festivals. *For thus saith the Lord, Sing with gladness, &c.*—When ye see some dawning of these blessed times, express your joy for the restoration of Jacob's posterity in the most public manner that can be; *and shout among the chief of the nations*—Namely, among the most potent nations from whence you are to be gathered. Or, persons belonging to the chief nations of the earth are here called upon to congratulate the Israelites on their restoration to their own land, and their conversion to the church of God, as Moses predicted, Deut. xxxii. 43, and the apostle exhorts, Rom. xv. 10, *Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people*; for when the promises made to the fathers are accomplished, *the Gentiles shall glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, For this cause will I confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name*, Rom. xv. 8. *Publish ye, praise ye, and say, O Lord, save thy people*—Publish these good tidings with the highest expressions of praise and glory to God; and likewise pray that he, who hath begun so glorious a work, would proceed and complete it.

Verses 8, 9. *Behold, I will bring them from the north country*—Here God himself undertakes to conduct home the remnant of his people from the countries through which they had been scattered; and the promise relates to the ten tribes, as well as to those of Judah and Benjamin; for Assyria and Media, whither they were removed, lay north of Judea as well as Babylon. And the following words speak of a general restoration of this people from their several dispersions; *and with them the blind and the lame, &c.*—God will compassionate their infirmities, and will conduct them with all imaginable care and tenderness, and furnish the feeble and indigent of them with suitable accommodations. The prophet

A. M. 3410. vailleth with child together : a great  
B. C. 594. company shall return thither.

9 ° They shall come with weeping, and with  
supplications will I lead them ; I will cause  
them to walk ° by the rivers of waters in a  
straight way, wherein they shall not stumble :  
for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my  
firstborn.

10 ¶ Hear the word of the LORD, O ye na-

° Psalm cxxvi. 5, 6 ; Chap. l. 4.—<sup>s</sup> Or, *favours*, Zech. xii. 10.  
° Isa. xxxv. 8 ; xliii. 19 ; xlix. 10, 11.—<sup>a</sup> Exod. iv. 22.

alludes to the care and compassion which God manifested in conducting his people, of all ages and conditions, through the wilderness, compared to the care with which a parent or nurse carries a tender child, Deut. i. 31. See also Isa. xl. 11, and xlix. 10. *They shall come with weeping*—The LXX. translate the words, *Εν κλαυθμῷ ἐηλθον, και εν παρακλησει αναξω αυτες, they went forth with weeping, but with comfort will I bring them back ;* which sense agrees exactly with the words of *Psa. cxxxvi. 5, 6*, which was composed upon occasion of the return from captivity, *He that sows in tears shall reap in joy : he that goeth forth weeping, shall come again with rejoicing.* Our translation, however, is much more agreeable to the original words, and is also confirmed by chap. iii. 21, where we read, *A voice was heard, weeping and supplications of the children of Israel ;* the prophet speaking upon the same subject, and in the same words here used. See also chap. l. 4, where it is said, *The children of Israel and Judah shall come together, going and weeping, and seek the Lord their God.* All which words imply, that the Jews and Israelites, at the time of their general restoration, shall have their joy tempered with tears of repentance for their former miscarriages ; which is more fully expressed *Zech. xii. 10*, where God promises to *pour upon them the spirit of grace and supplication. I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters*—So that they shall not be afflicted with thirst, or the want of any accommodation in their journey. The words allude to God's miraculously supplying the Israelites with water in the wilderness. See notes on *Isa. xxxv. 6, 7*, and *xli. 17, 18*, and *xlix. 10*. *In a straight way wherein they shall not stumble*—This phrase is an allusion to God's leading the Israelites through the Red sea, and afterward in the wilderness. See *Isa. lxiii. 13*, and *xlii. 16*. *For I am a father to Israel*—The remembrance of former connections is here mentioned as the motive of God's returning favour to Israel. *And Ephraim is my firstborn*—Ephraim is often, as here, equivalent to *Israel*, especially when Israel denotes the ten tribes as distinct from Judah. He is termed the firstborn among the tribes of Israel ; because the birth-right which Reuben had forfeited was conferred upon the two sons of Joseph, of whom Ephraim had the precedence. "The reader will observe, that all this was but imperfectly verified in the return of the Jews from Babylon, but was fully made good in

tions, and declare it in the isles afar  
off, and say, He that scattered Israel

will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock.

11 For ° the LORD hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him ° from the hand of *him that was stronger than he.*

12 Therefore they shall come and sing in ° the height of Zion, and shall flow together to

° Isa. xl. 11 ; Ezek. xxxiv. 12, 13, 14.—° Isa. xlv. 23 ; xlviii. 20.—° Isa. xlix. 24, 25.—° Ezek. xvii. 23 ; xx. 40.

those who were made partakers of the gospel of Christ, in the miracles, in the preaching of the apostles, in the free grace and pardoning mercy of the Redeemer."

Verses 10, 11. *Hear the word of the Lord, O ye nations, &c.*—This apostrophe, or turning to the heathen nations, was, as it were, the prelude of calling them to the knowledge of the true God. This calling of them was certainly never effected by the Jews in the way and to the degree it was by the apostles of Christ and their disciples, who gained thousands more to Christianity than ever the Jews did to Judaism. Here the prophet calls upon the Gentiles, not the Jews, to hear the word of the Lord, and to proclaim or make it known ; and the event has proved that he did not do this but by the direction of the Divine Spirit, since the Gentiles were far more ready to hear and obey the word of God by Christ, and to receive his divine doctrine, and propagate it, than the Jews were. *Declare it in the isles afar off*—The Jews, as we have repeatedly seen, called all the countries *islands* to which they went by sea. *He that scattered Israel, &c.*—He that caused Israel to be carried away captive into various countries, and dispersed them over the face of the earth, *will gather them into one body or people*, *Isa. xi. 12 ; xxvii. 12 ; liv. 7. And keep him as a shepherd does his flock*—As God's care over his people is often compared to that of a shepherd, so the office of the Messiah is described under the same character, *Isa. xl. 11*, and particularly with respect to the Jews, after their conversion and restoration. *For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, &c., from him that was stronger than he*—From those who by subtility and power conquered him, and detained him captive ; an emblem of that redemption which Christ obtains for us by vanquishing the devil, called the *strong one*, *Matt. xii. 29*.

Verses 12–14. *They shall sing in the height of Zion*—By *the height of Zion* is meant the temple, built upon a hill adjoining to mount Zion, and it is here to be taken metaphorically, as it frequently is in the writings of the prophets, for the church, which is compared, by Christ, to a *city set on a hill*, as being remarkable for the excellence of its laws and institutions, and the piety and virtue of its genuine members. *And shall flow to the goodness of the Lord, &c.*—Spiritual blessings are here, as elsewhere, described under the emblems of fruitfulness and

A. M. 3410. \* the goodness of the LORD, for  
B. C. 594. wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and  
for the young of the flock and of the herd : and  
their soul shall be as a 7 watered garden ; \* and  
they shall not sorrow any more at all.

13 Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance,  
both young men and old together : for I will  
turn their mourning into joy, and will com-  
fort them, and make them rejoice from their  
sorrow.

14 And I will satiate the soul of the priests  
with fatness, and my people shall be satisfied  
with my goodness, saith the LORD.

\* Hos. iii. 5. — 7 Isaiah lviii. 11. — \* Isaiah xxxv. 10 ; lxx. 19 ;  
Revelation xxi. 4.

plenty. *And their soul shall be as a watered garden*  
—Refreshed and fertilized by the truth and grace of  
God. *And they shall not sorrow any more at all*—  
Hebrew, ולא יוסיפו לראכה עוד, *They shall not add,*  
or, *continue, yet to grieve.* The LXX. render it,  
*οὐ πεινασουσιν ἐτι, They shall not hunger any more ;*  
and so the Vulgate. *Then shall the virgin rejoice,*  
&c., *both young men and old*—There shall be signs  
of a universal joy, in which all ages shall unani-  
mously join. The expressions in the next verse  
allude to that plentiful provision that was made  
for the temporal support of the priests under the  
law, which is here put metaphorically for that pleni-  
tude of blessings which are to be enjoyed under the  
gospel.

Verses 15–17. *Thus saith the Lord ; A voice, &c.*  
—Here “the scene of this prophecy changes, and  
two new personages are successively introduced, in  
order to diversify the subject, and to impress it more  
strongly on the mind of the reader. The first is  
Rachel, who in these verses is represented as just  
rising from the grave, and bitterly bewailing the loss  
of her children, for whom she looks about in vain,  
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.” The passage is strongly  
figurative, but not difficult of interpretation, as the  
reader will perceive by what follows: *A voice was  
heard in Ramah*—Ramah was a city of Benjamin,  
(see Judg. xix. 13,) near which Rachel, the mother  
of Joseph and Benjamin, was buried. She is here,  
in a beautiful figure of poetry, represented as come  
forth out of her grave, and, as chief mourner on so  
sad an occasion, lamenting bitterly for the loss of  
her children, none of whom presented themselves  
to her view, being all either slain or gone into exile.  
In this way the prophet sets forth the lamentations,  
in and about Jerusalem, at the time of the several  
captivities mentioned chap. lii. 15, 28–30. The  
evangelist indeed applies these words to Herod’s  
massacre of the infants at Bethlehem and its envi-  
rons, Matt. ii. 17, 18. But the context here plainly  
shows, that this massacre could not have been the

15 ¶ Thus saith the LORD ; \* A voice was heard in <sup>b</sup> Ramah, lamenta-  
tion, and bitter weeping ; Rachel weeping for  
her children refused to be comforted for her  
children, because <sup>c</sup> they were not.

16 Thus saith the LORD ; Refrain thy voice  
from weeping, and thine eyes from tears : for  
thy work shall be rewarded, saith the LORD ;  
and <sup>d</sup> they shall come again from the land of the  
enemy.

17 And there is hope in thine end, saith the  
LORD, that thy children shall come again to  
their own border.

\* Matthew ii. 17, 18. — <sup>b</sup> Josh. xviii. 25. — <sup>c</sup> Genesis xlii. 13.  
<sup>d</sup> Verses 4, 5 ; Ezra i. 5 ; Hos. i. 11.

direct and immediate object of the prophecy, (see  
the following note,) but the prophet’s words so well  
suited the occasion that the evangelist, with great  
propriety, observes their congruity therewith. He  
must however be understood just as if he had said,  
The circumstances of this affair were such that the  
words of Jeremiah, though spoken with a different  
view, may well be accommodated to this event.  
And this is as much as can be allowed with respect  
to several passages of the New Testament, where  
the words of the Old Testament were said to be  
fulfilled. See Matt. ii. 16 ; Acts i. 16–20, &c. ; and  
Blaney. It is observable, that the Vulgate and Chal-  
dee understand the word, רַמָּה, *ramah*, not as a  
proper name, but as an appellative, and translate it,  
*in excelso, on high, or, aloud* ; according to which  
the sense will be, *A voice is heard on high, or aloud,*  
*lamentations, weepings ; of Rachel bewailing her*  
*children, and refusing to be comforted concerning*  
*them, because they are not. Refrain thy voice from*  
*weeping, and thine eyes from tears*—Set bounds to  
thy sorrow, repress and moderate thy inordinate  
and excessive grief ; *for thy work shall be rewarded*  
—That is, it will appear thou hast not brought forth  
children in vain, nor shalt thou be deprived of the  
satisfaction of seeing the welfare of thy children,  
which is the parent’s reward for her pain in bring-  
ing them into the world, and her care and attention  
in providing for their support and education ; *for*  
*they shall come again from the land of the enemy.*  
Thus the text interprets itself. But if the massacre  
at Bethlehem had been primarily designed here, with  
what propriety could it have been said, how could  
it have been affirmed, that they should return from  
the land of the enemy, or, as in the next verse,  
*should come again to their own border ?* The  
words *יש תקוה לאחרייתך*, rendered here, *There is*  
*hope in thine end*, may be translated, *There is*  
*hope, or expectation, to thy posterity* ; that is, though these  
of the present age do not experience a return from  
captivity, yet their posterity shall enjoy that bless-  
ing. This promise was particularly fulfilled with re-  
spect to the tribe of Benjamin, as well as that of  
Judah, in their return under Cyrus. See Ezra i. 5.

A. M. 3410. 18 ¶ I have surely heard Ephraim  
B. C. 594. bemoaning himself *thus*; Thou hast  
chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock  
unaccustomed to the yoke: \* turn thou me,  
and I shall be turned; for thou *art* the LORD  
my God.

19 Surely † after that I was turned, I repen-  
ted; and after that I was instructed, I smote

\* Lam. v. 21.—† Deut. xxx. 2.—‡ Deut. xxxii. 36; Isa. lxiii.

Verse 18. *I have surely heard Ephraim, &c.*—Here, still further to diversify the subject, and give it the greater force, the other personage referred to in the preceding note is introduced. Ephraim, representing the ten tribes, is brought forward, lamenting his past undutifulness with great contrition and penitence, and professing an earnest desire of amendment. And “these symptoms of returning duty are no sooner discerned in him than God acknowledges him once more as a darling child, and resolves to receive him with mercy.” The passage is intended to show the change necessary to be wrought in the hearts of the Israelites, in order to their obtaining this restoration from captivity, according to the conditional promises made of old to this people. See Lev. xxvi. 40, 41. Previously to his conferring this great benefit upon them, God must hear them *bemoaning themselves*, or bewailing their miserable state, and the sins which had brought them into it, acknowledging that the chastisements which they had suffered had not been more or greater than their sins had justly merited, and praying earnestly for mercy and deliverance. *Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised*—Or, *instructed by thy discipline*, as אָמַר may be properly rendered. *As a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke*—Whereas before I was as an untamed bullock, or heifer, that is not to be managed but by stripes and corrections. *Turn thou me, and I shall be turned*—Do thou turn my heart by thy preventing and renewing grace, and then I shall be effectually reformed, Lam. v. 21. “Sometimes the Scripture ascribes the whole work of man’s conversion to God, because his grace is the first and principal cause of it. But yet, to make it effectual, man’s concurrence is necessary, as appears particularly from chap. li. 9, where God says, *We would have healed Babylon, and she is not healed*; that is, God did what was requisite on his part for her conversion, but she refused to comply with his call. To the same purpose he speaks to Jerusalem, (Ezek. xxiv. 13,) *I have purged thee, and thou wast not purged.*”

Verse 19. *Surely after that I was turned, I repented*—After I was enlightened and impressed with a due sense of my duty, and of the many deviations from it of which I had been guilty, and after my will was subjected to the will of God, I straightway became a true penitent, and expressed my repentance by all the outward and inward signs of an unfeigned sorrow for, and hatred to, my past conduct. *And after that I was instructed*—Re-

upon my thigh: I was ashamed, yea, A. M. 3410.  
even confounded, because I did bear B. C. 594.  
the reproach of my youth.

20 *Is Ephraim my dear son? is he a pleasant child?* for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still: † therefore my bowels † are troubled for him; † I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the LORD.

15; Hos. xi. 8.—† Heb. sound.—‡ Isa. lvii. 18; Hos. xiv. 4.

specting my sin and folly, in *forsaking the fountain of living waters for the broken cisterns that could hold no water*; *I smote upon my thigh*—Through the most poignant grief and concern, and with indignation against myself. *I was ashamed, yea, even confounded*—At my own stupidity and frowardness, and could neither with any confidence look up to God, nor with any comfort reflect upon myself; *because I did bear the reproach of my youth*—The burden of my former sins lay heavy upon my mind, and I became sensible that all the calamities and reproaches I had undergone were the due deserts of my offences. Ephraim *smote upon his thigh*, as the publican *upon his breast*. We find, both in the Holy Scriptures, and other ancient records, smiting on the thigh mentioned as an expression of great surprise and concern. Thus God commands Eze-  
kiel *to cry and howl*, on account of the sword that *should be upon his people, and to smite upon his thigh*. We find the same custom noticed by Homer, *Iliad xvi. l. 124.*

—*αυταρ Αχιλλευς  
Μηρω πληξαμενος Πατροκλην πρωσειπεν.*

Divine Achilles view’d the rising flames,  
And smote his thigh, and thus aloud exclaims,  
Arm, arm, Patroclus! POPE.

It is also noticed by Xenophon, Cicero, and others. The meaning is, when Ephraim was made sensible of his sinfulness he showed marks of real contrition.

Verse 20. *Is Ephraim my dear son? Is he, &c.*—These questions are designed to be answered in the affirmative, as appears from the inference, *therefore my bowels are moved for him*. It seems that, to suit the idiom of our language, and fully to express the sense of the original, the particle *not* ought to have been supplied, and the clause to have been read, *Is not Ephraim my dear son? Is he not a pleasant child?* That is, is he not one that I have set my affections on, as a parent does upon a child in whom he delights? Thus Dr. Waterland, Lowth, and many others interpret the words. Houbigant, however, defends the common reading, and thinks that God means to deny that Ephraim was his son, in order to show him that his bowels were moved toward him solely through free mercy, and not on account of any merits or deservings of his people. *For since I spake against him*—Or, *of him*, as the same phrase in the original is translated chap. xlvi. 27. *I do earnestly remember him still*—Ever since I have so severely reproved and chastised him, my

A. M. 3410. 21 Set thee up way-marks, make  
B. C. 594. thee high heaps: <sup>1</sup>set thy heart toward the highway, *even the way which thou wentest*: turn again, O virgin of Israel, turn again to these thy cities.

<sup>1</sup> Chap. i. 5.—→ Chap. ii. 18, 23, 36.

thoughts toward him have been thoughts of peace. I have a fatherly kindness and affection for him. *Therefore my bowels are troubled for him*—Or, *yearn over him*, as Joseph's bowels yearned toward his brethren, even when he spake roughly to them. Observe, reader, when God afflicts his people, yet he does not forget them; when he casts them out of their land, yet he does not cast them out of his sight, nor out of his mind. Even then, when God is speaking against us, yet he is acting for us, and designing our good in all; and this is our comfort in our affliction, that the Lord thinketh upon us, though we have forgotten him. When Israel's afflictions extorted a penitent confession and submission, it is said, (Judg. x. 16,) *his soul was grieved for the misery of Israel*: for he always afflicts with the greatest tenderness. It was his compassion that mitigated Ephraim's punishment, (Hos. xi. 8, 9,) *My heart is turned within me, &c.*, and now the same compassion accepted Ephraim's repentance, and induced God to say, *I will surely have mercy upon him*.

Verse 21. *Set thee up way-marks*—"These words are a call to Israel to prepare for their return. The word *צַיִּים*, rendered *way-marks*, means *stone pillars*, and *תְּמוֹרֵי יַם*, translated *heaps*, from *הַכֵּר*, a *palm-tree*, probably signifies *tall-poles*, like *palm-trees*, or, perhaps, made of palm-trees; both set up in the roads, at certain distances, for the traveller's direction, and extremely necessary for those who had to pass wild and spacious deserts."—Blaney. *Set thy heart toward the way which thou wentest*—Mind well the way that the Assyrians and Babylonians carried thee captive, for thou shalt return the same way. *Turn again*—That is, Return to thine own country; *O virgin of Israel*—See note on verse 14. *Turn again to these thy cities*—The expression is doubled for the greater certainty of the event.

Verse 22. *How long wilt thou go about*—Or, *go out of the right way*, or follow thine own imaginations, *O thou backsliding daughter*—Thou that didst formerly revolt from thy sovereign Lord, and decline from his worship and service, going after idols, and seeking help from foreign nations, instead of applying to him for it; and who now seemest to loiter when God calls thee to return homeward out of a strange country. The expression is often used of Israel, or the ten tribes: see chap. iii. 6-12: and of Judah and Israel together, *ibid.*, verses 14, 22; both being comprehended under the title of *the virgin of Israel*, in the foregoing verse. *For the Lord hath created, or doth create, a new thing in the earth, a woman shall compass a man*—It is difficult to say, with any certainty, what this obscure passage means. Several ancient Jews expounded it of the Messiah, and most Christian interpreters understand it of the miraculous conception of the child

22 ¶ How long wilt thou <sup>1</sup>go A. M. 3410.  
about, O thou <sup>1</sup>backsliding daugh- B. C. 594.  
ter? for the LORD hath created a new thing in the earth, A woman shall compass a man.

<sup>1</sup> Chap. iii. 6, 8, 11, 12, 14, 22.

Jesus in the womb of the virgin. "Taking the words in this sense they properly import," as Lowth justly observes, "a new creation, and such as is the immediate work of God. And that such a prophecy concerning the conception of Christ may not be thought to come in here abruptly, it is to be observed, that as the coming of the Messiah is the foundation of the promises, both of the first and second covenant; so it contains the most powerful arguments to persuade men to obedience: and the covenant, of which Christ was to be the Mediator is plainly foretold and described in the 31st and three following verses of this chapter." Blaney, however, thinks the original words, *נָקְבָה וְגַבְרָה תְּסֻבֶּה נָבֵר*, cannot by any construction be brought to imply any such thing as the miraculous conception above mentioned. "Admitting," he says, "that the word *תְּסֻבֶּה* may signify *shall encompass*, or, *comprehend in the womb*, and that *נָבֵר*, instead of *an adult*, or, *strong man*, (which the word generally means,) may also signify *a male child*; yet the words, all taken together, still import no more than that *a woman shall conceive, or contain, a male child*: but this is nothing new or extraordinary, and therefore I presume it not the sense intended." Being of opinion that the word, which we translate *compass*, or *encompass*, may signify *to cause to turn about*, or *repulse*, he renders the clause, "A woman shall put to the rout a strong man," judging it to be a proverbial form of speech, denoting, "The weaker shall prevail over the stronger," an expression equivalent to, *one shall chase a thousand*. Now this, says he, it must be confessed, is in itself new and unusual and contrary to the ordinary course of nature; and accordingly it is ascribed to the interposing power of God, who is said therein to create a new thing, or, in other words, to work a miracle. Interpreting the passage in this sense, he explains its connection with the context as follows: "The virgin of Israel is exhorted not to turn aside, or decline the invitation given her to return, as she might, perhaps, be disposed to do through dread of the power of enemies, who would oppose her deliverance. For her encouragement she is told, that she had no reason to be apprehensive of the superior strength of any enemies, since God would work a miracle in her favour, and enable her, though apparently weak, to overcome and prevail against all their opposition." By an interpretation nearly allied to this, many understand the passage as being a promise that the Jewish Church in its time, and afterward the gospel church, should prevail over all its enemies; though comparing the fewness and weakness of the church's members with the multitude of her enemies, and the greatness of their power; it seemed as strange a thing as for a woman to prevail against a strong and mighty man.

A. M. 3410. 23 Thus saith the LORD of hosts,  
B. C. 594.

the God of Israel; As yet they shall use this speech in the land of Judah and in the cities thereof, when I shall bring again their captivity; <sup>m</sup> The LORD bless thee, O habitation of justice, and <sup>n</sup> mountain of holiness.

24 And there shall dwell in Judah itself, and <sup>o</sup> in all the cities thereof together, husbandmen, and they *that* go forth with flocks.

25 For I have satiated the weary soul, and I have replenished every sorrowful soul.

26 Upon this I awaked, and beheld; and my sleep was sweet unto me.

27 ¶ Behold, the days come, saith the LORD,

<sup>m</sup> Psa. cxxii. 5, 6, 7, 8; Isa. i. 26.—<sup>n</sup> Zech. viii. 3.—<sup>o</sup> Chap. xxxiii. 12, 13.—<sup>p</sup> Ezekiel xxxvi. 9, 10, 11; Hosea ii. 23;

Verses 23–25. *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel*—These prophecies of the restoration of the Jews are ordinarily prefaced with these two attributes of God, the one of which asserts his power to do the thing promised; the other, his goodness to his people; *as yet, or, yet again, they shall use this speech in the land of Judah, and in the cities thereof, &c.*—Three things the prophet here foretels, 1st, That the cities which had formerly been the habitations of unjust, cruel, and bloody men, should become the habitations of men who should do justice to all. 2d, That the city which stood upon mount Zion, and had formerly been a habitation of idolaters and other unholy persons, should become a place in which men should, in a due and holy manner, worship and serve the true God. 3d, That they should be so famous, both for justice and holiness, that men would take notice of it, and wish they might be blessed on that account: so that as they had, for their sins, been made a curse and proverb, so, upon their reformation, they should be for a blessing. *And there shall dwell in Judah, &c., husbandmen*—This verse is not only intended to express that the country should be inhabited, as well as the cities, after their return from captivity, but to set forth their peaceable and happy state at that time. *For I have satiated, or, I will satiate, the weary soul*—I will comfort them after their sorrows and afflictions, and will give them abundance of ease and plenty.

Verse 26. *Upon this I awaked, &c.*—These words afford a plain proof that the preceding revelations had been made to the prophet in a dream, or vision. *And my sleep was sweet unto me*—The vision which I had seen was so agreeable to me that it gave me as great satisfaction and comfort as men usually feel when they have been refreshed with an undisturbed and sweet sleep.

Verses 27, 28. *I will sow the house of Israel*—Under the captivity the land lay desolate, without man and beast; chap. xxxiii. 12; but here it is promised that it should be again inhabited and replenished with both. *And like as I have watched over them*

that <sup>p</sup> I will sow the house of Israel A. M. 3410  
and the house of Judah with the seed B. C. 594.  
of man, and with the seed of beast.

28 And it shall come to pass, *that* like as I have <sup>q</sup> watched over them, <sup>r</sup> to pluck up, and to break down, and to throw down, and to destroy, and to afflict; so will I watch over them, <sup>s</sup> to build and to plant, saith the LORD.

29 ¶ <sup>t</sup> In those days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge.

30 <sup>u</sup> But every one shall die for his own iniquity: every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge.

Zech. x. 9.—<sup>v</sup> Chapter xlv. 27.—<sup>w</sup> Chapter i. 10; xviii. 7.  
<sup>x</sup> Chap. xxiv. 6.—<sup>y</sup> Ezek. xviii. 2, 3.—<sup>z</sup> Gal. vi. 5, 7.

*to pluck up, &c.*—I will show the same care and diligence in restoring them as I have formerly done in destroying them, according to the promise made to them upon their repentance and reformation. See chap. xviii. 7–10.

Verses 29, 30. *They shall say no more, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, &c.*—“God had often declared that he would *visit the sins of the fathers upon the children*, and had particularly threatened to execute judgment upon the present generation for the idolatries and other sins of their forefathers. See note on Exod. xx. 5, and chap. xv. 4. This gave occasion to the proverb mentioned in this verse, which they that were in captivity applied to their own case, as if the miseries they endured were chiefly owing to their fathers' sins: see Lam. v. 7; Ezek. xviii. 2; but when this judgment should be removed, then there would be no further occasion to use this proverb, as Ezekiel there speaks.” *But every one shall die for his own iniquity, &c.*—These national judgments ceasing, every one shall suffer only for his own faults. “This promise,” says Lowth, “will be remarkably verified when God shall cease to visit upon the Jewish nation that imprecation which they laid upon themselves by the crucifixion of Christ, *his blood be upon us, and upon our children.*” It was the opinion of Bishop Warburton, that the punishment of children for the iniquity of their parents, was to supply the want of the sanction of a future state, which he supposed was very obscurely, if at all, revealed under the Mosaic dispensation. “For,” says he, “while a future state was kept hid from the Jews there was an absolute need of such a law to restrain the more daring spirits by working upon their instincts. But when a doctrine was brought to light which held them up, and continued them after death, the objects of divine justice, it had then no further use, and was therefore reasonably to be abolished, with the rest of the Jewish laws peculiar to the Mosaic dispensation.” But it may be inquired here, Do not children still suffer for the sins of their parents in the only sense in which they ever did, namely, in all na-

A. M. 3410. 31 ¶ Behold, the <sup>a</sup> days come, saith  
B. C. 594. the LORD, that I will make a new  
covenant with the house of Israel, and with the  
house of Judah :

32 Not according to the covenant that I made  
with their fathers, in the day *that* <sup>b</sup> I took them  
by the hand to bring them out of the land of  
Egypt ; which my covenant they brake, <sup>c</sup> al-  
though I was a husband unto them, saith the  
LORD :

<sup>a</sup> Chap. xxxii. 40 ; xxxiii. 14 ; Ezek. xxxvii. 26 ; Heb. viii. 8-  
12 ; x. 16, 17.—<sup>b</sup> Deut. i. 31.—<sup>c</sup> Or, *should I have continued  
a husband unto them?*—<sup>d</sup> Chap. xxxii. 40.

tional calamities, and in that poverty and reproach,  
and those bodily afflictions, which the vices of their  
parents entail upon them ?

Verses 31, 32. *Behold, the days come, saith the  
Lord*—The latter days, or the times of the gospel,  
are here intended, as is evident from the apostle's  
applying the following promises to those times, and  
quoting this whole passage as a summary of the  
covenant of grace, Hebrews viii. 8-10. *I will  
make a new covenant with the house of Israel and  
the house of Judah*—The benefits of this covenant  
were first offered to the Jews, as being the comple-  
tion of that covenant which God had made with  
their fathers, Acts iii. 26, and xiii. 46 ; but those  
benefits were actually conferred only on the spiri-  
tual seed of Abraham, or the imitators of Abraham's  
faith, the true *Israel of God*, on whom *peace is* and  
*shall be*, Gal. vi. 16, and with whom only this new  
covenant is made. In other words, *Israel* and  
*Judah* stand here for the true people or church of  
God, especially the gospel church : and the cove-  
nant here promised to be made with them is said to  
be *new*, not because it was so as to the substance of  
it, for it was made with Abraham, Gen. xvii. 7, and  
with the Israelites, Deut. xxvi. 17, 18 ; but, upon  
many other accounts, especially the following :—1st,  
It was new, considered as *a testament*, confirmed  
by the actual death of the testator, which did not  
take place till gospel times. 2d, It was revealed  
after a new manner, more fully and particularly,  
plainly and clearly. 3d, It contained no such mix-  
ture of temporal promises as when first made with  
the Jews. 4th, The ceremonial law was no part of  
it, as it was to the Jews, who were obliged to ap-  
prove themselves God's people, by a strict observa-  
nce thereof. 5th, The publication of it was ex-  
tended to the Gentiles as well as the Jews, which  
was not the case with the Mosaic covenant. 6th,  
The influences of the Divine Spirit, attending the  
publication of it, are conferred more largely under  
this than under the old covenant, distributing  
to believers a greater measure and variety of  
gifts and graces, to enable them to comply with  
the terms, and fulfil the demands of it. *Not ac-  
cording to the covenant made with their fathers*  
—Differing from it in the circumstances above men-  
tioned, and in others declared afterward : *in the*

33 <sup>a</sup> But this *shall be* the covenant A. M. 3410.  
that I will make with the house of B. C. 594.

Israel ; After those days, saith the LORD, <sup>a</sup> I  
will put my law in their inward parts, and  
write it in their hearts ; <sup>b</sup> and will be their God,  
and they shall be my people.

34 And they shall teach no more every man  
his neighbour, and every man his brother, say-  
ing, Know the LORD : for <sup>c</sup> they shall all  
know me, from the least of them unto the

<sup>a</sup> Psalm xl. 8 ; Ezekiel xi. 19, 20 ; xxxvi. 26, 27 ; 2 Cor. iii. 3.  
<sup>b</sup> Chap. xxiv. 7 ; xxxii. 38.—<sup>c</sup> Isa. liv. 13 ; John vi. 45 ; 1 Cor.  
ii. 10 ; 1 John ii. 26.

*day when I took them by the hand, &c.*—The cove-  
nant which God made with the Jews, when they  
came out of the land of Egypt, was on his part the  
law which he gave them from Sinai, with the pro-  
mises annexed ; on their part, (which made it a for-  
mal covenant,) their promise of obedience to it.  
This covenant God says he made with them when  
they were a weak and ignorant people, the care of  
whom he took upon himself, and led them as a parent  
leads his feeble child by the hand. *Which my cove-  
nant they brake*—This covenant they are said to have  
broken, not because of every defect, or failure in  
their obedience, for in that sense, through the gen-  
eral depravity and weakness of human nature, they  
could not but break it ; (see Rom. iii. 20 ; Gal. iii. 10,  
11 ; ) but because of their gross and wilful sins often  
repeated and continued in without repentance, and  
more especially by their idolatry, compared to  
whoredom, which broke the marriage covenant be-  
tween God and them, and caused him to divorce  
them, and to say, *Lo Ammi, You are not my people :*  
*Although I was a husband to them*—This their  
covenant-breaking was aggravated by God's kind-  
ness to them and care of them, who, as he stood re-  
lated to them in the character of a husband, so he  
had always manifested to them such love as is but  
faintly shadowed forth by that of the most affection-  
ate husband to his wife, and had given them no  
temptation to go a whoring from him.

Verses 33, 34. *This shall be the covenant that I  
will make with the house of Israel*—That is, with  
those who are Israelites indeed, in *whom is no guile*,  
John i. 47, who are *Jews inwardly*, Rom. ii. 29, by  
the circumcision of the heart and spirit, spoken of  
and promised by God, Deut. xxx. 6. *I will put my  
law in their inward parts, &c.*—In the times of the  
gospel God's law is not abrogated and made void ;  
for Christ came *not to destroy the law, but to fulfil  
it* : but it is written in the hearts of God's true Is-  
rael by the finger of his Spirit ; and they become  
obedient to it from their secret approbation of it as  
holy, just, and good, and from the delight they take  
in it *after the inward man*. But it may be asked,  
How was this peculiar to this new covenant ? Did  
not God of old write his law on the hearts of his  
people ? Did not David and others, the servants of  
God, of whom we read in the Old Testament, serve

A. M. 3410. greatest of them, saith the LORD:  
B. C. 594. for <sup>d</sup> I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

35 ¶ Thus saith the LORD, \* which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth <sup>f</sup> the sea when the waves thereof roar; <sup>g</sup> The LORD of hosts is his name:

36 <sup>h</sup> If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, then the seed of Israel also

<sup>d</sup> Chap. xxxiii. 8; 1. 20; Mic. vii. 18; Acts x. 43; xiii. 39; Romans xi. 27.—<sup>e</sup> Genesis i. 16; Psalm lxxii. 5, 17; lxxxix. 2, 36, 37; cxix. 89.

God, out of a principle of love and delight in his law? We must answer, Undoubtedly they did, and the law of God was, in a measure, written in their hearts; but this was not through the virtue of the Mosaic dispensation, but through the grace of this new covenant, revealed and communicated, though but obscurely and partially, even under that dispensation. The principal design of the prophet here is evidently to express the difference between the law and the gospel: the law shows man his duty, the gospel brings the grace of regeneration, by which the heart of man is changed, and he is enabled to do his duty. All who, during the time of the Mosaic dispensation, attained salvation, were saved by virtue of this new covenant; but this was not then evidently exhibited; neither was the renewing grace of God so generally and largely given as it has been under the gospel. *And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour*—This must not be so interpreted as if under the gospel there should be no more need of ministerial teaching, for Christ himself sent out his apostles to preach; nor yet as if there should be no further need of brethren in Christ teaching one another, for the contrary is commanded, Col. iii. 16. This expression only signifies the great increase of divine knowledge, especially of the knowledge of the being and attributes of the one living and true God, and of the relations in which he is pleased to stand to his people, which is the knowledge here chiefly intended. *For they shall all know me, from the least unto the greatest*—Even the least of them, who have an interest in this new covenant, and are ingrafted into the good olive, and partake of the fatness of the root, even babes in Christ, and much more they who have arrived at the measure of the stature of his fulness; shall all savingly know me, and have eternal life in and by that knowledge. *For I will forgive their iniquity, &c.*—Here God represents the free pardon of all their sins as being the root and foundation of this grace, and of all the privileges and blessings of this new covenant.

Verses 35–37. Thus saith the Lord, who giveth the sun for a light by day—All the acts here mentioned are such as manifest the divine, almighty power of him who is the Lord of all the hosts of the

shall cease from being a nation before me for ever. A. M. 3410 B. C. 594.

37 Thus saith the LORD; <sup>i</sup> If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the LORD.

38 ¶ Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that the city shall be built to the LORD <sup>k</sup> from the tower of Hananeel unto the gate of the corner.

<sup>f</sup> Isa. li. 15.—<sup>g</sup> Chap. x. 16.—<sup>h</sup> Psalm cxlviii. 6; Isa. liv. 9, 10; Chap. xxxiii. 20.—<sup>i</sup> Chap. xxxiii. 22.—<sup>k</sup> Neh. iii. 1; Zech. xiv. 10.

creation. Which divideth, or, who did divide, the sea—Namely, as the words are generally interpreted, the Red sea, to give the Israelites passage. The original words, however, רָגַע הַיָּם, which occur Isa. li. 15, where they are translated as here, are by Bishop Lowth rendered, *who stilleth the sea*, a sense which accords better with the words immediately following, *when the waves thereof roar*—That is, even when the waves are most tumultuous, and roar most dreadfully, he, with infinite ease, quiets them, and produces a perfect calm. In this sense the same word is interpreted verse 2 of this chapter, and also chap. l. 34. *If these ordinances*—Hebrew, חֻקֵּי, *these appointments* respecting the heavenly bodies and their motions and uses; *depart from before me*—Be altered or suspended in their operations; *then shall the seed of Israel cease from being a nation, &c.*—Thus God makes the continuance of the laws of nature a pledge of the continuance of Israel as a people. The prediction implies, 1st, That God would preserve a remnant of them in the country to which they were led captive, and would restore them to their own land; 2d, That there should be another remnant of them, at the beginning of the gospel, called *οἱ σωζόμενοι, the saved*, (Acts ii. 47.) who, by embracing the faith of Christ, should escape those terrible judgments that should be inflicted upon the main body of that nation; and 3d, That Providence would still preserve them in a body distinct from all other people in the world, in order to their conversion in God's due time. To this place St. Paul, speaking of the conversion of the Jews in the latter times, seems to refer when he says, *The gifts and calling of God [to the Jews] are without repentance*, Rom. xi. 29. *If heaven above can be measured, &c.*—If the height and extent thereof can be ascertained by men, which is impossible, *I will also cast off all the seed of Israel, &c.*—That is, I will never cast them all off—a promise which the apostle, (Rom. xi. 1, 2,) proves to have been made good by God, notwithstanding the rejection of the great body of that people.

Verses 38–40. Behold, the days come, that the city shall be built to the Lord—Or, for the Lord, namely, for his use and service. Blaney renders it, *Under the direction of the Lord, from the tower of Hananeel, &c.*—Here follows a description of the cir-

A. M. 3410. 39 And <sup>1</sup>the measuring line shall  
B. C. 594. yet go forth over against it upon the  
hill Gareb, and shall compass about to Goath.

40 And the whole valley of the dead bodies,  
and of the ashes, and all the fields unto the

<sup>1</sup> Ezek. xl. 8; Zech. ii. 1.—<sup>2</sup> 2 Chron. xxiii. 15;

conference of a new city to be built on the site of Jerusalem; but that it does not mean the city which was rebuilt after the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity is evident from two principal circumstances; first, because the limits are here extended farther, so as to include a greater space than was contained within the walls at that time; and secondly, it is here said, that it should never be razed or destroyed any more. This new city, therefore, must be referred to those after-times when the general restoration of Israel is appointed to take place." Thus Blaney, with whom many other commentators agree. That this prophecy "was not fulfilled," says Dr. Dodd, "from the return out of Babylon to the days of Christ, we are assured from sacred history; where we read that mount *Goath*, or *Golgotha*, (which word in Hebrew signifies the *heap of Gotha*,) was situated without Jerusalem. The same may be said of the *valley of dead bodies and of the ashes*," namely, the valley of Hinnom, so described, from its having been made a common burying place, and a receptacle for the rubbish and filth of the city. "As

brook of Kidron, <sup>m</sup>unto the corner A. M. 3410.  
of the horse-gate toward the east, B. C. 594.

<sup>n</sup> shall be holy unto the LORD; it shall not be plucked up, nor thrown down any more for ever.

Nehemiah iii. 28.—<sup>a</sup> Joel iii. 17.

to Gareb we know nothing certain. We may also add, that the last clause of this chapter, *it shall not be plucked up, &c., any more for ever*, cannot refer to the Jerusalem which was rebuilt after the captivity, and which was plucked up and thrown down by the Romans. We must necessarily recur, therefore, either to some future building of that city, or to the church of Christ, against which we are assured *the gates of hell shall never prevail*, and which is elsewhere called the city of God, and the new Jerusalem. Taking the passage in this mystical sense, as a description of the church, in its most enlarged and perfect state, in the latter days, we can be at no loss to explain the clause in the last verse which expresses that all parts of the city, even the valley of Hinnom, and *all the fields, unto the brook Kidron, &c., shall be holy unto the Lord*. For, undoubtedly, at this time the church shall be thoroughly purged from all corruption, both with regard to the doctrine taught in it, and the principles and practices of its members, who shall all be both well instructed in divine things, and truly holy in their hearts and lives.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

<sup>1</sup>In this chapter, which has no connection with the preceding, we have an account, (1.) Of Jeremiah's imprisonment for foretelling the destruction of Jerusalem and the captivity of King Zedekiah, 1-5. (2.) Of an order he received from God to purchase a field in Anathoth, and of his executing the order in due form, and delivering the writings to Baruch to be kept safely, in token of God's purposing to restore the rights of possession in the land, 6-15. (3.) In a prayer he acknowledges God's infinite greatness and power, and the wonders of his goodness to Israel, with the ungrateful and contumacious behaviour of that people, which had brought the present calamities upon them; and concludes with an humble representation of the desperate circumstances of his country, notwithstanding that he had been commanded to make the foregoing purchase, 16-25. (4.) In reply, God asserts his own all-sufficiency; and then goes on to avow his resolution to give up the city to be taken and burned by the Chaldeans, because of the many and great provocations which had been given him, 26-35. (5.) He promises, however, in time to reassemble his people, and bring them back to their own land, to enter into covenant with them anew, and to promote their welfare; so that the land, though given up to desolation at present, should flourish again, and possessions be once more bought and sold, as in former times, 36-44.

A. M. 3415. THE word that came to Jeremiah  
B. C. 589. from the LORD <sup>a</sup>in the tenth  
year of Zedekiah king of Judah, which was  
the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar.

<sup>a</sup> 2 Kings xxv. 1, 2; Jer. xxxix. 1.

### NOTES ON CHAPTER XXXII.

Verse 1. *The word that came to Jeremiah*—As the date of the following transaction and prophecy is here stated to have been in the tenth year of Zedekiah's reign, while the Chaldeans invested the city,

2 For then the king of Babylon's A. M. 3415.  
army besieged Jerusalem: and Jere- B. C. 589.  
miah the prophet was shut up <sup>b</sup>in the court of the  
prison, which was in the king of Judah's house.

<sup>b</sup> Neh. iii. 25; Ch. xxxiii. 1; xxxvii. 21; xxxviii. 6; xxxix. 14.

and Jeremiah was confined in the court of the prison, it must have been after the Egyptians had retreated back to their own land, and the Chaldeans had renewed the siege a second time. Jeremiah at the beginning, it seems, of the siege foretold to Zedekiah

A. M. 3415. 3 For Zedekiah king of Judah had  
B. C. 589.

shut him up, saying, Wherefore dost thou prophesy, and say, Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall take it;

4 And Zedekiah king of Judah shall not escape out of the hand of the Chaldeans, but shall surely be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon, and shall speak with him mouth to mouth, and his eyes shall behold his eyes;

5 And he shall lead Zedekiah to Babylon, and there shall he be until I visit him, saith the

\* Chap. xxxiv. 2.—<sup>d</sup> Chap. xxxiv. 3; xxxviii. 18, 23; xxxix. 5; lii. 9.

that the city should be taken, and the king sent captive to Babylon, chap. xxxiv. 1, 7. The king, or his princes rather, irritated at his freedom, put him in prison, or, at least, in the court of the prison, which was in the palace. And it was in this place that the transaction here recorded happened. As Nebuchadnezzar came to besiege Jerusalem in the ninth year of Zedekiah, it is probable Jeremiah had now been confined a year or more in prison. The siege, it may be observed, lasted from the tenth month of that year to the fourth month of the eleventh year of that king's reign.

Verses 3-5. *Jeremiah was shut up in the court of the prison*—He was afterward put in the dungeon, chap. xxxvii. 16; and xxxviii. 6. But now he was not under so severe a restraint. Compare verses 26 and 28 of that chapter. *For Zedekiah had shut him up, saying, Wherefore dost thou prophesy and say, &c.*—This refers to the prophecy recorded chap. xxxiv. 2, &c., the particulars there mentioned being, in order of time, before the passages related in this chapter. We nowhere read that Zedekiah himself immediately commanded Jeremiah to be imprisoned: he seems rather to have been favourable to him, and to have been averse to his confinement; but God accounts princes to do that which their ministers or subordinate magistrates do with their connivance, or without their prohibition. *Behold, I will give this city, &c., and Zedekiah shall not escape*—Jeremiah prophesies that both the city and the court should fall into the hands of the king of Babylon: for God, whose city it was, in a peculiar manner would put it out of his protection, and give it into their hands; that, though Zedekiah should attempt to make his escape, he should be overtaken, and brought as a prisoner into Nebuchadnezzar's presence, to his great confusion and terror, he having made himself particularly obnoxious to him by breaking his faith with him; that he should hear the king of Babylon pronounce his doom, and see with what fury and indignation he should look upon him, *his eyes*, as it is expressed, *beholding Nebuchadnezzar's eyes*. He further prophesies that Zedekiah should be carried to Babylon, and continue a miserable captive there

LORD: <sup>f</sup> though ye fight with the Chaldeans, ye shall not prosper. A. M. 3415 B. C. 589.

6 ¶ And Jeremiah said, The word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

7 Behold, Hanameel, the son of Shallum thine uncle, shall come unto thee, saying, Buy thee my field that is in Anathoth: for the right of redemption is thine to buy it.

8 So Hanameel mine uncle's son came to me in the court of the prison, according to the word of the LORD, and said unto me, Buy my field, I pray thee, that is in Anathoth, which is in the country of Benjamin: for the right of in-

\* Chap. xxvii. 22.—<sup>f</sup> Chap. xxi. 4; xxxiii. 5.—<sup>g</sup> Lev. xxv. 24, 32; Ruth iv. 4.

until God should visit him—That is, till God should put an end to his life by a natural death, as Nebuchadnezzar had long before put an end to every comfort of his life by putting out his eyes. And, lastly, he foretels that all their attempts to force the besiegers from their trenches would be ineffectual; for though they should fight with the Chaldeans, they should not prosper. For prophesying thus, that is, for bearing testimony to the truth, and giving them faithful warning of impending judgments, he is imprisoned.

Verses 6-8. *The word of the Lord came unto me*—“Jeremiah, after having just informed us why he was put in prison, returns to his design, and tells us that God had advised him, probably in a dream or vision, that Hanameel, his cousin, should come to him with the offer of a field in Anathoth; the right of redeeming whereof was in him. Jeremiah might have given up his right, as not being in a situation to make the purchase; but, understanding from the revelation of the Lord, that this affair had a mystical reference, and that he ought to accept the offer of his cousin, he purchased the field, as is afterward related, with the full process and meaning of the affair.”—Dodd. The field, being in Anathoth, near Jerusalem, was consequently at this time actually in the possession of the Chaldean army. And the design of God in directing Jeremiah to purchase it was to signify, that though Jerusalem was now besieged, and the whole country was likely to be laid waste, yet the time should come when houses, and fields, and vineyards should be again possessed in that land, verse 15. As God appointed Jeremiah to confirm his predictions of the approaching destruction of Jerusalem by his own practice in living unmarried, so he now appointed him to confirm his predictions of the future restoration of Jerusalem by his own practice in purchasing this field. The Roman historian, Florus, relates, as a great instance of the bravery of the Roman citizens, that in the time of the second Punic war, when Hannibal besieged Rome, and was very near making himself master of it, a field, on which part of his army lay, being offered for sale at that time, was presently purchased, in a

A. M. 3415. heritance is thine, and the redemption  
B. C. 589. is thine; buy it for thyself. Then I  
knew that this *was* the word of the LORD.

9 And I bought the field of Hanameel mine  
uncle's son, that *was* in Anathoth, and <sup>h</sup>weighed  
him the money, *even* <sup>1</sup>seventeen shekels of  
silver.

10 And I <sup>2</sup>subscribed the evidence, and sealed  
it, and took witnesses, and weighed *him* the  
money in the balances.

11 So I took the evidence of the purchase,  
*both* that which was sealed *according* to the  
law and custom, and that which was open:

12 And I gave the evidence of the purchase  
unto <sup>1</sup>Baruch the son of Neriah, the son of  
Maaseiah, in the sight of Hanameel mine  
uncle's son, and in the presence of the <sup>h</sup>wit-  
nesses that subscribed the book of the purchase,  
before all the Jews that sat in the court of the  
prison.

13 ¶ And I charged Baruch before them,  
saying,

14 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of  
Israel; Take these evidences, this evidence of

<sup>h</sup> Gen. xxiii. 16; Zech. xi. 12.—<sup>1</sup> Or, *seven shekels and ten pieces of silver.*—<sup>2</sup> Heb. *wrote in the book.*—<sup>3</sup> Chap. xxxvi. 4.  
<sup>4</sup> Isa. viii. 2.—<sup>5</sup> Ver. 37, 43.—<sup>6</sup> 2 Kings xix. 15.—<sup>7</sup> Gen. xviii. 14; Verse 27; Luke i. 37.

firm belief that the Roman valour would raise the  
siege, lib. ii. cap. 6. And have not we much more  
reason to venture our all upon the word of God, and  
to embark on Zion's interests, which will undoubt-  
edly be the prevailing interests at last?

Verse 9. *I weighed him the money*—In ancient  
times all money was paid by weight, a custom still  
used in several countries; *even seventeen shekels of  
silver*—A sum which, in our money, is not much  
above forty shillings; a small price for a field or  
piece of ground. It must be considered, however,  
“that the quantity of land is uncertain, and that  
the circumstances of the times must have greatly  
tended to lessen the value of land. The field in  
question was at the time of the purchase in the en-  
emy's possession; and the purchaser well knew that  
he or his heirs had no chance of entering upon it till  
after the expiration of the seventy years' captivity.  
Besides, the seller, it is likely, was in the immediate  
want of the money, and could get no one else to pur-  
chase in the precarious situation things were in. He  
might therefore be glad to take what the prophet,  
who, doubtless, was not rich, was able to give, and who  
would not have thought of making the purchase at  
any rate had he not acted under the divine direction  
for a special purpose.”—Blaney.

Verses 10–14. *I subscribed the evidence, and sealed  
it*—I wrote down an account of the transaction in a  
book. The method it appears then in use among

the purchase, both which is sealed, A. M. 3415.  
and this evidence which is open; and <sup>1</sup> B. C. 589.  
put them in an earthen vessel, that they may  
continue many days.

15 For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God  
of Israel; Houses and fields and vineyards  
<sup>1</sup>shall be possessed again in this land.

16 ¶ Now when I had delivered the evidence  
of the purchase unto Baruch the son of Neriah,  
I prayed unto the LORD, saying,

17 Ah Lord God! behold, <sup>m</sup>thou hast made  
the heaven and the earth by thy great power  
and stretched-out arm, and <sup>n</sup>there is nothing  
<sup>3</sup>too hard for thee:

18 Thou showest <sup>o</sup>loving-kindness unto thou-  
sands, and recompensest the iniquity of the  
fathers into the bosom of their children after  
them: the Great, <sup>p</sup>the Mighty God, <sup>q</sup>the  
LORD of hosts, *is* his name;

19 <sup>r</sup>Great in counsel, and mighty in <sup>s</sup>work:  
for thine <sup>t</sup>eyes *are* open upon all the ways of  
the sons of men; <sup>u</sup>to give every one accord-  
ing to his ways, and according to the fruit of  
his doings:

<sup>3</sup> Or, *hid from thee.*—<sup>o</sup> Exodus xx. 6; xxxiv. 7; Deut. v. 9,  
10.—<sup>p</sup> Isaiah ix. 6.—<sup>q</sup> Chap. x. 16.—<sup>r</sup> Isaiah xxviii. 29.  
<sup>4</sup> Heb. *doing.*—<sup>s</sup> Job xxxiv. 21; Psa. xxxiii. 13; Prov. v. 21,  
Chap. xvi. 17.—<sup>t</sup> Chap. xvii. 10.

the Jews when any purchase was made was, that  
the purchaser, as well as those who sold, testified his  
consent by some writing signed before witnesses.  
*I took the evidence, both that which was sealed  
and that which was open*—The open, or unsealed writing,  
was either a copy of the sealed one, or else a certifi-  
cate of the witnesses, in whose presence the deed of  
purchase was signed and sealed. *I gave the evidence  
of the purchase unto Baruch*—“Baruch was a scribe  
by profession, and it may be concluded that the at-  
tendance of such a one, skilled in the forms of law,  
was necessary on those occasions, both to draw up  
the writings and to officiate in the character of a  
notary public. And to his custody, as being a pub-  
lic officer, the custody of the title-deeds was intrust-  
ed.” *I charged Baruch, to put them in an earthen  
vessel*—To preserve them from fire and moisture.  
It was common with the ancients to put their writings  
into earthen vessels. Origen found at Jericho a  
version of the Scriptures hid in an earthen pot.  
*That they may continue many days*—When hid  
under ground for greater security, to be produced  
when the land should be reinhabited.

Verses 18–22. *When I had delivered the evidence,  
I prayed unto the Lord*—What he prayed for we  
learn in the following verses: by which it appears  
that he was not without some doubts and perplexi-  
ties in this business. And though he yielded a  
ready and absolute obedience to God's command,

A. M. 3415. 20 Which hast set signs and won-  
B. C. 589. ders in the land of Egypt, *even* unto

this day, and in Israel, and among *other men* ; and hast made thee <sup>a</sup> a name, as at this day ;

21 And <sup>x</sup> hast brought forth thy people Israel out of the land of Egypt with signs, and with wonders, and with a strong hand, and with a stretched-out arm, and with great terror ;

22 And hast given them this land, which thou didst swear to their fathers to give them, <sup>y</sup> a land flowing with milk and honey ;

23 And they came in, and possessed it ; but <sup>z</sup> they obeyed not thy voice, neither walked in thy law ; they have done nothing of all that thou commandedst them to do ; therefore

<sup>a</sup> Exod. ix. 16 ; 1 Chron. xvii. 21 ; Isa. lxiii. 12 ; Dan. ix. 15.  
<sup>x</sup> Exod. vi. 6 ; 2 Sam. vii. 23 ; 1 Chron. xvii. 21 ; Psa. cxxxvi. 11, 12.—<sup>y</sup> Exod. iii. 8, 17 ; Chap. xi. 5.

yet he prays for a clearer revelation of his meaning in the matter. *Saying, Ah Lord God!* &c.—He begins his prayer with an acknowledgment of God's infinite power, made manifest in his works, both of creation and providence, whereby he shows himself wonderful in his mercies, and terrible in his judgments. It is observable that God himself makes use of these instances to confirm his people's faith in his ability to do whatever he pleases, chap. xxvii. 5. And the servants of God are often represented in holy writ as giving God such names and titles, and ascribing to him such attributes, as were calculated to strengthen their faith in prayer. *And there is nothing too hard for thee*—Hebrew, לא יפלא מך, too wonderful for thee, or, hidden from thee, as some render the clause: that is, out of the reach of thy wisdom and power to bring to pass. *Thou showest loving-kindness unto thousands, and recompensest, &c.*—This name God gave himself, Exod. xxxiv. 7 ; Deut. v. 9, 10, where see the notes ; and concerning the latter clause, the note on chap. xxxi. 29, 30. *The great, the mighty God, the Lord of hosts*—The God of infinite majesty, of boundless power, and of universal dominion, and therefore worthy of all adoration and praise, of all reverence and fear, of all subjection and obedience. *Great in counsel, and mighty in work*—Who art infinitely wise in ordering all events, and powerful in putting thy decrees in execution. *Thine eyes are open upon all the ways, &c.*—Beholding the evil and the good, and that not as an unconcerned spectator, but as an observing judge ; to give every one according to his ways—To reward or punish men according to their actions, and the principles from which they proceed. *Who hast set signs and wonders in the land of Egypt*—Who didst wonders of justice in the land of Egypt, which remain, if not in the marks, yet in the memorials of them, unto this day. *And in Israel*—An wroughtest wonders of mercy in Israel, bringing them out of Egypt through the Red sea, raining

upon them : A. M. 3415.  
B. C. 589.

24 Behold the <sup>6</sup> mounts, they are come unto the city to take it ; and the city <sup>a</sup> is given into the hand of the Chaldeans, that fight against it, because of <sup>b</sup> the sword, and of the famine, and of the pestilence : and what thou hast spoken <sup>c</sup> is come to pass ; and behold, thou seest *it*.

25 And thou hast said unto me, O Lord God, Buy thee the field for money, and take witnesses ; <sup>6</sup> for <sup>o</sup> the city is given into the hand of the Chaldeans.

26 ¶ Then came the word of the LORD unto Jeremiah, saying,

27 Behold, I *am* the LORD, the <sup>d</sup> God of all

<sup>z</sup> Neh. ix. 26 ; Chap. xi. 8 ; Dan. ix. 10-14.—<sup>a</sup> Or, engines of shot, Chap. xxxiii. 4.—<sup>b</sup> Verses 25, 36.—<sup>c</sup> Chap. xiv. 12.  
<sup>6</sup> Or, though.—<sup>o</sup> Verse 24.—<sup>d</sup> Num. xvi. 22.

down manna upon them, and quails from heaven, and fetching water out of the rock for them ; and among *other men*—And hast also done many wondrous works in other places, by which thou hast made thyself a glorious name.

Verses 23-25. *And they came in and possessed it*—In the former two verses he acknowledges God's goodness to Israel, here he owns his truth and faithfulness in bringing them into the land which he had promised them. *But they obeyed not thy voice*—Having borne testimony to God's power, wisdom, and faithfulness, he comes now to own his justice, confessing that this people for whom he had done so much, had very ill requited him. *They have done nothing at all that thou commandedst them, &c.*—They have not only broken some particular laws, but thy whole law. *Therefore thou hast caused all this evil, &c.*—Therefore thou art righteous in bringing these judgments upon them. *Behold the mounts*—The ramparts raised against the walls for placing battering engines on, and engines to cast weapons against the defenders, or for the purpose of making a general assault and taking the city. *And the city is given*—Is ready to be given ; *into the hand of the Chaldeans, because of the sword, &c.*—Such is the havoc that the sword, the famine, and the pestilence make among the people, that they cannot make head against the besiegers, but must be overcome by them. *And thou hast said unto me, Buy thee the field for money*—In this posture of affairs, when the city, and the country round about it, are in the power of the enemy, thou hast commanded me to make this purchase, which I have no prospect of ever enjoying. As if he had said, Lord ! expound thy meaning to me, why thou shouldst set me to make purchases for thine enemies to possess.

Verses 26-35. *Then came the word of the Lord unto Jeremiah*—To this difficulty of Jeremiah, between what was commanded him, and the prospect of its being, not only useless, but disadvantageous to

A. M. 3415. flesh : ° is there any thing too hard  
B. C. 589. for me ?

28 Therefore thus saith the LORD ; Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the Chaldeans, and into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, and he shall take it :

29 And the Chaldeans, that fight against this city, shall come and ° set fire on this city, and burn it with the houses, ° upon whose roofs they have offered incense unto Baal, and poured out drink-offerings unto other gods, to provoke me to anger.

30 For the children of Israel and the children of Judah ° have only done evil before me from their youth : for the children of Israel have only provoked me to anger with the work of their hands, saith the LORD.

31 For this city hath been to me as ° a provocation of mine anger and of my fury from

\* Verse 17.—<sup>f</sup> Verse 3.—<sup>g</sup> Chap. xxi. 10 ; xxxvii. 8, 10 ; lii. 13.—<sup>h</sup> Chap. xix. 13.—<sup>i</sup> Chap. ii. 7 ; iii. 25 ; vii. 22-26 ; xxiii. 21 ; Ezek. xx. 28.—<sup>j</sup> Heb. for my anger.—<sup>k</sup> 2 Kings xxiii. 27, xxiv. 3.

him, the Lord answered, *Behold, I am the God of all flesh*—Of all men : *is anything too hard for me ?*—The difficulties which thou thinkest are not to be surmounted are not difficulties to me, who can do all things, and have the lives and actions of men wholly at my disposal. *Therefore, thus saith the Lord*—The Lord now proceeds to confirm again the predictions so frequently given, concerning both the destruction and the restoration of Jerusalem ; and to explain more fully the reasons of his conduct toward the Jews and Israelites. *The Chaldeans, that fight against this city shall burn it*—Thou judgest right : this city shall be taken, and that by this very army of Chaldeans which now besieges it ; who shall destroy it by fire ; *with the houses, upon whose roofs they have offered incense, &c.*—As if he had said, In the execution of my vengeance I shall not act by absolute power, but as a just and righteous judge, vindicating the honour of my violated laws. For they have polluted their houses by idolatrous worship upon the roofs of them, openly and publicly, in contempt of my authority, and defiance of my justice. *For the children of Israel and Judah have only done evil before me, &c.*—If they had offended me only by some particular acts of sin, or by omitting their duty in only some few instances, or but for a short time, I might have been thought to act with severity toward them ; but from the time they first began to be a nation they have only provoked me to anger with the works of their hands—Passing from one course of sin, and from one species of idolatry, to another. *For this city hath been a provocation of mine anger, &c.*—The conduct of its inhabitants has been generally and long provoking : they began betimes, and have

the day that they built it even unto A. M. 3418.  
this day ; ° that I should remove it B. C. 589.  
from before my face,

32 Because of all the evil of the children of Israel and of the children of Judah, which they have done to provoke me to anger, ° they, their kings, their princes, their priests, and their prophets, and the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

33 And they have turned unto me the ° back, ° and not the face : though I taught them, ° rising up early and teaching them, yet they have not hearkened to receive instruction.

34 But they ° set their abominations in the house which is called by my name, to defile it.

35 And they built the high places of Baal, which are in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to ° cause their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire unto ° Molech ; ° which I com-

<sup>1</sup> Isa. i. 4, 6 ; Dan. ix. 8.—<sup>2</sup> Heb. neck.—<sup>3</sup> Chap. ii. 27 ; vii. 24.—<sup>4</sup> Chap. vii. 13.—<sup>5</sup> Chap. vii. 30 ; xxiii. 11 ; Ezek. viii. 5, 6.—<sup>6</sup> Chapter vii. 31 ; xix. 5.—<sup>7</sup> Leviticus xviii. 21 ; 1 Kings xi. 33.—<sup>8</sup> Chap. vii. 21.

continued in the commission of the most daring wickedness from age to age. *From the day that they built it*—Or, *that it was built*, the verb personal being often used for the impersonal. Solomon completed the building of Jerusalem, having greatly enlarged and beautified it with the temple and other stately buildings, and he afterward greatly defiled it by idolatry, the sin here spoken of. See 1 Kings xi. 7, compared with 2 Kings xxiii. 13. And, except in David's time, the worship of God could hardly be said to be preserved pure through the entire reign of any one king. *That I should remove it from before my face*—As if they had pursued these idolatrous practices on purpose to provoke me to destroy the city, and to cast its inhabitants out of it. As nothing can be more easy than for people to keep close to the divine rule, as to external acts of worship, so nothing is more provoking to God than their not doing so. And yet nothing has been more rarely done in any nation ; as if men had set themselves to bid defiance to a jealous God. *Because of all the evil of the children of Israel*—Still God makes their destruction to be of themselves, provoking him to that wrath which he executed upon them. *They, their kings, their princes, &c.*—The whole head was sick, the whole heart faint. All orders of men were so corrupted that there was no hope of their reformation or amendment. *They have turned unto me the back and not the face*—They have behaved themselves contemptuously toward me, like men who, when they are admonished or instructed, instead of looking toward those who instruct or admonish them, turn their backs upon them : see note on chap. ii. 27. *Though I taught them, rising up early, &c.*—Their sin would not have been so great

A. M. 3415. manded them not, neither came it  
B. C. 589. into my mind, that they should do  
this abomination, to cause Judah to sin.

36 ¶ And now therefore thus saith the LORD,  
the God of Israel, concerning this city, whereof  
ye say, <sup>a</sup>It shall be delivered into the hand of  
the king of Babylon by the sword, and by the  
famine, and by the pestilence;

37 Behold, I will <sup>c</sup>gather them out of all  
countries, whither I have driven them in mine  
anger, and in my fury, and in great wrath;  
and I will bring them again unto this place,  
and I will cause them <sup>d</sup>to dwell safely.

38 And they shall be <sup>e</sup>my people, and I will  
be their God:

39 And I will <sup>f</sup>give them one heart and one

<sup>a</sup> Verse 24.—<sup>c</sup> Deuteron. xxx. 3; Chap. xxiii. 3; xxix. 14; xxxi. 10; Ezekiel xxxvii. 21.—<sup>d</sup> Chapter xxiii. 6; xxxiii. 16. <sup>e</sup> Chap. xxiv. 7; xxx. 22; xxxi. 33.—<sup>f</sup> Chap. xxiv. 7; Ezek. xi. 19, 20.

and heinous if I, by my prophets, had not so continually instructed and reprov'd them; and they as stubbornly refused to hearken to the instruction, and to be amended by the reproofs. *They set their abominations*—Their idols, which, above all things, the jealous God abhors; *in the house which is called by my name*—That is, in the temple, which was ordinarily called *the house of the Lord*. This they did under some of the idolatrous kings. *And they built the high places of Baal, &c.*—See the notes on chap. xix. 5, 6, where all the clauses of this verse are explained.

Verses 36–39. *Now therefore, &c.*—In this and the following verses God returns an answer to the prophet's expostulation, verse 25. Or the words may be thus translated, *But now, notwithstanding, [all this,] thus saith the Lord; concerning this city, whereof ye say, It shall be delivered into the hand, &c.*—Many of the Jews now began to see that the Chaldeans would certainly take the city, and they became as much dispirited as before they were full of courage. *By the sword and by the famine, &c.*—The famine and pestilence, as well as the sword, seemed to fight for the king of Babylon, by the great havoc they made of the besieged, which rendered the taking of the city so much easier. *Behold I will gather them out of all countries, &c.*—See notes on chap. xxiii. 3, 8, and xxix. 14. *I will bring them again, &c., and cause them to dwell safely*—Though the city shall be taken, and the people shall go into captivity, yet they shall not be utterly lost, for I will gather them again, and they shall dwell here in quietness and safety as formerly. It is justly observed, however, by St. Jerome, in his notes on the place, that this promise, taken in its full extent, was not made good to those that returned from captivity, because they were frequently infested with wars, as well by the kings of Syria and Egypt, as by the rest of their neighbours, as appears from the history of the Mac-

way, that they may fear me <sup>g</sup>for ever, A. M. 3415.  
for the good of them, and of their <sup>h</sup>children after them: B. C. 589.

40 And <sup>i</sup>I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away <sup>j</sup>from them, to do them good; but <sup>k</sup>I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.

41 Yea, <sup>l</sup>I will rejoice over them to do them good, and <sup>m</sup>I will plant them in this land <sup>n</sup>assuredly with my whole heart and with my whole soul.

42 For thus saith the LORD; <sup>o</sup>Like as I have brought all this great evil upon this people, so will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised them.

<sup>g</sup> Heb. *all days*.—<sup>h</sup> Isaiah lv. 3; Chap. xxxi. 31.—<sup>i</sup> Heb. *from after them*.—<sup>j</sup> Chap. xxxi. 33.—<sup>k</sup> Deut. xxx. 9; Zeph. iii. 17.—<sup>l</sup> Chap. xxiv. 6; xxxi. 28; Amos ix. 15.—<sup>m</sup> Heb. *in truth, or, stability*.—<sup>n</sup> Chap. xxxi. 28.

cabees; and were finally subdued and destroyed by the Romans. *And they shall be my people, &c.*—See note on chap. xxiv. 7, and xxx. 22. *And I will give them one heart and one way*—When the ten tribes set up a distinct kingdom from that of Judah, they stood divided, not only in their civil interests, but also in respect to their religious worship. These distinctions, God here says, he would entirely abolish, so that Israel and Judah should be united, and become one nation and one church, living under the same civil government, and using the same forms of divine worship, equally acknowledging and serving the one living and true God. *That they may fear me for ever*—That they may worship and obey me in truth, as a people that have a real reverence for and fear of offending me; *for the good of them and of their children*—Which will be for the great advantage and happiness of them and their posterity as long as they shall continue so to do. This promise, in its full sense, will not be accomplished till the general conversion of Judah and Israel to Christianity, and their restoration and reunion in the latter days. See notes on chap. iii. 18, and xxx. 3.

Verses 40–44. *And I will make an everlasting covenant with them*—The Jewish covenant, even with respect to the ceremonial ordinances contained in it, is sometimes called an *everlasting covenant*: see Gen. xvii. 13; Lev. xxiv. 8; Isa. xxiv. 5; because those ordinances were to continue for a long succession of ages; but when this expression is applied to the gospel covenant, there is a peculiar emphasis contained in it, implying that it should never be abolished, or give way to any other dispensation. *That I will not turn away from them to do them good*—This clause manifestly shows, that this promise relates to those Jews and Israelites that should embrace the gospel, and become *Jews inwardly, and Israelites indeed*; for, as to others, God did turn away from doing them good, when their city was

A. M. 3415. 43 And <sup>o</sup> fields shall be bought in  
B. C. 589. this land, <sup>f</sup> whereof ye say, *It is desolate*  
without man or beast; it is given into  
the hand of the Chaldeans.

44 Men shall buy fields for money, and subscribe evidences, and seal *them*, and take wit-

<sup>o</sup> Verse 15.—<sup>f</sup> Chap. xxxiii. 10.

taken by Titus, and so many myriads of them perished by the sword, famine, and pestilence. *But I will put my fear into their hearts*—My Spirit shall beget in them a true reverence for, and genuine, loving fear of me, producing obedience to my laws, subjection to my authority, and perseverance in my ways, *so that they shall not depart from me*. Some justly infer from this declaration, that when once the body of the Jews shall be converted, they shall never again apostatize from God. *Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good*—I will not only do them good, but will take pleasure therein. *And I will plant them, &c., assuredly, with my whole heart*—With a true and lasting affection. *Like as I have brought all this great evil, &c.*—They shall find me as true to my promises as to my threatenings. See chap.

nesses in <sup>e</sup> the land of Benjamin, and A. M. 3415.  
in the places about Jerusalem, and in B. C. 589.  
the cities of Judah, and in the cities of the mountains, and in the cities of the valley, and in the cities of the south: for <sup>h</sup> I will cause their captivity to return, saith the LORD.

<sup>e</sup> Chap. xvii. 26.—<sup>h</sup> Chap. xxxiii. 7, 11, 26.

xxxi. 28. *And fields shall be bought in this land, &c.*—So that it was not without good reason that I sent Hanameel unto thee, verse 8. It was to assure thee that, though at present the Chaldeans shall prevail against Jerusalem, and the Jews shall be carried into captivity, and shall neither buy nor sell here, yet fields shall be bought here again. Men shall buy and sell, and seal evidences in all parts of this land, whereof you say, in despair, *It is desolate without man or beast*—Having no hope of the land being ever inhabited by your nation again. *For I will cause their captivity to return, saith the Lord*—The return of their captivity under Cyrus shall be an earnest of those greater blessings which I will bestow upon them at their general restoration.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

*This chapter contains a prophecy, which, though applicable, in some parts, to the restoration of the Jews from Babylon, cannot, however, be so applied upon the whole, for reasons already touched upon in the notes on chap. xxx. and xxxi.* (1.) *God here reveals his gracious purpose of healing the wounds of Jerusalem, restoring the captivity both of Israel and Judah, forgiving their sins, and distinguishing them with such blessings as to strike the astonished nations with fear and trembling, 1-9.* (2.) *He foretels that the land, whose desolation they deplored, should again flourish with multitudes both of men and cattle, 10-13.* (3.) *He confirms his former promise of establishing a kingdom of righteousness in a branch of the house of David, and rendering it perpetual, together with the priesthood of the sons of Levi, 14-18.* (4.) *He declares his covenant, in this respect, with David and the Levites, to be as sure as the covenant of day and night, 19-22.* And, (5.) *To remove the reproach of having cast off those families whom he had once distinguished by his choice, he renews his protestations of infallibly restoring the seed of Jacob, and of appointing the seed of David to rule over them for ever, 23-26.*

A. M. 3415. **M**OREOVER the word of the  
B. C. 589. LORD came unto Jeremiah the second time, while he was yet <sup>a</sup> shut up in the court of the prison, saying,

<sup>a</sup> Chap. xxxii. 2, 3.—<sup>b</sup> Isa. xxxvii. 26.—<sup>1</sup> Or, *JEHOVAH*.

### NOTES ON CHAPTER XXXIII.

Verse 1. *The word of the Lord came unto Jeremiah the second time*—See note on chap. xxxii. 2. Jeremiah being forced out of the temple, God follows him to the prison, and there reveals his mind to him once and again. The wickedness of the Jews in persecuting the prophet could not make God's promises of no effect respecting mercy to be shown to the people after the captivity; which promises, though made before, are here confirmed a second time.

3

2 Thus saith the LORD the <sup>b</sup> maker A. M. 3415.  
thereof, the LORD that formed it, to B. C. 589.  
establish it; <sup>1</sup> The <sup>a</sup> LORD is his name:

3 <sup>d</sup> Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and

<sup>c</sup> Exod. xv. 3; Amos v. 8; ix. 6.—<sup>d</sup> Psa. xci. 15; Ch. xxix. 12.

Verse 2. *Thus saith the Lord, the maker thereof*—That is, as many interpreters understand it, of the city of Jerusalem, a figure of that church spoken of before: see chap. xxxii. 36, 44, compared with the 4th, 6th, and 9th verses of this chapter. Blaney, however, renders the clause, *Thus saith Jehovah the doer of it, Jehovah the framer of it, who also disposeth it*, considering the pronoun *it* as referring to the thing which God here says he is about to do.

Verse 3. *Call unto me, and I will answer thee*—An expression manifesting God's favour and loving

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A. M. 3415. show thee great and <sup>2</sup> mighty things, B. C. 589. which thou knowest not.

4 For thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning the houses of this city, and concerning the houses of the kings of Judah, which are thrown down by <sup>3</sup> the mounts, and by the sword ;

5 <sup>1</sup> They come to fight with the Chaldeans, but it is to fill them with the dead bodies of men, whom I have slain in mine anger and in my fury, and for all whose wickedness I have hid my face from this city.

6 Behold, <sup>5</sup> I will bring it health and cure, and I will cure them, and will reveal unto them the abundance of peace and truth.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *hidden*, Isa. xlviii. 6.—<sup>2</sup> Chap. xxxii. 24.—<sup>3</sup> Chapter xxxii. 5.—<sup>4</sup> Chapter xxx. 17.—<sup>5</sup> Chapter xxx. 3; xxxii. 44; Verse 11.—<sup>6</sup> Isa. i. 26; Chap. xxiv. 6; xxx. 20; xxxi. 4, 28;

kindness ; that he was ready to comply with the first intimations of his servant's desires. Compare chap. xxix. 12. God, by thus directing his discourse to Jeremiah, not only signified his kindness toward him, but likewise the affection he still bore to his people, for whom this prophet so earnestly interceded, and whose welfare he had so much at heart. *And show thee great and mighty things*—That is, give thee a clear and full prospect of them. Hebrew, גורלות ונצרות, *great and abstruse, or, hidden things*, as some render the words ; *which thou knowest not*—And canst not know without further revelation, meaning, probably, not only what related to the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, but likewise the blessings to be conferred upon them in the times of the Messiah.

Verses 4, 5. *Thus saith the Lord concerning the houses of this city*—Not excepting those of the kings of Judah, thrown down by the mounts—Namely, by the battering engines placed upon the mounts, which were raised against the walls of the city ; *and by the sword*—By the violence of war. The Hebrew word generally rendered sword may mean any instrument of iron, and particularly such as were used in demolishing any building. It is rendered a *mattock* by our translators, 2 Chron. xxiv. 6, and *axes*, Ezek. xxvi. 9. *They come to fight with the Chaldeans*—Most interpreters understand this as spoken of the Jews sallying forth against the Chaldeans, to beat them off from the siege, which they attempted to do in vain, and to their own destruction, only thus filling the houses of Jerusalem with the dead bodies of their men, who died of the wounds received from the Chaldeans in making those sallies. And the verse is thought to come in by way of parenthesis, between the fourth and sixth, to show that at present God would not prosper any efforts that were made for the defence of the city, though he would restore it hereafter to its former splendour.

Verses 6-8. *Behold, I will bring it health and cure*—The latter part of this verse expounds the

7 And <sup>1a</sup> I will cause the captivity A. M. 3416 of Judah and the captivity of Israel B. C. 589. to return, and will build them, <sup>4</sup> as at the first.

8 And I will <sup>2</sup> cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me ; and I will <sup>1</sup> pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me.

9 <sup>2</sup> And it shall be to me a name of joy, a praise, and an honour, before all the nations of the earth, which shall hear all the good that I do unto them : and they shall <sup>3</sup> fear and tremble for all the goodness and for all the prosperity that I procure unto it.

xlii. 10.—<sup>1</sup> Ezek. xxxvi. 25; Zech. xiii. 1; Heb. ix. 13, 14. <sup>1</sup> Chap. xxxi. 34; Mic. vii. 18.—<sup>2</sup> Isa. lxii. 7; Chap. xlii. 11. <sup>3</sup> Isaiah lx. 5.

former, for, by *health and cure*, the prophet means *peace and truth, or, stability*. Blaney renders it, *I will make it, namely, the city or state perfectly sound and whole*. The disturbed and calamitous state of the nation being compared to wounds and sickness, (see chap. viii. 21, 22, and xxx. 17,) the restoring of it to a peaceful and prosperous state is fitly called its health and cure. *And will build them as at the first*—When they, by repentance, do their first works, God will, by their restoration, manifest toward them his ancient mercies and loving-kindnesses. He will not only cause their captivity to return, as is expressed, in plain words, in the former clause, but will re-establish them in the possession of their civil and religious privileges, and hereby promote both their virtue and happiness. *And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity*—I will make them pious and holy, as well as virtuous and happy ; *and I will pardon all their iniquities*—Will not impute their past sins any longer to them as I have done, but will remit the further punishments to which for sin they were liable.

Verse 9. *And it shall be to me a praise and an honour*—Jerusalem thus rebuilt, and Judah thus re-established, shall be to my glory before all the nations. In other words, it is foretold here that God's especial providence over the Jews, in restoring their city and temple, and re-establishing them in their own land, should be taken notice of by the heathen world, and should cause them to give glory to that God whom the Jews worshipped : see Ezra i. 2, and vi. 12. Or, as the words may imply, *This renewed nation shall be as much a reputation to religion as formerly they were a reproach to it*. This promise, however, has been much more signally fulfilled in the Christian Church, to which the heathen resorted, as to the seat and temple of truth, than it has yet been in the Jewish. *And they shall fear and tremble for the goodness that I do unto it*—These surprising effects of my goodness shall produce an astonishment like that which arises from fear. Or,

A. M. 3415. 10 ¶ Thus saith the LORD; Again  
B. C. 589. there shall be heard in this place,  
\* which ye say *shall be desolate* without man  
and without beast, *even* in the cities of Judah,  
and in the streets of Jerusalem, that are deso-  
late, without man, and without inhabitant, and  
without beast,

11 The <sup>2</sup> voice of joy, and the voice of glad-  
ness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice  
of the bride, the voice of them that shall say,  
¶ Praise the LORD of hosts: for the LORD is  
good; for his mercy *endureth* for ever: *and* of  
them that shall bring <sup>3</sup> the sacrifices of praise  
into the house of the LORD. For <sup>4</sup> I will cause  
to return the captivity of the land, as at the  
first, saith the LORD.

12 ¶ Thus saith the LORD of hosts; <sup>5</sup> Again  
in this place, which is desolate without man

\* Chap. xxxii. 43.—<sup>2</sup> Chap. vii. 34; xvi. 9; xxv. 10; Rev. xviii. 23.—<sup>3</sup> 1 Chron. xvi. 8, 34; 2 Chron. v. 13; vii. 3; Ezra iii. 11; Psa. cxxxvii. 1; Isa. xii. 4.—<sup>4</sup> Lev. vii. 12; Psa. cvii. 22; cxvi. 17.

the meaning is, They shall fear to engage against a nation so beloved and favoured by me, Exod. xv. 14-16.

Verses 10, 11. *Again there shall be heard in this place which ye say shall be desolate*—See note on chap. xxxii. 43; *the voice of joy and the voice of gladness*—The contrary to what takes place in the times of captivity and desolation. *The voice of them that shall say, Praise ye the Lord, for the Lord is good, &c.*—We read, (Ezra iii. 11,) that those who returned from captivity used this very hymn. *And of them that shall bring the sacrifice of praise into the house of the Lord*—Such as was wont to be offered upon any great deliverance. See Lev. vii. 12; Psa. cvii. 22, and cxvi. 17. The Hebrew, מנאִים וְתוֹרָה, is literally, *of them that bring praise, or, thanksgiving*, there being nothing for the word *sacrifice*. This, however, is called by St. Paul, *the sacrifice of praise, even the fruit of our lips*, (Heb. xiii. 15,) to distinguish it from the oblations commanded by the law, which consisted of the fruits of the ground, or of the flock and herd. The sum of this verse is, that those who were carried into captivity should return, and, upon their return, should be in their former state as to civil transactions, marrying and giving in marriage; and, as to religion, should publicly praise the Lord with holy and spiritual joy, as they had been wont to do in the best and most prosperous times of their commonwealth, which was fulfilled, as we see, Neh. xii. 27-40.

Verses 12, 13. *Again in this place shall be a habitation for shepherds, &c.*—See chap. i. 19; Isa. lxxv. 10. In those places which were desolate, without man and beast, there should be flocks and herds of sheep and goats, which the shepherds should take care of as in former times. *And in the cities of Ju-*

and without beast, and in all the cities thereof, shall be a habitation of shepherds causing *their* flocks to lie down.

13. <sup>6</sup> In the cities of the mountains, in the cities of the vale, and in the cities of the south, and in the land of Benjamin, and in the places about Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, shall the flocks <sup>7</sup> pass again under the hands of him that telleth *them*, saith the LORD.

14 <sup>8</sup> Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that <sup>9</sup> I will perform that good thing which I have promised unto the house of Israel and to the house of Judah.

15 ¶ In those days, and at that time, will I cause the <sup>10</sup> Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land.

16 <sup>11</sup> In those days shall Judah be saved, and

\* Verse 7.—<sup>1</sup> Isa. lxxv. 10; Chap. xxxi. 24; i. 19.—<sup>2</sup> Chap. xvii. 26; xxxii. 44.—<sup>3</sup> Levit. xxvii. 32.—<sup>4</sup> Chapter xxxiii. 5; xxxi. 27, 31.—<sup>5</sup> Chap. xxix. 10.—<sup>6</sup> Isa. iv. 2; xi. 1; Chap. xxxiii. 5.—<sup>7</sup> Chap. xxxiii. 6.

*dah shall the flocks pass again under the hands of him that telleth them*—Namely, so as to keep account of them, as they were wont to do, both morning and evening in those countries. Virgil alludes to the same custom, when he says, *Ecl. iii. Bisque die numerant ambo pecus, alter et hœdos; Twice each day they count my goats and sheep*. See Lev. xxvii. 32, where חָשַׁב וְחִשְׁבָה, *passing under the rod*, means their being numbered, the shepherds striking every sheep with his rod, or crook, as it passed out of the fold, and so counting them; and the expression here made use of, עַל יַד כּוֹנֵן, *under the hand of him that numbers them*, seems to signify the same thing.

Verses 14-16. *Behold, the days come that I will perform that good thing, &c.*—The Lord's word is not *yea* and *nay*: he cannot lie, or repent. There shall come a time when he will verify every good word which he hath spoken to, or concerning, his people. *In those days will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up to David*—The kings they had hitherto had of the line of David were most of them unrighteous men; but God here promises that after the captivity they should have a branch of David that would execute judgment and righteousness in the land, for the protection and government of those that feared him. If this passage point at all to Zerubbabel, who was a good man, a descendant of David, and, though not a king, a ruler of the Jews, after their return from Babylon, and who governed with equity and not as Jehoiakim had done; yet it can only refer to him as a type of the Messiah, the branch out of the stem of Jesse, Isa. xi. 1; *the branch of the Lord* that was to be *beautiful and glorious*, Isa. iv. 2; and the *righteous branch* that was to be *raised up unto David*, as he is described chap. xxiii.

A. M. 3415. Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and  
B. C. 589. this is the name wherewith she shall  
be called, <sup>3</sup> The LORD our Righteousness.

17 ¶ For thus saith the LORD; <sup>4</sup> David shall  
never <sup>o</sup> want a man to sit upon the throne of the  
house of Israel;

18 Neither shall the priests the Levites want  
a man before me to <sup>d</sup> offer burnt-offerings, and  
to kindle meat-offerings, and to do sacrifice con-  
tinually.

<sup>3</sup> Heb. *Jehovah-tsidkenu*.—<sup>4</sup> Heb. *There shall not be cut off from David*.—<sup>c</sup> 2 Samuel vii. 16; 1 Kings ii. 4; Psa. lxxxix. 29, 36; Luke i. 32, 33.

5, a passage exactly similar to this, and undoubtedly meant of the same person. See the notes on these passages. *In those days shall Judah be saved, &c.*—If a temporal salvation be here at all intended, it must be, not that which the Jews enjoyed for a short season under the government of Zerubbabel, a deliverance and protection from, or security against their enemies, which was very imperfect, and frequently interrupted; but that more perfect salvation, peace, and prosperity, which they shall enjoy in the latter days, after their conversion to Christianity, and restoration to their own land, according to the predictions contained in this and the three preceding chapters. But a spiritual and eternal salvation undoubtedly is chiefly intended here, as well as in the parallel passage, chap. xxiii. 6. *And this is the name wherewith ye shall be called, The Lord our righteousness*—According to this reading it is here foretold, that the name which properly belongs to the Messiah shall be given to Jerusalem, that is, to the church; “to signify,” says Lowth, “that it is in a peculiar manner dedicated to him, he having chosen it for the place of his residence, (see Ezek. xlvi. 35,) and that all the righteousness of the faithful, both their justification and sanctification, is derived from him. This seems,” adds he, “to be the genuine sense of the words, as may appear to any that will compare the original phrase here, קרא לה, with Isa. lxii. 4, 12, where it is said of Zion, *Thou shalt be called Hephzibah, or, my delight is in her, and sought out, a city not forsaken*. Nor is there any greater impropriety in giving the name Jehovah to a city, than in calling an altar *Jehovah-nissi*, that is, *Jehovah my banner*, (Exod. xvii. 15,) and *Jehovah-shalom, Jehovah peace*, (Judg. vi. 24,) in token that the Lord was the author of those mercies of which the said altars were designed to be monuments. So the servants of God are described as having his name written upon their foreheads, Rev. iii. 12; xiv. 1; but several interpreters, particularly Huetius, and our learned Bishop Pearson, (in his *Exposition of the Creed*, p. 165,) render the words thus: *He that shall call her* [to be his peculiar people] *is the Lord our righteousness*.” Thus also Dr. Waterland and others. But Blaney, who renders the last clause of chap. xxiii. 6, *This is the name by which Jehovah shall call him, OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS,*

19 ¶ And the word of the LORD A. M. 3415.  
came unto Jeremiah, saying, B. C. 589.

20 Thus saith the LORD; <sup>o</sup> If ye can break  
my covenant of the day, and my covenant of  
the night, and that there should not be day and  
night in their season;

21 *Then* may also <sup>f</sup> my covenant be broken  
with David, my servant, that he should not have  
a son to reign upon his throne; and with the  
Levites the priests, my ministers.

<sup>4</sup> Romans xii. 1; xv. 16; 1 Peter ii. 5, 9; Revelation i. 6.  
<sup>o</sup> Psalm lxxxix. 37; Isaiah liv. 9; Chapter xxxi. 36; Verse 25.  
<sup>f</sup> Psalm lxxxix. 34.

translates this, *And this is he whom Jehovah shall call OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS*, judging that the ה in הוּ, rendered *her*, is not the feminine pronoun affix, but the masculine, after the Chaldee form.

Verses 17, 18. *For thus saith the Lord, David shall never want a man, &c.*—It is very evident that the prophecies in these verses were not fulfilled in the Jews after the Babylonish captivity; for, from that time to the coming of Christ, David was without a successor of his family sitting upon the throne of Judah or Israel. Nor have they been fulfilled in them since, for, from the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans to the present time, they have neither had a king nor a regular priesthood belonging to their nation. There can therefore be no doubt that Jeremiah here foretels the kingdom of the Messiah, and the priesthood, or ministry rather, to be established by him, by which a *pure* and spiritual *oblation* should be *offered in every place* where a church should be formed for him, (see Mal. i. 11,) and not at Jerusalem and in Judea only. “As the Jewish priesthood, in the family of Aaron, is extinct, and hath been exercised neither in Jerusalem nor in any other place for seventeen centuries, it follows,” says Calmet, “that these promises can respect only the eternal priesthood of Jesus Christ, exercised by himself, and by his ministers, in the Christian Church from the beginning, and which shall continue to the end of time.” Nor is it unusual for God in the Old Testament to express promises relating to, and to be fulfilled under, the gospel, by terms proper to the Old Testament. See Isa. xix. 19; lvi. 7; lxvi. 23. And as the prophets often describe the Christian worship by representations taken from the temple service, so the apostles prove the rights and privileges belonging to the ministers of the gospel from the prerogatives given to the Jewish priesthood. See Rom. xv. 16; 1 Cor. ix. 13, 14.

Verses 20, 21. *If you can break my covenant of the day and of the night*—Called the ordinances of the day and night, chap. xxxi. 35, 36. *Then may also, my covenant be broken with David and with the Levites*—A promise this, that the kingdom of Christ and a Christian ministry shall continue in the church to the end of time. And as *his kingdom shall have no end*, (Luke i. 32, 33,) the words may

A. M. 3415. 22 As <sup>a</sup> the host of heaven cannot  
B. C. 589. be numbered, neither the sand of the  
sea measured: so will I multiply the seed of  
David, my servant, and the Levites that minister  
unto me.

23 ¶ Moreover the word of the LORD came to  
Jeremiah, saying,

24 Considerest thou not what this people  
have spoken, saying, <sup>b</sup> The two families which  
the LORD hath chosen, he hath even cast them  
off? thus they have despised my people, that

<sup>a</sup> Gen. xiii. 16; xv. 5; xxii. 17; Chap. xxxi. 37.—<sup>b</sup> Verses  
21, 22.—<sup>c</sup> Verse 20; Gen. viii. 22.

also be construed as extending to the eternal state,  
in which, as Christ shall reign in glory for ever, so  
his saints shall be priests unto God, and reign for  
ever with him.

Verse 22. *As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, &c.*—The former promise respected the stability, this the enlargement of the church, the members of which are here termed *the seed of David*, as they are elsewhere often called *the seed of Abraham*, being the imitators of the faith of Abraham and David. Or they may be termed *the seed of David*, because they are the seed of Christ, who is sometimes called David in the writings of the prophets, (see chap. xxx. 9,) and whose seed and whose Levites are multiplied in the multiplying of Christians and of faithful ministers under the gospel, which are the blessings here promised.

Verses 24–26. *The two families which the Lord hath chosen*—“It is plain from verse 26,” says Blaney, “that the two families here meant are those of Jacob and David, though some have supposed the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah, others the royal and sacerdotal families of David and Levi, to be intended.” *He hath even cast them off*—The words are spoken by those unbelieving Jews who thought God would never restore them to their former condition, nor give them again a king of the seed of David, thus indirectly accusing him of a breach of

they should be no more a nation before them. A. M. 3415.  
B. C. 589.

25 Thus saith the LORD; If <sup>i</sup> my covenant  
be not with day and night, *and if* I have not  
<sup>k</sup> appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth;  
26 <sup>l</sup> Then will I cast away the seed of Jacob,  
and David my servant, so that I will not take  
*any* of his seed to be rulers over the seed of  
Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: for <sup>m</sup> I will cause  
their captivity to return, and have mercy on  
them.

<sup>k</sup> Psalm lxxiv. 16, 17; civ. 19; Chap. xxxi. 35, 36.—<sup>l</sup> Chap.  
xxx. 37.—<sup>m</sup> Verses 7, 11; Ezra ii. 1.

promise. *Thus they have despised my people, &c.*—Thus, saith God, they have spoken in a reproachful and degrading manner of my people, as if they should never be a nation again, having rulers of themselves and a ministry. *If my covenant be not with day and night, &c.*—If I have not appointed the vicissitudes of day and night, and of summer and winter, upon which the seasons of the year and the fruitfulness of the earth depend; *then will I cast away the seed of Jacob*—Then will I finally, and for ever, abandon the body of the Jews and Israelites; *and David my servant*—Namely, the seed of David, all persons lineally descended from him, so that none of them shall ever hereafter reign over Israel and Judah. The sum of these verses is plainly this, that a restoration of them to their own land should as certainly succeed their captivity as the day succeeds the night, or summer follows winter. God had as certainly ordained the one as the other, and would as certainly have mercy on his people as he would certainly continue the revolutions of the heavenly bodies. And in showing this mercy he would take care that one of the seed of David should be their ruler: which has been, and still more fully shall be, fulfilled in the Messiah, who shall always as certainly govern his church, whether consisting of converted Jews or Gentiles, as there will always be a church on earth to be governed.

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

In this chapter we have two distinct prophecies. The first, dated at the time when Nebuchadnezzar was engaged in carrying on the siege of Jerusalem, and of Lachish, and Azekah, announces to Zedekiah the taking and burning of Jerusalem, and his own captivity, peaceful death, and honourable interment, 1–7. The second prophecy, delivered after the Chaldeans had broken off the siege and were gone to meet the Egyptian army, coming to the relief of Jerusalem, reproaches the people of Judah for their perfidious and inhuman behaviour to their brethren, whom they had released from bondage according to the law; but on thinking all danger from the enemy over, had compelled to resume their former servitude. For this God threatens to let loose upon them at once the sword, the pestilence, and the famine; and to deliver them up to the vexations of the Chaldeans, their cruel enemies, who should return, take, and burn their city, and reduce their country to a solitary waste, 8–22.

A. M. 3415. B. C. 589. **T**HE word which came unto Jeremiah from the LORD, \* when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and all his army, and <sup>b</sup> all the kingdoms of the earth <sup>1</sup> of his dominion, and all the people fought against Jerusalem, and against all the cities thereof, saying,

2 Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel; Go and speak to Zedekiah king of Judah, and tell him, Thus saith the LORD; Behold, \* I will give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and <sup>d</sup> he shall burn it with fire:

3 And \* thou shalt not escape out of his hand, but shalt surely be taken, and delivered into his hand; and thine eyes shall behold the eyes of the king of Babylon, and <sup>2</sup> he shall speak with thee mouth to mouth, and thou shalt go to Babylon.

\* 2 Kings xxv. 1, &c.; Chap. xxxix. 1; lii. 4.—<sup>b</sup> Chap. i. 15.  
<sup>1</sup> Heb. the dominion of his hand.—<sup>c</sup> Chap. xxi. 10; xxxii. 3, 28.  
<sup>d</sup> Chap. xxxii. 29; Verse 22.—\* Chap. xxxii. 4.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XXXIV.

Verse 1. *The word which came unto Jeremiah from the Lord, when Nebuchadnezzar, &c., fought against Jerusalem*—The siege was begun in the ninth year of Zedekiah, the tenth month and tenth day of the month, which answers to the latter end of our December. See chap. lii. 4. Blaney thinks the prophet received this revelation a month or two after the siege was begun, or toward the latter end of Zedekiah's ninth year; namely, during the interval between the raising the siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar and his return to that city, after having repulsed the king of Egypt, who was coming to the succour of Zedekiah, chap. xxxvii. 5. Jeremiah, it appears, was not at this time in prison: see verses 4, 14, 15, of that chapter. *And against all the cities thereof*—The lesser cities of Judea, which were subject to Jerusalem, as their metropolis, called elsewhere the daughters of Judah by way of distinction from the mother city.

Verses 2-5. *Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and thou shalt not escape, &c.*—This prophecy, which threatened the king in particular, as well as the city and nation in general, so much displeased Zedekiah that he shut up Jeremiah in prison. See notes on chap. xxxii. 2-5, where the same things are related that occur here. *But thou shalt die in peace*—Namely, by a natural death. The king of Babylon took him, killed his sons before his eyes, then put out his eyes, and bound him with chains, (chap. xxxix. 7,) but did not put him to death, as we here learn. *With the burning of thy fathers, &c., so shall they burn odours for thee*—It was customary among the Jews, at the funerals of their kings, especially of those whose memories they honoured, to prepare a bed of spices, of which they made a perfume by burning them, and

4 Yet hear the word of the LORD, A. M. 3415. O Zedekiah king of Judah; Thus B. C. 589. saith the LORD of thee, Thou shalt not die by the sword:

5 *But thou shalt die in peace: and with* <sup>f</sup> the burnings of thy fathers, the former kings which were before thee, <sup>g</sup> so shall they burn odours for thee; and <sup>h</sup> they will lament thee, saying, Ah lord! for I have pronounced the word, saith the LORD.

6 Then Jeremiah the prophet spake all these words unto Zedekiah king of Judah in Jerusalem,

7 When the king of Babylon's army fought against Jerusalem, and against all the cities of Judah that were left, against Lachish, and against Azekah: for <sup>i</sup> these defenced cities remained of the cities of Judah.

<sup>f</sup> Heb. his mouth shall speak to thy mouth.—<sup>g</sup> 2 Chron. xvi. 14; xxi. 19.—<sup>h</sup> Dan. ii. 46.—<sup>i</sup> Chap. xxii. 18.—<sup>j</sup> 2 Kings xviii. 13; xix. 8; 2 Chron. xi. 5, 9.

therein to deposit the body of the deceased prince: see 2 Chron. xvi. 14, and xxi. 19. *And they will lament thee, saying, Ah lord!*—In these, and the foregoing words, God promises Zedekiah an honourable interment, and suitable to his quality; a favour he did not vouchsafe to Jehoiakim, chap. xxii. 18.

Verse 7. *When the king of Babylon fought against Lachish and against Azekah*—See 2 Kings xviii. 13; xix. 8. These two cities were not far from Jerusalem, and had been fortified by Rehoboam, for the defence of his kingdom, 2 Chron. xi. 9. *After that Zedekiah had made a covenant with the people to proclaim liberty, &c.*—“By the law of Moses, (Exod. xxi. 2; Deut. xv. 12,) the Israelites were not allowed to detain their brethren of the Hebrew race in perpetual bondage, but were required to let them go free after having served six years. This law had, it seems, fallen into disuse; but King Zedekiah, upon the approach of the Chaldean army, whether from religious motives, or a political view to employ the men who were set free in the service of the war, engaged the people in a covenant to act conformably to the law; and they released their brethren accordingly. But no sooner were their fears abated, by the retreat of the Chaldeans, than, in defiance of every principle of religion, honour, and humanity, they imposed the yoke of servitude anew upon those unhappy persons. Archbishop Usher computes the ninth year of Zedekiah's reign to have been the sabbatical year, and supposes that, on this account, the covenant of general release was entered into at the beginning of that year. But the sabbatical year, which was every seventh year from that in which the Israelites entered into the possession of the land of Canaan, had nothing at all to do with the release of servants. In the year of sabbath they were only restrained from sowing their ground, and pruning

A. M. 3415. 8 ¶ This is the word that came  
B. C. 589. unto Jeremiah from the LORD, after  
that the King Zedekiah had made a covenant  
with all the people which were at Jerusalem, to  
proclaim <sup>1</sup> liberty unto them ;

9 <sup>1</sup> That every man should let his man-ser-  
vant, and every man his maid-servant, being  
a Hebrew or a Hebrewess, go free ; <sup>2</sup> that none  
should serve himself of them, to wit, of a Jew  
his brother.

10 Now when all the princes, and all the peo-  
ple which had entered into the covenant, heard  
that every one should let his man-servant, and  
every one his maid-servant, go free, that none  
should serve themselves of them any more, then  
they obeyed, and let them go.

11 But <sup>3</sup> afterward they turned, and caused  
the servants and the handmaids, whom they

<sup>1</sup> Exodus xxi. 2 ; Leviticus xxv. 10 ; Verse 14.—<sup>2</sup> Neh. v. 11.  
<sup>3</sup> Lev. xxv. 39-46.—<sup>4</sup> Verse 21 ; Chap. xxxvii. 5.

their vineyards. But every seventh year, from the  
beginning of their service, the Hebrew bond-slaves  
were to be discharged. Six years were they to  
serve, and in the seventh they were to go out free.  
Only the fiftieth year, or year of jubilee, was also to  
be a time of general release, Lev. xxv. 39-41. But,  
that the sabbatical year was so, I see not the least  
reason to conclude, but quite the contrary."—Blaney.

Verses 10, 11. Now when all the princes, &c.,  
heard—This verse is better translated by Blaney and  
others thus, And all the princes hearkened, or, con-  
sented, and all the people who entered into covenant to  
let every one his bondman, and every one his bond-  
woman go free, and not to exact service of them any  
more, they hearkened, I say, and let them go. That  
is, they conformed to the obligations of the cove-  
nant, which they had entered into at the instigation  
of their prince. But afterward they turned, and  
brought them into subjection, &c.—Namely, upon  
the advance of the Egyptian army, which caused  
Nebuchadnezzar to raise the siege of Jerusalem.  
When they thought themselves safe from their ene-  
mies, as if they had also got out of God's hand, they  
repented of their repentance, and returned to their  
old oppressions. Now this was not only a contempt  
of the divine law, as if it were of no force at all, but  
they might either keep it or break it as they thought  
fit ; but it was a contempt of the covenant which  
they had, in a very solemn manner, (see verses 18-  
20,) made with him, and of that wrath which they  
had imprecated upon themselves in case they should  
break that covenant. It was jesting with God Al-  
mighty, as if he could be imposed on by fallacious  
promises, which, when they had gained their point,  
they would think themselves no longer obliged by.  
It was lying to God with their mouths, and flatter-  
ing him with their tongues. It was likewise a con-  
tempt of the judgments of God, and setting them at

had let go free, to return, and brought A. M. 3415.  
them into subjection for servants and B. C. 589.  
for handmaids.

12 ¶ Therefore the word of the LORD came  
to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying,

13 Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel ;  
I made a covenant with your fathers in the day  
that I brought them forth out of the land of  
Egypt, out of the house of bond-men, saying,

14 At the end of <sup>o</sup> seven years, let ye go every  
man his brother a Hebrew, which <sup>3</sup> hath been  
sold unto thee ; and when he hath served thee  
six years, thou shalt let him go free from thee ;  
but your fathers hearkened not unto me, neither  
inclined their ear.

15 And ye were <sup>4</sup> now turned, and had done  
right in my sight, in proclaiming liberty every  
man to his neighbour ; and ye had <sup>p</sup> made a

<sup>o</sup> Exod. xxi. 2 ; xxiii. 10 ; Deut. xv. 12.—<sup>3</sup> Or, hath sold him-  
self.—<sup>4</sup> Heb. to-day.—<sup>p</sup> 2 Kings xxiii. 3 ; Neh. x. 29.

defiance ; as if when once the course of them was  
stopped a little, and interrupted, they would never  
proceed again, nor be revived : whereas, reprieves  
are so far from being pardons, that if they be abused  
thus, and sinners take encouragement from them to  
return to sin, they are but preparatives for heavier  
strokes of divine vengeance.

Verses 13, 14. I made a covenant with your fa-  
thers, saying, At the end of seven years—This is the  
literal translation of שבע שנים ; but the im-  
port of the phrase is, in the course of the seventh  
year ; or, within the term of seven years, as Dr.  
Waterland reads it. "The seventh year was the  
year of release, (Deut. xv. 9,) consequently servants  
were to continue in service but six years, and at the  
beginning of the seventh were to be let go free ; ibid.  
verse 12. And the words mean no more, as appears  
by a like form of speech, Deut. xiv. 28, where it is  
said, At the end of three years thou shalt bring forth  
all the tithe of thy increase that year : which is to  
be explained by chap. xxvi. 12, where every third  
year is called the year of tithing. So Christ is said  
to rise again after three days, Mark viii. 31, which  
is elsewhere explained by his rising the third day.  
But your fathers hearkened not unto me—Their  
worldly profit swaying more with them than God's  
command. It appears from hence, that the law, re-  
quiring them to let their servants go free after six  
years' service, had been violated by the Jews for ages  
before the captivity, as the law respecting the sab-  
batical year had also been. The consequence was,  
that the servants had, by long disuse, lost the benefit  
of the gracious provision which God, in his law, had  
made for them, for this trespass of them and their  
fathers God now justly delivered them into servitude  
to strangers.

Verses 15-17. And ye were now turned—That is, re-  
formed in this particular ; and had done right in my

A. M. 3415. covenant before me <sup>9</sup> in the house  
B. C. 589. <sup>8</sup> which is called by my name :

16 But ye turned and <sup>r</sup> polluted my name, and caused every man his servant, and every man his handmaid, whom he had set at liberty at their pleasure, to return, and brought them into subjection, to be unto you for servants and for handmaids.

17 Therefore thus saith the LORD ; Ye have not hearkened unto me, in proclaiming liberty, every one to his brother, and every man to his neighbour : <sup>a</sup> behold, I proclaim a liberty for you, saith the LORD, <sup>t</sup> to the sword, to the pestilence, and to the famine ; and I will make you

<sup>9</sup> Chapter vii. 10.—<sup>8</sup> Hebrew, *whereupon my name is called.*  
<sup>a</sup> Exodus xx. 7 ; Leviticus xix. 12.—<sup>t</sup> Matt. vii. 2 ; Gal. vi. 7 ; James ii. 13.

*sight*—In proclaiming liberty to your servants. *And ye had made a covenant before me*—Had entered into solemn engagements in my presence and temple to that purpose. This was probably such a covenant as Josiah and all the people had made formerly, (2 Kings xxiii. 2, 3,) whereby they obliged themselves to serve God, and obey his laws in general, and this concerning giving freedom to their servants in particular. *But ye turned*—Declined from these good beginnings ; *and polluted my name*—That is, profaned it, in swearing, or solemnly promising in and by it, to do that which you have not done. Certainly, whoever uses the name of God, by way of sanction to his promises, that the greater confidence may be placed in them, and afterward does not perform them, profanes or pollutes the name of God. *Therefore, behold I proclaim liberty for you to the sword, &c.*—I now declare that I give free commission and liberty to my sore judgments, the sword, the famine, and the pestilence, to invade and destroy multitudes of you. See chap. xxxii. 24, 36. The expressions here used import, that these calamities come upon men by direction and commission from God, as the executioners of his justice. *And to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth*—Those of you who escape destruction shall be dispersed through different nations, where you shall learn by experience how great are the hardships and miseries attendant on a state of servitude. See note on chap. xxiv. 9.

Verse 18. *When they cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts*—In order to ratify the covenant, they killed a calf, or young bullock, which they cut in two, and placing the two parts at some distance from each other, they passed between them ; signifying by this rite that they consented to be served in the like manner, in case they violated their part of the covenant. We learn from the Holy Scriptures, and from heathen authors, that the same or similar ceremonies were in use in making and ratifying covenants and treaties in ancient times. In this way Abraham's covenant with God was con-

<sup>6</sup> to be <sup>a</sup> removed into all the king- A. M. 3415.  
doms of the earth. B. C. 589.

18 And I will give the men that have transgressed my covenant, which have not performed the words of the covenant which they had made before me, when <sup>x</sup> they cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts thereof,

19 The princes of Judah, and the princes of Jerusalem, the eunuchs, and the priests, and all the people of the land, which passed between the parts of the calf ;

20 I will even give them into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of them that seek their life : and their <sup>v</sup> dead bodies

<sup>6</sup> Chapter xxxii. 24, 36.—<sup>a</sup> Heb. *for a removing.*—<sup>x</sup> Deut. xxviii. 25, 64 ; Chap. xxix. 18.—<sup>v</sup> Gen. xv. 10, 17.—<sup>v</sup> Chap. vii. 33 ; xvi. 4 ; xix. 7.

firmed, Gen. xv. 10. And, according to Livy, lib. i. cap. 24 ; and lib. xxi. cap. 45, rites of a similar kind were in use among the old Romans ; as we find from Homer they were also among the Greeks. Thus he tells us, when they had entered into a solemn agreement with the Trojans to put an end to the war, by the single combat of Paris and Menelaus, at the pouring out of their wine upon their sacrifice, they made the following imprecation upon those who should not observe their part of the treaty, *Iliad*, iii. l. 298.

Οπποτεροι προτεροι υπερ ορκια πημνηθειαν,  
Ωδε σφ' εγκεφαλος χαμαδις ρεοι, ως οδε οινοσ.

“So may their blood who first the league confound,  
Shed, like this wine, distain the thirsty ground.”

POPE.

Verses 19-22. *The princes of Judah, &c.*, (see chap. xxix. 2,) *the eunuchs*—The officers belonging to the court ; *the priests and all the people which passed between the parts of the calf*—Assenting to the solemn and awful imprecation, Let us in like manner be cut in pieces if we do not perform what we now promise. *I will even give them into the hand of their enemies, &c.*—God does not here threaten all the Jews, but those only who had first made, and then broken, this solemn covenant, and thereby falsified their engagements, and dealt treacherously with him. The king and nobles, and great courtiers, as well as the people, he would give into the hand of their enemies, who sought, not their wealth only, or their service, but their lives : and who should obtain what they sought ; and, not content therewith, should leave their dead bodies lying unburied upon the face of the earth, a loathsome spectacle to all mankind, and an easy prey to the *fowls of the heaven and the beasts of the earth*. Thus doth the Lord execute justice, without respect of persons, on all that do wickedly, and who will neither be won by his mercies, nor be brought to obey him by a dread of his wrath. *Behold, I will command, and cause them to return to this city*—Name-

A. M. 3415. shall be for meat unto the fowls of  
B. C. 589. the heaven, and to the beasts of the  
earth.

21 And Zedekiah king of Judah and his  
princes will I give into the hand of their  
enemies, and into the hand of them that  
seek their life, and into the hand of the

\* Chapter xxxvii. 5, 11.—\* Chap. xxxvii. 8, 10.—<sup>b</sup> Chapter

ly, the king of Babylon's army, which had departed  
for a season, having gone to meet the army of the  
king of Egypt. I will put it into their hearts to re-  
turn, saith the Lord, to the siege, and they shall leave  
it no more till they have taken the city, and burned  
it with fire, and made the whole country desolate.  
The motions of armies are under the government of  
Divine Providence, they are all at God's command ;  
when he bids them come they come, and they shall  
certainly effect what he hath determined to be done.  
When we come to chapter xxxix. we shall read of  
the fulfilment of this prophecy. Observe here, reader,  
1st, As an humble confidence in God is a hopeful  
presage of approaching deliverance, so security in

king of Babylon's army, \* which are A. M. 3415.  
gone up from you. B. C. 589.

22 \* Behold, I will command, saith the LORD,  
and cause them to return to this city ; and they  
shall fight against it, <sup>b</sup> and take it, and burn it  
with fire : and <sup>c</sup> I will make the cities of Judah  
a desolation without an inhabitant.

xxxviii. 3 ; xxxix. 1, 2, 8 ; lii. 7, 13.—<sup>c</sup> Chap. ix. 11 ; xlv. 2, 6.

sin is a sad omen of approaching destruction. 2d,  
When judgments are removed from a people before  
they have done their work, and leave them unhum-  
bled and unreformed, they do but retreat to come  
on again with so much the greater force ; for when  
God judges he will overcome. 3d, It is just with  
God to disappoint those expectations of mercy which  
his providence had excited, when we disappoint  
those expectations of duty which our professions,  
pretensions, and fair promises had given cause for.  
If we repent of the good we had promised, God will  
repent of the good he had purposed. *The froward  
are an abomination to the Lord. With the froward  
he will show himself froward.*

CHAPTER XXXV.

In this chapter, (1,) *The prophet sets before the Jews, as an aggravation of their disobedience to God, the obedience of the family of the Rechabites to the commands which were left them by Jonadab, their ancestor, and shows how they persevered in that obedience, and would not be induced to decline from it, 1-11. (2,) With this he aggravates the disobedience of the Jews to God, and upbraids them with their contempt of his precepts, 12-15. (3,) He foretels, that the judgments of God would fall upon them for this disobedience, 16, 17. (4,) He assures the Rechabites of the blessing of God, because of their dutiful behaviour to their father, 18, 19.*

A. M. 3398. **T**HE word which came to Jeremiah  
B. C. 606. from the LORD, in the days of  
Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah,  
saying,

2 Go unto the house of the <sup>a</sup> Rechabites, and  
speak unto them, and bring them into the house  
of the LORD, into one of <sup>b</sup> the chambers, and  
give them wine to drink.

\* 2 Kings x. 15 ; 1 Chron. ii. 55.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XXXV.

Verse 1. *The word which came unto Jeremiah in the days of Jehoiakim, &c.*—Here we have another evidence that the prophecies of this book are not placed in that order wherein they were delivered, for all the intermediate prophecies from chap. xxvi. belong clearly to the reign of Zedekiah ; and consequently are posterior to this chapter and the next, which are dated in the reign of Jehoiakim, together with chap. xlv., which is closely connected with the latter of these two chapters. This may most probably be referred to the fourth year of Jehoiakim's reign, when Nebuchadnezzar, having beaten the

3 Then I took Jaazaniah the son A. M. 3398.  
of Jeremiah, the son of Habazianah, B. C. 606.  
and his brethren, and all his sons, and the  
whole house of the Rechabites ;

4 And I brought them into the house of the  
LORD, into the chamber of the sons of Hanan,  
the son of Igdaliah, a man of God, which was  
by the chamber of the princes, which was

<sup>b</sup> 1 Kings vi. 5.

king of Egypt's army at Euphrates, (see chap. xlv. 2,) marched toward Syria and Palestine, to recover those provinces again which the king of Egypt had conquered, in which expedition he laid siege to Jerusalem.

Verses 2-4. *Go to the house of the Rechabites*—“The Rechabites, as may be collected from verse 7, were not of the children of Israel, but strangers of another race that dwelt among them. From 1 Chron. ii. 55, they appear to have been *Kenites*, a people originally settled in that part of Arabia Petrea which was called the land of Midian. At what time Rechab lived, who gave his name to the family, is not

A. M. 3398. above the chamber of Maaseiah the  
B. C. 606. son of Shallum, ° the keeper of the  
1 door :

5. And I set before the sons of the house of the Rechabites pots full of wine, and cups, and I said unto them, Drink ye wine.

6 But they said, We will drink no wine: for ° Jonadab the son of Rechab our father commanded us, saying, Ye shall drink no wine, neither ye, nor your sons for ever :

7 Neither shall ye build house, nor sow seed, nor plant vineyard, nor have any: but all your days ye shall dwell in tents; ° that ye may live many days in the land where ye be strangers.

° 2 Kings xii. 9; xxv. 18; 1 Chron. ix. 18, 19.—<sup>1</sup> Heb. *threshold*,

certain, nor whether he was the immediate father, or remote ancestor of Jonadab; for the word *son* often denotes nothing more than a lineal descendant. But it is most likely that the Jonadab here spoken of, as having dictated a rule of living to the Rechabites, was the same person of whom mention is made 2 Kings x. 15. For that this latter was a man of considerable eminence is manifest from the respect shown him by Jehu; and his being taken along with that prince to witness his zeal for the honour of the true God, shows him to have been a man of right and religious principles. The institutions he left with his posterity bespeak a principal concern for the purity of their morals, which he might rightly suppose would be less liable to be corrupted whilst they adhered to the simplicity of their ancient usages, than if they adopted the refinements of modern luxury. He, therefore, enjoined them not only to abstain from the use of wine, but to live as the patriarchs did of old, and as many of their countrymen, the Scenite Arabs, continue to do at this day, without any fixed habitations or possessions, far from the society of cities, in the open country, feeding their flocks, and maintaining themselves by the produce of them."—Blaney. *And bring them into the house of the Lord*—Into one of the chambers adjoining to the temple. By this it appears that the Rechabites were not idolaters, for it was not lawful for such persons to come within the precincts of the temple. *I brought them into the chamber of the sons of Hanan*—The chambers adjoining to the temple, of which there were several, were for the use of the priests and Levites, during the time of their ministrations. They were also used as repositories for laying up the holy vestments, and vessels, and whatever stores were necessary for the daily sacrifices, and the other parts of the temple service. *The son of Igdaliah, a man of God*—That is, as this name usually imports, a prophet, or one who had been employed upon a divine commission. *Which was by the chamber of the princes*—The chamber where the princes, or the members of the sanhedrim, or great council, used to

8 Thus have we obeyed the voice A. M. 3398,  
of Jonadab the son of Rechab our B. C. 606.

father in all that he hath charged us, to drink no wine, all our days, we, our wives, our sons, nor our daughters;

9 Nor to build houses for us to dwell in: neither have we vineyard, nor field, nor seed:

10 But we have dwelt in tents, and have obeyed, and done according to all that Jonadab our father commanded us.

11 But it came to pass, when Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon came up into the land, that we said, Come, and let us go to Jerusalem for fear of the army of the Chaldeans, and for

or, vessel.—<sup>1</sup> 2 Kings x. 15.—<sup>2</sup> Exod. xx. 12; Eph. vi. 2, 2.

assemble. *Above the chamber of Maaseiah, the keeper of the door*—That is, one of the keepers; for there were several Levites appointed to that office, both to open and shut the gates of the temple in due time, and likewise to attend at them all day, for preventing any thing that might happen to the prejudice of the purity, or safety of that holy place. Some of these officers had likewise the custody of the holy vessels.

Verses 5-7. *I set before the sons of the Rechabites pots full of wine, &c.*—In obedience to God's command, (verse 2,) and that the prophet might have full proof of their fixed resolution to adhere to the injunction of their progenitor Jonadab, which no temptation could prevail with them to violate. *But they said, We will drink no wine*—They peremptorily refused, and all agreed in the refusal. The prophet knew very well they would refuse, and therefore when they did so, urged them no further. *For Jonadab, our father, commanded us, saying, Ye shall drink no wine*—Concerning the probable reasons of this command, and of those in the following verse, see note on verse 2.

Verses 8-11. *Thus have we obeyed the voice of Jonadab our father*—We have conformed ourselves to his injunctions, and governed our lives by them, during the space of nearly three hundred years. *But when Nebuchadrezzar came, &c., we said, Come, let us go to Jerusalem*—The Rechabites appear to have retired within the walls of Jerusalem upon the hostile approach of Nebuchadnezzar and his army, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim. Calmet, indeed, supposes it was not till the latter end of Jehoiakim's reign that the Rechabites were driven into the city for shelter, grounding his opinion upon its being said in this verse, that they entered it for fear of the army of the Chaldeans, and of the army of the Syrians, and comparing this with 2 Kings xxiv. 2, where the Lord is said to have sent bands of the Chaldees, and bands of the Syrians, against Judah to destroy it. "But this reasoning," says Blaney, "will not hold, for, 1st, Nebuchadnezzar might have

A. M. 3398. fear of the army of the Syrians : so  
B. C. 606. we dwell at Jerusalem.

12 ¶ Then came the word of the Lord unto Jeremiah, saying,

13 Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel ; Go and tell the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, Will ye not receive instruction to hearken to my words ? saith the Lord.

14 The words of Jonadab the son of Rechab, that he commanded his sons not to drink wine, are performed ; for unto this day they drink none, but obey their father's commandment : notwithstanding I have spoken unto you, rising early and speaking ; but ye hearkened not unto me.

15 I have sent also unto you all my servants the prophets, rising up early and send-

ing them, saying, Return ye now every man from his evil way, and amend your doings, and go not after other gods to serve them, and ye shall dwell in the land which I have given to you and to your fathers : but ye have not inclined your ear, nor hearkened unto me.

16 Because the sons of Jonadab the son of Rechab have performed the commandment of their father, which he commanded them ; but this people hath not hearkened unto me :

17 Therefore thus saith the Lord God of hosts, the God of Israel ; Behold, I will bring upon Judah and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem all the evil that I have pronounced against them ; because I have spoken unto them, but they have not heard ; and

¶ Chap. xxxii. 33.—¶ 2 Chron. xxxvi. 15.—¶ Chap. vii. 13 ; xxv. 3.—¶ Chap. vii. 25 ; xxv. 4.

\* Chap. xviii. 11 ; xxv. 5, 6.—¶ Proverbs i. 24 ; Isa. lrv. 12 ; lxvi. 4 ; Chap. vii. 13.

been, and most probably was, joined by the Syrians in his first expedition against Jerusalem, after the defeat of the Egyptians at Carchemish, which brought on the submission of Syria. And, 2d, Nebuchadnezzar does not appear to have come in person a second time, at least till after Jehoiakim was taken prisoner, and his generals had closely invested Jerusalem." So we dwell at Jerusalem—Having retired to Jerusalem upon the Chaldean invasion, they were forced to continue there during the siege of the place. In such an extraordinary case, they did not think themselves obliged to a strict observance of the injunction of Jonadab respecting dwelling in tents, because all human laws admit of an equitable construction, and may be superseded in cases of necessity, or when the observance of them is attended with such great inconveniences as the lawgiver himself, if he could have foreseen them, would probably have excepted.

Verses 12-16. Then came the word of the Lord unto Jeremiah.—As the trial of the constancy of the Rechabites was only intended for a sign, so now we have the application of it made by God himself. Tell the men of Judah, Will ye not receive instruction ? &c.—Will nothing enlighten or affect you ? Will nothing prevail to make you sensible of your sin and duty ? You see how obedient the Rechabites are to their father's commandment ; but you have not hearkened unto me—Though it might have been more reasonably expected that my people should have obeyed me, than that the sons of Jonadab should have obeyed him. Thus the Rechabites' observance of their father's charge to them is made use of by God as an aggravation of the disobedience of the Jews to him : and the aggravation was certainly very high. For, 1st, The Rechabites were obedient to one that was but a man like themselves,

and had only the wisdom and power of a man, and was only the father of their flesh ; but the Jews were disobedient to the infinite and eternal God, that had an absolute authority over them, as the father of their spirits. 2d, Jonadab was long since dead, and was ignorant of his posterity, and could neither take cognizance of their disobedience to his orders, nor give any correction for it ; but God lives for ever to see how his laws are observed, and is in readiness to punish all disobedience. 3d, The Rechabites were probably seldom or never put in mind of their obligations to their progenitor ; but God often sent his prophets to his people, to remind them of, and excite to, their duty to him, yet they would not comply with it. This is insisted on here as a great aggravation of their disobedience, verses 14, 15. 4th, Jonadab had not conferred, nor could confer, any such favours on his seed as God had bestowed on his people, nor had laid them under any such obligations, from duty and interest, to obey him, as God had laid Israel and Judah under to observe his laws. 5th, God did not oblige his people to so much hardship, and to such instances of self-denial and mortification, as Jonadab enjoined to his seed, and yet Jonadab's orders were obeyed, and God's were not.

Verse 17. Therefore thus saith the Lord, Behold, &c.—Because they have not obeyed the precepts of my word, I will therefore perform the threatenings of it. I will bring upon Judah, &c.—Namely, by the Chaldean army ; all the evil that I have pronounced against them—Both in the law and in the prophets ; because I have spoken unto them, and called unto them—Tried all ways and means to convince and reduce them ; spoken by my word, called by my providence, and both in order to the same end ; and yet all to no purpose : they have not heard nor answered.

A. M. 3398. I have called unto them, but they  
B. C. 606. have not answered.

18 ¶ And Jeremiah said unto the house of the Rechabites, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Because ye have obeyed the commandment of Jonadab your father, and kept

<sup>a</sup> Heb. *There shall not a man be cut off from Jonadab*

Verses 18, 19. *Jeremiah said unto the house of the Rechabites, &c.*—Mercy is here promised to the family of the Rechabites for their steady and unanimous adherence to the laws of their house. Though it was only for the shaming of Israel that their constancy was tried, yet, being unshaken, God takes occasion from it to tell them that he had blessings in reserve for them. *Jonadab shall not want a man to stand before me for ever*—“The meaning of this promise,” says Blaney, “in its full extent, seems to be, not only that the race of Jonadab should never

all his precepts, and done according A. M. 3398.  
unto all that he hath commanded you : B. C. 606.

19 Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; <sup>2</sup> Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not want a man to <sup>m</sup> stand before me for ever.

*the son of Rechab to stand, &c.*—<sup>m</sup> Chap. xv. 19.

fail or be extinct, but that some of the family should ever be found among the worshippers of the true God. For to stand in the presence of a prince, implies an attendance, in some degree, upon his person and service. So the queen of Sheba, speaking of Solomon's court, says, *Happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee*, 1 Kings x. 8; and therefore, *to stand before God*, must denote at least the privilege of treading his courts, and of worshipping him among the train of his chosen servants and people.”

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

*In this chapter we have an account of another expedient tried, but tried in vain, to awaken and reform this heedless and refractory people. (1.) By divine appointment a roll of a book is provided, and Jeremiah causes Baruch to write therein all his preceding prophecies, 1-4. (2.) Baruch, by Jeremiah's order, reads this roll to all the people publicly on a fast day, 5-10. (3.) The princes are informed of it, and send for Baruch, who reads the roll before them, at the contents of which they are greatly alarmed, and advise Jeremiah and Baruch to hide themselves, 11-19. (4.) They acquaint the king with these things, who sends for the roll, and having heard a part of it read, he cuts it in pieces and burns it, 20-26. (5.) God commands Jeremiah to write it anew, and to denounce the judgments of God against King Jehoiakim, 27-31. (6.) Baruch writes a new copy, with additions, 32.*

A. M. 3398. AND it came to pass in the fourth  
B. C. 606. year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, that this word came unto Jeremiah from the LORD, saying,

2 Take thee a <sup>a</sup> roll of a book, and <sup>b</sup> write

<sup>a</sup> Isa. viii. 1; Ezek. ii. 9; Zech. v. 1.—<sup>b</sup> Chap. xxx. 2.

### NOTES ON CHAPTER XXXVI.

Verse 1. *And it came to pass, &c.*—Jeremiah here inserts a history of some things which related to, or had a connection with, his prophecies; (as we find Isaiah did with regard to his;) and, accordingly, we are here informed how they came to be written, namely, by the express order of God, that they might stand upon record before the things foretold came to pass; so that there might be no room to say he had never prophesied such and such things, or that the prophecies were made after the things they pretended to foretel had happened. *In the fourth year of Jehoiakim this word came unto Jeremiah*—It is uncertain whether what is related in this chapter happened during the siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, (for the city was besieged in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, 2 Kings xxiv. 1, 2,) or after the siege,

therein all the words that I have A. M. 3398.  
spoken unto thee against Israel, and B. C. 606.  
against Judah, and against <sup>c</sup> all the nations, from the day I spake unto thee, from the days of <sup>d</sup> Josiah, even unto this day.

<sup>c</sup> Chap. xxv. 15.—<sup>d</sup> Chap. xxv. 3.

when Jehoiakim was escaped from the hand of Nebuchadnezzar. It seems probable from what follows, particularly from verse 9, that it happened at or near the end of the fourth year, when Nebuchadnezzar was retired. For Jeremiah says nothing of the siege, and he orders Baruch to read his prophecies before an assembly of the people who had come to Jerusalem out of their cities, verse 6, which certainly implies that Jerusalem was not then in a state of siege. See Calmet.

Verse 2. *Take thee a roll of a book*—Compare Isa. viii. 1; Ezek. ii. 9; Zech. v. 1. The ancient manner of writing was upon long scrolls of parchment, which they afterward rolled upon sticks. On these words it is remarked by Harmer, (vol. iv. chap. 7, obs. 122,) “Many things were rolled up, much in the shape of an ancient Jewish manuscript, which

A. M. 3396. 3 • It may be that the house of  
B. C. 606. Judah will hear all the evil which I  
purpose to do unto them; that they may <sup>r</sup>re-  
turn every man from his evil way; that I may  
forgive their iniquity and their sin.

4 Then Jeremiah <sup>s</sup> called Baruch the son of  
Neriah: and <sup>h</sup> Baruch wrote from the mouth  
of Jeremiah all the words of the LORD, which he  
had spoken unto him, upon a roll of a book.

• Verse 7; Chapter xxvi. 3.—<sup>r</sup> Chap. xviii. 8; Jonah iii. 8.  
<sup>s</sup> Chap. xxxii. 12.

yet were not fit to write upon; the words then in  
this, and some other similar cases, may be under-  
stood to mean, Take thee a roll, or volume, fit to be  
made a book of, fit to be written on." *And write  
therein all the words that I have spoken against Is-  
rael and Judah*—Jeremiah prophesied against Israel  
as well as against Judah, chap. ii. 4; iii. 12, 14; xxiii. 13;  
xxxii. 30. The kingdom of Israel was indeed destroyed  
by Shalmaneser, before the time of Jeremiah; but yet  
the prophet was ordered to reprove their sins, both  
to make the justice of God appear in punishing them  
so severely, and withal to warn the Jews by their  
example. Besides, there were some remains of  
these tribes still left, who joined themselves to the  
tribe of Judah. *And against all the nations*—See  
chap. xxv. 15, 16. *From the day I spake unto thee,  
from the days of Josiah*—Namely, all the revela-  
tions which he had had from God for twenty-two  
years last past; for he began to prophesy in the thir-  
teenth year of Josiah, who reigned thirty-one years,  
so that he prophesied eighteen years during Josiah's  
life, and this was the fourth year of the reign of Je-  
hoiakim, his successor. God would have his pro-  
phesies recorded, that there might be a memorial of  
them, that so the truth of them might appear when  
God should bring them to pass; the time of which  
now drew near.

Verse 3. *It may be that the house of Judah will  
hear, &c.*—That is, will hearken, and lay to heart,  
*all the evil, &c., that they may return, &c.*—Blaney  
translates the verse, "Peradventure the house of Ju-  
dah may hear all the evil which I purpose to do unto  
them, so as to return every one from his evil way,  
and I may forgive their iniquity and their sin." See  
the like expression, verse 7; chap. xxvi. 3; Ezek.  
xii. 3; Am. v. 15; in which places God is introduced  
as speaking after the manner of men, and using such  
methods as, in human probability, might be most  
likely to prevail: compare chap. viii. 6. These, and  
expressions of the like kind, sufficiently indicate that  
God's foreknowledge of future events lays no re-  
straint on the will of man, nor takes away the liberty  
of human actions. *That I may forgive their iniquity  
and their sin*—Forgiveness of sin in Scripture some-  
times signifies the acquitting of a sinner from the  
obligation sin had laid him under to eternal death;  
sometimes the remission of a temporal punishment:  
it may here be understood as comprehending both,  
though it is probable the latter is principally intended.

5 And Jeremiah commanded Ba- A. M. 3396.  
ruch, saying, I *am* shut up, I cannot B. C. 606.  
go into the house of the LORD:

6 Therefore go thou and read in the roll,  
which thou hast written from my mouth, the  
words of the LORD in the ears of the people in  
the LORD's house upon <sup>i</sup> the fasting day: and  
also thou shalt read them in the ears of all Ju-  
dah that come out of their cities.

<sup>h</sup> Chapter xlv. 1.—<sup>i</sup> Leviticus xvi. 29; xxiii. 27-32; Acts  
xxvii. 9.

Verse 4. *Then Jeremiah called Baruch*—Baruch  
was the most faithful disciple of this prophet: he  
served him as long as he lived in the capacity of his  
secretary, and never left him till his death. *And Ba-  
ruch wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words,  
&c.*—We need not ask how Jeremiah could remem-  
ber all the prophecies that he had prophesied, for  
twenty-two years before, considering who it was  
that commanded him to put them in writing. God  
undoubtedly brought them to his remembrance,  
otherwise it would have been impossible for him to  
have recollected them all. The Spirit of God dic-  
tated to Jeremiah, and he to Baruch.

Verses 5, 6. *Jeremiah commanded Baruch, say-  
ing, I am shut up*—It is not said, that "he was shut  
up in prison" at this time: but barely that *he was  
shut up, or confined*, as עָצוּר signifies, that is, under  
some such confinement, or restraint, as precluded  
his going to the house of the Lord. *Therefore go  
thou and read in the roll, &c., upon the fasting day*  
—Not the day of the yearly fast, mentioned Lev.  
xxiii. 27, but on a day appointed for a national fast,  
of which we read more, verse 9, proclaimed by Je-  
hoiakim, probably to avert the calamity hanging over  
them from the Chaldeans, or from the drought. And  
it was undoubtedly because of the concurrence of peo-  
ple which the prophet knew would then be in the  
temple that he chose that day, when some would be  
present from all parts of Judah. It was the opinion,  
indeed, of Archbishop Usher and Dean Prideaux,  
that the roll was twice read by Baruch in the tem-  
ple, and that the first reading was on the tenth day  
of the seventh month, being the great day of atone-  
ment, in the fourth year of King Jehoiakim. "But  
this," says Blaney, "I am persuaded is a mistake;  
and that the reasons urged by the latter of those two  
learned men, in support of this hypothesis, are by  
no means conclusive. I see no good reason for con-  
cluding that the roll was read publicly in the temple  
more than once; nor does Josephus, who speaks of  
its being read in the ninth month of the fifth year,  
(*Antiquities*, lib. x. cap. 6,) give the least hint of its  
having been read before; if it had been, I think  
we might naturally expect to be informed how  
it was received by those who heard it the first time,  
as well as by those who heard it the second. From  
the utter silence on this head, the contrary may be  
presumed, and we may fairly conjecture the case to  
have been pretty nearly as follows. Toward the

A. M. 606. 7 <sup>1</sup> It may be <sup>1</sup> they will present  
B. C. 606. their supplication before the LORD,  
and will return every one from his evil way:  
for great is the anger and the fury that the  
LORD hath pronounced against this people.

8 And Baruch the son of Neriah did accord-  
ing to all that Jeremiah the prophet command-  
ed him, reading in the book the words of the  
LORD in the LORD's house.

B. C. 606. 9 And it came to pass in the fifth  
year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah  
king of Judah, in the ninth month, *that*  
they proclaimed a fast before the LORD to all  
the people in Jerusalem, and to all the peo-  
ple that came from the cities of Judah unto  
Jerusalem.

10 Then read Baruch in the book the words  
of Jeremiah in the house of the LORD, in the  
chamber of Gemariah the son of Shaphan the

<sup>1</sup> Verse 3.—<sup>1</sup> Heb. *their supplication shall fall.*

latter end of Jehoiakim's fourth year, after Nebuchadnezzar had replaced him on the throne, and had left the city, it is possible that both king and people, freed from former apprehensions, began again to indulge their wicked inclinations; and therefore Jeremiah was ordered to lay before them at once all the evils that still threatened them, and from which nothing but speedy repentance could protect them. In consequence of this charge, he caused Baruch to write a collection of all his prophecies, and to have them in readiness to read at a fit opportunity. Perhaps the collection was not fully completed before the fifth year was already begun; but the season pitched on, as most convenient for reading this tremendous publication, was the day on which the people should assemble to deplore, before God, the calamity with which he had visited them just twelve months before. Accordingly, at that time Baruch read openly in the temple what he had written, and the immediate consequences of such reading are here related at large."

Verses 7, 8. *It may be they will present their supplications*—Hebrew, תפל חתתכם לפני יהוה, *peradventure they may prostrate themselves in supplication before Jehovah*; or, more literally, *their supplication may fall before Jehovah*, which, undoubtedly, says Blaney, "respects the humble posture of the supplicant in presenting it:" see note on verse 3. In the subsequent part of the verse, the words *anger and fury* (or, *wrath*, as רחוקה, should rather be rendered) are put by a metonymy for the effects of them, namely, the heavy judgments which, in consequence thereof, Jehovah had denounced against this people. We learn from this verse that prayer and reformation are the most likely means that can be used to turn away God's wrath when it is ready to fall upon a sinful nation.

scribe, in the higher court, at the A. M. 606.  
B. C. 606. <sup>2</sup> entry <sup>1</sup> of the new gate of the LORD's  
house, in the ears of all the people.

11 ¶ When Michaiah the son of Gemariah,  
the son of Shaphan, had heard out of the book  
all the words of the LORD,

12 Then he went down into the king's house,  
into the scribe's chamber: and lo, all the  
princes sat there, *even* Elishama the scribe, and  
Delaiah the son of Shemaiah, and Elnathan  
the son of Achbor, and Gemariah the son of  
Shaphan, and Zedekiah the son of Hananiah,  
and all the princes.

13 Then Michaiah declared unto them all the  
words that he had heard, when Baruch read the  
book in the ears of the people.

14 Therefore all the princes sent Jehudi the  
son of Nethaniah, the son of Shelemiah, the  
son of Cushi, unto Baruch, saying, Take in thy

<sup>2</sup> Or, *door*.—<sup>1</sup> Chap. xxvi. 10.

Verses 9, 10. *In the fifth year, &c., they proclaimed a fast*—"It was customary among the Jews to proclaim anniversary fasts upon certain days, in memory of some great calamities which had befallen them at that time. Of this kind were the fasts of the fourth, fifth, seventh, and tenth months, mentioned Zech. vii. 5, and viii. 19; the first instituted in remembrance of the city's being taken by Nebuchadnezzar; the second in memory of the temple's being burned in that month; the third for the murder of Gedaliah; the fourth in memory of the siege which then began. *Then read Baruch the words of Jeremiah, in the house of the Lord*—It has been before observed, that by *the house of the Lord* is meant all that is included within the sacred precincts of the temple; not only the sanctuary, or house properly so called, but all the out-buildings, and the courts around, both the inner court of the priests, and the outer court, which was open to all the people. *In the chamber of Gemariah the scribe*—This chamber was undoubtedly in the great outer court, either close to, or over the gateway of the eastern gate; so that if he read, as is supposed, from a window, or balcony, he would be heard by the concourse of people that came flocking into the court through that gate: see chap. xxvi. 10.

Verses 11–15. *When Michaiah, the son of Shaphan, had heard, &c.*—Shaphan's family were all great men at court: see note on chap. xxvi. 24; *he went down into the king's house, &c.*—It is uncertain whether this Michaiah went to make this relation to the princes, who sat in the secretary's chamber, as a piece of news only, or out of a malicious design to accuse the prophet and Baruch, as persons guilty of a seditious practice, in what they had done. *Then Michaiah declared unto them all the words that he had heard*—That is, the substance of all the words, &c.; for none can imagine that a

A. M. 3398. hand the roll wherein thou hast read  
B. C. 606. in the ears of the people, and come.

So Baruch the son of Neriah took the roll in his hand, and came unto them.

15 And they said unto him, Sit down now, and read it in our ears. So Baruch read *it* in their ears.

16 Now it came to pass, when they had heard all the words, they were afraid both one and other, and said unto Baruch, We will surely tell the king of all these words.

17 And they asked Baruch, saying, Tell us now, How didst thou write all these words at his mouth?

18 Then Baruch answered them; He pronounced all these words unto me with his

<sup>m</sup> Amos

hearer could remember every word. *Therefore all the princes sent Jehudi, &c.*—That is, all the princes who at that time sat there in council sent a messenger with a command to Baruch to appear before them, and to bring the roll which he had read in the ears of the people. *And they said, Sit down now and read it. So Baruch read it*—The courage of Baruch is admirable; he was now before the council, in the king's house; the substance of the prophecies was, to threaten heavy judgments to the king, and court, and all the people; and the king, as appears by all history, was of a vindictive spirit, and a persecutor of God's prophets; and yet Baruch is not afraid, but reads the prophecy in their ears.

Verses 16-19. *When they heard all the words*—It is hardly to be imagined that all these counsellors would sit still till they had heard all the prophecies read which Jeremiah had uttered for the last twenty-two years; but *all* signifies many, or, the substance of all his prophecies. *They were afraid both one and other*—That is, they were all of them afraid. The judgments denounced were so terrible as to make the ears of them that heard them tingle. Jeremiah had now been above twenty years a prophet to this people, and doubtless had been in great esteem for eighteen years of that time, while Josiah was alive, and they could not but observe that his prophecies had been often accomplished. They were, therefore, it seems, afraid that they should see these fulfilled also. *And they asked Baruch, saying, Tell us now, How didst thou write all these words?*—This seemed a reasonable question, considering they were the substance of what he had been prophesying for so many years. The matter seemed strange to the princes, the prophets not being used to study and write their discourses, but to preach them extempore. *Baruch answered, He pronounced all these words, and I wrote them, &c.*—This could not but add to the princes' fear that these prophecies would be accomplished, for they must needs conceive that, without a special

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mouth, and I wrote *them* with ink in the book.

A. M. 3398.  
B. C. 606.

19 Then said the princes unto Baruch, Go hide thee, thou and Jeremiah, and let no man know where ye be.

20 ¶ And they went in to the king into the court, but they laid up the roll in the chamber of Elishama the scribe, and told all the words in the ears of the king.

21 So the king sent Jehudi to fetch the roll: and he took it out of Elishama the scribe's chamber. And Jehudi read it in the ears of the king, and in the ears of all the princes which stood beside the king.

22 Now the king sat in <sup>m</sup> the winter-house in the ninth month: and *there was a fire*

iii. 15.

influence of God, it would have been a thing impossible that Jeremiah should have called to mind all that he had spoken at sundry times for so many years. *Then said the princes unto Baruch, Go hide thee, thou and Jeremiah*—They thought it their duty to acquaint the king with the matter, and yet were unwilling that Jeremiah and Baruch should feel the effects of his displeasure.

Verse 20. *And they went in to the king into the court*—“They were before, it is said, verse 12, in the king's house, that is, in the exterior precincts of the palace; where were apartments and offices fitted up for the principal officers of state, and for the attendants of the court. But, from what is here said, there was an interior body of building for the king's personal residence, ranged, as is the fashion of the great houses of the East at this day, round an open court, or quadrangle, and containing apartments separately appropriated for summer and winter use.”—Blaney. *But they laid up the roll, &c.*—They were obliged by their office, as counsellors to the king, to acquaint him with what they heard, which might be prejudicial to him and his nation; and indeed this was the very end for which God commanded the enrolling of these prophecies, that both the king and his counsellors, together with all the people, might take notice of them; but they did not carry the book with them, but laid it up in the secretary's chamber.

Verse 22. *Now the king sat in the winter-house*—The princes and great men had distinct houses, or apartments, fitted for the several seasons of the year, Am. iii. 15. *In the ninth month*—Which answers to the latter end of our November and part of December. *And there was a fire on the hearth burning before him*—Hebrew, וַתֵּחַר הָאֵשׁ לְפָנָיו כַּבְעֵרָה, *et focus coram ipso ardebat*, Buxtorff: literally, *And a hearth, or, fire-pan was burning before him*. Thus the LXX., *καὶ εἰσάρα πυρός κατα προσώπον αὐτοῦ: and a pan of fire before him*. To the same purpose the Vulgate, *et posita erat arula coram eo*

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A. M. 3398. on the hearth burning before him.  
B. C. 606.

23 And it came to pass, *that* when Jehudi had read three or four leaves, he cut it with the penknife, and cast *it* into the fire that *was* on the hearth, until all the roll was consumed in the fire that *was* on the hearth.

24 Yet they were not afraid, nor <sup>a</sup>rent their garments, *neither* the king, nor any of his servants that heard all these words.

<sup>a</sup> 2 Kings xxii. 11; Isa. xxxvi. 22; xxxvii. 1.

*plena prunis, There was set before him a little altar, or fire-pan, full of burning coals.* The reason of this phraseology we have in the account which Lightfoot gives us from Maimonides, namely, that chimneys were not admitted at Jerusalem by reason of the smoke. And Mr. Harmer tells us, (chap. iii. obs. 24,) that Sir John Chardin, in his MS. notes, supposes that the fire which was burning before Jehoiakim was a *pan of coals*; and cites a passage from him, which says, in French, "This was just as persons of quality warm themselves in winter in Persia, and particularly in Media, and wherever there is no want of wood. The manner in which they sit will not allow them to be near a chimney: in these places, therefore, of the East, they have great brasiers of lighted coals." Harmer likewise informs us, that "the fires used at Aleppo, in the lodging rooms, are of charcoal in pans; and that pans of coals are the fires which are often made use of in winter in Egypt." It may be observed further here, that this description of Jehoiakim sitting in his winter-house, in the ninth month, with a pan of fire before him, answers to Dr. Russel's account, who says, that the most delicate in those countries make no fires till the end of November. How long they continue the use of them he does not say: but we learn from other sources, that in Judea they are continued far into the spring: see John xviii. 18.

Verse 23. *When Jehudi had read three or four leaves*—Hebrew, רלרות, *rolls, or scrolls*, for their books, as we have observed, consisted of several pieces of parchment rolled upon each other. Dr. Waterland renders the word *columns*, and Blaney, *sections*, observing that to render it *leaves*, "seems rather to carry an eye to the books of modern times, than to suit that ancient mode of writing." The word primarily signifies *doors, that open and shut*, and therefore is properly enough put for distinct and separate rolls, or parts of those prophecies which, being delivered at different times, and having a relation to different subjects, have each a proper beginning and ending of its own. Houbigant reads, *pages*, which he says, "were the same with those now found in the parchments called, 'The Volumes of the Synagogue,' in which the parchments are not sewed one beneath another; for if this were the case, the volume would only have one page, whose beginning would be at the top, and its end at the

25 Nevertheless Elnathan and Delaiah and Gemariah had made intercession to the king that he would not burn the roll: but he would not hear them.

26 But the king commanded Jerahmeel the son <sup>3</sup>of Hammelech, and Seraiah the son of Azriel, and Shelemiah the son of Abdeel, to take Baruch the scribe and Jeremiah the prophet: but the LORD hid them.

<sup>3</sup> Or, of the king.

bottom of the parchment; but the parchments are sewed one to another on their sides, and are read by unfolding the volume either to the right or left; so that there are as many pages as there are parchments." *He cut it with a penknife*—Hebrew, כתיב, הכספר, *the knife of the scribe*. It seems the implements for writing were lying on the table before the king, ready for the scribe's or secretary's use, in case there was any call for writing orders, or despatches. Among these was the knife he used, either for cutting the pen when necessary, or for making erasures. *And cast into the fire until all the roll was consumed*—Not considering or not regarding its containing a revelation of the will of God, and a divine message to him in particular: a piece this of as daring impiety as a man could easily be guilty of, and a most impudent affront to the God of heaven!

Verse 24. *Yet they were not afraid*—No, not those princes that trembled at the word when they heard it the first time, verse 16. The fear with which they were then seized quickly wore off, or else they durst not discover it in the king's presence, who showed no concern himself. *Nor rent their garments*—A custom observed among the Jews at the hearing of any dreadful news; *neither the king nor any of his servants that heard all these words*—How different was the spirit of this king and his courtiers from that of his father Josiah, who, when he heard the words of the law read to him by Shaphan the scribe, both rent his clothes and wept before the Lord in the deepest humiliation and distress, persuaded that great was the wrath about to be poured upon the nation; and yet the parts of the law read to him were certainly neither so particular, nor so immediately adapted to the present state of affairs in the country as the contents of this roll were.

Verses 25, 26. *Nevertheless, Elnathan, Delaiah, and Gemariah had made intercession, &c.*—These three princes appear to have had a greater dread of God upon their hearts than the rest, for, so far as they durst, they interposed and besought the king not to burn the roll; but he would not hearken to their advice; so far from it that he gives orders to apprehend both Jeremiah and Baruch. *But the Lord hid them*—God by his providence kept them both out of their hands, directing them to such a place of recess as the king's messengers could not find out.

A. M. 3399. 27 ¶ Then the word of the LORD  
B. C. 605. came to Jeremiah, after that the king had burned the roll, and the words which Baruch wrote at the mouth of Jeremiah, saying,

28 Take thee again another roll, and write in it all the former words that were in the first roll, which Jehoiakim the king of Judah hath burned.

29 And thou shalt say to Jehoiakim king of Judah, Thus saith the LORD; Thou hast burned this roll, saying, Why hast thou written therein, saying, The king of Babylon shall certainly come and destroy this land, and shall cause to cease from thence man and beast?

30 Therefore thus saith the LORD, of Jehoi-

° Chap. xxii. 30.—° Chap. xxii. 19.

Verses 27-29. *Then the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, &c.*—Jeremiah now receives orders to write in another roll the same words that were written in that which Jehoiakim had burned. Observe well, reader, though the attempts of hell against the word of God are very daring, yet not one tittle of it shall fall to the ground; nor shall the unbelief of man make the truth of God of none effect. Its enemies may prevail to burn many of the Bibles which contain it, yet they cannot abolish the word of God; they can neither extirpate it, nor defeat the accomplishment of it. *And thou shalt say to Jehoiakim*—Or, of Jehoiakim; as *by* is translated, verse 30; for this command seems to have been given to Jeremiah during the time of his confinement. *Thou hast burned this roll, saying, Why, &c.*—We learn here what was the cause of the king's anger; Jeremiah had prophesied, that the king of Babylon should come and take Jerusalem, and lay the country waste, which was fulfilled within six years after this, and more fully still in eighteen years.

Verses 30, 31. *He shall have none to sit on the throne of David*—That is, none that shall be king any considerable time; Jeconiah, his son, was set up, but kept his throne only three months, and left none to succeed him in a direct line. *And his dead body shall be cast out*—See note on chap. xxii. 19. *And I will punish him and his seed, &c.*—Even his seed and his servants shall fare the worse for their relation to him: for they shall be punished, not in-

akim king of Judah; ° He shall have none to sit upon the throne of David: and his dead body shall be ° cast out in the day to the heat, and in the night to the frost.

31 And I will ° punish him and his seed and his servants for their iniquity; and I will bring upon them, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and upon the men of Judah, all the evil that I have pronounced against them; but they hearkened not.

32 ¶ Then took Jeremiah another roll, and gave it to Baruch the scribe, the son of Neriah; who wrote therein from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the book which Jehoiakim king of Judah had burned in the fire: and there were added besides unto them many ° like words.

° Heb. visit upon, Chap. xxiii. 34.—° Heb. as they.

deed for his iniquity, but the sooner for their own. And as to the people, God threatens that they should feel what they were not willing to hear, *even all the evil which God by his prophet had pronounced against them.* Though the roll, the copy of the divine decree, was burned, the original remained, which should again be copied out after another manner in bloody characters. There is no escaping God's judgments by striving against them. *Who ever hardened his heart against God and prospered?*

Verse 32. *Then took Jeremiah another roll*—Here we are shown, that wicked men gain nothing by opposing themselves to the revealed will of God, how ungrateful soever it may be to them, but the addition of guilt to their souls, and the increase of divine wrath; God's counsels shall stand, and what he speaks shall most certainly be accomplished. Here is another roll written, with additional threatenings, confirming what God had before said. *There were added unto them, besides, many like words*—Blaney translates the clause, *And there was a further addition made unto them of many words of the same sort.* "From hence we may infer," says Lowth, "that God's Spirit did not always endite the very form of words which the holy writers have set down, but, directing them in general to express his sense in proper words, left the manner of expression to themselves. From whence proceeds that variety of style which we may observe in the Scriptures, suitable to the different genius and education of the writers."

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

In this chapter we have, (1.) Certain preliminary facts related, tending to fix the time and occasion of Zedekiah's second message to Jeremiah, 1-5. (2.) God suggests an answer, foretelling the retreat of the Egyptians, and the return of the Chaldean army, who should take and burn Jerusalem, 6-10. (3.) During the absence of the Chaldeans, Jeremiah,

attempting to quit the city and retire to his own country possessions, is seized upon for a deserter, and thrown into a dungeon, 11-15. (4.) The king sends for and consults him; and, being entreated by the prophet not to remand him to his former prison, is prevailed upon to change the place, and to abate the rigour, of his confinement, 16-21.

A. M. 3405. **AND** King <sup>a</sup> Zedekiah the son of Josiah reigned instead of Coniah the son of Jehoiakim, whom Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon, made king in the land of Judah.

2 <sup>b</sup> But neither he, nor his servants, nor the people of the land, did hearken unto the words of the LORD, which he spake <sup>1</sup> by the Prophet Jeremiah.

B. C. 590. 3 And Zedekiah the king sent Jehucal the son of Shelemiah, and <sup>c</sup> Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah the priest to the Prophet Jeremiah, saying, Pray now unto the LORD our God for us.

4 Now Jeremiah came in and went out among the people: for they had not put him into prison.

5 Then <sup>d</sup> Pharaoh's army was come forth out

<sup>a</sup> 2 Kings xxiv. 17; 2 Chronicles xxxvi. 10; Chap. xxii. 24. <sup>b</sup> 2 Chron. xxxvi. 12, 14.—<sup>1</sup> Heb. by the hand of the prophet. <sup>c</sup> Chap. xxi. 1, 2; xxix. 25; lii. 24.

#### NOTES ON CHAPTER XXXVII.

Verses 1, 2. *Zedekiah, whom Nebuchadrezzar made king*—See 2 Kings xxiv. 17; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 10, where is related the history of Zedekiah's succession. He was but a tributary king, having taken an oath of homage to the king of Babylon. He was a feeble and irresolute prince, and although not so bad as many of his predecessors, yet he had but little true piety or virtue. *Neither he nor his servants, &c., did hearken unto the words of the Lord*—Though they saw in his predecessor the fatal consequences of contemning the word of God, and though it had already begun to be fulfilled, yet they did not take warning, nor give any more heed to it than others had done before them.

Verses 3-5. *Zedekiah sent Jehucal the son of Shelemiah*—This man came in the place of Pashur, who, together with Zephaniah, brought the former message from Zedekiah; saying, *Pray now unto the Lord our God for us*—Wicked men of all ranks are desirous, in their distresses, of the prayers of those whose counsels and admonitions they never regard while they are in prosperity, which is a plain evidence of their acting contrary to the convictions of their own consciences. *Now Jeremiah came in and went out among the people*—That is, he was not yet put in prison as he afterward was: see verse 15; chap. xxxii. 2. Jerusalem also, for the present, was at liberty, for *Pharaoh's army was come forth out of Egypt, &c.*—Zedekiah, contrary to the oath that he had given to Nebuchadrezzar, made an alliance with the king of Egypt, and contracted with him for assistance against the king of Babylon; whereupon the

of Egypt: <sup>e</sup> and when the Chaldeans that besieged Jerusalem heard tidings of them, they departed from Jerusalem.

6 ¶ Then came the word of the LORD unto the Prophet Jeremiah, saying,

7 Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel; Thus shall ye say to the king of Judah, <sup>f</sup> that sent you unto me to inquire of me; Behold, Pharaoh's army, which is come forth to help you, shall return to Egypt into their own land.

8 <sup>g</sup> And the Chaldeans shall come again, and fight against this city, and take it, and burn it with fire.

9 Thus saith the LORD; Deceive not <sup>2</sup> yourselves, saying, The Chaldeans shall surely depart from us: for they shall not depart.

10 <sup>h</sup> For though ye had smitten the whole army of the Chaldeans that fight against you,

<sup>d</sup> 2 Kings xxiv. 7; Ezekiel xvii. 15.—<sup>e</sup> Verse 11; Chapter xxxiv. 21.—<sup>f</sup> Chapter xxi. 2.—<sup>g</sup> Chap. xxxiv. 22.—<sup>h</sup> Heb. souls.—<sup>2</sup> Chap. xxi. 4, 5.

king of Egypt sent an army to his relief: see Ezek. xvii. 15; which obliged the Chaldeans to raise the siege of Jerusalem, that they might go and fight this army."—Lowth. During this time, it seems, it was that Zedekiah sent to desire the prophet to pray for them.

Verses 7-10. *Pharaoh's army, which is come forth to help you, shall return*—They shall be discomfited by the Chaldeans, and forced to retreat without affording you any assistance: see 2 Kings xxiv. 7. *And the Chaldeans shall come again*—They shall return, renew the siege, and prosecute it with more vigour than ever. *And take it and burn it with fire*—The sentence passed upon Jerusalem shall be executed, and they shall be the executioners: see chap. xxxiv. 22. *Deceive not yourselves, &c.*—In vain did the Jews rejoice in Pharaoh's coming to help them: in vain did they flatter themselves that the army of the Chaldeans would be routed; for, (as God was against them,) had this even been the case, had they smitten, as God here tells them, the whole army of the Chaldeans, so that *there remained but wounded men among them*, yet would they have been sufficient to have taken and laid low the proud city of Jerusalem. *For, when God will take away, who shall rescue?*—In vain, therefore, if God be our enemy, is all our power and policy; in vain do we endeavour to strengthen ourselves by riches and great friends, and to build our nest on high; for we can never be safe, but in the favour, and under the protection of the Almighty. And we may observe further, that whatever instruments God has determined to make use of, in any service for him, whe-

A. M. 3415. and there remained *but* <sup>3</sup> wounded  
B. C. 589. men among them, *yet* should they  
rise up every man in his tent, and burn this  
city with fire.

11 ¶ <sup>1</sup> And it came to pass, that when the  
army of the Chaldeans was <sup>4</sup> broken up from  
Jerusalem for fear of Pharaoh's army,

12 Then Jeremiah went forth out of Jeru-  
salem to go into the land of Benjamin, <sup>5</sup> to  
separate himself thence in the midst of the  
people.

13 And when he was in the gate of Benja-  
min, a captain of the ward *was* there, whose

<sup>3</sup> Heb. thrust through.—<sup>1</sup> Verse 5.—<sup>4</sup> Heb. made to ascend.  
<sup>5</sup> Or, to slip away from thence in the midst of the people.

ther of mercy or judgment, they shall accomplish  
that for which they are designed, whatever incapacity  
they may lie under, or be reduced to.

Verse 12. *Then Jeremiah went forth, &c., to go  
into the land of Benjamin*—Jeremiah, having no fur-  
ther revelation from God to communicate, and know-  
ing the city would soon be taken, resolves to go to  
his own country to Anathoth. *To separate himself  
thence, &c.*—The Hebrew, להלך משם בתוך העם,  
is rendered by Houbigant, "That he might have  
there a possession for himself with the people;" by  
Dr. Waterland, "To take rents from thence," &c.;  
and by Blaney, "To receive a portion thereof among  
the people." "This," says the last-mentioned crit-  
ic, "seems a more natural interpretation of the  
words, than to understand them, as our translators  
seem to have done, of the prophet's withdrawing  
himself, or slipping away, (as it is expressed in the  
margin,) for fear of being shut up again in the city,  
on the renewal of the blockade. For the case ap-  
pears to have been this, Jeremiah had been cut off  
from his patrimony in the land of Benjamin, by the  
Chaldeans having been masters there. But, upon  
their retreat, he meant to return, with a view of  
coming in for a share of the produce of the land  
with the rest of his neighbours. For that he was  
likely to want some means for his support is evident  
from his having been obliged to be subsisted in pri-  
son afterward upon a public allowance."

Verses 13, 14. *When he was in the gate of Ben-  
jamin*—The gate leading toward the country of  
Benjamin; *Irijah, the son of Hananiah*—Probably  
of that Hananiah whose death Jeremiah had fore-  
told, ch. xxviii. 17; *took Jeremiah the prophet*—Ap-  
prehended him as one who was about to desert the  
city, and fall off to the Chaldeans; the ground of  
which accusation was the prophet's having foretold  
that the Chaldeans should take the city, and exhort-  
ed the Jews to submit to them. *Then said Jerem-  
iah, It is false*—Though, as the Lord's prophet,  
he had faithfully revealed his will, and foretold the  
calamity that was about to come upon the nation, by  
means of the Chaldeans, this did not prove that he  
took their part, for at the same time he gave advice

name *was* Irijah, the son of Shele- A. M. 3415.  
miah, the son of Hananiah; and he B. C. 589.  
took Jeremiah the prophet, saying, Thou fallest  
away to the Chaldeans.

14 Then said Jeremiah, *It is* <sup>6</sup> false; I fall  
not away to the Chaldeans. But he hearkened  
not to him: so Irijah took Jeremiah, and  
brought him to the princes.

15 Wherefore the princes were wroth with  
Jeremiah, and smote him, <sup>k</sup> and put him in pri-  
son in the house of Jonathan the scribe: for  
they had made that the prison.

16 ¶ When Jeremiah was entered into <sup>l</sup> the

<sup>6</sup> Heb. falsehood, or, a lie.—<sup>k</sup> Chap. xxxviii. 26.—<sup>l</sup> Chapter  
xxxviii. 6.

both to the king and people how they might, in some  
measure at least, escape the judgments he had de-  
nounced against them; nor had he now any design  
to flee to the Chaldeans; so far from it, that, when  
the city was taken, and the captain of the guard gave  
him his choice, either to go along with him to Baby-  
lon, or to go back to Gedaliah, whom the king of  
Babylon had left as deputy governor in Judea, he  
chose rather to go and live under Gedaliah's govern-  
ment in a poor condition, than to enjoy protection  
and plenty in an idolatrous country. *But he hear-  
kened not unto him*—The captain of the ward would  
not believe him, but carried him before the princes.

Verse 15. *Wherefore the princes were wroth*—  
These princes seem to have been much more hostile  
to the prophet than those that were in the time of  
Jehoiakim, (see chap. xxxvi. 19,) for they proceed  
here merely upon the captain's information, and,  
treating him as guilty, without any proof, cruelly  
cause him to be beaten, though entirely innocent,  
and put into a most miserable dungeon. *In the  
house of Jonathan the scribe*—"There is nothing  
extraordinary," says Blaney, "in making the dwell-  
ing-house of a great man a prison, according to  
either the ancient or modern manners of the East:  
see Gen. xxxix. 20; even in the royal palace itself  
we find there was a prison, chap. xxxii. 2." Mr.  
Harmer (chap. viii. obs. 37) quotes the following pas-  
sage from a MS. of Sir John Chardin:—"The east-  
ern prisons are not public buildings erected for that  
purpose; but a part of the house in which their cri-  
minal judges dwell. As the governor and provost  
of a town, or the captain of the watch, imprison  
such as are accused in their own houses, they set  
apart a canton of them for that purpose, when they  
are put into these offices, and choose for the jailer  
the most proper person they can find of their domes-  
tics." Thus Mr. Harmer thinks that Jonathan's  
house became a prison in consequence of his being  
a royal scribe, or, as we should term him, secretary  
of state.

Verse 16. *When Jeremiah was entered into the  
dungeon*—Hebrew אל בית חבור, *into the house of  
the pit, ditch, or lake; and into the cabins*—Or,

A. M. 3415. dungeon, and into the <sup>7</sup> cabins, and  
B. C. 589. Jeremiah had remained there many  
days;

17 Then Zedekiah the king sent, and took him out: and the king asked him secretly in his house, and said, Is there *any* word from the LORD? And Jeremiah said, There is: for, said he, thou shalt be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon.

18 Moreover, Jeremiah said unto King Zedekiah, What have I offended against thee, or

<sup>7</sup> Or, cells.

cells, as הרחיים signifies. "From comparing this place with chap. xxxviii. 6, it seems likely that this dungeon was a deep pit, sunk perpendicularly like a well, in the middle court or quadrangle, around which the great houses were built; and that in the sides of it, near the bottom, were scooped niches, like the cabins of a ship, for the separate lodgment of the unfortunate persons who were let down there. Hence also it may be, that the same word here rendered *dungeon* is frequently put for *the grave*; the ancient repositories of the dead being often constructed with niches, in the same manner in which the bodies were placed, separately. Accordingly we read, Isa. xiv. 15, *Yet thou shalt be brought down to the grave, to the sides of the pit*, אל ירכתי בור. How long Jeremiah was forced to remain in this miserable place is not said, but it seems from ver. 19, that it was until the Chaldean army was returned to the siege.

Verse 17. *Then Zedekiah the king sent and took him out*—When the vain hopes with which they had fed themselves, and on the ground of which they had re-enslaved their servants, were all vanished away, then they were in a greater consternation than ever: and then the king sent, in all haste, for the prophet, to see if he could give him any hope of their deliverance. When the Chaldeans were withdrawn, he only sent to desire the prophet to pray for him, but now, the city being again invested, he sent for him to consult him: thus gracious will men be when pangs come upon them! *He asked him secretly in his house*—Being ashamed to be seen in his company: *Is there any word from the Lord?*—That is, Hath God revealed any thing to thee concerning what will be the issue of the return of the Chaldean army to the siege of the city? Canst thou give us any hopes that they will again retire? What need had Zedekiah to make this inquiry, when God, by this prophet, had so often revealed his will to him in this matter? Observe, reader, those that will not hearken to God's admonitions when they are in prosperity, would be glad of his consolations when they are in adversity; and expect that his ministers should then speak words of peace to them. But how can they expect it? what have they to do with peace? *Jeremiah said, There is, for thou shalt be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon*—

against thy servants, or against this A. M. 3415  
people, that ye have put me in prison? B. C. 589.

19 Where *are* now your prophets which prophesied unto you, saying, The king of Babylon shall not come against you, nor against this land?

20 Therefore, hear now, I pray thee, O my lord the king: <sup>o</sup> let my supplication, I pray thee, be accepted before thee; that thou cause me not to return to the house of Jonathan the scribe, lest I die there.

<sup>o</sup> Heb. let my supplication fall.

Here we have an instance of that freedom and firmness of mind which belong to them who truly live in the fear of God, and put their trust in him. Jeremiah's life and comfort are in Zedekiah's hands, and he has now an important petition to present to him; and yet, having this opportunity, he tells him plainly that there is a word from the Lord, but no word of comfort to him, or his people; but that destruction awaits them: see the difference between his spirit and that of Zedekiah. Though a king, Zedekiah dares not run the risk of offending his courtiers, who were his subjects and servants, while the prophet dares denounce the king's ruin to himself: not knowing but such integrity might cost him his life. If he had consulted with flesh and blood, he would have given the king a plausible answer, and not have told him the worst at this time, especially as he had so often told it him before. But Jeremiah was one that had *obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful*, and would not, to obtain mercy of man, be unfaithful either to God, or to his prince, or to his people; he therefore tells him the truth, and the whole truth, which to know would be a kindness to the king, in order that, being forewarned of the approaching calamity, he might be the better prepared for it.

Verses 18-21. *Moreover Jeremiah said, What have I offended against thee*—What law have I broken? What injury have I done to thee, or thy people, or government, *that ye have put me in prison*—Have put me into the pit or dungeon, as a malefactor of the worst kind? *Where are now your prophets*—That is, your false prophets? Surely the event has now convinced you, how much they have deceived you: for you see the siege renewed, and the city in imminent danger of being taken. Here we see Jeremiah's confinement in the dungeon had not broken his spirit, or diminished either his zeal or courage in delivering God's message: he still speaks with the greatest boldness, and as one having authority. No doubt he would have been willing, had God called him to it, to seal his testimony with his blood: nevertheless, having so fair an opportunity to obtain relief, he thought it his duty to embrace it, and therefore, with great humility and submissiveness, and in a most respectful manner, presents his supplication, not indeed for an entire deliverance from restraint, which, however, it would

A. M. 3415. 21 Then Zedekiah the king com-  
B. C. 589. manded that they should commit  
Jeremiah <sup>m</sup> into the court of the prison, and  
that they should give him daily a piece of

<sup>m</sup> Chap. xxxii. 2; xxxviii. 13, 28.

not have been unreasonable to ask, but for a less  
cruel treatment. *Then Zedekiah commanded that  
they should commit Jeremiah into the court of the  
prison*—A more agreeable place of confinement;  
and that they should give him daily a piece of bread,  
&c.—Namely, out of the public stock, (for the prison  
was within the precincts of the court,) in order that  
he might not die for want. *Until all the bread of*

bread out of the bakers' street, <sup>n</sup> until A. M. 3415.  
all the bread in the city were spent. B. C. 589.  
Thus Jeremiah remained in the court of the  
prison.

<sup>n</sup> Chap. xxxviii. 9; lii. 6.

*the city was spent*—Till the famine forced the city  
to surrender, chap. lii. 6. This was the king's first  
order, but afterward it was reversed, by the impor-  
tunity of the princes and great men, chap. xxxviii. 6,  
when Jeremiah was again thrown into the dungeon.  
Though after that he was released from that place,  
and returned to his former confinement, *ibid.*  
verse 28.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

*This chapter contains the last transaction in which Jeremiah was prophetically concerned before the taking of Jerusalem.*

(1.) *The princes of Judah, offended with Jeremiah for repeating to the people, who visited him in the court of the prison, the message he was charged with, chap. xxi. 9, 10, caused him to be cast into a deep and miry dungeon, 1-6. (2.) Ebed-melech obtains an order from the king, and takes him out of it, 7-13. (3.) The king consults with him in private; he seeks to persuade the king to give himself up to the king of Babylon's officers, as the only means of safety to himself, and of preserving the city from destruction, 14-23. (4.) The king assures to him his life, but requires him not to divulge the secret of his conference to the princes, who inquire about it, but receive an evasive answer; and Jeremiah remains in the court of the prison, 24-28.*

A. M. 3415. **T**HEN Shephatiah the son of Mat-  
B. C. 589. tan, and Gedaliah the son of  
Pashur, and <sup>a</sup> Jucal the son of Shelemiah, and  
<sup>b</sup> Pashur the son of Malchiah, <sup>c</sup> heard the words  
that Jeremiah had spoken unto all the people,  
saying,

2 Thus saith the LORD, <sup>d</sup> He that remaineth  
in this city shall die by the sword, by the fam-  
ine, and by the pestilence: but he that goeth  
forth to the Chaldeans shall live; for he shall  
have his life for a prey, and shall live.

<sup>a</sup> Chapter xxxvii. 3.—<sup>b</sup> Chapter xxi. 1.—<sup>c</sup> Chapter xxi. 8.  
<sup>d</sup> Chapter xxi. 9.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Verse 1. *Then Shephatiah, &c.*—Here are four  
of the great men, counsellors or chief officers to Ze-  
dekiah, named, of whom we have no further mention  
in holy writ; nor do they deserve to have much in-  
quiry made after them. Some of them were sent by  
Zedekiah to Jeremiah to inquire concerning the  
event of the siege, chap. xxxvii. 3, and xxi. 1-9.  
“The answer which Jeremiah returned by them to  
the king, he afterward published to the people;  
which was the occasion of the new troubles recorded  
in this chapter.”—Lowth. The fact seems to have  
been, that, as he was now removed into a little freer  
air than he had been in, his friends, or such as had a  
desire to see him, came to him, and being inquisitive  
concerning the issue of the siege, he could not but

3 Thus saith the LORD, <sup>e</sup> This city A. M. 3415.  
shall surely be given into the hand B. C. 589.  
of the king of Babylon's army, which shall  
take it.

4 Therefore the princes said unto the king,  
We beseech thee, <sup>f</sup> let this man be put to death:  
for thus he weakeneth the hands of the men of  
war that remain in this city, and the hands of  
all the people, in speaking such words unto  
them: for this man seeketh not the <sup>1</sup> welfare of  
this people, but the hurt.

<sup>e</sup> Chapter xxi. 10; xxxii. 3.—<sup>f</sup> Chapter xxvi. 11.—<sup>1</sup> Heb.  
*peace.*

tell them what he knew of the mind of God, and advise  
them the best way he could for their safety. Some of  
them, it is likely, went to these princes, and informed  
them of what they had heard from the prophet.

Verses 2-5. *Thus saith the Lord, He that goeth  
forth to the Chaldeans shall live*—This had been  
the constant tenor of this prophet's prophecies.  
The crime of which he was now accused, seems to  
lie in this, that in such a time of danger he should  
repeat this prophecy, and also advise the people  
to leave the city, and go out to the Chaldeans,  
telling them that if they did so, though the city  
would be lost, yet they should save their lives, which  
might induce some to desert their posts. This they  
interpret to be not seeking the welfare of the people,  
but their hurt; though, indeed, their welfare was

A. M. 3415. 5 Then Zedekiah the king said,  
B. C. 589. Behold, he is in your hand: for the  
king is not he that can do any thing against  
you.

6 ¶ Then took they Jeremiah, and cast him  
into the dungeon of Malchiah the son <sup>2</sup> of  
Hammelech, that was in the court of the pris-  
on: and they let down Jeremiah with cords.  
And in the dungeon there was no water, but  
mire: so Jeremiah sunk in the mire.

¶ Chap. xxxvii. 21.—<sup>2</sup> Or, of the king.

that alone which he sought, knowing that there was no other way for them to save their lives, but by submitting to the Chaldeans. The great men, however, would not believe it; for they would not form their judgments on the revelations which God had been pleased to make of his will, but were determined to judge of their safety from what they wished. Hence, for any one not to be of their opinion was to be an enemy to the state. *Therefore the princes said unto the king*—See chap. xxxvi. 12, 21; *We beseech thee, let this man be put to death*—His crime deserves no less a punishment; for he weakeneth the hands of the men of war—By making them despair of success. *Then the king said, Behold he is in your hand*—At your disposal; I give him up into your power. Though Zedekiah was convinced that Jeremiah was a prophet sent of God, yet he had not courage to own this conviction, but weakly yielded to the violence of his persecutors. *For the king is not he that can do anything against you*—He speaks as one who did not dare, in such difficult times, to contradict the great men about him. Blaney renders the clause, "For the king can carry no point in competition with you;" observing, "The king evidently speaks this in disgust with the princes for endeavouring to frustrate his clemency. He had once rescued Jeremiah out of their hands, and taken him under his royal protection. But his prerogative, he tells them, was likely to avail but little when opposed by their obstinate and repeated importunities. The power was in reality theirs and not his."

Verse 6. *Then they took Jeremiah and cast him into the dungeon of Malchiah*—A place of much the same nature with that mentioned chap. xxxvii. 16, but in another prison. *And they let down Jeremiah with cords*—It seems there was no passage into this dungeon by stairs, and, as it was deep, they were obliged to let him down in this manner. *So Jeremiah sunk in the mire*—Which was in the bottom of this pit. Josephus asserts that he sunk up to his neck in it, and adds, that their intention in putting him into so foul a place was, that he might perish in it, *Antiq.*, lib. ix. cap. 10. It has been thought by some, that during his abode in this loathsome place he composed the melancholy meditations contained in the third chapter of his Lamentations; but this seems highly improbable.

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7 ¶ <sup>h</sup> Now when Ebed-melech the A. M. 3415  
B. C. 589.  
Ethiopian, one of the eunuchs which  
was in the king's house, heard that they had  
put Jeremiah in the dungeon; the king then  
sitting in the gate of Benjamin;

8 Ebed-melech went forth out of the king's  
house, and spake to the king, saying,

9 My lord the king, these men have done  
evil in all that they have done to Jeremiah the  
prophet, whom they have cast into the dun-

<sup>h</sup> Chap. xxxix. 16.

Verses 7-9. *Now when Ebed-melech the Ethiopian*—Or *Cushite*, as the Hebrew is. His country seems to be mentioned to let us know that this prophet of the Lord found more kindness from a stranger, who was a native heathen, than from his own countrymen; *one of the eunuchs which was in the king's house*—That is, one of the court officers. It is probable that the princes had put Jeremiah into this miserable place privately, but by some means the report of what they had done providentially reached this officer's ears. *The king then sitting in the gate of Benjamin*—Namely, to hear the complaints of the people, and to administer justice; the courts for that purpose being usually held in the gates of the city. *Ebed-melech went forth and spake to the king*—The zeal as well as courage of this good officer was very remarkable. He did not stay till the king returned to his house, but went to him as he was sitting in the gate administering justice, where doubtless he was not alone, but was probably attended by some of those very princes who had thrown Jeremiah into the dungeon: Ebed-melech, however, was not afraid of them, but complains openly to the king of their cruelty to Jeremiah, *saying, My lord the king, these men have done evil in all that they have done to Jeremiah*—They deal unjustly with him, for he had not deserved any punishment at all, and they deal barbarously with him, so as they used not to deal with the vilest malefactors. *And he is like to die*—Hebrew, *יָמָו חָרָרָה*, *he will die upon the spot; for hunger, for there is no bread*—That is, as some interpret the clause, "There was no need for those who desired his death to put him into so filthy and loathsome a place; since, if he had continued in the court of the prison, he must have died through the famine which threatens the city. The words, however, are more literally rendered, *When there is no longer any bread in the city*. Ebed-melech supposed with reason that when the bread failed, Jeremiah must perish with hunger in the dungeon; for he would be of course neglected, and not have it in his power to make those shifts for subsistence which persons at liberty might avail themselves of. Such was the compassion which the stranger had for the Lord's prophet, whom his own countrymen would have destroyed! And God, who put these sentiments of pity and benevolence into Ebed-melech's heart, afterward recompensed him by delivering him

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A. M. 3415. geon; and <sup>3</sup> he is like to die for  
B. C. 589. hunger in the place where he is: for  
*there is no more bread in the city.*

10 Then the king commanded Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, saying, Take from hence thirty men <sup>4</sup> with thee, and take up Jeremiah the prophet out of the dungeon, before he die.

11 So Ebed-melech took the men with him, and went into the house of the king under the treasury, and took thence old cast clouts and old rotten rags, and let them down by cords into the dungeon to Jeremiah.

12 And Ebed-melech the Ethiopian said unto Jeremiah, Put now *these* old cast clouts and rotten rags under thine arm-holes under

<sup>3</sup> Heb. *he will die.*—<sup>4</sup> Heb. *in thy hand.*—<sup>1</sup> Verse 6.

from death when the city was taken, chap. xxxix. 15, 16. But how remarkable it is, that in the whole city of Jerusalem no person was found, save this Ethiopian, to appear publicly, as the friend and advocate of the prophet in his distress! Thus is the justice of God vindicated in giving up this people into the hands of their enemies, when there was not a single person of their nation willing to hazard his life or character in the cause of God, to save the life of one who had been known among them for a true prophet between twenty and thirty years.

Verses 10–13. *Then the king commanded, &c.*—The king, who a little while ago durst do nothing against the princes, has now his heart wonderfully and suddenly changed, and will have Jeremiah released in defiance of them; ordering no fewer than thirty men, and those probably of the life-guard, to be employed in fetching him out of the dungeon, lest the princes should raise a party to oppose it. *So Ebed-melech took the men*—He lost no time, but immediately went about this good work, and used as much tenderness as despatch in accomplishing it; going into the king's house and fetching thence old soft rags and pieces of cloth, to be put under the prophet's arm-holes, to prevent the cords, wherewith he was to be drawn up, from hurting him. This circumstance, trivial as it may appear, is here particularly noticed and recorded to the honour of this pious Gentile; for *God is not unrighteous to forget any work or labour of love* which is shown to his people or ministers; no, nor any circumstance thereof, Heb. vi. 10. Observe, reader, those that are in distress should not only be relieved, but relieved with compassion and marks of respect, all which things will be remembered, and will be found to a good account, in the day of final recompense.

Verse 14. *Then Zedekiah sent, &c.*—Here we have an account of the honour which the king did the prophet after he was fetched out of the dungeon: he sent for him to advise with him privately what measures it would be best to take in the present calamitous state of public affairs. The interview took

the cords. And Jeremiah did so. A. M. 3415.  
B. C. 589. 13 <sup>1</sup> So they drew up Jeremiah with  
cords, and took him up out of the dungeon: and Jeremiah remained <sup>2</sup> in the court of the prison.

14 ¶ Then Zedekiah the king sent, and took Jeremiah the prophet unto him into the <sup>3</sup> third entry that *is* in the house of the LORD: and the king said unto Jeremiah, I will ask thee a thing; hide nothing from me.

15 Then Jeremiah said unto Zedekiah, If I declare *it* unto thee, wilt thou not surely put me to death? and if I give thee counsel, wilt thou not hearken unto me?

16 So Zedekiah the king sware secretly unto Jeremiah, saying, As the LORD liveth, <sup>1</sup> that

<sup>2</sup> Chap. xxxvii. 21.—<sup>3</sup> Or, *principal.*—<sup>1</sup> Isa. lvii. 16.

place *in the third entry in*, or leading toward, or adjoining to, *the house of the Lord.* Dr. Lightfoot explains this of the third passage or gate which lay between the king's palace, where the prison was, and the temple, whither the king now retreated for fear of the Chaldean army. *And the king said, I will ask thee a thing*—Hebrew, שאל אני דבר, *I am asking thee a word*, namely, of prediction, counsel, or comfort, *a word from the Lord*, chap. xxxvii. 17. Whatever word thou hast for me, *hide it not from me*—Let me know the worst. He had been plainly told what would be the issue of the measures they were pursuing; but, like Balaam, he asks again, in hopes to get a more pleasing answer; as if God, who is *in one mind*, were altogether such a one as himself, who was in many minds.

Verse 15. *Then Jeremiah said, If I declare it unto thee, wilt thou not surely put me to death?*—“The prophet had so much experience of the unsteadiness of the king's temper, of his backwardness in following good counsel, and want of courage to stand by those that durst advise him well, that he might, with good reason, resolve not to venture his life to serve a man that was in a manner incapable of being directed. And although God had showed him what would be the effect of his advice, if it were followed, (verse 17,) yet it doth not appear that he had commanded him to make this known to Zedekiah.”—Lowth. *And if I give thee counsel, wilt thou not hearken unto me?*—Rather, *wilt thou hearken unto me?* Which is undoubtedly the sense intended, unless we translate the words, as some do, without an interrogation, *thou wilt not hearken unto me.* So Jeremiah might well conclude from the king's former behaviour, for he had often been advised by him, but would never take his advice, and the prophet knew the same would be the case still, that the king would be overruled by a corrupt court and his own aversion to change his state as a king to the state of a prisoner.

Verse 16. *The king sware, As the Lord liveth, that made this soul*—That is, who gave me my life and thee thine, and who, as he is the author, so he is the

A. M. 3415. made us this soul, I will not put thee  
B. C. 589. to death, neither will I give thee into  
the hand of these men that seek thy life.

17 Then said Jeremiah unto Zedekiah, Thus saith the LORD, the God of hosts, the God of Israel; If thou wilt assuredly <sup>m</sup> go forth <sup>n</sup> unto the king of Babylon's princes, then thy soul shall live, and this city shall not be burned with fire; and thou shalt live and thy house.

18 But if thou wilt not go forth to the king of Babylon's princes, then shall this city be given into the hand of the Chaldeans, and they shall burn it with fire, and <sup>o</sup> thou shalt not escape out of their hand.

19 And Zedekiah the king said unto Jeremiah, I am afraid of the Jews that are fallen to the Chaldeans, lest they deliver me into their hand, and they <sup>p</sup> mock me.

20 But Jeremiah said, They shall not deliver

<sup>m</sup> 2 Kings xxiv. 12.—<sup>n</sup> Chapter xxxix. 3.—<sup>o</sup> Chap. xxxii. 4; xxxiv. 3; Verse 23.—<sup>p</sup> 1 Sam. xxxi. 4.

preserver, of our life and being: who may uphold or take them away as and when he pleases. *I will not put thee to death, &c.*—Zedekiah says nothing to the prophet as to obeying his counsel, but he gives him the security of his oath that he would neither himself slay him, by giving an immediate command from himself for his being slain, nor surrender him up into the hands of those princes who, he perceived, sought his life.

Verses 17, 18. *Then said Jeremiah, Thus saith the Lord*—Here we have the good advice which Jeremiah gave him, with the reasons why the king ought to take it; reasons drawn, not from any prudence or politics of his own, but in the name of the Lord, the God of hosts, and God of Israel. *If thou wilt assuredly go forth unto the king of Babylon's princes*—Those mentioned chap. xxxix. 3, and submit thyself to them; *then thy soul shall live*—That is, thou shalt live; and *this city shall not be burned, &c.*—Thou shalt save the city from destruction by fire, and thy wives and children from suffering a violent death. It must be observed that Nebuchadnezzar was not now in person at the siege of Jerusalem, but at Riblah in Syria, chap. xxxix. 5, 9. His army was commanded by his generals; and it is to them, here termed *princes*, that Jeremiah counsels Zedekiah to go forth, and through them to submit himself to the king, by whom he had been established on the throne. *But if thou wilt not go forth, &c.*—As he had before used exhortations and promises, so here he uses warnings and threatenings to prevail with the king to take that course by which alone he could preserve Jerusalem, and himself, and family from ruin.

Verses 19, 20. *Zedekiah said, I am afraid of the Jews, &c.*—The sense seems to be, that he was afraid lest the Chaldeans, when he had given him-

thee. Obey, I beseech thee, the voice <sup>A. M. 3415.</sup>  
of the LORD, which I speak unto <sup>B. C. 589.</sup>  
thee: so it shall be well unto thee, and thy  
soul shall live.

21 But if thou refuse to go forth, this is the word that the LORD hath showed me.

22 And behold, all the women that are left in the king of Judah's house shall be brought forth to the king of Babylon's princes, and those women shall say, <sup>6</sup> Thy friends have set thee on, and have prevailed against thee: thy feet are sunk in the mire, and they are turned away back.

23 So they shall bring out all thy wives and <sup>9</sup> thy children to the Chaldeans: and <sup>r</sup> thou shalt not escape out of their hand, but shalt be taken by the hand of the king of Babylon, and <sup>7</sup> thou shalt cause this city to be burned with fire.

<sup>6</sup> Heb. *Men of thy peace.*—<sup>9</sup> Chap. xxxix. 6; xli. 10.—<sup>r</sup> Verse 18.—<sup>7</sup> Heb. *thou shalt burn, &c.*

self up to them, should deliver him into the hands of those Jews who had fallen to them, and they should insult over and deride him, as being obliged at last to do what he had blamed, and, if he had been able, would have punished them for doing. Thus the Vulgate, *Solicitus sum propter Judæos, qui transfugerunt ad Chaldæas: ne forte tradar in manus eorum et illudant mihi.* He was conscious he had acted a base part in violating the oath of homage and fidelity which he had given to the king of Babylon, and that he was considered by many of the Jews, especially by those who had gone over to the Chaldeans, as having ruined his country by his impolitic measures. Thus he was more concerned for his honour than for his life, and the lives of his wives and children, and the safety of the whole city. And thus often great persons are more patient of death than of reproach and dishonour. *But Jeremiah said, They shall not deliver thee*—The Chaldeans will not do so base an act, but deal with thee as with a prince. God foresees all possible events, and what would be the consequence of the several counsels men propose to themselves. *Obey, I beseech thee, the voice of the Lord: so it shall be well with thee*—Let not thy fears, therefore, respecting the treatment thou wilt meet with, be a temptation to thee to disobey the command of God: for if thou doest as thou art advised to do, *thou shalt live*—Though not in that splendour in which thou now livest, yet in a much more comfortable state than if the city be taken by storm.

Verses 21-23. *But if thou refuse, this is the word that the Lord hath showed me*—Namely, what follows in the next two verses. *Behold, all the women that are left in the king of Judah's house*—The king's wives, his daughters, and the other women that belong to the king's court and family, shall be-

A. M. 3415. 24 ¶ Then said Zedekiah unto  
B. C. 589. Jeremiah, Let no man know of these  
words, and thou shalt not die.

25 But if the princes hear that I have talked  
with thee, and they come unto thee, and say  
unto thee, Declare unto us now what thou  
hast said unto the king, hide it not from us,  
and we will not put thee to death; also what  
the king said unto thee:

26 Then thou shalt say unto them, \* I pre-  
sented my supplications before the king, that

\* Chap. xxxvii. 20.—† Chap. xxxvii. 15.—° Heb. they

come a prey to the chief officers of the king of Baby-  
lon's army. *And those women shall say, Thy friends  
have set thee on, &c.*—They shall tell thee that, for  
these thy calamities, thou mayest thank thy heark-  
ening to thy priests and false prophets; (called in  
the Hebrew the *men of his peace*, because they  
soothed up the king with the promises of peace;) in  
other words, those very women shall then reproach  
thee for having suffered thyself to be ensnared by  
the ill advice of thy friends, and brought under in-  
superable difficulties. They will say to thee, *Thy  
feet are sunk in the mire*—Thou art plunged into  
calamities from which thou canst not extricate thy-  
self. *And they are turned away back*—Even thy  
friends, by following whose counsel thou art brought  
into these snares and troubles, forsake thee in thy  
distress, every one shifting for himself. And thus  
shall a greater evil come upon thee than that which  
thou fearest, and the fear of which makes the unwill-  
ing to comply with the will of God concerning thee.  
*So shall they bring out all thy wives, &c.*—The pro-  
phet partly repeats and partly enlarges on the argu-  
ment advanced in the former verse, with a view to  
prevail on the king to surrender himself to the Chal-  
deans. He urges, that if he would not do it, not  
only himself but his wives and children also would  
fall into his enemies' hands, and that their reflection  
upon him, for the misery he had brought upon them  
and his country, would be no small aggravation of  
his affliction.

Verses 24-27. *Then said Zedekiah, Let no man  
know of these words, &c.*—Keep what has passed  
between us secret, and I will keep my promise to  
thee of preserving thy life. These words sufficient-

he would not cause me to return † to A. M. 3415.  
Jonathan's house, to die there. B. C. 589.

27 Then came all the princes unto Jeremiah,  
and asked him: and he told them according to  
all these words that the king had commanded.  
So ° they left off speaking with him; for the  
matter was not perceived.

28 So ° Jeremiah abode in the court of the  
prison until the day that Jerusalem was  
taken: and he was *there* when Jerusalem  
was taken.

were silent from him.—° Chap. xxxvii. 21; xxxix. 14.

ly show that Zedekiah stood in fear of his courtiers.  
This is the righteous judgment of God, that those  
who will not *sanctify the Lord of hosts in their  
hearts*, and make him their fear, shall fear men,  
whom to fear is to be in a state of ignoble and mise-  
rable bondage. *But if the princes hear, &c.*—It  
was hardly possible that Zedekiah should have this  
private discourse with Jeremiah, but some or other  
of his courtiers should come to the knowledge of it.  
But here we see in what a state of miserable subjec-  
tion this poor prince was to them, in that he could  
discourse to nobody, but they must come and in-  
quire what he had said. *Thou shalt say, I present-  
ed my supplication, &c.*—Jeremiah had been for-  
merly kept prisoner in Jonathan's house, chap.  
xxxvii. 15. But the last time he was imprisoned  
was in the dungeon of Hammelech, verse 6 of this  
chapter: a place which, perhaps, might at this time  
be put to some other use. *Then came all the princes  
to Jeremiah*—As the king suspected, so it came to  
pass: his private discourse with the prophet trans-  
pired, and all the princes then at court came and  
inquired of Jeremiah what was the substance of it.  
*And he told them according to all that the king had  
commanded*—He told them part of the truth, but  
not all, concealing from them the advice which he  
had given to the king, with relation to the questions  
he had proposed to him. For a man is not bound  
in all cases to discover the whole truth, particularly  
to those who have no right to the knowledge of it,  
which, in this case, these princes had not. *So the  
matter was not perceived*—The princes never got  
to know what was the principal subject of the king's  
conference with the prophet.

## CHAPTER XXXIX.

This chapter contains an account, (1.) Of the taking of Jerusalem by the Chaldean army, after eighteen months siege, 1-3. (2.) Of the flight of Zedekiah, and the particulars of his punishment, after he was taken and brought before the king of Babylon, 4-7. (3.) Of the burning of the city, and removal of the people, a few of the poor only excepted, 8-10. (4.) Of the release of Jeremiah, and the kindness wherewith he was treated, in consequence of a special charge from Nebuchadnezzar, 11-14. (5.) The piety of Ebed-melech is rewarded with a promise of personal safety amidst the ensuing public calamities, 15-18.

A. M. 3416. **I**N the <sup>a</sup>ninth year of Zedekiah  
B. C. 588. king of Judah, in the tenth month,  
came Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon and  
all his army against Jerusalem, and they be-  
sieged it.

B. C. 588. **2** And in the eleventh year of Zede-  
kiah, in the fourth month, the ninth  
day of the month, the city was broken up.

**3** <sup>b</sup> And all the princes of the king of Baby-  
lon came in, and sat in the middle gate, *even*  
Nergal-sharezer, Samgar-nebo, Sarsechim, Rab-  
saris, Nergal-sharezer, Rab-mag, with all the  
residue of the princes of the king of Babylon.

**4** ¶ <sup>c</sup> And it came to pass, *that* when Zede-  
kiah the king of Judah saw them, and all the  
men of war, then they fled, and went forth  
out of the city by night, by the way of the  
king's garden, by the gate betwixt the two  
walls: and he went out the way of the plain.

**5** But the Chaldeans' army pursued after  
them, and <sup>d</sup>overtook Zedekiah in the plains  
of Jericho: and when they had taken him,  
they brought him up to Nebuchadrezzar king  
of Babylon to <sup>e</sup>Riblah in the land of Hamath,  
where he <sup>f</sup>gave judgment upon him.

**6** Then the king of Babylon slew <sup>A. M. 3416.</sup>  
the sons of Zedekiah in Riblah before <sup>B. C. 588.</sup>  
his eyes: also the king of Babylon slew all the  
nobles of Judah.

**7** Moreover <sup>g</sup>he put out Zedekiah's eyes, and  
bound him <sup>h</sup>with chains, to carry him to  
Babylon.

**8** ¶ <sup>i</sup> And the Chaldeans burned the king's  
house, and the houses of the people, with fire,  
and brake down the walls of Jerusalem.

**9** <sup>h</sup> Then Nebuzar-adan the <sup>j</sup>captain<sup>k</sup> of the  
guard carried away captive into Babylon the  
remnant of the people that remained in the  
city, and those that fell away, that fell to him,  
with the rest of the people that remained.

**10** But Nebuzar-adan the captain of the  
guard left of the poor of the people, which had  
nothing, in the land of Judah, and gave them  
vineyards and fields <sup>l</sup>at the same time.

**11** ¶ Now Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon  
gave charge concerning Jeremiah <sup>m</sup>to Nebu-  
zar-adan the captain of the guard, saying,

**12** Take him, and <sup>n</sup>look well to him, and do  
him no harm; but do unto him even as he  
shall say unto thee.

<sup>a</sup> 2 Kings xv. 1-4; Chapter lii. 4-7.—<sup>b</sup> Chapter xxxviii. 17.  
<sup>c</sup> 2 Kings xxv. 4; Chap. lii. 7, &c.—<sup>d</sup> Chap. xxxii. 4; xxxviii.  
18, 23.—<sup>e</sup> 2 Kings xxxiii. 33.—<sup>f</sup> Heb. *spoke with him judg-*  
*ments*, Chap. iv. 12.—<sup>g</sup> Ezekiel xii. 13, compared with Chap.  
xxxiii. 4.—<sup>h</sup> Heb. *with two brazen chains, or, fetters.*

<sup>i</sup> 2 Kings xxv. 9; Chapter xxxviii. 18; lii. 13.—<sup>j</sup> 2 Kings  
xxv. 11; Chapter lii. 15.—<sup>k</sup> Or, *chief marshal*.—<sup>l</sup> Heb. *chief*  
*of the executioners, or slaughtermen*, and so verses 10, 11; Gen.  
xxxvii. 26.—<sup>m</sup> Hebrew, *in that day*.—<sup>n</sup> Heb. *by the hand of*.  
<sup>o</sup> Heb. *set thine eyes upon him*.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XXXIX.

Verses 1-3. *In the ninth year of Zedekiah, &c.*—  
See notes on 2 Kings xxv. 1-4. *And all the princes  
of the king of Babylon came in, and sat in the  
middle gate*—Or, *the gate of the centre*, as Blaney  
translates it, observing, "The city of Jerusalem  
stood upon two hills, Zion to the south, and Acra to  
the north, with a deep valley between them. *The  
gate of the centre*, as the term seems plainly to im-  
port, was a gate of communication in the middle of  
the valley between the two parts of the city, some-  
times called *the higher and the lower city*. The  
Chaldeans entered the city on the north side by a  
breach in the walls, and immediately rushing for-  
ward, and posting themselves in this gate, in the  
very heart of the city, they became thereby masters  
at will of the whole. Zedekiah, with his troops,  
perceiving this, fled out of the opposite gate on the  
south side." *Even Nergal-sharezer, Samgar-  
nebo, &c.*—It was customary among the Chaldeans  
to give the names of their idols, as an additional  
title or mark of honour, to persons of distinction:  
see note on Isa. xxxix. 1. *Nergal* was the name of  
an idol worshipped by the *Cuthites*, 2 Kings xvii.  
30. *Nebo* was a *Babylonish deity*, Isa. xlvi. 1.

Verses 4-10. *They fled by the gate betwixt the  
two walls*—Betwixt the wall and the outworks, or

betwixt the old wall of the city and the new one  
which Hezekiah built, of which mention is made 2  
Chron. xxxii. 5. See note on 2 Kings xxv. 4. Blaney  
thinks it probable that between these two walls  
there might be a private postern through which the  
king and his followers might slip out unperceived  
by the besiegers, who surrounded the city, and un-  
doubtedly kept a strict watch on the principal gates.  
*The Chaldean army pursued, &c.*—For an illustra-  
tion of this and the five following verses, see notes  
on 2 Kings xxv. 5-12.

Verses 11, 12. *Now Nebuchadrezzar gave charge  
concerning Jeremiah*—He had undoubtedly been  
informed of the advice which Jeremiah had given,  
both to the king and people, to submit themselves  
to his authority: which advice, if it had been taken,  
would have prevented the charge and labour of so  
long a siege, and the bloodshed that attended it.  
*Saying, Take him and look well to him*—Through  
this order of the king of Babylon, God fulfilled his  
promise made chap. xv. 11, *I will cause the enemy  
to treat thee well in the day of evil*. Jeremiah had  
been faithful to his God as a prophet, and now God  
approves himself faithful to him, and the promise  
he had made him. Now he is comforted, according  
to the time wherein he had been afflicted, and sees  
many fall on each hand while he is safe. The false

A. M. 3416. 13 So Nebuzar-adan the captain of  
B. C. 588. the guard sent, and Nebushasban,  
Rab-saris, and Nergal-sharezer, Rab-mag, and  
all the king of Babylon's princes;

14 Even they sent, <sup>1</sup> and took Jeremiah out  
of the court of the prison, and committed him  
<sup>2</sup> unto Gedaliah the son of <sup>1</sup> Ahikam the son  
of Shaphan, that he should carry him home:  
so he dwelt among the people.

15 ¶ Now the word of the LORD came unto  
Jeremiah, while he was shut up in the court  
of the prison, saying,

16 Go and speak to <sup>3</sup> Ebed-melech the Ethi-

opian, saying, Thus saith the LORD A. M. 3416.  
of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, B. C. 588.

<sup>4</sup> I will bring my words upon this city for evil,  
and not for good; and they shall be accom-  
plished in that day before thee.

17 But I will deliver thee in that day, saith  
the LORD: and thou shalt not be given into  
the hand of the men of whom thou art  
afraid.

18 For I will surely deliver thee, and thou  
shalt not fall by the sword, but <sup>5</sup> thy life shall  
be for a prey unto thee: <sup>6</sup> because thou hast  
put thy trust in me, saith the LORD.

<sup>1</sup> Chapter xxxviii. 28.—<sup>2</sup> Chapter xl. 5.—<sup>3</sup> Chapter xxvi. 24.  
<sup>4</sup> Chap. xxxviii. 7, 12.

<sup>5</sup> Daniel ix. 12.—<sup>6</sup> Chap. xxi. 9; xlv. 5.—<sup>7</sup> 1 Chron. v. 20;  
Psa. xxxvii. 40.

prophets fell by those judgments which they affirm-  
ed would never come, (chap. xiv. 15,) which made  
their misery the more terrible to them. The true  
prophet escaped those judgments which he said  
would come, and that made his escape the more  
comfortable to him. The same persons who were  
the instruments of punishing the persecutors, were  
the instruments of relieving the persecuted; and  
Jeremiah did not the less prize his deliverance, be-  
cause it came by the hand of the king of Babylon,  
but saw thereby more of the hand of God in it.

Verses 13, 14. *Nebuzar-adan sent and took Jerem-  
iah out of the court of the prison*—Where he was  
when the city was taken, chap. xxxviii. 28; and  
committed him unto Gedaliah—Namely, after he  
had been carried out of Jerusalem with the rest of  
the captives as far as Ramah: see chap. xl. 1-5.  
Observe here, reader, a king of Israel and his princes  
put the Lord's prophet in prison, and a heathen king  
and his princes took him out! God's people and  
ministers have often met with fairer and kinder  
treatment among strangers and infidels than among  
those who call themselves of the holy city. St.

Paul found more favour and justice with King Agrip-  
pa than with Ananias the high-priest. But we shall  
meet with a more full account of Jeremiah's release,  
and of the kind treatment he received from the  
Chaldeans, in the next chapter.

Verses 15-18. *The word of the Lord came to  
Jeremiah when he was in the court of the prison*—  
These words give us to understand that this and  
the next three verses respect a matter which took  
place before the things related in the preceding part  
of this chapter, namely, the kindness which Ebed-  
melech showed to Jeremiah in his distress. Here  
God commissions his prophet to promise him a re-  
compense for that kindness. He had relieved a *prophet  
in the name of a prophet*, and he is here  
assured he shall receive a *prophet's reward*. This  
message was delivered to him immediately after he  
had shown that mercy to Jeremiah; but it is men-  
tioned here after the taking of the city, to show  
that, as God was kind to Jeremiah at that time, so  
he was to Ebed-melech for his sake; and it was a  
special favour to both, as they no doubt accounted it,  
that they were not involved in the common calamities.

## CHAPTER XL.

In this, and the four following chapters, we have an account of the fate of those few Jews that were left in Canaan, after their brethren were carried into captivity to Babylon. And it is a very mournful story. For, though at first there was some prospect of their doing well, they soon appeared to be as obstinate in sin as ever, unhumiliated and unreformed, till, all the rest of the judgments threatened, Deut. xxviii., being executed upon them, that which completes the threatenings there mentioned, recorded in the last verse of that dreadful chapter, was also accomplished. The Lord shall bring thee into Egypt again. In this chapter we have, (1.) A more particular account of Jeremiah's discharge, and his settlement with Gedaliah, whom Nebuchadnezzar had made governor of the poor Jews, 1-6. (2.) The great resort of the fugitive Jews from the neighbouring countries to Gedaliah, and their agreeable condition with him, 7-12. (3.) Gedaliah is informed of a treacherous design formed against his life by Ishmael, a Jewish prince, instigated by the king of the Ammonites, but does not credit the information, 13-16.

A. M. 3416. B. C. 588. **T**HE word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, <sup>a</sup> after that Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard had let him go from Ramah, when he had taken him being bound in <sup>1</sup> chains among all that were carried away captive of Jerusalem and Judah, which were carried away captive unto Babylon.

2 And the captain of the guard took Jeremiah, and <sup>b</sup> said unto him, The LORD thy God hath pronounced this evil upon this place.

3 Now the LORD hath brought *it*, and done according as he hath said: <sup>c</sup> because ye have sinned against the LORD, and have not obeyed his voice, therefore this thing is come upon you.

4 And now, behold, I loose thee this day from the chains which <sup>2</sup> were upon thy hand. <sup>d</sup> If it seem good unto thee to come with me into Babylon, come; and <sup>3</sup> I will look well unto thee: but if it seem ill unto thee to come with me into Babylon, forbear: behold, <sup>e</sup> all the land is before thee: whither it seemeth good and convenient for thee to go, thither go.

5 Now while he was not yet gone back, *he*

<sup>a</sup> Chapter xxxix. 14.—<sup>1</sup> Or, *manacles*.—<sup>b</sup> Chapter i. 7. <sup>c</sup> Deut. xxix. 24, 25; Dan. ix. 11.—<sup>2</sup> Or, *are upon thy hand*. <sup>d</sup> Chap. xxxix. 12.—<sup>3</sup> Heb. *I will set mine eye upon thee*.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER XL.

Verse 1. *The word which came to Jeremiah, &c.*—This relates to the prophecy recorded chap. xlii. 7, which was occasioned by the story that here follows concerning Ishmael's conspiracy against Gedaliah. *After that Nebuzar-adan had let him go from Ramah*—After Jeremiah was taken out of the court of the prison, he was carried, probably by mistake, expressly contrary to Nebuchadnezzar's orders, among the other prisoners to Ramah, a city in the tribe of Benjamin near Gibeon. Here, it seems, the mistake was discovered, and the prophet was discharged by the special order of the court.

Verses 2-4. *The captain of the guard said, The Lord thy God hath pronounced this evil, &c.*—Although each of the Gentile or heathen nations worshipped its peculiar god or gods, yet they did not reject or deny the gods of other nations; and therefore the captain of the guard speaks here to Jeremiah of Jehovah as his God, and the God of the Jews, and attributes all the calamities which had befallen this people to the indignation of this their God against them, because they had not obeyed and served him as they ought to have done. This seems a much more probable interpretation of Nebuzar-adan's words than to understand them as expressive of his faith in the living and true God, of whom it is likely he knew little or nothing. *And now, behold, I loose thee this day, &c.*—This captain of the guard, like a faithful servant, remembers his prince's orders about the prophet, and offers to him greater

*said, Go back also to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan,* <sup>A. M. 3416. B. C. 588.</sup> <sup>f</sup> whom the king of Babylon hath made governor over the cities of Judah, and dwell with him among the people: or go wheresoever it seemeth convenient unto thee to go. So the captain of the guard gave him victuals and a reward, and let him go.

6 <sup>g</sup> Then went Jeremiah unto Gedaliah the son of Ahikam to <sup>h</sup> Mizpah; and dwelt with him among the people that were left in the land.

7 ¶ <sup>i</sup> Now when all the captains of the forces which *were* in the fields, *even* they and their men, heard that the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah the son of Ahikam governor in the land, and had committed unto him men, and women, and children, and of <sup>k</sup> the poor of the land, of them that were not carried away captive to Babylon;

8 Then they came to Gedaliah to Mizpah, <sup>1</sup> even Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and Johanan and Jonathan the sons of Kareah, and Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth, and the sons of

<sup>g</sup> Gen. xx. 15.—<sup>f</sup> 2 Kings xxv. 22.—<sup>g</sup> Chapter xxxix. 14. <sup>h</sup> Judges xx. 1; 1 Sam. vii. 5, 6; 1 Kings xv. 22.—<sup>i</sup> 2 Kings xxv. 23.—<sup>k</sup> Chapter xxxix. 10.—<sup>1</sup> Chap. xli. 1.

favour than to any of the other prisoners. With respect to them, he uses the power which conquest had given him over them, and they must go whither the king of Babylon pleased to send them; but he gives Jeremiah liberty to choose whether he would go along with him to Babylon, or stay in his own country, assuring him that if he would go to Babylon he would take particular care of him.

Verses 5, 6. *Now while he was not yet gone back*—Hebrew, *ויערני לא שוב*, *while he would not yet return, he said, &c.*—The prophet seems to have been in doubt at first what course to take. The Chaldee reads the clause, *If thou wilt not abide [here] go back to Gedaliah, understanding the verb שׁוּב as if it were derived from שׁוּב, to abide, words of a like sound having often a promiscuous signification. This Gedaliah was a person of considerable interest and authority. So the captain of the guard gave him victuals and a reward*—It was by the particular order of Nebuchadnezzar that the prophet was used in this kind manner. *Then went Jeremiah unto Gedaliah to Mizpah*—A town in the confines of Judah and Benjamin, where Gedaliah fixed his residence, being a place of note in the times of the judges, and afterward rebuilt by King Asa. See the margin.

Verses 7-10. *Now when all the captains of the forces heard, &c., they came to Gedaliah*—By the taking of Jerusalem the Chaldeans made a complete conquest of Judea; whereupon that part of the Jewish army which had escaped destruction dis

A. M. 3416. Ephai the Netophathite, and Jeza-  
B. C. 588. niah the son of a Maachathite, they  
and their men.

9 And Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan sware unto them and to their men, saying, Fear not to serve the Chaldeans: dwell in the land, and serve the king of Babylon, and it shall be well with you.

10 As for me, behold, I will dwell at Mizpah, to serve the Chaldeans, which will come unto us: but ye, gather ye wine, and summer-fruits, and oil, and put *them* in your vessels, and dwell in your cities that ye have taken.

11 Likewise when all the Jews that were in Moab, and among the Ammonites, and in Edom, and that were in all the countries, heard that the king of Babylon had left a remnant of Judah, and that he had set over them Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan;

12 Even all the Jews returned out of all places whither they were driven, and came to

<sup>4</sup> Heb. to stand before, Deut. i. 38.

persed themselves into several parts of the country. *And Gedaliah sware unto them*—They might reasonably suspect that the Chaldeans would have a jealous eye upon any conflux of people to Jerusalem, especially military men, and therefore might be somewhat suspicious of him, who was the Chaldean deputy governor; the securing them from fears on that account was the cause of Gedaliah's giving them this voluntary oath; saying, *Fear not to serve the Chaldeans*—The same advice Jeremiah had formerly given to the Jews, chap. xxvii. 11. *As for me, I will dwell at Mizpah, to serve the Chaldeans*—I keep my residence here, a place upon the frontiers, that I may be ready to obey any orders that the king of Babylon sends me by his servants. *But ye, gather ye wine, and summer-fruits, and oil*—But do you live in the country, and gather such fruits as the country affords, and do not fear being spoiled of them; but do as ye used to do in the times of the greatest peace and security. *Wine and oil* are here put by a metonymy for *grapes and olives*. It was now about the month of August, which was the proper season for gathering in the summer-fruits in that country.

Verses 11, 12. *Likewise when all the Jews that were in Moab, &c.*—Probably, upon the king of Babylon's first invading Judea, many fled, and more as he proceeded in his conquests, overrunning the country; and it is likely, at the taking of the city, many escaped and fled into different countries, as they had opportunity, or judged this or that country would be the safest place of refuge. Some, therefore, fled to Moab, some to Ammon, some to Edom,

the land of Judah, to Gedaliah, unto Mizpah, and gathered wine and summer-fruits very much.

13 ¶ Moreover, Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces that were in the fields, came to Gedaliah to Mizpah.

14 And said unto him, Dost thou certainly know that <sup>m</sup> Baalis the king of the Ammonites hath sent Ishmael the son of Nethaniah <sup>5</sup> to slay thee? But Gedaliah the son of Ahikam believed them not.

15 Then Johanan the son of Kareah spake to Gedaliah in Mizpah secretly, saying, Let me go, I pray thee, and I will slay Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and no man shall know it: wherefore should he slay thee, that all the Jews which are gathered unto thee should be scattered, and the remnant in Judah perish?

16 But Gedaliah the son of Ahikam said unto Johanan the son of Kareah, Thou shalt not do this thing: for thou speakest falsely of Ishmael.

<sup>m</sup> Chap. xli. 10.—<sup>5</sup> Heb. to strike thee in soul?

and some to other countries; but when they heard that the king of Babylon had appointed a governor over the country of their own nation and religion, they returned, and, there being few people left in the land, which was of itself wonderfully fruitful, they gathered a great quantity of grapes and other summer-fruits, such as it produced.

Verses 13–16. *Johanan the son of Kareah came to Gedaliah, &c.*—They had been with him before, verses 8, 9, but now they come to discover to him a conspiracy formed against his life. *And said, Dost thou certainly know, &c.*—Or, rather, *Dost thou not know, &c.*, (which is evidently the sense intended,) *that the king of the Ammonites hath sent Ishmael to slay thee?*—The king of the Ammonites had concerted this matter with Ishmael, with a design to make the Jews, who still remained in their own country, his vassals: see chap. xli. 10. *But Gedaliah believed them not*—Not being credulous, or of a suspicious temper. *Then Johanan spake to Gedaliah secretly*—Finding that Gedaliah took little notice of what he had spoken to him in the presence of the other captains, he goes to him secretly, and offers him his service to prevent the stroke designed against him, suggesting to him, that if he did not value his own life, yet he ought to consider in what a destitute condition the people would be, in case he should be cut off: they were at present but a small remnant, and if that calamity should happen, even this remnant would also perish. *But Gedaliah said, Thou shalt not do this thing, for thou speakest falsely of Ishmael*—Gedaliah shows in this instance more of that charity that *thinks no evil*, than of that

prudence and discretion which became a chief magistrate. He ought to have been particularly on his guard against one, concerning whose mischievous designs he had received such information ; but, alas!

he placed too great confidence in the fidelity of those about him, and this proved ruinous, both to himself and to the poor people whom he was appointed to govern and protect.

## CHAPTER XLI.

*The black cloud that appeared to be gathering in the foregoing chapter here bursts in a dreadful storm. (1.) Gedaliah, and all the Jews that were with him, are barbarously slain by Ishmael, and a pit is filled with their dead bodies, 1-3, 9. (2.) Eighty devout men who were going to bewail the ruins of Jerusalem and the temple are drawn in by Ishmael, and all, except ten, are likewise murdered, 4-8. (3.) The people that escape the sword are taken prisoners by Ishmael, and carried off toward the country of the Ammonites, 10. (5.) By the courage and conduct of Johanan, though the death of the slain is not revenged, yet the prisoners are recovered, and he, now becoming their commander in chief, designs to carry them into the land of Egypt, to avoid the resentment of the Chaldeans, 11-18.*

A. M. 3416. B. C. 588. **N**OW it came to pass in the seventh month, <sup>a</sup> that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah the son of Elishama, of the seed royal, and the princes of the king, even ten men with him, came unto Gedaliah the son of Ahikam to Mizpah ; and there they did eat bread together in Mizpah.

2 Then arose Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and the ten men that were with him, and <sup>b</sup> smote Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan with the sword, and slew him, whom the king of Babylon had made governor over the land.

<sup>a</sup> 2 Kings xxv. 25 ; Chap. xl. 6, 8.—<sup>b</sup> 2 Kings xxv. 25.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER XLI.

Verse 1. *Now, in the seventh month*—Answering partly to our September, and partly to October ; two months after the taking of Jerusalem. The murder of Gedaliah gave occasion to the fasts of the seventh month, which the Jews observed after their return from captivity, Zech. vii. 5, 8, 19. *Ishmael the son of Nethaniah*—The same Ishmael that came to Gedaliah, chap. xl. 8, 9, and to whom he swore protection ; *of the seed royal*—Being of the family of David, he supposed he had a greater right to the government than Gedaliah, and therefore seems to have borne him a grudge : on which account he was the fitter instrument for the king of the Ammonites to make use of ; *and the princes of the king, even ten men with him*—Some of the chief officers of state belonging to Zedekiah. These, undoubtedly, brought a great number of others with them in their retinue, or else they could not have made such a destruction as they did.

Verses 3, 4. *Ishmael also slew all the Jews and the men of war*—That is, all that joined in opposing him, and in assisting Gedaliah : for several of the commanders, as well as the greater part of the people, were still left alive, as appears by the sequel of the story. *And on the second day after, &c., no man knew it*—That is, no man who lived at any considerable distance from Mizpah, for Ishmael undoubtedly

3 Ishmael also slew all the Jews A. M. 3416. B. C. 588. that were with him, *even with Gedaliah*, at Mizpah, and the Chaldeans that were found there, *and the men of war.*

4 And it came to pass the second day after he had slain Gedaliah, and no man knew it,

5 That there came certain from Shechem, from Shiloh, and from Samaria, *even fourscore men*, <sup>c</sup> having their beards shaven, and their clothes rent, and having cut themselves, with offerings and incense in their hand, to bring *them to* <sup>d</sup> the house of the LORD.

<sup>c</sup> Lev. xix. 27, 28 ; Deut. xiv. 1 ; Isa. xv. 2.—<sup>d</sup> 2 Kings xxv. 9 ; 1 Sam. i. 7.

used every means in his power to keep this slaughter secret, lest the news of it should reach the ears of some of the Chaldean commanders, and so he should be prevented from making his escape.

Verse 5. *There came fourscore men, having their beards shaven, &c.*—“These were tokens of great mourning, by which these persons expressed their grief for the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. Such expressions of sorrow were forbidden to be used at funeral obsequies, Lev. xix. 27, 28 ; but might be lawfully used upon other mournful occasions. *With offerings and incense to bring them to the house of the Lord*—Some understand this as if devout persons brought their oblations to the place where the altar formerly stood, which they looked upon as consecrated ground ; a custom, they think, countenanced by the words of Baruch, chap. i. 10, where the exiles at Babylon are supposed to *send money to buy offerings for the altar of the Lord*, after that Jerusalem was taken and burned. Others *by the house of the Lord* understand an altar or place of worship erected by Gedaliah at Mizpah ; in imitation of that which was formerly set up there by Samuel, which place continued to be a *proseucha*, or place of worship, in after times, as appears from 1 Mac. iii. 46. There were many such sanctuaries or places of worship, both in Judea and elsewhere, among the Jewish dispersions.”—Lowth.

A. M. 3416. 6 And Ishmael the son of Nethaniah went forth from Mizpah to meet them, <sup>1</sup>weeping all along as he went: and it came to pass, as he met them, he said unto them, Come to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam.

7 And it was so, when they came into the midst of the city, that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah slew them, and cast them into the midst of the pit, he, and the men that were with him.

8 But ten men were found among them that said unto Ishmael, Slay us not: for we have treasures in the field, of wheat, and of barley, and of oil, and of honey. So he forbore, and slew them not among their brethren.

<sup>1</sup> Heb. *in going and weeping.*—<sup>2</sup> Or, *near Gedaliah.*—<sup>3</sup> Heb. *by the hand, or, by the side of Gedaliah.*

Verses 6-8. *And Ishmael went forth to meet them, weeping all along as he went*—As if he sympathized with them, and bewailed, as they did, the desolations of Jerusalem. He appears to have been a complete hypocrite. *As he met them he said, Come to Gedaliah*—He invites them to the new governor for protection, as if he had been one of his courtiers and friends, and by these arts conceals his bloody design against them. *And when they came into the midst of the city*—Whence they could not easily escape; *Ishmael slew them*—Though they had given him no provocation, and indeed, as it seems, were entire strangers to him. And, no doubt, he took the offerings they had brought, and converted them to his own use: for he that did not hesitate to commit such a murder certainly would not scruple to commit sacrilege. *And cast them into the midst of the pit*—The words, and cast them, are not in the Hebrew, which is literally, *slew them in the midst of the pit*. So also the LXX., *εσφαξεν αυτοις εις το φρεαρ*. The Complutensian edition, however, supplies *και ενβαλεν, and cast them*, which accords with the reading of the Syriac. The Vulgate renders the clause, *interfecit eos Ismael circa medium lacu: Ishmael slew them about the middle of the lake, or, pool*; and Blaney reads, *Ishmael massacred them at the pit*. *He and the men that were with him*—Hired, it seems, to assist him in this bloody work. *But ten men were found that said, Slay us not, for we have treasures, &c.*—He slew seventy of them, but the remaining ten pleading for their lives, and urging that they had estates in the country of corn, oil, and honey, his covetousness prevailed over his cruelty, and he spared their lives, to become master of their property.

Verse 9. *Now the pit was it which Asa had made, &c.*—The word בור, here and elsewhere rendered pit, frequently signifies, a cistern, basin, or, reservoir; a large place made for receiving rain-water; which seems to be the meaning of the word here. This pit, or reservoir, Asa, who built and fortified

9 Now the pit wherein Ishmael had cast all the dead bodies of the men, whom he had slain <sup>2</sup>because <sup>3</sup>of Gedaliah, was it <sup>1</sup>which Asa the king had made for fear of Baasha king of Israel: and Ishmael the son of Nethaniah filled it with them that were slain.

10 Then Ishmael carried away captive all the residue of the people that were in Mizpah, <sup>5</sup>even the king's daughters, and all the people that remained in Mizpah, <sup>h</sup>whom Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard had committed to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam: and Ishmael the son of Nethaniah carried them away captive, and departed to go over to <sup>i</sup>the Ammonites.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Kings xv. 22; 2 Chron. xvi. 6.—<sup>5</sup> Chap. xliii. 6.—<sup>h</sup> Chap. xl. 7.—<sup>i</sup> Chap. xl. 14.

Mizpah, at the time he was at war with Baasha king of Israel, caused to be made in the midst of the city, in order that the people might not be in want of so necessary an article as water in case of a siege. Reservoirs of this kind were much in use in Palestine, as Jerome tells us, in his commentary upon Amos iv. 7, 8. And Josephus testifies the advantage of them to the besieged when he tells us that, when Masada was reduced to the greatest distress for want of water, it was relieved by a fall of rain in the night, which filled all the reservoirs, *Antiq. lib. xiv. cap. 14*. Each private family seems also to have had one of these reservoirs for its own use. *Drink ye every one the waters of his own cistern*, בורו, *his pit, or, reservoir*, says Rabshakeh to the people of Jerusalem, Isa. xxxvi. 16.

Verses 10-13. *Ishmael carried away captive all the residue of the people*—All that he did not slay: see note on verse 3; and among the rest Zedekiah's daughters, who had been left to the care of Gedaliah, when his sons were slain. These, it seems, being recovered by Johanan, were taken with him into Egypt, where they perished among the other Jews. *And Ishmael departed to go over to the Ammonites*—Probably intending to make a present of the captives he was taking with him, to Baalis king of Ammon, by whom he had been instigated to the murder of Gedaliah. *But when Johanan, and all the captains heard, &c.*—It would have been well if Johanan, when he gave information to Gedaliah of Ishmael's treasonable design, had stayed with him; for he and his captains, and their forces, might have been a life-guard to him, and a terror to Ishmael, and so have prevented the mischief, without the effusion of blood. *They took all the men, and went to fight with Ishmael*—Upon receiving notice of the murders he had committed, and which way he had gone, they pursued him, and found him by the great waters that are in Gibeon—Called the pool of Gibeon, of which we read 2 Sam. ii. 13. *Now when all the people which were with Ishmael*—Namely, the poor cap-

A. M. 3416. 11 ¶ But when Johanan the son  
B. C. 588. of Kareah, and all <sup>k</sup> the captains of  
the forces that *were* with him, heard of all  
the evil that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah  
had done,

12 Then they took all the men, and went to  
fight with Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and  
found him by <sup>l</sup> the great waters that *are* in  
Gibeon.

13 Now it came to pass, *that* when all the  
people which *were* with Ishmael saw Johanan  
the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the  
forces that *were* with him, then they were  
glad.

14 So all the people that Ishmael had carried  
away captive from Mizpah cast about  
and returned, and went unto Johanan the son  
of Kareah.

15 But Ishmael the son of Nethaniah escaped

<sup>k</sup> Chap. xl. 7, 8, 13.—<sup>l</sup> 2 Sam. ii. 13.

tives whom he was taking into the land of the Ammonites; *saw Johanan, &c., they were glad*—As they might well be, to see a probability of escaping out of the hands of the bloody man who had slain so many of their brethren: and they presently found an opportunity to wheel about, and come over to Johanan and his captains, Ishmael not attempting to detain them, but readily quitting his prey to save his life.

Verses 16–18. *Then took Johanan and the captains, all the remnant of the people, &c.*—It would have been a happy thing, if Johanan, when he had rescued the captives, would have sat quietly down with them, in the land of Judah, and governed them peaceably as Gedaliah did; but, instead of that, he is for leading them into the land of Egypt, as Ishmael would have led them into the land of the Ammonites; so that, though he got the command of them in a better way than Ishmael did, yet he did not use it much better. Gedaliah, who was of a meek and quiet spirit, was a great blessing to them; but Johanan, who was of a fierce and restless disposition, seems to have been permitted to get the command of them for their hurt, and to complete their ruin,

from Johanan with eight men, and A. M. 3416.  
B. C. 588. went to the Ammonites.

16 Then took Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces that *were* with him, all the remnant of the people whom he had recovered from Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, from Mizpah, after *that* he had slain Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, *even* mighty men of war, and the women, and the children, and the eunuchs, whom he had brought again from Gibeon:

17 And they departed, and dwelt in the habitation of <sup>m</sup> Chimham, which is by Bethle-hem, to go to enter into Egypt.

18 Because of the Chaldeans: for they were afraid of them, because Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had slain Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, <sup>n</sup> whom the king of Babylon made governor in the land.

<sup>m</sup> 2 Sam. xix. 37, 38.—<sup>n</sup> Chapter xl. 5.

even after they were, as they thought, redeemed. Thus did God still walk contrary to them, and thus did evil still pursue this sinful people. *And they departed and dwelt in the habitation of Chimham*—The same parcel of ground, probably, that David gave to Chimham, the son of Barzillai: see 2 Sam. xix. 38–40. Here Johanan made his headquarters, steering his course toward Egypt, either from a personal affection to that country, or an ancient national confidence in the Egyptians for help in distress. *Because of the Chaldeans*—As the person, whom Nebuchadnezzar had made governor in the land, was slain, it was not unreasonable for them to think that Nebuchadnezzar would consider the murder of him as an affront done to himself; and though Johanan had no hand in that villainous act, yet he did not know but the king of Babylon, being unacquainted with all the parties among the Jews, might look upon all that remained in the country as guilty, and might revenge the murder of his deputy governor upon them all. He therefore chooses for them a habitation, from whence they might, in a short time, go down into Egypt, which was Johanan's design, as we shall read in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER XLII.

In this chapter, (1.) Johanan and the other captains of the poor Jews in Canaan solicit Jeremiah to pray for God's direction, respecting the course they should take, solemnly engaging to follow it, 1–6. (2.) By God's order Jeremiah encourages them to remain in Judæa, assuring them that there only they would be safe and prosperous, 7–12. (3.) He dissuades them from going to Egypt, as what would ruin them, 13–18. (4.) He admonishes them that their dissimulation, in thus consulting God, when they were determined to follow their own will, would be punished with destruction by the sword, famine, and pestilence, 19–22.

A. M. 3416. B. C. 588. **THEN** all the captains of the forces, <sup>a</sup> and Johanan the son of Kareah, and Jezaniah the son of Hoshaiah, and all the people from the least even unto the greatest, came near,

2 And said unto Jeremiah the prophet, <sup>1</sup> Let, we beseech thee, our supplications be accepted before thee, and <sup>b</sup> pray for us unto the LORD thy God, *even* for all this remnant; (for we are left *but* <sup>c</sup> a few of many, as thine eyes do behold us:)

3 That the LORD thy God may show us <sup>d</sup> the way wherein we may walk, and the thing that we may do.

4 Then Jeremiah the prophet said unto them, I have heard *you*; behold, I will pray unto the LORD your God according to your words; and it shall come to pass, *that* <sup>e</sup> whatsoever thing the LORD shall answer you, I will declare *it* unto you, I will <sup>f</sup> keep nothing back from you.

5 Then they said to Jeremiah, <sup>g</sup> The LORD be a true and faithful witness between us, if

we do not even according to all things <sup>A. M. 3416. B. C. 588.</sup> for the which the LORD thy God shall send thee to us.

6 Whether *it be* good, or whether *it be* evil, we will obey the voice of the LORD our God, to whom we send thee; <sup>h</sup> that it may be well with us, when we obey the voice of the LORD our God.

7 ¶ And it came to pass after ten days, that the word of the LORD came unto Jeremiah.

8 Then called he Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces which *were* with him, and all the people from the least even to the greatest,

9 And said unto them, Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, unto whom ye sent me to present your supplication before him;

10 If ye will still abide in this land, then <sup>i</sup> will I build you, and not pull *you* down, and I will plant you, and not pluck *you* up: for I <sup>k</sup> repent me of the evil that I have done unto you.

<sup>a</sup> Chapter xl. 8, 13; xli. 11.—<sup>1</sup> Or, *Let our supplication fall before thee.*—<sup>b</sup> 1 Sam. vii. 8; xii. 19; Isa. xxxvii. 4; James v. 16.—<sup>c</sup> Lev. xxvi. 22.—<sup>d</sup> Ezra viii. 21.

<sup>e</sup> 1 Kings xxii. 14.—<sup>f</sup> 1 Sam. iii. 18; Acts xx. 20.—<sup>g</sup> Gen. xxxi. 50.—<sup>h</sup> Deut. vi. 3; Chapter vii. 23.—<sup>i</sup> Chap. xxiv. 6; xxxi. 28; xxxiii. 7.—<sup>k</sup> Deut. xxxii. 36; Chap. xviii. 8.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER XLII.

Verses 1-3. *Then all the captains, and all the people*—That is, both those captains, and many of the people; *came near and said unto Jeremiah*—Who was probably carried away with the other captives by Ishmael, and rescued by Johanan; *Let, we beseech thee, our supplications be accepted before thee*—Thus these men, though wretched hypocrites, yet address the prophet with great respect and reverence, and in words which implied that they thought themselves unworthy to be permitted to ask any favour of him. Probably the evidence they had had so lately of his being a true prophet of the Lord, by the accomplishment of all that he had foretold against both the city and temple, might in some measure occasion their showing him such respect. *And pray for us, that the Lord may show us the way wherein we may walk*—“It is the constant method of hypocrites to pretend an absolute submission to the will of God till that will is found to run counter to their inclinations or interest.”—Lowth.

Verses 4-6. *Then Jeremiah said, I have heard you, &c.*—That is, I will do for you what you desire. *I will pray unto the Lord your God*—They called the Lord Jeremiah’s God: here Jeremiah calls him *their God*, both to remind them of God’s relation to them, and of their duty toward him. *And whatsoever thing the Lord shall answer, I will declare*—I will be faithful in giving you an account of what God shall reveal to me to be his will concerning you. *Then they said, The Lord be a true and faithful witness, &c.*—The words of this and the following

verse imply a perfect oath, the form of which lies in appealing to God as a witness of the sincerity of the hearts of those that swear, for a security to those to whom the oath is given: which also includes a secret challenging of God to take vengeance upon those that give that security, if they should not act according to their promise. The thing these men promise is, that they would perfectly obey God’s will, whether agreeable or disagreeable to them. And they further declare they were convinced that their prosperity and happiness entirely depended upon their complying with God’s will, adding, *That it may be well with us, &c.*

Verses 7-10. *And it came to pass after ten days*—Thus long they were held in suspense, perhaps to punish them for their hypocrisy, or to show that Jeremiah did not speak of himself nor what he would; for he could not speak when he would, but was obliged to wait for instructions; *the word of the Lord came unto Jeremiah*—Namely, the word mentioned, chap. xl. 1, to which the contents of the last two chapters, and the preceding part of this, are but an historical preface. *Then called he Johanan, and all the captains, &c.*—What the Lord had revealed to him he declared publicly, both to the captains and to all the people, to those in the lowest as well as to those in the highest station; and that fully and faithfully as he had received it. *Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel*—If Jeremiah had been desired to direct them by his own prudence, probably he could not have determined what to advise them to, the case being certainly difficult: but what he has

A. M. 3416. 11 Be not afraid of the king of  
B. C. 588. Babylon, of whom ye are afraid; be not afraid of him, saith the LORD: <sup>1</sup> for I am with you, to save you, and to deliver you from his hand.

12 And <sup>m</sup> I will show mercies unto you, that he may have mercy upon you, and cause you to return to your own land.

13 But if <sup>a</sup> ye say, We will not dwell in this land, neither obey the voice of the LORD your God,

14 Saying, No; but we will go into the land of Egypt, where we shall see no war, nor hear the sound of the trumpet, nor have hunger of bread: and there will we dwell:

15 And now therefore hear the word of the LORD, ye remnant of Judah; Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; If ye <sup>o</sup> wholly set <sup>p</sup> your faces to enter into Egypt, and go to sojourn there;

<sup>1</sup> Isa. xliii. 5; Rom. viii. 31.—<sup>m</sup> Psa. cvi. 45, 46.—<sup>p</sup> Chap. xlv. 16.—<sup>o</sup> Deut. xvii. 16; Chap. xlv. 12, 13, 14.—<sup>p</sup> Luke ix. 51.—<sup>q</sup> Ezek. xi. 8.—<sup>a</sup> Heb. shall cleave after you.

to advise is, that which *the Lord God of Israel*, to whom they had sent him, directed to be said. *If ye will still abide in this land*—That is, If you will give up all thoughts of going into the land of Egypt, and abide where you are, or in any part of Judea under subjection to, and in the protection of, the king of Babylon, into whose power I have given you; *then will I build you, &c.*—Then will I see to your security and prosperity, and make you a happy people. *For I repent me of the evil, &c.*—I am satisfied with the punishment which your nation hath undergone, and now, if you do not destroy yourselves by new acts of disobedience, I will change the course of my providence toward you. God is said in Scripture to *repent* when he alters the outward methods of his providence toward any people or individual: see note on Gen. vi. 6.

Verses 11, 12. *Be not afraid of the king of Babylon*—As if he had said, I know what you are afraid of; you fear lest the king of Babylon should send a force against you and utterly root you out, because one of your nation hath murdered his viceroy Gedaliah; but suffer not your passion of fear to rise too high on this account, and make you flee into Egypt. *For I am with you to save you*—For you shall have my presence with you, to deliver and preserve you, so that Nebuchadnezzar shall have neither inclination nor power to do you any harm. *I will show mercies unto you that he may have mercy, &c.*—We are beholden to God for all the compassion and kindness which we meet with from men; though we may receive good from their hands, it is God who inclines their hearts to do it. *And cause you to return to your own land*—The mercy which God here promises

16 Then it shall come to pass, *that* A. M. 3416.  
the sword, <sup>a</sup> which ye feared, shall B. C. 588.  
overtake you there in the land of Egypt, and the famine, whereof ye were afraid, <sup>2</sup> shall follow close after you there in Egypt; and there ye shall die.

17 <sup>3</sup> So shall it be with all the men that set their faces to go into Egypt to sojourn there; they shall die <sup>r</sup> by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence: and <sup>s</sup> none of them shall remain or escape from the evil that I will bring upon them.

18 For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; As mine anger and my fury hath been <sup>t</sup> poured forth upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem; so shall my fury be poured forth upon you, when ye shall enter into Egypt: and <sup>u</sup> ye shall be an execration, and an astonishment, and a curse, and a reproach; and ye shall see this place no more.

<sup>a</sup> Heb. so shall all the men be.—<sup>r</sup> Chap. xxiv. 10; Verse 22. <sup>s</sup> Chapter xlv. 14, 28.—<sup>t</sup> Chap. vii. 20.—<sup>u</sup> Chap. xviii. 16; xxiv. 9; xxvi. 6; xxix. 18, 22; xlv. 12; Zech. viii. 13.

these men is, that the king of Babylon should give them liberty to go every one to his own inheritance; for at present they were banished by their own fears from their own houses and estates, though not from their own country.

Verses 13–18. *But if ye say, We will not dwell in this land, neither obey*—Hebrew, לבלתי שמוע, so as not to obey. If they did not continue in their own land, they disobeyed the voice of the Lord. *Saying, No; we will go into the land of Egypt, where we shall see no war, &c.*—Their great sin was unbelief: they would not take the promise of God as a security to them for a quiet and peaceable abode, and a supply of all their wants, in Judea: but they resolved to go into Egypt, where they expected to have a greater certainty of peace and plenty. Therefore the Lord declares by his prophet, that the evils which they feared in Canaan should overtake them with double violence in Egypt, namely, both the sword and famine, by which they should die, and that they should be an execration and an astonishment, a curse and a reproach, (verse 18,) as God had threatened to make the inhabitants of Jerusalem, chap. xxiv. 9, and xxix. 18, where see the notes. *And ye shall see this place no more*—And in this, saith God, will I deal worse with you than with those who were carried captive to Babylon; many of them shall return, after the time fixed for the duration of their captivity is expired, but you shall return into this land no more. There was this aggravation in the sin of those Jews to whom God was now speaking by his prophet, that they had lately seen his words, by the same prophet, fully verified; yet would not take warning, but ran into the same sin of unbelief.

A. M. 3416. B. C. 588. 19 ¶ The LORD hath said concerning you, O ye remnant of Judah; <sup>2</sup> Go ye not into Egypt: know certainly that I have <sup>4</sup> admonished you this day.

20 For <sup>6</sup> ye dissembled in your hearts, when ye sent me unto the LORD your God, saying, <sup>7</sup> Pray for us unto the LORD our God; and according unto all that the LORD our God shall say, so declare unto us, and we will do it.

<sup>2</sup> Deut. xvii. 16.—<sup>4</sup> Heb. testified against you.—<sup>6</sup> Or, ye have used deceit against your souls.

Verse 19. *The Lord hath said, Go ye not into Egypt*—The good prophet, knowing how much it concerned this people to believe and obey the message God had sent to them by him, repeats again what he had urged before, assuring them it was by the command of the Lord that he said it. *Know certainly that I have admonished you this day*—Hebrew, כַּכְּמִי הִקְרִיתִי בְכֶם, *have testified to you, or, admonished you before witnesses*. "God commanded the Jews, by Moses, not to have any commerce with Egypt, that they might not practise the idolatrous customs of that country, (Lev. xviii. 3,) with whose idolatries they had been defiled during their sojourning there. Afterward he often reproved them by his prophets for making alliances with Egypt. And there were particular reasons, at this time, for so severe a prohibition, as the words here and in the context import, namely, because the Jews either learned several of their idolatrous practices from the Egyptians, or, at least were confirmed in those evil customs by their example. Besides, it was the rival kingdom that contended for empire with the Babylonians; and so the Jews going into Egypt for protection was, in effect, refusing to submit themselves to the king of Babylon, to whom God had decreed the government of Judea and all the neighbouring countries, chap. xxvii. 6."—Lowth.

Verses 20-22. *For ye dissembled in your hearts*—Hebrew, חֲזַקְתֶּם, *have used deceit*. They acted

21 And now I have this day declared it to you; but ye have not obeyed the voice of the LORD your God, nor any thing for the which he hath sent me unto you.

22 Now therefore know certainly that <sup>2</sup> ye shall die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence, in the place whither ye desire <sup>6</sup> to go and to sojourn.

<sup>2</sup> Verse 2.—<sup>3</sup> Verse 17; Ezekiel vi. 11.—<sup>6</sup> Or, to go to sojourn.

deceitfully, either toward God, calling him to bear witness to their sincerity in a matter in which they were not sincere; or toward the prophet, sending him to inquire of God for them, and promising to act according as God should direct, when they never intended it; or, toward their own souls, as the margin reads it. Thus Blaney, *Surely ye have practised deceit against your own souls*, following the Masoretic reading of the margin, confirmed by twenty-two MSS. and five editions. The LXX. read *ἐπονηρυσασθε ἐν ψυχαῖς ὑμῶν*; *for you have acted wickedly in your souls*, and the Vulgate, *because you have deceived your souls*. *Now I have this day declared it to you*—I went, according to your desire, to inquire of God for you; he revealed his will to me respecting you, and now I have as faithfully told you what it is. *But ye have not obeyed, &c.*—Or, *will not obey*. If it be asked how Jeremiah knew they would not obey God's will in this instance, inasmuch as they had not yet declared their intentions known to him, it must be answered, God had made their intentions known to him. *Now therefore know certainly that ye shall die by the sword, &c.*—You think to avoid death by going to Egypt to sojourn for a little time, but you shall perish there, and that by those very deaths which, by going thither, you seek to avoid. Observe, reader, we must expect disappointment, misery, and ruin to follow actions done in disobedience to the revealed will of God

CHAPTER XLIII.

Here, (1.) *Johanan and his companions, pretending that Jeremiah's faithful admonitions were not of God, but from Baruch, disregard them, and go to Egypt, taking the prophet along with them, 1-7. (2.) God sends them another message, importing, that the Chaldeans should quickly pursue them into Egypt, and ravage that country, 8-13.*

A. M. 3416. B. C. 588. AND it came to pass, that when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking unto all the people all the words of the LORD their God, for which the LORD their God

<sup>a</sup> Chap.

had sent him to them, even all these words, A. M. 3416. B. C. 588.

2 <sup>a</sup> Then spake Azariah the son of Hoshai-ah, and Johanan the son of Kareah, and all

xlii. 1.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XLIII.

Verses 2, 3. *Then spake Azariah, the son of Hoshai-ah*—Called *Jazaniah*, chap. xlii. 1. We may

observe many like instances in the books of Kings and Chronicles, of the same persons being called by two different names. *And all the proud men*—They

A. M. 3416. the proud men, saying unto Jeremiah,  
B. C. 588.

Thou speakest falsely: the LORD our God hath not sent thee to say, Go not into Egypt to sojourn there:

3 But Baruch the son of Neriah setteth thee on against us, for to deliver us into the hand of the Chaldeans, that they might put us to death, and carry us away captives into Babylon.

4 So Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces, and all the people, obeyed not the voice of the LORD, to dwell in the land of Judah.

5 But Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces, took <sup>b</sup>all the remnant of Judah, that were returned from all nations,

<sup>b</sup> Chap. xl. 11, 12.—<sup>c</sup> Chap. xli. 10.—<sup>d</sup> Ch. xxxix. 10; xl. 7.

who refused to obey Almighty God when his commands crossed their own inclinations. *Saying unto Jeremiah, The Lord hath not spoken by thee*—The constant method of hypocrites and infidels, who pretend they are not satisfied of the truth of divine revelation, when the true cause of their unbelief is, that God's commands contradict their own lusts and appetites. *But Baruch the son of Neriah setteth thee on against us*—They would not directly accuse Jeremiah of partiality toward, or confederacy with, the Chaldeans, as his enemies had done formerly, (chap. xxxvii. 13,) but they lay the blame upon Baruch, whom they knew to be an intimate companion of Jeremiah's, and to have been kindly used by the Chaldeans upon Jeremiah's account.—Lowth.

Verses 4-7. *So Johanan and all the captains, &c., obeyed not, &c.*—That is, they resolved not to obey the message God had sent them by Jeremiah; but took all the remnant of Judah that were returned, &c.—The resolution which they had formed they presently put in practice. Though Jeremiah and Baruch, and probably many of the people, were not willing to go along with them, yet these rebellious captains forced them to go; so that the prophet and his pious friends were now a kind of prisoners to their own countrymen. *So they came into the land of Egypt*—Their great inclination to go into Egypt arose, as has been intimated, from a supposition that they should be safer there from the Babylonians, who, they thought, might injure them at any time while they stayed in Judea; but would not venture to attack Egypt, on account of its strongly fortified cities, which commanded the passes into the country, and the various channels of the Nile, which were great obstructions to the march of an army. *Thus they came even to Tahpanhes*—One of the principal cities of Egypt, and a place of residence for their kings. The word is contracted to *Hanes*, Isa. xxx. 4, and joined with *Zoan*, the chief city of the kingdom. *Tahpanhes* gave a name to a queen of Egypt, (1 Kings xi. 19,) and is supposed by many to be the same city which was afterward called

whither they had been driven, to <sup>A. M. 3416.</sup>  
<sup>B. C. 588.</sup> dwell in the land of Judah;

6 *Even* men, and women, and children, <sup>c</sup>and the king's daughters, <sup>d</sup>and every person that Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard had left with Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Jeremiah the prophet, and Baruch the son of Neriah.

7 So they came into the land of Egypt: for they obeyed not the voice of the LORD: thus came they *even* to <sup>e</sup>Tahpanhes.

8 ¶ Then came the word of the LORD unto Jeremiah in Tahpanhes, saying,

9 Take great stones in thy hand, and hide them in the clay in the brick-kiln, which is at

<sup>e</sup> Chap. ii. 16; xlv. 1; called *Hanes*, Isa. xxx. 4.

*Daphnæ Pelusiacæ*. In this behaviour of the Jews we have an instance of great impiety joined to hypocrisy. They had promised with an oath to follow the advice of the prophet; but, because his counsel was not agreeable to their inclinations, they went down into Egypt, and even charged the prophet with speaking falsely in the name of the Lord. In these Jews we see a picture of those persons who, upon some occasions, express their zeal and good intentions, but reject the most wholesome counsels when those counsels thwart their passions, and are in opposition to what they have secretly purposed. With respect to Jeremiah, it may be observed, God suffered him to be carried to Egypt, that he might there denounce the ruin of the Egyptians as well as of the Jews, who had put their trust in them. Wherever the wicked are, the hand of God finds them out; and those who think, by disobeying him, to avoid the evils which they dread, and to that end make use of unlawful means, fall by those very means into the evils they expect to shun, and are confounded in their hope.

Verses 8, 9. *Then came the word of the Lord to Jeremiah in Tahpanhes*—Jeremiah was now among idolatrous Egyptians and treacherous Israelites, yet here the word of the Lord came to him, and he prophesied. God can visit his people with his grace, and the revelations of his mind and will, wherever they are; and when his ministers are bound, his word is not bound. When Jeremiah went into the land of Egypt, not out of choice, but by constraint, God withdrew not his wonted favour from him. And what he received of the Lord he delivered to the people. Wherever we are, we must endeavour to do good; for that is our business in this world. *Saying, Take great stones in thy hand*—Such as are used as foundation-stones; and *hide them in the clay in the brick-kiln*—Or furnace. The Vulgate reads, *in crypta, quæ est sub muro lateritio, in the hollow place, or vault, which is under the brick wall*; and the LXX., *εν ποθυροις, in the place before the gate which is at the entry of Pharaoh's house*—

A. M. 3416. the entry of Pharaoh's house in  
B. C. 588. Tahpanhes, in the sight of the men  
of Judah ;

10 And say unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel ; Behold, I will send and take Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will set his throne upon these stones that I have hid ; and he shall spread his royal pavilion over them.

11 <sup>a</sup> And when he cometh, he shall smite the land of Egypt, and deliver <sup>b</sup> such as are for death to death ; and such as are for captivity

<sup>a</sup> Chap. xxv. 9 ; xxvii. 6 ; Ezek. xxix. 18, 20.—<sup>c</sup> Chap. xlv. 13 ; xlv. 13.—<sup>b</sup> Chap. xv. 2 ; Zech. xi. 9.

Which, however, might be a great way from the palace itself ; the courts of great kings being almost equal to a city, for extent, in ancient times : particularly the palace of Babylon was four miles in compass, according to Diodorus Siculus : *in the sight of the men of Judah*—Hebrew, אַנְשֵׁי יְהוּדָה, literally, of men Jews ; which signifies indefinitely some of that nation ; not as in our present translation, which seems to imply, that the presence of all the Jewish emigrants was required ; for in that case the reading would at least have been, with the definite article prefixed, הַאֲנָשִׁים הַיְהוּדִים, the men the Jews : see Blaney. Jeremiah was not ordered to place these stones thus in the presence of the Egyptians, who were unacquainted with his prophetic character, but in the sight of the Jews to whom he was sent ; at least some of them, who might attest what they had seen to others ; in order that, since he could not prevent their going into Egypt, he might bring them to repent of their going.

Verses 10, 11. *And say, Thus saith the Lord, I will send Nebuchadrezzar, &c.*—God now commands his prophet to expound to the Jews the design of the order given him in the preceding verse. The stones hid in the clay, at the entry of Pharaoh's house, were intended to be a sign that the king of Babylon should make himself master of that royal city, and set his throne in that very place. This minute circumstance is particularly foretold, that, when it was accomplished, they might be put in mind of the prophecy, and confirmed in their belief of the extent and certainty of the divine prescience ; to which the smallest and most contingent events are evident. God calls Nebuchadnezzar his *servant*, because in this instance he should execute God's will, accomplish his purposes, and be instrumental in carrying on his designs. *And when he cometh, he shall smite the land of Egypt*—Though Egypt has always been a warlike nation, it shall not be able to withstand the king of Babylon ; but whom he will he shall slay, and in what way he pleases ; and de-

to captivity ; and such as are for the sword to the sword.

12 And I will kindle a fire in the houses of the gods of Egypt ; and he shall burn them, and carry them away captives : and he shall array himself with the land of Egypt, as a shepherd putteth on his garment ; and he shall go forth from thence in peace.

13 He shall break also the images of Bethshemesh, that is in the land of Egypt ; and the houses of the gods of the Egyptians shall he burn with fire.

<sup>1</sup> Chap. xlvi. 25.—<sup>1</sup> Heb. statues, or standing images.—<sup>2</sup> Or the house of the sun.

*liver such as are for death to death*—See note on chap. xv. 2. Death here signifies the pestilence which the prophet foretels would overspread the country of Egypt by reason of the famine occasioned by sieges and other ravages of war.

Verses 12, 13. *And I will kindle a fire in the houses of the gods of Egypt*—I will cause the temples of the gods of Egypt to be set on fire, and their images to be consumed, or carried away, as being neither able to save their worshippers nor themselves. God here speaks of himself as the prime mover, or principal agent in this business, no doubt with a design to inculcate this necessary and important lesson, that in the punishing of idolatrous or ungodly nations both the plan is his, and the power of carrying it into execution, whatever instruments he may choose to employ as the subordinate ministers of his providence. *And he shall array himself with the land of Egypt*—That is, he shall clothe, or enrich himself and his army with the spoils and plunder of the country : or he shall add Egypt to his dominions, and possess himself of the riches of it, with as much ease as the shepherd puts on his garment. So calamities, when they surround men on every side, are compared to a garment, Psa. cix. 19. "The expression shows," says Rollin, "the prodigious ease with which all the power and riches of a kingdom are carried away, when God appoints the revolution." *And he shall go forth from thence in peace*—None daring or attempting to resist him, or give him any molestation. *He shall also break the images of Bethshemesh*—Or, the house of the sun, as the word signifies. The LXX. render the clause, και συντροφιει εν της Ηλιουπολης, *He shall break in pieces the pillars of Heliopolis*, that is, the city of the sun, where, as we learn from Herodotus, lib. ii. c. 59, the Egyptians celebrated a grand festival annually, in honour of the sun, that had a temple there. But בית שמש, the house of the sun, seems rather to mean the temple itself, in which the images of their deity were erected.

## CHAPTER XLIV.

We have in this chapter, (1.) A most awakening sermon delivered by Jeremiah to the Jews in Egypt, to reprove them for their obstinate continuance in idolatry, notwithstanding the warnings given them, both by the word and rod of God, and to threaten the judgments of God against them for it, 1-14. (2.) The impudent and impious contempt which the people put upon this admonition, and their declared resolution to persist in their idolatries, in despite both of God and his prophet, 15-19. (3.) The sentence passed upon them for their obstinacy; that they should all be cut off, and perish in Egypt, except a very small number: as a token and earnest of which, the king of Egypt should shortly fall into the hands of the king of Babylon, and be unable any longer to protect them, 20-30.

A. M. 3417. THE word that came to Jeremiah  
B. C. 587.

concerning all the Jews which dwell in the land of Egypt, which dwell at <sup>a</sup> Migdol, and at <sup>b</sup> Tahpanhes, and at <sup>c</sup> Noph, and in the country of Pathros, saying,

2 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Ye have seen all the evil that I have brought upon Jerusalem, and upon all the cities of Judah; and behold, this day they are <sup>d</sup> a desolation, and no man dwelleth therein;

3 Because of their wickedness which they

<sup>a</sup> Exod. xiv. 2; Chap. xlvi. 14.—<sup>b</sup> Chap. xliii. 7.—<sup>c</sup> Isaiah xix. 13.—<sup>d</sup> Chap. ix. 11; xxxiv. 22.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER XLIV.

Verse 1. *The word which came to Jeremiah*—The patience and goodness of God to this remnant of his ancient people are very remarkable; he leaves them not even in their rebellion, but commissions his prophet, whom he had before sent to forbid their going into this idolatrous country, to try if in Egypt they could be brought to repentance and reformation; concerning all the Jews which dwelt at Migdol, and at Tahpanhes, &c.—They were now dispersed into divers parts of the country, and Jeremiah is sent with a message from God to them, which he delivered, either by going about from place to place to them; or when he had many of them together in Pathros, as is mentioned verse 15. We find a place termed Migdol, mentioned Exod. xiv. 2, as situate near the Red sea. "But I do not take this," says Blaney, "to be here intended. Migdol properly signifies a tower, and may, in all probability, have been a name given to different cities in Egypt where there was a distinguished object of that kind. The city of Magdulus is mentioned by Herodotus, Hecataeus, and others, and placed by Antoninus at the entrance of Egypt from Palestine, about twelve miles from Pelusium. This was too far distant from the Red sea to be in the route of the Israelites; but its situation in the neighbourhood of Tahpanhes, or Daphnæ, and its distance from Judea, favour the supposition of its being the Migdol here spoken of. For then, as Bochart observes, we shall find the four places mentioned exactly in the order of their respective distances from that country; 1st, Migdol, or Magdulus; 2d, Tahpanhes, or Daphnæ; 3d, Noph, or Memphis; and lastly, the district of Pathros, or Thebais." Near Memphis stands one of the pyramids which are yet remaining.

Verses 2-5. *Ye have seen all the evil that I have*

have committed to provoke me to <sup>A. M. 3417.</sup> anger, in that they went <sup>B. C. 587.</sup> to burn incense, and to <sup>f</sup> serve other gods, whom they knew not, neither they, ye, nor your fathers.

4 Howbeit, <sup>g</sup> I sent unto you all my servants the prophets, rising early and sending them, saying, O, do not this abominable thing that I hate.

5 But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear to turn from their wickedness, to burn no incense unto other gods.

<sup>e</sup> Chap. xix. 4.—<sup>f</sup> Deut. xiii. 6; xxxii. 17.—<sup>g</sup> 2 Chronicles xxxvi. 15; Chap. vii. 25; xxv. 4; xxvi. 5; xxix. 19.

brought on Jerusalem—He refers to the late destruction of it by the king of Babylon: this remnant of the people was a brand plucked out of the burning, and their eyes had been witnesses of the desolations which God had wrought. *Because of their wickedness, &c.*—As they were eye-witnesses of the effect, so nothing but their unbelief made them strangers to the cause of the divine wrath manifested against them; for God, by his prophets, had continually assured them that the grand cause was their departure from him, the one living and true God, and forsaking his worship for that of idols. *To serve other gods, whom they knew not*—The sin of their various idolatries was aggravated by this, that they were as much strangers to the idols as to the people with whom they joined in the worship of them, neither they nor any of their fathers having had any proof that these idols had ever done, or were able to do, any thing for their worshippers: compare Deut. xiii. 6, and xxxii. 17. These idols are opposed to the true God, called elsewhere *the God of their fathers*, who had made himself known to them by so many wonderful works and so many instances of his favour and benignity; and had promised to show the same favour to their posterity, if they continued steadfast in their obedience. *I sent, &c., saying, O! do not this abominable thing that I hate*—God had given them numberless admonitions and warnings by his prophets, that idolatry in all the species and instances of it was a sin which he hated above all others, and would very dreadfully punish, yet they would not hear so as to yield obedience to him; but still persisted in the commission of this most abominable and absurd iniquity. The Hebrew, אל נא תעש, may be properly rendered, *Do not, I pray you*, this abominable thing which I hate. Thus the Vulgate, *Nolite, oro, facere verbum abo-*

A. M. 3417. 6 Wherefore <sup>h</sup> my fury and mine  
B. C. 587. anger was poured forth, and was  
kindled in the cities of Judah and in the streets  
of Jerusalem; and they are wasted *and* deso-  
late, as at this day.

7 Therefore now thus saith the LORD, the  
God of hosts, the God of Israel; Wherefore  
commit ye *this* great evil <sup>1</sup> against your souls,  
to cut off from you man and woman, child and  
suckling, <sup>1</sup> out of Judah, to leave you none to  
remain;

8 In that ye <sup>h</sup> provoke me unto wrath with  
the works of your hands, burning incense  
unto other gods in the land of Egypt, whi-  
ther ye be gone to dwell, that ye might cut  
yourselves off, and that ye might be <sup>1</sup> a curse  
and a reproach among all the nations of the  
earth?

9 Have ye forgotten the <sup>2</sup> wickedness of  
your fathers, and the wickedness of the kings  
of Judah, and the wickedness of their wives,  
and your own wickedness, and the wicked-

<sup>h</sup> Chap. xlii. 18.—<sup>1</sup> Num. xvi. 38; Chap. vii. 19.—<sup>1</sup> Heb.  
out of the midst of Judah.—<sup>1</sup> Chap. xxv. 6, 7.—<sup>1</sup> Chap. xlii.  
18; Verse 12.—<sup>2</sup> Heb. wickednesses, or, punishments, &c.

*minationis hujuscemodi. Be unwilling, I beseech  
you, to practise a thing so abominable.* The lan-  
guage is as pathetic as it is emphatical.

Verses 6, 7. *Wherefore my fury, &c., was pour-  
ed forth, &c.*—As if he had said, For these very rea-  
sons, their idolatry and contempt of my word by  
my prophets, the very sins you are now committing,  
I gave Judah and Jerusalem into the hand of the  
king of Babylon, and they are, as you see this day,  
waste and desolate. *Wherefore commit ye this  
great evil? &c.*—What sort of prudence is it that  
influences you to do such actions as these, by which  
you cannot injure God, but yourselves only? You  
are now but a few of many; what love can you have  
for your country while you take courses which will  
certainly tend to the utter extirpation of those few,  
so that there shall be none remaining of all the Jews?  
God designed that this remnant should have remain-  
ed in Judea, and kept possession of it, when the rest  
of their brethren were carried away captive, chap.  
xlii. 10. But by their going into Egypt and defiling  
themselves with the idolatries of that nation, they  
provoked God to make an utter destruction of them.

Verses 8-10. *Ye provoke me unto wrath with the  
works of your hands*—By making and setting up  
idols to worship. *That ye might cut yourselves off,  
&c.*—This is not to be so taken as if they did these  
things with a design to cut off themselves and their  
posterity: but only as signifying that their utter  
ruin would be the certain consequence of their con-  
tinuing so to act. *Have ye forgotten the wickedness  
of your fathers? &c.*—Have you forgotten what

ness of your wives, which they have <sup>h</sup> committed  
A. M. 3417. committed in the land of Judah, and <sup>h</sup> committed  
B. C. 587. in the streets of Jerusalem?

10 They are not <sup>3</sup> humbled *even* unto this  
day, neither have they <sup>m</sup> feared, nor walked in  
my law, nor in my statutes, that I set before  
you and before your fathers.

11 ¶ Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts,  
the God of Israel; Behold, <sup>a</sup> I will set my  
face against you for evil, and to cut off all  
Judah.

12 And I will take the remnant of Judah,  
that have set their faces to go into the land  
of Egypt to sojourn there, and <sup>o</sup> they shall all  
be consumed, *and* fall in the land of Egypt;  
they shall *even* be consumed by the sword *and*  
by the famine: they shall die, from the least  
even unto the greatest, by the sword and by the  
famine: and <sup>p</sup> they shall be an execration,  
*and* an astonishment, and a curse, and a re-  
proach.

13 <sup>q</sup> For I will punish them that dwell in the

<sup>3</sup> Heb. *contrite*, Psa. li. 17.—<sup>m</sup> Prov. xxviii. 14.—<sup>a</sup> Lev.  
xvii. 10; xx. 5, 6; Chap. xxi. 10; Amos ix. 4.—<sup>o</sup> Chap. xlii.  
15, 17, 22.—<sup>p</sup> Chap. xlii. 18.—<sup>q</sup> Chap. xliiii. 11.

great wickedness your fathers committed, and what  
great punishments were in consequence thereof in-  
flicted upon them? We may be truly said to have  
forgotten that the sight of which, or reflection there-  
on, makes no such impression upon us as produces  
a suitable practice. *Which they have committed in  
the land of Judah, &c.*—To have practised these  
things in any place would have been to contract  
great guilt; but to have done them in the land of  
Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, in the valley  
of vision, and in the holy city, where there were  
such means of information and such helps to piety,  
was still more aggravated and inexcusable wicked-  
ness. *They are not humbled even unto this day*—  
Neither they nor you are yet properly humbled, and  
prepared for receiving mercy. *Neither have they  
feared, nor walked in my law*—Hence we learn,  
that reformation and obedience are the proper fruit  
of true contrition and humiliation; God does not  
account those to be humbled, but hardened, who are  
not reformed and made obedient, let their pretended  
contrition or humiliation be, in outward appearance,  
what it may.

Verses 11-14. *I will set my face against you  
for evil*—See note on chap. xxi. 10. *And I will take  
—Or, I will take away,* namely, by destruction; *the  
remnant of Judah, &c.*—The direful punishments  
denounced against those who went to Egypt were  
not denounced because it was a sin in itself for the  
Jews to leave their country, and seek a securer habi-  
tation in Egypt, but because, in so doing, they showed  
their distrust of God's power or goodness, as if he

A. M. 3417. land of Egypt, as I have punished  
B. C. 587. Jerusalem, by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence:

14 So that none of the remnant of Judah, which are gone into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, shall escape or remain, that they should return into the land of Judah, to the which they <sup>4</sup> have a desire to return to dwell there: for <sup>1</sup> none shall return but such as shall escape.

15 ¶ Then all the men which knew that their wives had burned incense unto other gods, and all the women that stood by, a great multitude, even all the people that dwelt in the land of Egypt, in Pathros, answered Jeremiah, saying,

16 *As for* the word that thou hast spoken

<sup>4</sup> Heb. *lift up their soul.*—<sup>1</sup> Verse 28.—<sup>2</sup> So Chapter vi. 16.  
<sup>3</sup> Num. xxx. 12; Deut. xxiii. 23; Judg. xi. 36; Verse 25.

were not able or willing to protect them in Judea, and also were guilty of disobeying his express commands, and disbelieving his faithful promises, whereby he had engaged to protect them. To which must be further added, the great danger and probability, not to say certainty, there was that they would fall into the idolatry of the Egyptians. Therefore God uttered grievous threatenings against their going thither, that they might be deterred from it. *For I will punish them that dwell in the land of Egypt, &c.*—See notes on chap. xlii. 15–18. *So that none of the remnant of Judah which are gone, &c.*—Blaney translates this more agreeably to the Hebrew, thus: “And the remnant of Judah, those who are come into the land of Egypt, with a view to sojourn there, and to return into the land of Judah, &c., shall not have one escaper or survivor; whereas none shall return but escapers.” And he observes, “It is evident, from verse 28, that some Jews were to escape the general destruction in Egypt, and to return into their own country, although but a few; and the same thing is implied in the latter sentence of this verse. But the former part of this verse excludes out of the number of the escapers every individual of those that were called properly *the remnant of Judah*, those that had set their faces to enter Egypt to sojourn there, in opposition to the express command of God, upon a presumption that they knew better than God how to consult their own restoration. The few then who were destined to escape, and to return back to the land of Judah, were to be such as had come into the land of Egypt in a less offensive manner, and happened to be there when the storm burst upon them.”

Verse 15. *Then all the men and all the women that dwell in Pathros*—Which was Upper Egypt; *answered Jeremiah, &c.*—From this it appears with how much reason it was that God ordered Jeremiah to endeavour to prevent their going into Egypt, since

unto us in the name of the LORD, A. M. 3417.  
B. C. 587. <sup>5</sup> we will not hearken unto thee.

17 But we will certainly do <sup>1</sup> whatsoever thing goeth forth out of our own mouth, to burn incense unto the <sup>6</sup> queen <sup>2</sup> of heaven, and to pour out drink-offerings unto her, as we have done, we, and our fathers, our kings, and our princes, in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem: for *then* had we plenty of <sup>6</sup> victuals, and were well, and saw no evil.

18 But since we left off to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink-offerings unto her, we have wanted all *things*, and have been consumed by the sword and by the famine.

19 <sup>3</sup> And when we burned incense to the queen of heaven, and poured out drink-offerings

<sup>5</sup> Or, *frame of heaven.*—<sup>2</sup> Chapter vii. 18.—<sup>6</sup> Heb. *bread.*  
<sup>3</sup> Chap. vii. 18.

the Israelitish women imitated the idolatry of the inhabitants of it, as soon as they came thither, and no people were immersed in a more absurd and shameful idolatry than the Egyptians. It is probable that when the Jewish women perceived the Egyptians to abound in riches and plenty, and to live in peace and security, they foolishly concluded that the gods which the Egyptians worshipped were more powerful, or more beneficent, than Jehovah, whom the Jews worshipped.

Verses 16–19. *As for the word thou hast spoken unto us, we will not hearken unto thee*—Johanan and the rest (chap. xliii. 5) only denied that God had said such things, and told Jeremiah he had spoken falsely: but now these people rise higher; they acknowledge Jeremiah had spoken to them in the name of the Lord, but, nevertheless, tell him in plain terms they would not obey his word, and indeed this is in the hearts of all sinners that are ruled by their lusts; though they will sometimes pretend that what they hear is not the will of God, but spoken out of malice and prejudice; yet they are preresolved they will not comply with it, let their understandings be never so well informed. *But will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth out of our own mouth*—That is, that which we have solemnly vowed to perform. Here we have the root of all the disobedience of sinners, their resolution to please themselves, and do their own will, and not in any thing to deny themselves. *To burn incense to the queen of heaven*—To the moon and the rest of the host of heaven: see the note on chap. vii. 18; and xix. 13. *As we have done, we and our fathers, &c.*—Their arguments for continuing in this idolatry are, 1st, Custom and antiquity; they and their fathers had practised it. 2d, The example of their kings and princes. 3d, The plenty and prosperity they had while they did so, as if their idols and not Jehovah had been the authors of it. They compared their former condition, before the

A. M. 3417. unto her, did we make her cakes to  
B. C. 587.

worship her, and pour out drink-offerings unto her, without our <sup>7</sup> men?

20 ¶ Then Jeremiah said unto all the people, to the men, and to the women, and to all the people which had given him *that* answer, saying,

21 The incense that ye burned in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, ye and your fathers, your kings and your princes, and the people of the land, did not the LORD remember them, and came it *not* into his mind?

22 So that the LORD could no longer bear, because of the evil of your doings, *and* because

<sup>7</sup> Or, husbands.—<sup>7</sup> Chap. xxv. 11, 18, 38.—<sup>2</sup> Verse 6.

invasion of Judea and the siege of Jerusalem, with their present state, and argued from their being in prosperity at that time, that they must needs have been then in the right; not considering that it was to be ascribed to the goodness and long-suffering of God waiting for their repentance, as being unwilling to destroy them, or even to bring any great calamity upon them. Besides, though on account of the measure of their iniquity being filled up, they now suffered more grievous calamities than they had ever done before, yet, if they were at all acquainted with the history of former times, they could not but know that idolatry had always brought calamities on their fathers, and that they never were so prosperous as when they worshipped and served Jehovah only. *But since we left off, &c., we have wanted all things*—This is their last argument in defence of their idolatry, an argument drawn from the evils that had befallen them since they had left off to worship the host of heaven; thus making their ceasing to commit the sin of idolatry the cause of their sufferings, whereas, in truth, the commission of that and their other sins had been the cause of all the calamities to which they had been exposed. *And when we burned incense, &c., did we worship her without our men?*—Here the women speak, and allege that their husbands had joined with them in offering incense to the host of heaven, and that it was not done without their privacy. “By the law of Moses the men had an independent power of binding themselves by any religious vow or obligation; but the vows of the women were not binding, without the knowledge and consent of their fathers and husbands; but if the father or husband knew of the vow, and did not signify his dissent at the time, his consent was presumed, and the vow stood firm and irrevocable, Num. xxx. 1–16. This appeal, therefore, to the concurrence of their men must be considered as coming from the female part of the assembly only, who thereby appear to declare that since they were thus authorized by those who alone had a legal right to control them, they should not submit to any other restraint upon their inclinations.”—Blaney.

Verses 20–23. *Then Jeremiah said, The incense*

of the abominations which ye have A. M. 3417. committed; therefore is your land <sup>7</sup> a B. C. 587. desolation, and an astonishment, and a curse, without an inhabitant, <sup>2</sup> as at this day.

23 Because ye have burned incense, and because ye have sinned against the LORD, and have not obeyed the voice of the LORD, nor walked in his law, nor in his statutes, nor in his testimonies; <sup>a</sup> therefore this evil is happened unto you, as at this day.

24 Moreover, Jeremiah said unto all the people, and to all the women, Hear the word of the LORD, all Judah <sup>b</sup> that *are* in the land of Egypt:

<sup>a</sup> Dan. ix. 11, 12.—<sup>b</sup> Chap. xliii. 7; Verse 15.

*that ye burned, &c.*—In these verses the prophet shows that they interpreted the dispensations of God's providence toward them in a sense directly contrary to their true intent and meaning. They concluded that their omission of late to *burn incense to the queen of heaven* was the cause of the calamities which had befallen them; but the prophet shows them that the true cause was, not their leaving off that practice, but their being formerly guilty of it. This their idolatry, with their other sins, did indeed go unpunished a great while: for God was long-suffering toward them, and during the time of his patience it was perhaps, as they said, *well with them*, and they *saw no evil*; but at length they became so provoking that, as the prophet tells them, verse 22, *the Lord could no longer bear*, but began a controversy with them. Upon this, it seems, some of them did in a degree reform their conduct: but their old guilt being uncancelled, and their corrupt inclinations being still the same, God remembered against them the idolatries of *their fathers, their kings, and their princes*, which they, instead of being ashamed of, gloried in: *all these*, he intimates, verse 21, *came into his mind*, with all the *abominations which they had committed*, verse 22, and all their disobedience *to the voice of the Lord*, verse 23: all was brought to account; and to punish them for these was their land made *a desolation, an astonishment, and a curse*, as they saw it to be. *Therefore*—Not for their late reformation, he assures them, but for their old transgressions, had *all that evil happened to them*.

Verses 24–28. *Jeremiah said, Hear all Judah that are in the land of Egypt*—That is, all you men and women that belong to Judah, and are now come to dwell in Egypt; *ye and your wives have spoken*—The Hebrew word הוֹרִינָה, rendered *have spoken*, is of the feminine gender, and implies that the women were first and principally concerned in this idolatry, and that the men's guilt lay chiefly in conniving at them, and suffering themselves to be seduced by them; *saying, We will surely perform our vows, &c.*—They insist on their unlawful vows as obligations in conscience, which could not be dispensed with, just as Herod did on his unlawful oath,

A. M. 3417. 25 Thus saith the LORD of hosts,  
B. C. 587.

the God of Israel, saying; ° Ye and your wives have both spoken with your mouths, and fulfilled with your hand, saying, We will surely perform our vows that we have vowed, to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink-offerings unto her: ye will surely accomplish your vows, and surely perform your vows.

26 Therefore hear ye the word of the LORD, all Judah that dwell in the land of Egypt; Behold, ° I have sworn by my great name, saith the LORD, that ° my name shall no more be named in the mouth of any man of Judah in all the land of Egypt, saying, The Lord God liveth.

27 † Behold, I will watch over them for evil, and not for good: and all the men of Judah that are in the land of Egypt ° shall be con-

° Verse 15.—† Gen. xxii. 16.—‡ Ezek. xx. 39.—§ Chap. i. 10; xxxi. 28; Ezekiel vii. 6.—¶ Verse 12.—‡ Verse 14; Isa. xxvii. 13.

Matt. xiv. 9: as if, though to burn incense to the queen of heaven were a sin, yet their having vowed to do it were sufficient to justify them in the doing of it; whereas no man can, by his vow, make that lawful to himself, much less his duty, which God had before made sin. *Ye will surely accomplish your vows, &c.*—You are resolved upon it, and there is no moving you from your resolution. *Therefore hear ye the word of the Lord*—Hear what is God's resolution. *Behold, I have sworn by my great name, saith the Lord*—I also have made a solemn vow, in opposition to that wicked one of yours, and have confirmed it by an oath. *I have sworn and will not repent: That my name shall no more be named by any man of Judah in the land of Egypt, &c.*—“These Jews seem to have joined the worship of the true God with that of idols, as the Samaritans did before them, 2 Kings xvii. 33. Thereupon God declares he will not receive any such polluted worship at their hands, (compare Ezek. xx. 39,) nor suffer his name to be any longer profaned by such hypocrites, but will consume them by a sudden and general destruction”—Lowth. *Behold, I will watch over them for evil*—God here represents himself as one who would be solicitous and industrious to bring evil upon them, as men, who are so in any business, watch all opportunities for doing it: as if he had said, No opportunity shall be let slip to bring some judgment upon them, until there be an end of them, and they be quite rooted out. *Yet a small number that escape the sword shall return, &c.*—A very few, next to none in comparison of the great number that shall return out of the land of the Chaldeans: see note on verse 14. *And all the remnant of Judah shall know whose words shall stand, mine or theirs*—They said they should recover themselves

sumed by the sword and by the fa- A. M. 3417.  
mine, until there be an end of them. B. C. 587.

28 Yet † a small number that escape the sword shall return out of the land of Egypt into the land of Judah; and all the remnant of Judah, that are gone into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, shall know whose † words shall stand, ° mine, or theirs.

29 ¶ And this shall be a sign unto B. C. 587.  
you, saith the LORD, that I will punish you in this place, that ye may know that my words shall † surely stand against you for evil:

30 Thus saith the LORD; Behold, † I will give Pharaoh-hophra king of Egypt into the hand of his enemies, and into the hand of them that seek his life; as I gave † Zedekiah king of Judah into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, his enemy, and that sought his life.

† Verses 17, 25, 26.—‡ Heb. from me, or them.—§ Psalm xxxiii. 11.—¶ Chap. xlvi. 25, 26; Ezek. xxix. 3, &c.; xxx. 21, &c.—‡ Chap. xxxix. 5.

when they returned to worship the queen of heaven. God says they shall hereby ruin themselves: and now the event will show who was in the right. The contest between God and sinners is, whose word shall stand, whose will shall be done, who shall prevail? Sinners say, We shall have peace, though we go on in sin: God says, Ye shall have no peace. *And when God judges, he will overcome:* his word shall stand, and not the sinner's.

Verses 29, 30. *And this shall be a sign unto you*—Signs are usually antecedent to the thing signified, as Isa. xxxviii. 7; but here, as Exod. iii. 12, Isa. xxxvii. 30, and Luke ii. 12, the word is taken, in a larger sense, for a circumstance that should attend the thing signified. It may be observed, however, that although the destruction of these Jews, and that of Pharaoh, were things immediately following each other, yet the latter was in order before the other. *I will give Pharaoh-hophra into the hand of his enemies*—Pharaoh was a name common, in ancient times, to all the kings of Egypt; but several of them had some additional epithet to distinguish them from the rest. Thus the predecessor of this king was called *Pharaoh-nechoh*, 2 Kings xxiii. 29. This *Pharaoh-hophra* appears to have been the same that is called by profane authors *Apries*; and his unfortunate end, in exact conformity with this prediction, is particularly related by Herodotus, lib. ii. cap. 169, and by Diodorus Siculus, lib. i. p. 43. “His subjects 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 rebellion; 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 strangled in his own palace; thus verifying this prophecy." See Rollin's *Ancient Hist.*, vol. i., and Bishop Newton on the *Prophecies*, vol. i. p. 302.

## CHAPTER XLV.

*This chapter, though placed at a considerable distance from it, is evidently an appendage to chap. xxxvi. Baruch, as we there learn, had been employed by Jeremiah, as his amanuensis, to write a collection of all those dreadful threatenings which God had denounced by his mouth. This seems to have affected his spirits, and to have alarmed his fears to such a degree, that God judged it proper to encourage and comfort him by letting him know that, although amidst the general calamities of his country he ought not to look for any great matters for himself, yet, in consideration of his services, his own life should be preserved to him by a special providence, in all places to which it might be his lot to go, 1-5.*

A. M. 3397. B. C. 607. **T**HE word that Jeremiah the prophet spake unto Baruch the son of Neriah, when he had written these words in a book at the mouth of Jeremiah, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, saying,

2 Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, unto thee, O Baruch;

3 Thou didst say, Wo is me now! for the LORD hath added grief to my sorrow; I fainted

<sup>a</sup> Chap. xxxvi. 1, 4, 32.—<sup>b</sup> Isa. v. 5.—<sup>c</sup> Chap. xxv. 26.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER XLV.

Verse 1. *The word that Jeremiah spake unto Baruch when he had written, &c.*—"This seems to indicate that the exact time of the uttering of this prophecy was between the writing and the publication of the roll. And, perhaps, if Baruch had not received such special assurances of protection, he might not have had resolution enough to have followed the prophet's further directions, and to have read first before all the people, and afterward before the princes, what he had written."—Blaney.

Verses 3-5. *Thou didst say, Wo is me now, &c.*—"The sorrows which I felt for the threatenings denounced against my country and religion are increased by my own troubles, being sought after by the king's command in order to be put to death:" see chap. xxxvi. 28. *The Lord saith, That which I have built will I break down, &c.*—The land and

in my sighing, and I find no rest. A. M. 3397. B. C. 607. 4 Thus shalt thou say unto him, The

LORD saith thus; Behold, <sup>b</sup> that which I have built will I break down, and that which I have planted I will pluck up, even this whole land.

5 And seekest thou great things for thyself? seek *them* not: for behold, <sup>c</sup> I will bring evil upon all flesh, saith the LORD: but thy life will I give unto thee <sup>d</sup> for a prey in all places whither thou goest.

<sup>d</sup> Chap. xxi. 9; xxxviii. 2; xxxix. 18.

people which have so long flourished under the peculiar care of my providence I resolve now to give up to utter destruction: see chap. xxxi. 28. *And seekest thou great things for thyself?*—Dost thou aspire to honour, dignity, and prosperity, or expect to be exempted from adversity and trouble in a time of great and common calamity? *Seek them not*—Never think of any thing of the kind; *for, behold, I bring evil on all flesh*—Upon the whole country where thou livest, and upon all orders and degrees of men therein. *But thy life will I give unto thee for a prey*—Thy life shall be preserved, but under such circumstances that thou shalt have reason to look on thyself as peculiarly indebted to the divine providence for so singular and extraordinary a favour. See note on chapter xxi. 9, where the same proverbial expression occurs, and is further explained.

## CHAPTER XLVI.

*This chapter contains two prophecies against Egypt: the first fulfilled immediately after the publication; the other about thirty-four years after. To be more particular: We have here, (1.) A prediction of the defeat of Pharaoh-necho's army, notwithstanding their pompous preparations and sanguine expectations, by the Chaldean forces at Carchemish on the Euphrates, 1-12. (2.) A prophecy of the invasion and conquest of Egypt, by the Chaldeans under Nebuchadnezzar, who should fill the country with terror and confusion, murder its inhabitants, and render it desolate for forty years, 13-26. (3.) A word of comfort is given to the Israel of God in the midst of these calamities, 27, 28.*

A. M. 3397. B. C. 607. **T**HE word of the LORD which came to Jeremiah the prophet against the Gentiles;

2 Against Egypt, against the army of Pharaoh-necho king of Egypt, which was by the river Euphrates in Carchemish, which Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon smote in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah.

3 Order ye the buckler and shield, and draw near to battle.

4 Harness the horses; and get up, ye horsemen, and stand forth with your helmets; furbish the spears, and put on the brigandines.

5 Wherefore have I seen them dismayed and turned away back? and their mighty ones are beaten down, and are fled apace, and look not back: for fear was round about, saith the LORD.

6 Let not the swift flee away, nor the mighty man escape: they shall stumble, and fall toward the north by the river Euphrates.

7 Who is this that cometh up as a flood, whose waters are moved as the rivers?

8 Egypt riseth up like a flood, and his waters are moved like the rivers; and he saith, I will go up, and will cover the earth; I will destroy the city and the inhabitants thereof.

\* Chapter xxv. 15.—<sup>b</sup> 2 Kings xxxiii. 29; 2 Chronicles xxxv. 29; fulfilled presently.—<sup>c</sup> So Chap. li. 11, 12; Nah. ii. 1; iii. 14.

<sup>1</sup> Heb. broken in pieces.—<sup>2</sup> Heb. fled a flight.—<sup>d</sup> Chapter vi. 25; xlix. 29.—<sup>e</sup> Dan. xi. 19.—<sup>f</sup> Isaiah viii. 7; Chapter xlvii. 2; Dan. xi. 22.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XLVI.

Verse 1. *The word of the Lord which came to Jeremiah against the Gentiles*—This is a general title to the collection of prophecies contained in this and the five following chapters, and refers to the denunciation of God's judgments upon the countries round about Judea, namely, those of whom an enumeration is made chap. xxv. 19–25. To some of these prophecies the date is annexed; in others it is left uncertain. It is evident they were not all delivered at the same time, and they seem to be here out of their proper place. In the *Vatican* and *Alexandrian* copies of the *Septuagint*, they follow immediately after chap. xxv. 13, where express mention is made of the book which Jeremiah had prophesied against all the nations; which book is contained in this and the following chapters. It seems those who collected Jeremiah's writings judged proper, without confining themselves to the order of time, to join together all those prophecies which respected the Gentile nations, and were not immediately connected with the affairs of the Jews.

Verse 2. *Against Egypt, against the army of Pharaoh-necho*—Pharaoh-necho was king of Egypt in Josiah's time, and it was by his army that Josiah was killed at Megiddo, as is related 2 Kings xxiii. 29, where see the note. That army was then marching under the conduct of Necho against the Medes and Babylonians, who, having by the capture of Nineveh destroyed the Assyrian empire, had become formidable to the neighbouring states. Josiah opposed it in its march through the country, but was defeated, and received a wound in the battle which proved mortal. Necho continued his march after this victory, defeated the Babylonians, took Carchemish, and securing it with a strong garrison, returned into his own country. Nabopolassar, the king of Babylon, observing that all Syria and Palestine had revolted on account of the reduction of Carchemish by the Egyptians, sent his son Nebuchadnezzar with an army to retake that city, and recover the revolted provinces. Necho marched with a powerful army

to oppose him; and it appears it was at the time when the Egyptian army lay along the banks of the Euphrates, waiting to oppose the entrance of Nebuchadnezzar into Syria, that this prophecy was delivered, namely, as is here said, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim. The two armies came to an engagement near the city of Carchemish, and the event of the battle proved very disastrous to the Egyptians, who were routed with prodigious slaughter, as is here foretold by the prophet in a very animated style, and with great poetic energy and liveliness of colouring.

Verses 3–6. *Order ye the buckler, &c.*—In these verses the mighty preparations of the Egyptians for war are described, which causes the prophet, who foresees the defeat, to express, as he does in the next two verses, "his astonishment at an event so contrary to what might have been expected; but he accounts for it by ascribing it to the disposition of the Almighty, who had spread terror all around, and had decreed that neither swiftness nor strength should avail the owners so as to save them from the impending overthrow."—Blaney. *I have seen them dismayed and turned back*—God had, in a vision, shown Jeremiah the army of the Egyptians discomfited and fleeing; and their mighty ones—Their most powerful warriors and valiant commanders; are beaten down, and are fled apace—Either fall in the battle, or flee away as fast as they can; for fear is round about—A panic fear hath seized the whole army. *Let not the swift flee away*—Let them not be able to escape from those that pursue them, but be either killed or taken. *They shall stumble, &c., toward the north by the river Euphrates*—Which was northward from Egypt, and even from Judea: so Babylon is described as lying northward, being situate upon that river.

Verses 7–10. *Who is this that cometh up as a flood*—Here the king of Egypt is compared to a mighty river, the Nile, or the Euphrates, when it swells above its banks, and threatens to overwhelm the country with ruin and desolation. *And he saith,*

A. M. 3397. 9 Come up, ye horses; and rage, B. C. 607. ye chariots; and let the mighty men come forth: <sup>3</sup> the Ethiopians and <sup>4</sup> the Libyans, that handle the shield; and the Lydians, <sup>5</sup> that handle and bend the bow.

10 For this *is* <sup>b</sup> the day of the Lord God of hosts, a day of vengeance, that he may avenge him of his adversaries: and <sup>i</sup> the sword shall devour, and it shall be satiate and made drunk with their blood: for the Lord God of hosts <sup>k</sup> hath a sacrifice in the north country by the river Euphrates.

11 <sup>l</sup> Go up into Gilead, and take balm, <sup>m</sup> O

<sup>3</sup> Heb. *Cush*.—<sup>4</sup> Heb. *Put*.—<sup>5</sup> Isa. lxi. 19.—<sup>b</sup> Isa. xiii. 6; Joel i. 15; ii. 1.—<sup>i</sup> Deut. xxxii. 42; Isa. xxxiv. 6.—<sup>k</sup> Isa. xxxiv. 6; Zeph. i. 7; Ezek. xxxix. 17.

*I will go up, and will cover the earth*—With my numerous armies; *I will destroy the city*—Carchemish or Babylon; *and the inhabitants thereof*—Who shall not be able to withstand the powerful force I bring against them. Thus the prophet represents him as beginning his march with all the ostentation and insolence of presumed success. *Come up, ye horses; and rage, ye chariots, &c.*—Here he is exhibited calling aloud to the nations of which his army is composed, giving them the signal for action, and rousing them to deeds of desperate valour; but all in vain: for the time is come for God to avenge himself of his ancient foes: they are doomed to slaughter, to fall a bloody sacrifice on the plains of the north. *For*, adds the prophet, verse 10, *this is the day of the Lord God of hosts*—That is, as it follows, *the day of his vengeance*. Hence, *the day of the Lord* is used in the New Testament to signify the day of judgment, of which all other days of vengeance are the earnest and forerunners. *That he may avenge himself of his adversaries*—Of the idols of Egypt and their worshippers: the Egyptians were some of the first idolaters, and carried idolatry to its greatest height. *And the sword shall devour, it shall be satiate, &c.*—These metaphorical expressions signify the very great slaughter which would be made at that time in the Egyptian army. *For the Lord God hath a sacrifice, &c.*—The slaughter of men in battle, which is by way of punishment for their sins, is called a sacrifice to God, because it makes some kind of satisfaction and atonement to the divine justice. See the margin.

Verses 11, 12. *Go up into Gilead, and take balm*—Gilead was famous for producing balm and such like healing gums: see note on chap. viii. 22. The prophet, alluding to the custom of men's going thither for relief in dangerous infirmities, ironically advises the Egyptians to try all the methods they can think of to prevent that destruction that threatened them, but he signifies that all their endeavours would be in vain. Compare chap. li. 8. *O virgin, the daughter of Egypt*—Those cities or countries are called virgins which were never conquered.

virgin, the daughter of Egypt: in vain A. M. 3397. shalt thou use many medicines; *for* B. C. 607. <sup>5</sup> thou <sup>a</sup> shalt not be cured.

12 The nations have heard of thy shame, and thy cry hath filled the land: for the mighty man hath stumbled against the mighty, *and* they are fallen both together.

13 ¶ The word that the LORD spake to Jeremiah the prophet, how Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon should come *and* <sup>o</sup> smite the land of Egypt.

14 Declare ye in Egypt, and publish in Migdol, and publish in Noph and in Tahpanhes:

<sup>1</sup> Chap. viii. 22; li. 8.—<sup>2</sup> Isaiah xlvii. 1.—<sup>3</sup> Heb. *no cure* shall be unto thee.—<sup>4</sup> Ezek. xxx. 21.—<sup>5</sup> Isa. xix. 1; Chapter xliii. 10, 11; Ezek. xxix.; xxx.; xxxii.; fulfilled about 571.

Egypt was grown great by her conquests, particularly by the former battle at Carchemish, (see verse 2,) and did not apprehend itself to be in any danger of being conquered. *The nations have heard of thy shame*—Of thy armies being shamefully beaten and running away; *for the mighty man hath stumbled against the mighty*—When an army is once broken and disordered, multitudes are a hinderance one to another, and one part helps to destroy another. Thus the prophet concludes the first prophecy against Egypt, or, as he expresses it, *the daughter of Egypt*, by an apostrophe to her, addressing her as a conquered nation, whose wound is pronounced incurable, and disgrace universally known; forasmuch as the number of her warriors served only to augment the general disorder, and more effectually to destroy each other.

Verse 13. *The word that the Lord spake, &c.*—Here begins the second prophecy against Egypt, the exact time of the delivery of which we have no means of ascertaining; but the desolation foretold in it is undoubtedly the same with that predicted by Ezekiel, chaps. xxix., xxx., xxxi., xxxii. And this came to pass in the twenty-seventh year of Jehoiachin's captivity, that is, the sixteenth year after the destruction of Jerusalem, as may be collected from Ezek. xxix. 17, where Nebuchadnezzar's army is spoken of as having at that time suffered a great deal at the siege of Tyre; on which account the spoils of Egypt are promised them for their wages and indemnification: and the promise was accordingly made good that same year.—*Jos. Ant.*, lib. x. cap. 9.

Verses 14, 15. *Publish in Migdol, and in Noph, and Tahpanhes*—Concerning these three cities, see note on ch. xlv. 1. The meaning is, publish this prophecy over all the land of Egypt; or these three places are named, because in them the Jews, who went into Egypt with Johanan, were chiefly settled. *Say, Stand fast, and prepare thee*—Prepare for war, and resolve to keep your ground, and not yield to the enemy: compare verses 2, 3. *For the sword shall devour round about thee*—The nations are de-

A. M. 3397. say ye, <sup>p</sup> Stand fast, and prepare  
B. C. 607. thee; for <sup>a</sup> the sword shall devour  
round about thee.

15 Why are thy valiant *men* swept away?  
they stood not, because the LORD did drive  
them.

16 He <sup>e</sup> made many to fall, yea, <sup>r</sup> one fell  
upon another: and they said, Arise, and  
let us go again to our own people, and to  
the land of our nativity, from the oppressing  
sword.

<sup>p</sup> Verses 3, 4. — <sup>a</sup> Verse 10. — <sup>e</sup> Hebrew, *multiplied the faller*.  
<sup>r</sup> Lev. xxvi. 37.

stroyed around you, and you have reason to expect  
that the sword will next reach you. *Why are thy  
valiant men swept away?*—“The Hebrew word  
אָנִי, here rendered *valiant*, is sometimes spoken of  
God, as Gen. xlix. 24. Sometimes it is a title given  
to *angels*, as Psa. lxxviii. 25; but the LXX. under-  
stand it here of *Apis*, the idol of Egypt, which might  
properly be said to be conquered when the nation,  
that had put themselves under his protection, was  
subdued.”—Lowth. And, instead of *they stood not*,  
*because the Lord did drive them*, as we translate the  
next clause, the LXX. add, ο μοσχος ο εκλεκτος ου εκ  
εμεινεν, οτι κυριος παρελυσεν αυτον, *thy elect calf did  
not abide, because the Lord debilitated*, literally,  
*paralyzed, him*. But it is not at all probable that  
this idol was here intended, but either of the mighty  
princes of Egypt; or, if the noun be singular, as  
Blaney understands it, reading, אָנִיךָ, *thy mighty  
one*, instead of אָנִיךָ, *thy mighty ones*, then the  
king is probably meant. Neither the king himself,  
nor his valiant captains, could stand before Nebuchad-  
nezzar and the Chaldean army, because God dis-  
comfited them. It was of God to destroy Egypt,  
and when he works none can hinder him; when he  
strikes none can stand up against him, or stand be-  
fore him.

Verses 16, 17. *He made many to fall*—Or, as the  
Vulgate renders הרבה כושל, *multiplicavit ruen-  
tes, he multiplied those falling*, or more literally,  
*the faller*, as in the margin, the word being singular.  
Blaney connects this with the next clause, as the  
LXX. do, and reads the verse thus: “He hath caused  
many to stumble, yea, to fall; they said therefore  
one to another, Arise, and let us return to our peo-  
ple, and to our native country, because of the op-  
pressor’s sword.” These are either the words of the  
Egyptian allies, resolving to return to their own  
countries, and not concern themselves any further  
with the affairs of Egypt; or else they are the words  
of the remains of the Egyptians, resolving to retire  
within their own borders, as thinking the Babylo-  
nians would not follow them thither. *They did cry*,  
*Pharaoh king of Egypt is but a noise*—He is no  
more than an empty boaster: he has neglected the  
opportunities he ought to have laid hold on, and he  
is not prepared according to his appointment.

17 They did cry there, Pharaoh <sup>A. M. 3397.</sup>  
<sup>B. C. 607.</sup> king of Egypt *is but* a noise; he hath  
passed the time appointed.

18 *As I live*, saith the King, <sup>a</sup> whose name *is*  
the LORD of hosts, Surely as Tabor *is* among  
the mountains, and as Carmel by the sea, *so*  
shall he come.

19 O <sup>t</sup> thou daughter dwelling in Egypt,  
<sup>7</sup> furnish thyself <sup>u</sup> to go into captivity: for  
Noph shall be waste and desolate without an  
inhabitant.

<sup>a</sup> Isa. xlvii. 4; xlviii. 2; Chap. xlviii. 15. — <sup>t</sup> Chap. xlviii. 18.  
<sup>7</sup> Heb. *make thee instruments of captivity*. — <sup>u</sup> Isa. xx. 4.

Verse 18. *As I live saith the king, whose name is  
the Lord of hosts*—He, before whom the mightiest  
kings on earth, though gods to us, are but as grass-  
hoppers; he hath said and sworn what follows;  
*Surely as Tabor, &c.*—As surely as Tabor is among  
the mountains and Carmel by the sea, so surely shall  
the conqueror of Egypt come. Or, though Egypt  
were as inaccessible as the top of Tabor, and begirt  
with the sea like Carmel, yet the enemy should come  
upon her, and make an entire conquest of her.  
Houbigant paraphrases the clause thus, “As much as  
Tabor overtops all other mountains, so much shall  
the Chaldeans be superior to the Egyptians; and as  
the waves of the sea roar in vain at the foot of mount  
Carmel, so shall the Egyptians waves rage in vain.”  
Blaney understands the clause in nearly the same  
sense, observing, “Tabor and Carmel were two of  
the most considerable mountains in the land of  
Israel. Carmel formed the principal headland all  
along the sea-coast. Nebuchadnezzar is compared  
to these on account of his superiority over all  
others.”

Verse 19. *O thou daughter dwelling in Egypt*—  
Blaney translates it, *O inhabiting daughter of  
Egypt*, observing, that an antithesis seems to be de-  
signed between יושבת, *inhabiting*, and the act of mi-  
gration, which was to follow. Countries and cities  
are often represented under the emblem of women,  
especially in medals and pictures. *Furnish thyself  
to go into captivity*—“The expression is ironical,  
implying that, instead of the rich and goodly furni-  
ture wherein she did pride herself, she should be  
carried away captive, naked and bare, and wanting  
all manner of conveniences.” The Hebrew of this  
clause seems to be more literally translated in the  
margin than in the text; the word כָּלֵי, there ren-  
dered *instruments*, meaning either the carriages, or  
the trunks and boxes that were to hold the things to  
be removed. Blaney reads it, *Get ready thy equi-  
page for removing*. *For Noph shall be waste, &c.*  
—Noph in particular shall be wholly depopulated  
and laid waste. This place, called also *Memphis*,  
was accordingly laid waste some time after this, and  
remained some years in a state of desolation. It  
was, indeed, afterward rebuilt, but never recovered  
its ancient splendour.

A. M. 3397. 20 Egypt is like a very fair <sup>a</sup> heifer,  
B. C. 607. *but* destruction cometh; it cometh  
<sup>b</sup> out of the north.

21 Also her hired men *are* in the midst of her like <sup>c</sup> fatted bullocks; for they also are turned back, *and* are fled away together: they did not stand, because <sup>d</sup> the day of their calamity was come upon them, *and* the time of their visitation.

22 <sup>e</sup> The voice thereof shall go like a serpent; for they shall march with an army, and come against her with axes, as hewers of wood.

23 They shall <sup>f</sup> cut down her forest, saith the

<sup>a</sup> So Hosea x. 11.—<sup>b</sup> Chapter i. 14; xlvi. 2; Verses 6, 10.  
<sup>c</sup> Heb. *bullocks of the stall*.—<sup>d</sup> Psalm xxxvii. 13; Chap. i. 27.  
<sup>e</sup> Isa. xxix. 4.—<sup>f</sup> Isa. x. 34.—<sup>g</sup> Judg. vi. 5.

Verses 20, 21. *Egypt is like a very fair heifer*—“In the foregoing verse the prophet compared Egypt to a delicate young woman. Here he resembles her to a fat and well-favoured heifer. In which comparison, as Grotius not improbably conjectures, there is an allusion to their god *Apis*, which was a bull, remarkable for his beauty and the fine spots or marks he had about him.”—Lowth. *But destruction cometh, &c.*—The Hebrew is very emphatical, קָרַךְ מִצָּפוֹן בָּא, *destruction from the north, it cometh, it cometh.* Also her hired men—Her mercenary soldiers; *are in the midst of her like fatted bullocks*—Bullocks fatted up, and fit for the slaughter: or they are inactive, and as little courageous as fatted bullocks; foreign or hired troops never fighting with such spirit and resolution as those manifest who are defending their own country and property. *They did not stand*—Namely, in the fight; *because the day of their calamity was come*—Because the time when God resolved to punish them, and bring calamity upon them, was arrived, even the time of their visitation, as it is expressed chap. i. 27.

Verses 22, 23. *The voice thereof shall go like a serpent*—“That is, her (Egypt's) voice shall be low and inarticulate through fear. This passage seems to be an imitation of Isa. xxix. 4, where we find the same threat denounced against Jerusalem, namely, *Thy speech shall be low out of the dust, and thy voice shall be as one that hath a familiar spirit, out of the ground.* The cause which is assigned is the same in both places, the irresistible attack of powerful enemies.”—Dr. Durell. See note on Isaiah xxix. 4. *For they shall march with an army*—For the Chaldeans shall come with powerful forces; *with axes, as hewers of wood*—As if they came to fell timber in a wood. *They shall cut down her forest*—Here Egypt is compared to a forest, either for the multitude of cities and their stately buildings, or of people in that country; and its destruction is described by the metaphor of cutting down the trees of a forest. *Though it cannot be searched, &c.*—Though the forest be very thick, and the trees thereof innumerable. *Because they are more than*

LORD, though it cannot be searched; A. M. 3397. because they are more than <sup>o</sup> the <sup>p</sup> grasshoppers, and *are* innumerable. B. C. 607.

24 The daughter of Egypt shall be confounded; she shall be delivered into the hand of <sup>q</sup> the people of the north.

25 The LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saith; Behold, I will punish the <sup>r</sup> multitude <sup>s</sup> of <sup>t</sup> No, and Pharaoh, and Egypt, <sup>u</sup> with their gods, and their kings; even Pharaoh, and *all* them that trust in him:

26 <sup>v</sup> And I will deliver them into the hand of those that seek their lives, and into the hand of

<sup>d</sup> Chap. i. 15.—<sup>e</sup> Or, *nourisher*.—<sup>f</sup> Heb. *Amon*.—<sup>g</sup> Ezek. xxx. 14, 15, 16; Nah. iii. 8.—<sup>h</sup> Chap. xliii. 12, 13; Ezek. xxx. 13.—<sup>i</sup> Chap. xlv. 30; Ezek. xxxii. 11.

*the grasshoppers*—Because the army of the Chaldeans shall be as numerous as the inhabitants of Egypt. In other words, though the cities and inhabitants of Egypt be never so numerous and large; yet the Chaldean army shall plunder and destroy them, because their number is proportionable to such an enterprise. Armies are often compared to grasshoppers and such like insects, both for their multitudes, and because they make a general consumption, grasshoppers devouring all before them, wherever they come: see Judg. vi. 5; vii. 12; Joel ii. 4, 5.

Verses 25, 26. *Behold, I will punish the multitude of No*—Hebrew, אֲמוֹן כּוּנַא, *Amon of No*, which, says Blaney, “is the literal translation, and we need seek for no other.” *Amon*, or *Ammon*, as the word is generally written, was the name by which the Egyptians called Jupiter, who had a celebrated temple at Thebes, famous for its hundred gates in Homer's time, and supposed to be the same city with *No* here mentioned. Here Jupiter was worshipped in a distinguished manner, on which account the place was called *Diospolis*, the city of Jupiter, which name the LXX. have put for *No*, Ezek. xxx. 14–16. If therefore *No* be *Thebes*, or *Diospolis*, as it seems evident it is, then *Ammon of No* signifies the deity of the place, the *Theban Jupiter*, as Herodotus styles him, lib. ii. cap. 42. As, on the other hand, כּוּנַא אֲמוֹן, *No-ammon*, Nah. iii. 8, should be rendered, *No of Ammon*, which exactly corresponds with the Greek Διοσπολις, or, *city of Jupiter*. But very different from these is the term, אֲמוֹן כּוּנַא, used Ezek. xxx. 15, which indeed signifies the *multitude*, or numerous inhabitants of *No*; although, from the similitude of the words אֲמוֹן and חָמֹן, *Amon* and *Hamon*, our translators, and others besides them, have confounded them together. Some have supposed *No* to mean *Alexandria*, the great emporium of Egypt; and the Chaldee and Vulgate have rendered it so. But *Alexandria* was not built till ages after the time when Jeremiah prophesied: and it does not appear that there had been before any city, at least any considerable one, standing upon the spot which the founder made the object of his choice.

A. M. 3397. Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, B. C. 607. and into the hand of his servants: and <sup>h</sup> afterward it shall be inhabited, as in the days of old, saith the LORD.

27 ¶ <sup>i</sup> But fear not thou, O my servant Jacob, and be not dismayed, O Israel: for behold, I will save thee from afar off, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall

<sup>h</sup> Ezek. xxix. 11, 13, 14.—<sup>i</sup> Isa. xli. 13, 14; xliii. 5; xliv. 2; Chap. xxx. 10, 11.

And Pharaoh and Egypt, with their gods and their kings—The same divine vengeance, which falls upon the idol Ammon and his worshippers, shall reach the rest of Egypt with their respective idols and governors. "When an idolatrous nation," says Blaney, "is doomed to destruction, God is said to execute vengeance upon the idols of the country: see chap. xliii. 12, 13. Accordingly, here Ammon of No, the principal deity, and Pharaoh, the principal man, among the Egyptians, are marked out in the first place as the primary objects of divine visitation; then follows, in the gross, Egypt with all her gods, and all her kings; which latter term is explained to include both Pharaoh himself, and those subordinate rulers who were dependant upon him

return, and be in rest and at ease, A. M. 3397. and none shall make *him* afraid. B. C. 607.

28 Fear thou not, O Jacob my servant, saith the LORD: for I *am* with thee; for I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have driven thee: but I will not make <sup>h</sup> a full end of thee, but correct thee in measure; yet will I <sup>11</sup> not leave thee wholly unpunished.

<sup>h</sup> Chap. x. 24; xxx. 11.—<sup>11</sup> Or, not utterly cut thee off.

for the rank and authority they held. And afterward it shall be inhabited, as in the days of old—At the end of forty years Egypt was to begin to recover itself, as Ezekiel foretels, chap. xxix. 13.

Verses 27, 28. But fear not thou, O my servant Jacob; for I will make a full end of all the nations whither, &c.—See notes on chap. xxx. 10, 11, from whence these two verses are taken, containing a comfortable promise to the Jews, that God will not make an utter destruction of them as he hath done of several other nations, against which the prophets have denounced his judgments; but will still preserve a remnant of them, to whom he will perform the promises made to their fathers: see also note on chap. xxx. 16, 17.

CHAPTER XLVII.

This chapter contains the short but terrible doom of the Philistines, and of Tyre and Sidon. It is foretold, (1.) That forces from the north should invade and ravage their country in a most terrible manner, 1-5. (2.) That the war should continue long, and be very ruinous, notwithstanding all endeavours to put an end to it, 6, 7.

A. M. 3397. THE word of the LORD that came B. C. 607. to Jeremiah the prophet <sup>a</sup> against the Philistines, <sup>b</sup> before that Pharaoh smote <sup>1</sup> Gaza.

<sup>a</sup> Chap. xxv. 20; Ezek. xxv. 15, 16; Zeph. ii. 4, 5.—<sup>b</sup> Amos i. 6, 7, 8.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XLVII.

Verse 1. The word of the Lord—against the Philistines—"Among the other nations, who were doomed to suffer by the hostilities of Nebuchadrezzar, the Philistines are enumerated, chap. xxv. 20; and the calamities foretold in this present chapter most probably befell them during the long siege of Tyre, when that prince ravaged their country, in order, as it is said, verse 4, to cut off from Tyre and Sidon all chance of assistance from that quarter. But as no history, sacred or profane, has mentioned the taking of Gaza by the king of Egypt, there is no means of ascertaining the precise date of the delivery of this prophecy." Before that Pharaoh smote Gaza—"Some have supposed the Pharaoh here spoken of to be Pharaoh-necho, and that he subdued Gaza after the battle of Megiddo, (2 Kings

2 Thus saith the LORD; Behold, A. M. 3397. <sup>c</sup> waters rise up <sup>d</sup> out of the north, B. C. 607. and shall be an overflowing flood, and shall overflow the land, and <sup>2</sup> all that is therein; the

<sup>1</sup> Heb. Azzah.—<sup>c</sup> Isa. viii. 7; Chap. xlvi. 7, 8.—<sup>d</sup> Chap. i. 14; xlvi. 20.—<sup>2</sup> Heb. the fulness thereof.

xxiii. 29.) when the whole country round submitted to his victorious arms. Others have thought that it was Pharaoh-hoppra, who, having marched out of Egypt to the relief of Jerusalem, when besieged by the Chaldeans, in the ninth or tenth year of Zedekiah, thought proper to retire again on the approach of the enemy toward him, (chap. xxxvii. 5, 7,) but, on his return, fell upon Gaza, and pillaged it. All this, however, is no better than mere conjecture."—Blaney.

Verses 2, 3. Behold, waters rise out of the north—Waters sometimes signify multitudes of people and nations, Rev. xvii. 15; sometimes great and threatening calamities, Psa. lxxix. 1, these waters mean both. By the north, in this prophecy, the country of the Chaldeans is intended, from whence it is here foretold an army should come and overflow the land like

A. M. 3397. city, and them that dwell therein: B. C. 607.

then the men shall cry, and all the inhabitants of the land shall howl.

3 At the <sup>o</sup> noise of the stamping of the hoofs of his strong horses, at the rushing of his chariots, and at the rumbling of his wheels, the fathers shall not look back to their children for feebleness of hands;

<sup>o</sup> Chap. viii. 16; Nah. iii. 2.—<sup>r</sup> Chap. xxv. 22.—<sup>s</sup> Ezek. xxv. 16; Amos i. 8; ix. 7.—<sup>t</sup> Heb. the isle.—<sup>u</sup> Gen. x. 14.

a deluge, spreading devastation and destruction everywhere. *At the noise of the stamping, &c.*—The word שָׁעִטָה, here rendered *stamping*, occurs nowhere else in the Hebrew Scriptures. The LXX. render it, *ορμης, impetus, force, rushing along*: the Syriac and Chaldee, by words that respectively denote a progressive motion. “But Grotius,” says Blaney, “seems to have expressed it most happily, who has rendered שָׁעִטָה כַּקוֹל אַרְבָּעֵי רַגְלֵי, a quadrupedante sono: having in view, no doubt, that line of Virgil, *Æn. viii. 596.*

Quadrupedante putrem sonitu quatit ungula campum.

We may therefore render it, *At the galloping sound, or, at the sound of the galloping,* of the hoofs of his strong horses—Hebrew, אַרְבָּעֵי רַגְלֵי, of his mighty ones; namely, horses. *At the rushing of his chariots, the rumbling of his wheels*—Blaney unites these two particulars in one, and reads, “At the rattling of the multitude of his wheels as he drove along.” *The fathers shall not look back to their children*—To provide for their safety, or so much as to see what becomes of them; for *feebleness of hands*—Their bodily vigour being dissolved, or relaxed, through the impression made by fear on their minds, which shall be such as to incapacitate them from exerting their strength to any efficacious purpose.

Verse 4. *To cut off from Tyrus and Zidon every helper, &c.*—The siege of Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar was an action famous in the histories of that age, the siege lasting thirteen years. Zidon was partaker of the same fate with Tyre, both in prosperity and adversity: see Isa. xxiii. 2, 4. And her destruction is joined with that of Tyre by Ezek. chap. xxviii. *The remnant of the country of Caphtor*—Or, *the isle of Caphtor*; called *the remnant of the Philistines*, Am. i. 8; and *the remnant of the sea-coast*, Ezek. xxv. 16. The expression denotes either a colony transplanted from Caphtor, or else that small remainder of the Philistines, after they had been almost all destroyed in former times, according to the judgments denounced against them by Amos, chap. i. 8, and Isa. xiv. 19, &c., Caphtor, or Caphtorim, were the ancient inhabitants of Palestine: see Deut. ii. 23. The Caphtorim and Casluhim were two neighbouring nations, and nearly related to each other, being both descended from Misraim the father of the Egyptians: see Gen. x. 13, 14; which may be the reason why Moses there derives the pedigree of the Philistines from the latter of these two. The an-

4 Because of the day that cometh to A. M. 3397. spoil all the Philistines, and to cut off B. C. 607.

from <sup>r</sup> Tyrus and Zidon every helper that remaineth: for the LORD will spoil the Philistines, <sup>s</sup> the remnant of <sup>3</sup> the country of <sup>b</sup> Caphtor.

5 <sup>i</sup> Baldness is come upon Gaza; <sup>k</sup> Ashkelon is cut off with the remnant of their valley: how long wilt thou <sup>l</sup> cut thyself?

<sup>i</sup> Amos i. 7; Mic. i. 16; Zeph. ii. 4, 7; Zech. ix. 5.—<sup>k</sup> Chap. xxv. 20.—<sup>l</sup> Chap. xvi. 6; xli. 5; xlvi. 37.

cients generally suppose Caphtor to be the same with Cappadocia. These two nations might go out of Egypt, their native soil, and settle themselves in Cappadocia, where they passed under the general appellation of Caphtorim, and afterward return back to their own native country, and settle in Palestine.

Verse 5. *Baldness is come upon Gaza; how long wilt thou cut thyself, &c.*—Under great calamities, and for the loss of any near kindred, it was usual for men to express their grief by shaving their heads, and cutting their flesh. Instead of *Ashkelon is cut off, &c.*, Blaney reads, *Ashkelon is put to silence*, observing, that “silence likewise is expressive of great affliction. Thus Job’s friends are said to have sat with him seven days and seven nights upon the ground without addressing a word to him, because they saw his grief was very great, Job ii. 13. And so the Hebrew word here used, נִרְכָּה, is to be understood, (Isa. xv. 1,) of Moab’s being made speechless with grief and astonishment the night that its cities were spoiled: see chap. xlviii. 2.” *With the remnant of their valley*—Instead of this interpretation, the LXX. read *οι καταλοιποι Ενακιμ, the remnant of the Anakims*. And this reading may be thought to derive some countenance from what is said Josh. xi. 22. But we shall see reason to prefer the present reading of the text, if we consider the situation of Gaza and Ashkelon, about twelve miles distant from each other, near the sea, in a valley, of whose beauty and fertility an accurate traveller has given the following description: “We passed this day through the most pregnant and pleasant valley that ever eye beheld. On the right hand a ridge of high mountains; (whereon stands Hebron;) on the left hand the Mediterranean sea; bordered with continued hills, beset with variety of fruits. The champaign between, about twenty miles over, full of flowery hills, ascending leisurely, and not much surmounting their ranker valleys; with groves of olives, and other fruits, dispersedly adorned.”—*Sandys’s Travels*, book iii. p. 150. The author adds, that in his time, “this wealthy bottom (as are all the rest) was, for the most part, uninhabited, but only for a few small and contemptible villages”—a state of desolation, owing to the oppressions of a barbarous and ill-advised government. But we may easily conceive the populousness that must have prevailed there in its better days, especially if we consider the power which the Philistines once possessed, and the armies they brought into the field; although their country

A. M. 3397. 6 O thou <sup>m</sup> sword of the LORD,  
B. C. 607. how long *will it be* ere thou be  
quiet? <sup>4</sup> put up thyself into thy scabbard, rest,  
and be still.

<sup>m</sup> Deut. xxxii. 41; Ezek. xvi. 3, 4, 5.—<sup>4</sup> Heb. *gather thyself*.

was scarcely forty English miles in length, and much longer than it was broad.—Blaney.

Verses 6, 7. *O thou sword of the Lord*—By the *sword of the Lord*, war is here intended, with which, as a great instrument of calamity and destruction, God punishes the crimes of his enemies, and pleads the cause of his people. Some have understood the prophet as speaking in the words of the Philistines, complaining of the havoc which the sword made among them; but however weary they might be of the war, and desirous of its ceasing, it is not likely they should see the hand of God in it, or term it *his sword*. The words are rather to be considered as the lamentation of the prophet, (and it is a most pa-

7 <sup>5</sup> How can it be quiet, seeing the LORD hath <sup>a</sup> given it a charge against Ashkelon, and against the sea-shore? there hath he <sup>o</sup> appointed it.

<sup>5</sup> Heb. *how canst thou?*—<sup>a</sup> Ezek. xiv. 17.—<sup>o</sup> Mic. vi. 9.

thetic and animated one,) over the miseries with which God, in his just displeasure, was punishing the nations for their sins. *How can it be quiet, seeing the Lord hath given it a charge against Ashkelon, &c.*—Here the prophet returns an answer to the foregoing inquiry, importing, that the havoc made by the sword was the effect of God's irreversible purpose and decree. He gives the sword its commission, and it slays when and where he appoints, and continues to destroy a longer or shorter time, as he determines. When it is drawn, it will not be sheathed till it has fulfilled its charge. As God's *word*, so his *rod* and his *sword* shall accomplish that for which he sends them.

## CHAPTER XLVIII.

*In this chapter, which concerns the Moabites, the prophet, (1.) Foretels, that a dreadful destruction should come upon them, and extend to all parts of their land, 1-6, 8, 21-25, 34: that the Chaldeans should shortly and unexpectedly invade their country, destroy them with great fury, force some to flee away, carry multitudes captive, with their idols, and lay the land desolate, 7-12, 14-16, 40-45. That their joys should be turned into mourning, while their neighbours should bewail their miseries, 17-19, 33-39. (2.) He sets forth the causes of these calamities, namely, their pride, carnal security, and idolatry, 7, 11, 14, 29, 35; and their contempt of, and enmity against God and his people; 20, 27, 30, 42. (3.) Promises their restoration after the Chaldean captivity, 47.*

A. M. 3399. **A** GAINST <sup>a</sup> Moab thus saith the  
B. C. 605. LORD of hosts, the God of Israel;  
Wo unto <sup>b</sup> Nebo! for it is spoiled: <sup>c</sup> Kiriathaim  
is confounded *and* taken: <sup>1</sup> Misgab is con-  
founded and dismayed.

<sup>a</sup> Isaiah xv. 1; xvi.; Chapter xxv. 21; xxvii. 3; Ezekiel xxv. 9; Amos ii. 1, 2.—<sup>b</sup> Numbers xxxii. 38; xxxiii. 47; Isaiah xv. 2.

### NOTES ON CHAPTER XLVIII.

Verse 1. *Against Moab*—Hebrew, לְמוֹאָב, *To*, or, concerning Moab, thus saith the Lord of hosts—This prophecy concerning the Moabites, as also the following which respect the Ammonites, Edomites, and other neighbouring nations, are supposed to have been fulfilled during the siege of Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar: see note on chap. xlvii. 1. Many expressions and passages are found in this chapter which Jeremiah seems to have borrowed from a prophecy of Isaiah, chap. xv., and xvi., concerning a like calamity which befell Moab, in all probability when Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, seized upon their cities and fortresses, and ravaged their country, on his march through it to invade the kingdom of Israel. By comparing the parallel places much light may be mutually thrown upon them. Kiriathaim,

2 <sup>d</sup> There shall be no more praise of Moab: in <sup>e</sup> Heshbon they have devised evil against it; come, and let us cut it off from *being* a nation. Also thou shalt <sup>2</sup> be cut down, O Madmen; the sword shall <sup>3</sup> pursue thee.

<sup>c</sup> Numbers xxxii. 37.—<sup>1</sup> Or, *the high place*.—<sup>d</sup> Isa. xvi. 14. <sup>e</sup> Isa. xv. 4.—<sup>2</sup> Or, *be brought to silence*, Isa. xv. 1.—<sup>3</sup> Heb. *go after thee*.

one of the cities of Moab, here mentioned, was given by Moses to the Reubenites, as appears by Josh. xiii. 10, but the Moabites afterward recovered the possession of it. Blaney thinks the word which our translators have rendered *Misgab*, as if it were the proper name of a city, is rather to be considered as an appellative, especially as it has an article prefixed. He therefore renders it, *the high fortress*, observing that it may either mean Kiriathaim, before mentioned, or any other high fortress of Moab.

Verses 2-6. *There shall be no more praise of Moab*—The glory of Moab shall be contemned, as Isaiah speaks, chap. xvi. 14. Every thing for which it was famous shall be destroyed. *In Heshbon they have devised evil against it*—Heshbon was the capital city of the Moabites: when the Chaldeans made themselves masters of Heshbon, a place of great im-

A. M. 3399. 3 <sup>f</sup> A voice of crying shall be from  
B. C. 605.

Horonaim, spoiling and great destruction.

4 Moab is destroyed; her little ones have caused a cry to be heard.

5 <sup>g</sup> For in the going up of Luhith <sup>4</sup> continual weeping shall go up; for in the going down of Horonaim the enemies have heard a cry of destruction.

6 <sup>h</sup> Flee, save your lives, and be like <sup>5</sup> the <sup>i</sup> heath in the wilderness.

7 ¶ For because thou hast trusted in thy works and in thy treasures, thou shalt also be taken: and <sup>k</sup> Chemosh shall go forth into captivity with his <sup>1</sup> priests and his princes together.

8 And <sup>m</sup> the spoiler shall come upon every city, and no city shall escape: the valley also

<sup>f</sup> Verse 5.—<sup>g</sup> Isaiah xv. 5.—<sup>4</sup> Heb. *weeping with weeping*.  
<sup>h</sup> Chap. li. 6.—<sup>5</sup> Or, *a naked tree*.—<sup>i</sup> Ch. xvii. 6.—<sup>k</sup> Num. xxi. 29; Judg. xi. 24; Isa. xli. 1, 2; Chap. xliii. 12.

portance, they consulted how to carry on their conquests over the rest of the country. *Thou shalt be cut down, or, brought to silence*, Isa. xv. 1. *O Madmen*—A city in Moab. *Her little ones have caused a cry to be heard*—Or, *sent forth a cry*. Both small and great were involved in this calamity, but the word צָרִיר, signifies *great* as well as *little*: and the Chaldee paraphrast renders it here *lords*; which seems to be the sense in which it is used. *For in the going up, &c.*—The ascent of Luhith is in tears, and their weeping is increased, because, in the descent of Horonaim, the enemies have heard the cry of the sufferers: see Isa. xv. 5. *Flee, &c., and be like the heath*—Resort to the most solitary places, and continue in obscurity where no enemy can find you out.

Verses 7-10. *Chemosh shall go, &c.*—Chemosh was the idol of the Moabites, Num. xxi. 29. *The valley also shall perish and the plain*—Those who live in the country, with their flocks and pastures, shall be involved in the same calamity with the inhabitants of the cities. *Give wings to Moab, &c.*—It is not a common speed that can deliver him from that imminent danger which threatens him. *Cursed be he, &c.*—God executes his judgments upon sinners by the ministry of men, and those oftentimes as great sinners as they who suffer by them. He had declared by Jeremiah his purpose of making the Chaldeans his instruments in punishing the Jews and the neighbouring countries: see chap. xxv. 9. And it is here signified, that they would expose themselves to the divine wrath and curse if they spared Moab, and did not execute judgment upon it effectually.

Verses 11, 12. *Moab hath been at ease*—Or, *hath been opulent*, as the Chaldee renders מְשֻׁבָּה, *from his*

shall perish, and the plain shall be destroyed, as the LORD hath spoken. A. M. 3399. B. C. 605.

9 <sup>n</sup> Give wings unto Moab, that it may flee and get away: for the cities thereof shall be desolate, without any to dwell therein.

10 <sup>o</sup> Cursed be he that doeth the work of the LORD <sup>6</sup> deceitfully, and cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood.

11 ¶ Moab hath been at ease from his youth, and he <sup>p</sup> hath settled on his lees, and hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel, neither hath he gone into captivity: therefore his taste <sup>7</sup> remained in him, and his scent is not changed.

12 Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will send unto him wanderers that shall cause him to wander, and shall empty his vessels, and break their bottles.

<sup>1</sup> Chap. xlix. 3.—<sup>m</sup> Chap. vi. 26; Verse 18.—<sup>n</sup> Psa. lv. 6; Verse 28.—<sup>o</sup> Judges v. 23; 1 Sam. xv. 3, 9; 1 Kings xx. 42.  
<sup>6</sup> Or, *negligently*.—<sup>p</sup> Zeph. i. 12.—<sup>7</sup> Heb. *stood*.

*youth*—Moab was an ancient kingdom, and had enjoyed great tranquillity, though a small country and surrounded with potent neighbours. It had now been in a state of peace and prosperity since the time of Shalmaneser, having experienced no particular calamity since the judgment foretold by Isaiah, and inflicted by that prince; so that there were forty years between that affliction and this here spoken of. The comparison between the state of the Moabites and that of wine is elegant, and is kept up with great propriety. All wines, it is said, ought to be kept for some time upon their lees, in order to preserve their strength and flavour; on which account *the lees* are expressed by a word that signifies *the preservers*. Wine is apt to be damaged by being drawn off too soon into other vessels. By this allegory, therefore, Moab is represented as having enjoyed singular advantages from having constantly remained in his own country ever since he became a people. And the prophet's words imply, that the Moabites had increased in pride and insolence in proportion to the duration of their national tranquillity and prosperity. *Behold, saith the Lord, I will send unto him wanderers*—The Chaldee soldiers, that come out of a foreign country. These shall make a prey of him, and carry off as much of his wealth as they can, and spoil the rest. Blaney thinks the allegory begun in the preceding verse, is here continued and accordingly renders מְצִיִּים, *tillers*, observing, that the Chaldeans, who are here designed, "should lower the vessels of Moab, namely, the cities, and empty them; and also break to pieces their bottles or pitchers, that is, destroy the lesser towns and villages, dependant on the cities; to which the bottles, or pitchers, answer, being filled with the redundancy of the larger vessels."

A. M. 3399. 13 And Moab shall be ashamed of  
B. C. 605.

<sup>a</sup> Chemosh, as the house of Israel  
was ashamed of <sup>b</sup> Beth-el their confidence.

14 ¶ How say ye, <sup>c</sup> We are mighty and strong men for the war?

15 <sup>d</sup> Moab is spoiled, and gone up out of her cities, and <sup>e</sup> his chosen young men are <sup>f</sup> gone down to the slaughter, saith <sup>g</sup> the King, whose name is the LORD of hosts.

16 The calamity of Moab is near to come, and his affliction hasteth fast.

17 All ye that are about him bemoan him; and all ye that know his name, say, <sup>h</sup> How is the strong staff broken, and the beautiful rod!

18 <sup>i</sup> Thou daughter that dost inhabit <sup>j</sup> Dibon, come down from thy glory, and sit in thirst; for <sup>k</sup> the spoiler of Moab shall come upon thee, and he shall destroy thy strong holds.

19 O <sup>l</sup> inhabitant of <sup>m</sup> Aroer, <sup>n</sup> stand by the way, and espy; ask him that fleeth, and her that escapeth, and say, What is done?

20 Moab is confounded; for it is broken

<sup>a</sup> Judges xi. 24; 1 Kings xi. 7.—<sup>b</sup> Hosea x. 6.—<sup>c</sup> 1 Kings xii. 29.—<sup>d</sup> Isaiah xvi. 6.—<sup>e</sup> Verses 8, 9, 18.—<sup>f</sup> Heb. the choice of.—<sup>g</sup> Chap. l. 27.—<sup>h</sup> Chap. xlvi. 18; li. 57.—<sup>i</sup> Isa. ix. 4; xiv. 4, 5.—<sup>j</sup> Isaiah xli. 7; Chap. xlvi. 19.—<sup>k</sup> Num. xxi. 30; Isa. xv. 2.

Verses 13-17. *And Moab shall be ashamed of Chemosh, &c.*—They shall be disappointed in their expectations of succour from their tutelary idol, as the ten tribes have been in the trust they reposed in the calf they worshipped at Bethel. *Moab is spoiled, and gone up out of her cities*—The words out of are not in the Hebrew; therefore some render this clause, *Moab is spoiled, and the cities to which she ascended*; that is, those situated on high eminences. *All ye that are about him bemoan him*—His calamities are so great as must needs make all who see him, or have heard of his former fame and glory, bewail his misfortunes. *How is the strong staff broken*—A staff, or rod, is an emblem of authority, and thence comes to signify a kingdom, or government, especially such a one as oppresses its subjects, or neighbours, Isa. ix. 4, and x. 5.

Verses 18-25. *Thou daughter that dost inhabit Dibon*—Thou that art exalted in pride, and rendered effeminate through luxury: Dibon being one of the chief cities of Moab; *come down from thy glory, and sit in thirst*—Submit to a mean condition, wherein thou shalt feel the want of all the conveniences of life. The Hebrew language expresses a barren land, which yields no sustenance by a *thirsty ground*, Psa. lxiii. 2; Isa. xxxv. 7; Ezek. xix. 13. *O inhabitant of Aroer*—A town in the borders of Moab; *stand by the way and espy, &c.*—The prophet describes the great concern and fear that were upon them, which made them hearken to every little report that

down: <sup>o</sup> howl and cry; tell ye it in A. M. 3399.  
B. C. 605.

<sup>p</sup> Arnon, that Moab is spoiled,

21 And judgment is come upon <sup>q</sup> the plain country; upon Holon, and upon Jahazah, and upon Mephaath,

22 And upon Dibon, and upon Nebo, and upon Beth-diblathaim,

23 And upon Kiriathaim, and upon Beth-gamul, and upon Beth-meon,

24 And upon <sup>r</sup> Kerieth, and upon Bozrah, and upon all the cities of the land of Moab, far or near.

25 <sup>s</sup> The horn of Moab is cut off, and his <sup>t</sup> arm is broken, saith the LORD.

26 ¶ <sup>u</sup> Make ye him drunken; for he magnified *himself* against the LORD: Moab also shall wallow in his vomit, and he also shall be in derision.

27 For <sup>v</sup> was not Israel a derision unto thee? <sup>w</sup> was he found among thieves? for since thou spakest of him, thou <sup>x</sup> skippedst for joy.

<sup>c</sup> Verse 8.—<sup>d</sup> Heb. *inhabitates*.—<sup>e</sup> Deut. ii. 36.—<sup>f</sup> 1 Sam. iv. 13, 16.—<sup>g</sup> Isa. xvi. 7.—<sup>h</sup> Numbers xxi. 13.—<sup>i</sup> Verse 8. <sup>j</sup> Verse 41; Amos ii. 2.—<sup>k</sup> Psa. lxxv. 10.—<sup>l</sup> Ezek. xxx. 21. <sup>m</sup> Chap. xxv. 15, 27.—<sup>n</sup> Zeph. ii. 8.—<sup>o</sup> Chap. ii. 26.—<sup>p</sup> Or, *movedst thyself*.

was stirring. *Howl and cry*—There will be just cause for a general lamentation. *Judgment is come upon the plain country, &c.*—The inhabitants of the low grounds have suffered the punishment they deserved. *The horn of Moab is cut off*—The authority and power of Moab are taken away. This is a metaphorical expression, taken from horned beasts, whose power to defend themselves, and injure other creatures, lies chiefly in their horns. *And his arm is broken*—His strength is exhausted, the arm of man being the instrument whereby he chiefly discovers his strength.

Verses 26, 27. *Make ye him drunken*—God's judgments are often represented under the metaphor of a cup of intoxicating liquors: see note on chap. xxv. 15. *Moab also shall wallow in his vomit*—The judgments which God sends upon him shall expose him to the scorn of his enemies; just as a drunken man is the object of men's laughter and derision. *For was not Israel a derision unto thee?*—Didst not thou insult over the calamities of the Jews when they were carried away captive? Israel is here put for Judah. *Was he found among thieves?*—Though the sins of Israel were great in the sight of God, yet, as he had done no injury to the Moabites, there was no reason why they should use him with the same despite and contempt as if he had been a common thief and robber, whom all men think they have a right to abuse. *For since thou spakest of him, thou skippedst for joy*—This translation, Blaney ob

A. M. 3399. 28 O ye that dwell in Moab, leave  
B. C. 605. the cities, and <sup>p</sup> dwell in the rock, and  
be like <sup>q</sup> the dove that maketh her nest in the  
sides of the hole's mouth.

29 We have heard the <sup>r</sup> pride of Moab, (he is ex-  
ceeding proud,) his loftiness, and his arrogancy,  
and his pride, and the haughtiness of his heart.

30 I know his wrath, saith the LORD; but *it*  
*shall not be so*; <sup>s</sup> his <sup>11</sup> lies shall not so effect *it*.

31 Therefore <sup>t</sup> will I howl for Moab, and I  
will cry out for all Moab; *my heart* shall  
mourn for the men of Kir-heres.

32 <sup>u</sup> O vine of Sibmah, I will weep for thee  
with the weeping of Jazer: thy plants are gone

<sup>p</sup> Psalm lv. 6, 7; Verse 9.—<sup>q</sup> Cant. ii. 14.—<sup>r</sup> Isa. xvi. 6;  
&c.—<sup>s</sup> Isa. xvi. 6; Chap. l. 36.—<sup>t</sup> Or, those on whom he  
stayeth (Heb. his bars) do not right.

serves, seems quite foreign to the purpose, and does  
not accord with the literal meaning of the Hebrew,  
כִּדְּרֵי דַרְבֵּן כּוֹ הַהַגְוֹרֵד, which, he thinks, may be pro-  
perly rendered, *That thou shouldest insult him*  
*with all the power of thy words*. The sense then of  
the sentence will be, "Didst thou find Israel among  
thieves, coming to rob thee of thy property, that  
thou shouldest think thyself entitled to break out  
into all manner of revilings against him? Compare  
Ezek. xxv. 8; Zeph. ii. 8, 10. Lowth suggests another  
interpretation, which the words will very well bear,  
and which agrees with the Chaldee paraphrase,  
namely, *For the words thou hast spoken against*  
*him, thou shalt be carried captive*. To this purpose  
also the Vulgar Latin, *propter verba tua quæ adver-*  
*sum illum locutus es, captivus diceres*.

Verse 28. *Ye that dwell in Moab, leave the cities*  
—The walls of which will not be sufficient to defend  
you from the sword of the enemy. *And dwell in*  
*the rock*—Hide yourselves in the rocks and caverns  
of your country. *And be like the dove that maketh*  
*her nest in the sides of the hole's mouth*—That is, *on*  
*the edge of the precipice*, as Blaney interprets the ex-  
pression, or the *brink of destruction*. The Moabites  
are here, therefore, "exhorted to retire for safety to  
those places where the apprehensions of danger  
would secure them from the enemy's pursuit. That  
doves build in the clefts, or natural hollows of rocks,  
see Cant. ii. 14. Dr. Shaw, in his *Travels*, p. 162,  
fol., mentions a city on the African coast, called  
*Haman-et*, from the number of wild pigeons that are  
bred in the cliffs of the adjacent mountains."

Verses 29, 30. *We have heard the pride of Moab*  
—The several synonymous terms made use of in this  
verse are meant to express the great pride and insol-  
ence of Moab. Though some of these terms are  
not found in the parallel passage, (Isa. xvi. 6,) yet in  
the main they agree therewith; and "while they  
describe the overweening pride and haughtiness of  
Moab, and the intemperance of his rage, they inti-  
mate the small pretensions he had for such high as-  
suming, either in respect of the extent of his power,

over the sea, they reach *even* to the A. M. 3399.  
sea of Jazer: the spoiler is fallen upon B. C. 605.  
thy summer-fruits and upon thy vintage.

33 And <sup>v</sup> joy and gladness is taken from the  
plentiful field, and from the land of Moab; and  
I have caused wine to fail from the wine-  
presses: none shall tread with shouting; *their*  
*shouting shall be no shouting*.

34 <sup>w</sup> From the cry of Heshbon *even* unto Ele-  
aleh, *and even* unto Jahaz, have they uttered  
their voice, <sup>x</sup> from Zoar *even* unto Horonaim,  
*as a heifer of three years old*: for the waters  
also of Nimrim shall be <sup>12</sup> desolate.

35 Moreover I will cause to cease in Moab,

<sup>v</sup> Isa. xv. 5; xvi. 7, 11.—<sup>w</sup> Isa. xvi. 8.—<sup>x</sup> Isa. xvi. 10;  
Joel i. 12.—<sup>y</sup> Isaiah xv. 4, 6.—<sup>12</sup> Isaiah xv. 5; Verse 5.  
<sup>12</sup> Heb. desolations.

or his actual performances." *I know his wrath*—  
Hebrew, עֲרִירוֹ, *his fierce wrath, or rage*; but *it shall*  
*not be so*—He shall not be able to execute it, or bring  
to pass what he thinks to do: his power shall not be  
equal to his malice. *His lies shall not so effect it*—  
Or rather, *have not so effected*, the verb being in the  
past time. But this latter part of the sentence seems  
more properly rendered by Blaney, thus: "But he  
is not alike," (that is, equal to his wrath and threats,)  
"in the extent of his ability he is not alike in per-  
forming."

Verses 31-33. *Therefore will I howl for Moab*—  
See note on Isa. xv. 5. *I will cry out for all Moab*  
—The whole country of Moab: the phrase is the  
same with *whole Palestina*, Isa. xiv. 31. *For the*  
*men of Kir-heres*—See note on Isa. xvi. 7, 11. *O vine*  
*of Sibmah*—The expressions here denote the de-  
struction of the fruitful vineyards of Sibmah; the  
loss of which the neighbouring places of Jazer would  
have reason to lament. *Thy plants are gone over*  
*the sea*—The vineyards of Sibmah seem to have  
been of a vast extent, and to have been greatly cele-  
brated: see note on Isa. xvi. 8, 9. *And joy and glad-*  
*ness is taken from the plentiful field*—The gathering  
in of the harvest and other fruits of the earth is usu-  
ally accompanied with great expressions of joy; but  
there would be no occasion for this in the land of  
Moab, as the enemy would spoil or carry away their  
crop and vintage. *None shall tread with shouting*  
—They shall not have a vintage left sufficient to ex-  
cite them to shouts of joy, or to induce them to  
exhort and encourage one another to labour dili-  
gently.

Verses 34-39. *From the cry of Heshbon*—When  
Heshbon was taken by the enemy, the cry of the  
inhabitants reached as far as Elealeh and Jahaz: the  
same was likewise heard from Zoar to Horonaim.  
*As a heifer of three years old*—The meaning un-  
doubtedly is, that the cry of Moab, beginning at  
Heshbon, was continued on from city to city, till the  
whole country resounded as with the lowing of a  
cow that runs from place to place in search of her

A. M. 3399. saith the LORD, <sup>a</sup> him that offereth in  
B. C. 605. the high places, and him that burneth  
incense to his gods.

36 Therefore <sup>b</sup> my heart shall sound for Moab  
like pipes, and my heart shall sound like pipes  
for the men of Kir-heres: because <sup>c</sup> the riches  
that he hath gotten are perished.

37 For <sup>d</sup> every head shall be bald, and every  
beard <sup>13</sup> clipped: upon all the hands shall be  
cuttings, and <sup>e</sup> upon the loins sackcloth.

38 There shall be lamentation generally  
upon all the house-tops of Moab, and in the  
streets thereof: for I have broken Moab like  
<sup>f</sup> a vessel wherein is no pleasure, saith the  
LORD.

39 They shall howl, saying, How is it broken  
down! how hath Moab turned the <sup>14</sup> back with  
shame! so shall Moab be a derision and a dis-  
maying to all them about him.

40 For thus saith the LORD; Behold, <sup>g</sup> he  
shall fly as an eagle, and shall <sup>h</sup> spread his  
wings over Moab.

41 <sup>i</sup> Kerioth <sup>15</sup> is taken, and the strong holds

<sup>a</sup> Isa. xv. 2; xvi. 12.—<sup>b</sup> Isa. xv. 5; xvi. 11.—<sup>c</sup> Isa. xv. 7.  
<sup>d</sup> Isa. xv. 2, 3; Chap. xlvii. 5.—<sup>13</sup> Heb. *diminished*.—<sup>e</sup> Gen.  
xxxvii. 34.—<sup>f</sup> Chapter xxii. 28.—<sup>14</sup> Heb. *neck*.—<sup>g</sup> Deut.  
xxviii. 49; Chap. xlix. 22; Dan. vii. 4; Hos. viii. 1; Hab. i. 8.  
<sup>h</sup> Isa. viii. 9.—<sup>i</sup> Verse 24.

calf that has been taken from her. An image singularly expressive: see notes on Isa. xv. 4-6. *I will cause to cease in Moab him that offereth in the high places*—For an explanation of this and the next verse, see notes on Isa. xvi. 11, 12. *For every head shall be bald, &c.*—This and all the other expressions of this verse signify the greatness of the affliction, intimated by the manner of mourning, which is such as was used in the greatest calamities: compare Isa. xv. 3. *I have broken Moab like a vessel wherein is no pleasure*—As earthen vessels, if they are not fit for the use for which they were designed, are broken to pieces without any concern or regret, so as never to be repaired; thus have I broken Moab, saith the Lord. *They shall howl, saying, How is it broken down!*—Hebrew, חרה, *broken to pieces*, as the same word is twice rendered chap. l. 2. The prophet persists in his allusion to the breaking of an earthen vessel.

Verses 40-44. *Behold, he shall fly as an eagle*—Conquerors are often compared to eagles and other birds of prey; and the encamping of their armies is represented by the spreading of the wings of such fowls. *The mighty men's hearts shall be as the heart of a woman in her pangs*—They shall be dismayed at the apprehension of the evils that are coming upon them, and shall lose their wonted courage and resolution. *Moab shall be destroyed from being a people*—From being a nation or go-

are surprised, and <sup>1</sup> the mighty men's <sup>a</sup> hearts in Moab at that day shall be <sup>B. C. 605.</sup>  
as the heart of a woman in her pangs.

42 And Moab shall be destroyed <sup>1</sup> from being a people, because he hath magnified *himself* against the LORD.

43 <sup>m</sup> Fear, and the pit, and the snare, shall be upon thee, O inhabitant of Moab, saith the LORD.

44 He that fleeth from the fear, shall fall into the pit; and he that getteth up out of the pit, shall be taken in the snare: for <sup>n</sup> I will bring upon it, *even* upon Moab, the year of their visitation, saith the LORD.

45 They that fled stood under the shadow of Heshbon because of the force: but <sup>o</sup> a fire shall come forth out of Heshbon, and a flame from the midst of Sihon, and <sup>p</sup> shall devour the corner of Moab, and the crown of the head of the <sup>16</sup> tumultuous ones.

46 <sup>q</sup> Wo be unto thee, O Moab! the people of Chemosh perisheth: for thy sons are taken <sup>17</sup> captives, and thy daughters captives.

<sup>14</sup> Or, *The cities*.—<sup>15</sup> Isa. xiii. 8; xxi. 3; Chap. xxx. 6; xlix. 22, 24; l. 43; li. 30; Mic. iv. 9.—<sup>16</sup> Psa. lxxxiii. 4; Isa. vii. 8.  
<sup>17</sup> Isaiah xxiv. 17, 18.—<sup>n</sup> Chap. xi. 23.—<sup>o</sup> Numbers xxi. 28.  
<sup>p</sup> Num. xxiv. 17.—<sup>16</sup> Heb. *children of noise*.—<sup>q</sup> Num. xxi. 29  
<sup>17</sup> Heb. *in captivity*.

vernment, as it was before. *Fear, and the pit, and the snare, &c.*—These words, and those of the next verse, are taken from Isa. xxiv. 17, 18, where see the notes.

Verses 45, 46. *They that fled stood under the shadow of Heshbon, &c.*—They that fled for fear of the enemies' forces thought to find shelter and safety in Heshbon, a strong fenced city. Or, instead of, *because of the force*, the Hebrew כח, may be rendered *for want of force, or strength*, namely, force of their own to withstand the enemy. *But a fire shall come forth out of Heshbon, and a flame from the midst of Sihon*—That is, of the city of Sihon, meaning still Heshbon. When the enemies have possessed themselves of Heshbon, they will quickly spread like fire over the rest of the country. Thus the prophet fitly applies to the present case the words of an ancient poem made upon Sihon's conquests over Moab, and recited by Moses, Num. xxi. 27, 28, where see the notes. *And shall devour the corner of Moab, and the crown of the head of the tumultuous ones*—By the *corner* may be meant the borders, or extreme parts of the country. So the Hebrew word פנס signifies, Num. xxxiv. 3; Neh. ix. 22. The nobility, who are the stay and support of the government, are expressed by the *crown of the head*. By the *tumultuous* are meant those that are proud and haughty in their state and plenty, and insult over their inferiors. *Wo be unto*

A. M. 3309. 47 ¶ Yet will I bring again the  
B. C. 605. captivity of Moab <sup>r</sup> in the latter days,

saith the LORD. Thus far is the A. M. 3309.  
judgment of Moab. B. C. 605.

<sup>r</sup> Chapter

xlix. 6, 39.

thee, O Moab!—This verse is likewise taken out of Num. xxi. 19. *The people of Chemosh perisheth*—People are sometimes denominated from the God they worship: so the Jews were called the people of the Lord, or Jehovah.

Verse 47. *Yet will I bring again the captivity of Moab*—“The Moabites were afterward restored to their country, as appears from Josephus, *Antiq.*

lib. xiii. c. 17. But these and similar promises of mercy after judgment are chiefly to be understood of the conversion of the Gentiles under the gospel, called the *latter days* in the prophets. The conversion of idolaters is expressed by returning from their captivity, Ezek. xvi. 53.—Lowth. See also Calmet's *Dissertation* upon the return of the Moabites, &c.

CHAPTER XLIX.

*This chapter contains a collection of prophecies against several of those nations against which Jeremiah received a general commission to declare God's judgments, chap. xxv. 13. (1.) Against the Ammonites, 1-6. (2.) The Edomites, 7-22. (3.) The Syrians, 23-27. (4.) The Arabians of Kedar and Hazor, 28-33. (5.) The Elamites, 34-39. Concerning the time of the fulfilment of these prophecies, see the note on chap. xlviii. 1.*

A. M. 3404. CONCERNING <sup>1</sup> <sup>a</sup> the Ammon-  
B. C. 600. ites, thus saith the LORD; Hath Israel no sons? hath he no heir? why then doth <sup>2</sup> their king inherit <sup>b</sup> Gad, and his people dwell in his cities?

2 Therefore behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will cause an alarm of war to

be heard in <sup>c</sup> Rabbah of the Ammon- A. M. 3404.  
ites; and it shall be a desolate heap, B. C. 600.  
and her daughters shall be burned with fire: then shall Israel be heir unto them that were his heirs, saith the LORD.

3 Howl, O Heshbon, for Ai is spoiled: cry, ye daughters of Rabbah, <sup>d</sup> gird you with sackcloth;

<sup>1</sup> Or, *Against*.—<sup>a</sup> Ezek. xxi. 29; xxv. 2; Amos i. 13; Zeph. ii. 8, 9.—<sup>b</sup> Or, *Melcom*.

<sup>b</sup> Amos i. 13.—<sup>c</sup> Ezek. xxv. 5; Amos i. 14.—<sup>d</sup> Isa. xxxii. 11; Chap. iv. 8; vi. 26.

NOTES ON CHAPTER XLIX.

Verse 1. *Hath Israel no sons? Why then doth their king inherit Gad?*—Is there no posterity of Israel, that the king of the Ammonites hath taken possession of Gad, as if he had a right to it, and his people dwell in the cities of it? Instead of *their king* here, Blaney reads *Milcom*, and Dr. Waterland and Houbigant *Malkam*, the idol of the Ammonites. “God sorely afflicted those parts of the kingdom of Israel that lay eastward of Jordan, first by Hazael, 2 Kings x. 33; afterward by Tiglath-pileser, chap. xv. 29; and then delivered up the whole kingdom to be carried captive by Shalmaneser, chap. xvii.; after which, it is probable, the Ammonites took occasion to possess themselves of Gad, that lay near their territories. But God's dispossessing the Israelites gave the Ammonites no right to invade their inheritance, (see Zeph. ii. 8,) especially as they had been so tender of the Ammonites' right as not to invade their possessions in their march toward the land of Canaan.” See Lowth, and Deut. iv. 19; 2 Chron. xx. 10. It is probable, as the king of Ammon had instigated Ishmael to kill Gedaliah, that the reason which induced Nebuchadnezzar to make war upon the Ammonites was to revenge that murder.

Verse 2. *Therefore I will cause the noise of war to*

*be heard in Rabbah, &c.*—The principal city of that country. *Her daughters shall be burned with fire*—That is, the lesser cities, which are reckoned so many daughters to the mother city. *Then shall Israel be heir unto them that were his heirs*—Hebrew, וירש את רישי, *Possidebit possessores suos*, Vulgate, *shall possess his possessors*: or, as Blaney renders it, *shall take to their possessions who have taken to his*. “This is understood,” says he, “to have been fulfilled when Judas Maccabeus defeated the Ammonites, and took their towns, 1 Mac. v. 6, &c. Zephaniah speaks in like manner, chap. ii. 9, *The residue of my people shall spoil them, and the remnant of my people shall possess them*. But both prophets may, perhaps, refer to still future times, when Israel shall be finally restored to their own land, as is frequently foretold of them, and not only recover their own ancient possessions, but succeed, likewise, to the vacant possessions of their once hostile neighbours, long since extinct and irrecoverably lost.”

Verse 3. *Howl, O Heshbon, for Ai is spoiled*—This “Ai must be a different city from that taken by Joshua, chap. viii., which lay on the west side of Jordan. Grotius mentions another city, called *Gaia* by Ptolemy; which, being near Heshbon, the de-

A. M. 3404. lament, and run to and fro by the  
B. C. 600. hedges; for <sup>3</sup> their king shall go into  
captivity, and his <sup>o</sup> priests and his princes to-  
gether.

4 Wherefore gloriest thou in the valleys, <sup>4</sup> thy  
flowing valley, O <sup>t</sup> backsliding daughter? that  
trusted in her treasures, <sup>s</sup> saying, Who shall  
come unto me?

5 Behold, I will bring a fear upon thee, saith  
the Lord God of hosts, from all those that be  
about thee; and ye shall be driven out every

<sup>3</sup> Or, *Melcom*, 1 Kings xi. 5, 33.—<sup>4</sup> Chapter xlviii. 7; Amos  
i. 15.—<sup>t</sup> Or, *thy valley floweth away*.—<sup>s</sup> Chapter iii. 14; vii.  
24.—<sup>o</sup> Chap. xxi. 13.

struction of it was matter of concern to the neigh-  
bouring city." *Lament, and run to and fro by the  
hedges*—Try to hide yourselves in the thickets, and  
remove from one place to another, for fear of being  
discovered. But by נָרִית, here rendered *hedges*,  
Blaney thinks, are meant, "those fences or encl-  
osures round the lesser towns, which served to secure  
them against thieves and robbers, but were not dign-  
ified with the name of walls, capable of resisting  
the attack of a regular enemy." The psalmist, he  
supposes, distinguishes these from the fortifications  
of cities, Psalm lxxxix. 40, terming the former נְרִיתוֹ,  
*his fences*, and the latter מְצָרָיו, *his strong holds*,  
or *walled fortresses*. According to this interpreta-  
tion, therefore, the prophet here foretels that "the  
inhabitants of the lesser towns should run to and fro,  
like persons distracted with fear, *within their encl-  
osures*, not daring to step beyond them, lest they  
should fall in with the enemy, whose approach they  
dreaded." *For their king*—Or, *Milcom*, their idol;  
*shall go into captivity, and his priests and princes  
together*—"Here the same is said of Milcom," says  
Blaney, "as was of Chemosh, chap. xlviii. 7, which  
shows that the word is properly used as the name of  
the Ammonitish idol."

Verses 4-6. *Wherefore gloriest thou in the val-  
leys?*—That is, in the riches of thy fat and plentiful  
valleys, which overflow with abundance of all things:  
compare Isa. xxviii. 1, 4. Though they be fruitful,  
yet glory not therein, for, notwithstanding their fer-  
tility, they shall be no security to thee against the  
terror which I shall bring upon thee. *Behold, I will  
bring fear upon thee*—When God gives up a people  
to destruction, he commonly takes from them their  
usual courage. But the word *fear* here may denote  
a hostile army, the cause of fear and terror. *And  
ye shall be driven out every man right forth*—That  
is, so as not to dare to look back, or stop to consider  
which way to go, but flee for your lives that way  
which lies next. *And none shall gather up him that  
wandereth*—None shall bring him that flees from  
the enemy to his house, or afford him any shelter or  
accommodation. *And afterward I will bring  
again the captivity of Ammon*. See note on chap.  
xlviii. 47.

man right forth; and none shall ga- A. M. 3404.  
ther up him that wandereth. B. C. 600.

6 ¶ And <sup>h</sup> afterward I will bring again the  
captivity of the children of Ammon, saith the  
LORD.

7 ¶ <sup>i</sup> Concerning Edom, thus saith the LORD  
of hosts: <sup>k</sup> Is wisdom no more in Teman? <sup>l</sup> is  
counsel perished from the prudent? is their  
wisdom vanished?

8 <sup>m</sup> Flee ye, <sup>n</sup> turn back, dwell deep, O inha-  
bitants of <sup>a</sup> Dedan; for I will bring the cala-

<sup>h</sup> So Verse 39; Chap. xlviii. 47.—<sup>i</sup> Ezek. xxv. 12; xxxv.  
2; Joel iii. 19; Amos i. 11.—<sup>k</sup> Obad. 8.—<sup>l</sup> Isa. xix. 11.  
<sup>m</sup> Verse 30.—<sup>n</sup> Or, *they are turned back*.—<sup>a</sup> Chap. xxv. 23.

Verse 7. *Concerning Edom*—The destruction of  
Edom, or Idumea, is likewise foretold by Ezekiel,  
Joel, Amos, and Obadiah: see the margin. *Is wis-  
dom no more in Teman*—"The eastern part of the  
world (by which is chiefly meant Arabia and the  
adjacent countries) was famous for the study of  
wisdom, or philosophy, as it was called in later times:  
see 1 Kings iv. 30. The Edomites put in their claim  
to this prerogative, as appears from what is said  
here, and in the parallel place of Obadiah, verse 8, as  
also from the book of Job, where Eliphaz, one of  
the disputants, is called the Temanite, as being de-  
scended from Teman, Esau's grandson, who gave  
name to the city or country of Teman, elsewhere  
mentioned. *Is counsel perished from the prudent?*  
—When God designs a people for destruction, he  
deprives them of that common prudence and fore-  
sight which are requisite for the due management of  
their affairs."—Lowth. Here Edom, which boasted  
itself, and whose fame was spread abroad for wis-  
dom and prudence, is described acting as if all its  
wisdom and prudence were gone.

Verse 8. *Flee ye, turn back, dwell deep*—"When  
the Arabs," says Harmer, "have drawn upon them-  
selves such a general resentment of the more fixed  
inhabitants of those countries that they think them-  
selves unable to stand against them, they withdraw  
into the depths of the great wilderness, where none  
can follow them with hopes of success." D'Arvieux  
tells us, "they will be quite ready to decamp upon  
less than two hours' warning, and, retiring immedi-  
ately into the deserts, render it impossible for other  
nations, even the most powerful, to conquer them,  
they not daring to venture far into the deserts, where  
the Arabs alone know how to steer their course, so  
as to hit upon places of water and forage. Is it not  
then most probable that the *dwelling deep*, which  
Jeremiah here recommends to the Arab tribes, means  
this plunging far into the deserts, rather than going  
into *deep caves* and *dens*, as Grotius and other com-  
mentators suppose?" *O inhabitants of Dedan*—  
The Dedanites were Arabians of the posterity of  
Dedan, a grandson of Abraham, Gen. xxv. 3. They  
seem by this place to have been, in latter times, sub-  
dued by the Idumeans, and incorporated with them.

A. M. 3404. mity of Esau upon him, the time that  
B. C. 600. I will visit him.

9 If ° grape-gatherers come to thee, would they not leave *some* gleaning-grapes? if thieves by night, they will destroy ° till they have enough.

10 <sup>p</sup> But I have made Esau bare, I have uncovered his secret places, and he shall not be able to hide himself: his seed is spoiled, and his brethren, and his neighbours, and <sup>q</sup> he is not.

11 Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve *them* alive; and let thy widows trust in me.

12 For thus saith the LORD; Behold, <sup>r</sup> they whose judgment *was* not to drink of the cup,

° Obad. 5.—<sup>q</sup> Heb. *their sufficiency*.—<sup>r</sup> Mal. i. 3.—<sup>s</sup> Isaiah xvii. 14.—<sup>t</sup> Chap. xxv. 29; Obad. 16.

Verses 9, 10. *If grape-gatherers come to thee, &c.*—The vintage is not usually gathered so clean but there will be a gleanings left, Isa. xvii. 6; and house-breakers, or thieves, commonly leave something behind. *But I have made Esau bare*—But the destruction coming upon thee will be so entire that scarcely a remnant shall be preserved. *I have uncovered his secret places*—I have taken from him every thing that might be a refuge or defence to him, and laid open all the recesses wherein he might conceal himself, or his riches. *His seed is spoiled, &c.*—The calamity shall also extend to his family, and to all that he has any connection with. *And he is not*—He is utterly ruined and undone.

Verse 11. *Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them, &c.*—The Chaldee paraphrast understands this of the Jews, to whom the following words do certainly belong, as if it contained God's promise to take care of their families, in that distressed and forlorn state to which the captivity had reduced them. Some, who apply it to the Edomites, understand it as spoken by way of irony, in which light they understand Isa. xvi. 4. "But there is nothing in the context," says Houbigant, "which can lead to this interpretation. I rather understand it as a prophecy; nor was it any thing wonderful that the conquerors should spare the little children and widows, from whom they had nothing to fear; nor that the Edomites should forsake both the one and the other, when compelled to a precipitate flight." Or, it is a promise that God would not wholly destroy the race of Esau, but protect and preserve a remnant of them; and that, at the time when he sent these his judgments on the proud and self-confident, and all their boasted strength was cast down, the weak and helpless should be remembered by him, the Father of mercies.

Verses 12, 13. *They whose judgment was not to drink of the cup*—Namely, of God's wrath: see note on chap. xxv. 15; *have assuredly drunken*—The Is-

have assuredly drunken; and *art thou he that shall altogether go unpunished?* thou shalt not go unpunished, but thou shalt surely drink of it.

13 For <sup>u</sup> I have sworn by myself, saith the LORD, that <sup>v</sup> Bozrah shall become a desolation, a reproach, a waste, and a curse; and all the cities thereof shall be perpetual wastes.

14 I have heard a <sup>w</sup> rumour from the LORD, and an ambassador is sent unto the heathen, *saying*, Gather ye together, and come against her, and rise up to the battle.

15 For lo, I will make thee small among the heathen, *and* despised among men.

16 Thy terribleness hath deceived thee, *and* the pride of thy heart, O thou that dwellest in

<sup>u</sup> Gen. xxii. 16; Isaiah xlv. 23; Amos vi. 8.—<sup>v</sup> Isa. xxxiv. 6; lxiii. 1.—<sup>w</sup> Obad. 1, 2, 3.

raelites, God's peculiar people, who, in regard to the gracious promises which he had made to them and to their fathers, the near relation in which they stood to him, and the many pious persons who, from age to age, were found among them, might, in all human appearance, have expected mercy at God's hands, have, nevertheless, suffered dreadful judgments. *And art thou he that shall altogether go unpunished?*—Is Edom the righteous nation, which, above all others, deserves to be exempted from punishment? There is a peculiar emphasis, says Blaney, in the pronoun הוּא, *he*, which denotes that Edom was *he*, the people, to which the punishment was peculiarly due: see note on chap. xxv. 20. *I have sworn by myself*—I have confirmed my threatening, as I have frequently confirmed my promises, by an oath; *that Bozrah shall become a desolation, &c.*—Bozrah, one of the chief cities of Idumea, is here put for that country in general, it being usual with the prophets to describe the destruction of a whole nation by the ruin of some one or more of its principal cities: see verse 23; Amos i. 8, 12–14.

Verses 14–16. *I have heard a rumour*—Hebrew, שמועה, a report or message, *from the Lord, and an ambassador is sent unto the heathen*. Obadiah begins his prophecy against Edom in similar words. The prophets, it must be observed, "often represent God as summoning armies, and setting them in array of battle against those people whom he has decreed to destroy. And his stirring up men's spirits to invade such countries, is described here as if he had sent an ambassador to the Chaldeans and their confederates, to engage them in a war against the Idumeans; according to the methods which earthly princes use to engage their allies."—Lowth. *For lo, I will make thee small, &c.*—I will bring thee low and make thee very contemptible. *Thy terribleness hath deceived thee*—"Thou hast been formerly terrible to all about thee, and looked upon as impregnable; and the confidence thou hast had in

A. M. 3404. the clefts of the rock, that holdest  
B. C. 600. the height of the hill : \* though thou  
shouldest make thy <sup>v</sup> nest as high as the eagle,  
\* I will bring thee down from thence, saith the  
LORD.

17 Also Edom shall be a desolation : \* every  
one that goeth by it shall be astonished, and  
shall hiss at all the plagues thereof.

18 <sup>b</sup> As in the overthrow of Sodom and Go-  
morrah and the neighbour cities thereof, saith  
the LORD, no man shall abide there, neither  
shall a son of man dwell in it.

19 <sup>c</sup> Behold, he shall come up like a lion  
from <sup>d</sup> the swelling of Jordan against the ha-  
bitation of the strong : but I will suddenly  
make him run away from her : and who is a  
chosen man, that I may appoint over her ? for  
<sup>e</sup> who is like me ? and who will <sup>v</sup> appoint me

\* Obad. 4.—<sup>v</sup> Job xxxix. 27.—\* Amos ix. 2.—<sup>c</sup> Chap. xviii. 16 ; 1. 13.—<sup>b</sup> Gen. xix. 25 ; Deut. xxix. 23 ; Chap. i. 40 ; Amos iv. 11.—<sup>e</sup> Ch. i. 44.—<sup>d</sup> Ch. xii. 5.—<sup>e</sup> Exod. xv. 11.

this thy strength hath made thee careless and secure, and thereby given thy enemies an advantage against thee." *O thou that dwellest in the clefts, &c.*—St. Jerome, who lived in the neighbourhood, tells us, in his commentary upon Obadiah, "that Idumea was a rocky mountainous country, and that the inhabitants dwelt in caves dug out of the rocks and hills." *Though thou shouldest make thy nest as high as the eagle*—The greatest height or strength cannot place thee out of the reach of divine vengeance. The eagle is remarkable for its flying high, and making its nest in very high and inaccessible rocks : see note on Job xxxix. 27, 28.

Verses 17–19. *Edom shall be a desolation ; every one shall hiss, &c.*—See note on chap. xviii. 16. *As in the overthrow of Sodom, &c.*—A proverbial expression, denoting an utter destruction. *Behold, he shall come up like a lion, &c.*—This is a description of Nebuchadnezzar's marching with his army against Idumea, whom the prophet compares to a lion coming out of his den near Jordan. When that river swells, in the time of harvest, the lions, that lie in the thickets on the river side, are raised out of their coverts, and infest the country : see note on chap. xii. 5, and *Maundrell's Travels*, pp. 81, 82. *Against the habitation of the strong*—Hebrew, אֵל נוֹרָה אִיתוֹ, the strong folds, or rough pastures. The LXX. read εἰς τόπον Αἰθαμ, to the place Aitham, considering the word which we render strong as a proper name. *But I will suddenly make him run away from her*—This clause should rather be rendered, *I will rouse him up and make him run upon her*, the preposition כִּעַל, here rendered from likewise signifying upon, and being so rendered by our translators, 1 Kings ix. 5. To this purpose the Vulgate, *quia subito currere faciam eum ad illam, because I will cause him to run suddenly against her. And who is a*

the time ? and <sup>f</sup> who is that shepherd A. M. 3404.  
that will stand before me ? B. C. 600.

20 \* Therefore hear the counsel of the LORD, that he hath taken against Edom ; and his purposes, that he hath purposed against the inhabitants of Teman : surely the least of the flock shall draw them out : surely he shall make their habitations desolate with them.

21 <sup>h</sup> The earth is moved at the noise of their fall, at the cry the noise thereof was heard in the <sup>g</sup> Red sea.

22 Behold, <sup>i</sup> he shall come up and fly as the eagle, and spread his wings over Bozrah : and at that day shall the heart of the mighty men of Edom be as the heart of a woman in her pangs.

23 ¶ <sup>k</sup> Concerning Damascus. Hamath is confounded, and Arpad : for they have heard

<sup>f</sup> Or, convert me in judgment.—<sup>f</sup> Job xli. 10.—<sup>g</sup> Chap. i. 45. <sup>h</sup> Chap. i. 46.—<sup>g</sup> Heb. Weedy sea.—<sup>i</sup> Chap. iv. 13 ; xlviii. 40, 41.—<sup>k</sup> Isa. xvii. 1 ; xxxvii. 13 ; Amos i. 3 ; Zech. ix. 1, 2.

*chosen man that I may appoint over her*?—Namely, to spoil and destroy her. What select man shall I employ for this purpose ? for it must be one who will do it effectually. Nebuchadnezzar, or his captain-general Nebuzar-adan, seems to be here meant. *For who is like me ?*—Who is able, like me, to prepare instruments to perform his work ? *And who will appoint me the time ? and who is that shepherd ? &c.*—Who will challenge me to meet him in the field, as if we were upon equal terms ? or what leader or general can enter the lists with me ? "The word *shepherd* often signifies a prince, or commander. But here it is used in opposition to the lion mentioned before ; as if he had said, A shepherd may as well encounter a lion as the best appointed warrior contend with the Almighty, or those whom he makes the instruments of his vengeance."—Lowth.

Verses 20–22. *Therefore hear the counsel of the Lord*—Let them, the Edomites, hear and consider what God hath purposed against them. *Surely the least of the flock shall draw them out*—By the least of the flock, may be here understood the common soldiers in the Chaldean army, any one of whom, he says, shall have courage and strength enough to conquer the Idumeans, and draw them to slaughter or captivity. *The earth is moved at the noise of their fall*—The neighbouring countries are astonished at it. The prophet compares the destruction of Idumea to the fall of a great building, which affrights those that are near it. *The noise thereof was heard in the Red sea*—The borders of Idumea reached to the Red sea. *Behold he shall fly as the eagle*—The suddenness and rapidity with which Nebuchadnezzar, or his general, Nebuzar-adan, marched and fell upon Edom, are described in this verse : see note on chap. xlviii. 40, 41.

Verse 23. *Concerning Damascus*—"Damascus

A. M. 3404. evil tidings: they are <sup>9</sup> faint-hearted; B. C. 600. <sup>1</sup> there is sorrow <sup>10</sup> on the sea; it cannot be quiet.

24 Damascus is waxed feeble, and turneth herself to flee, and fear hath seized on her: <sup>a</sup>anguish and sorrow hath taken her, as a woman in travail.

25 How is <sup>a</sup> the city of praise not left, the city of my joy!

26 <sup>o</sup> Therefore her young men shall fall in her streets, and all the men of war shall

<sup>9</sup> Heb. melted. — <sup>10</sup> Or, as on the sea. — <sup>a</sup> Isa. xiii. 8; Chap. iv. 31; vi. 24; xxx. 6; xlvi. 41; Verse 22.

was the capital of the kingdom of Syria, and had seemingly at this time swallowed up all the other petty sovereignties of that country. Isaiah had before uttered a prophecy concerning it, of a calamitous import, (chap. xvii.,) which had been fulfilled by Tiglath-pileser's taking it, and carrying the people captive to Kir, 2 Kings xvi. 9. Amos also had foretold the same event, chap. i. 3-5. But it had recovered itself after the fall of the Assyrian empire, and is here doomed to suffer again the like calamities from the resentment of Nebuchadnezzar, probably about the same time with the other neighbouring nations: see note on chap. xlvi. 1. *Hamath is confounded, and Arpad*—Hamath and Arpad are elsewhere joined together: see 2 Kings xviii. 34; xix. 13; Isa. x. 9. Hamath was the capital of a part of Syria, bearing the same name, and which formed once an independent kingdom. It was situate on the northern frontier of the land of Israel, whence we find frequent mention of the entrance of Hamath, Num. xxxiv. 8, &c. The city of Hamath, Josephus tells us, was that which the Macedonians afterward called *Epiphania*: *Ant.*, lib. i. cap. 6. And Jerome, in his commentary on Isa. x. 9, says the same. *Hemath, quam Syri usque hodie Epiphanium vocant*—Aphad, or Arvad, is with good reason held to be the island of *Aradus*, in the Mediterranean sea; as those who are called רארוי, Gen. x. 18, are by the LXX. rendered *Αραδιοι*, in the Vulgate, *Aradii*. This island was not far from the shore, and nearly opposite to Hamath.—Blaney. *They heard evil tidings*—Tidings of the approach of a hostile army; *they are faint-hearted*—Their courage fails them. *Their sorrow is on the sea*—Or, as on the sea, namely, when a storm arises and the sea is tempestuous. Houbigant reads, *They fluctuate as the sea; they cannot be at rest*: compare Isa. lvii. 20, 21. But Blaney renders ראוה נים, *They are melted into a sea of solicitude*: observing, "This is a literal translation of the text; and appears to me preferable in sense to any of the interpretations I have hitherto met with."

Verses 24-27. *Damascus is waxed feeble*—That is, the inhabitants of Damascus. They have lost their ancient courage and valour; they were wont to be formidable to their enemies, but now they flee before them. *Fear*, or rather, *trembling*, or, *horror*,

be cut off in that day, saith the LORD of hosts. A. M. 3404. B. C. 600.

27 And I will kindle a <sup>p</sup> fire in the wall of Damascus, and it shall consume the palaces of Ben-hadad.

28 ¶ <sup>q</sup> Concerning Kedar, and concerning the kingdoms of Hazor, which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon shall smite, thus saith the LORD; Arise ye, go up to Kedar, and spoil <sup>r</sup> the men of the east.

29 Their <sup>s</sup> tents and their flocks shall they

<sup>a</sup> Chap. xxxiii. 9; li. 41. — <sup>o</sup> Chap. i. 30; li. 4. — <sup>p</sup> Amos i. 4. <sup>q</sup> Isa. xxi. 13. — <sup>r</sup> Judg. vi. 3; Job i. 3. — <sup>s</sup> Psa. cxx. 5.

as רטט, properly signifies, *hath seized on her, distress and pangs*, Hebrew, צרה וחנלי, *have taken her, as a woman in travail*—Great anguish and sorrow are ordinarily expressed by this similitude in the Scriptures. *How is the city of praise*—That is, a city of fame and renown; *not left*—Namely, not spared, or left untouched by the enemy. This is thought to be spoken in the person of the king, or some other inhabitant of Damascus. *Therefore her young men*—Or, *surely her young men*, as the particle לכן is rendered chap. v. 2; *shall fall in her streets*—Or, *broad places*, as the Hebrew word signifies. *A fire shall consume the palaces of Benhadad*—The name of several kings of Syria.

Verses 28, 29. *Concerning Kedar and the kingdoms of Hazor*—Kedar is well known to have been one of the sons of Ishmael, Gen. xxv. 13, who settled in Arabia. But of Hazor we find no satisfactory account given by commentators. There is, indeed, a city called *Hazor*, mentioned Josh. xi. 10, and in other parts of Scripture: but this was in the land of Canaan; whereas the *kingdoms of Hazor*, here mentioned, were evidently in Arabia, in the neighbourhood, at least, of Kedar. Among the sons of Joktan, however, who were prior to the Ishmaelites in Arabia, and whose descendants are therefore looked on as the only genuine Arabs, we find one whose name was *Hazarmaveth*, Gen. x. 26-30. And, as by Kedar all the descendants of Ishmael are probably here designed, so all the other branches of the family of Joktan may, in like manner, be included under the general name of *Hazor*. And perhaps the most probable reason why the Arabians are called a *mingled people* is, that they were thus made up of the people of different descents; some of them being sprung from Joktan, others from Ishmael, to whom must be added the sons of Abraham by Keturah, who are also said to have been settled in *Kedem*, or the east country, Gen. xxv. 6, and perhaps other families besides. All these were divided into petty sovereignties under certain chiefs or princes, which explains what is to be understood by the kingdoms of *Hazor*: see Blaney. *Arise ye, go up to Kedar, &c.*—Here the prophet foretels that Nebuchadnezzar should conquer these kingdoms, and *spoil the men of the East*, as the Arabians are called in the Scriptures. *Their tents and their flock shall they*—Namely, the

A. M. 3404. take away : they shall take to them-  
B. C. 600. selves their curtains, and all their ves-  
sels, and their camels; and they shall cry unto  
them, ' Fear is on every side.

30 ¶ <sup>a</sup> Flee, <sup>11</sup> get you far off, dwell deep, O  
ye inhabitants of Hazor, saith the LORD; for  
Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon hath taken  
counsel against you, and hath conceived a pur-  
pose against you.

31 Arise, get you up unto <sup>r</sup> the <sup>12</sup> wealthy  
nation, that dwelleth without care, saith the  
LORD, which have neither gates nor bars,  
*which* <sup>v</sup> dwell alone.

32 And their camels shall be a booty, and the  
multitude of their cattle a spoil: and I will  
<sup>r</sup> scatter into all winds <sup>a</sup> them *that are* <sup>13</sup> in the  
utmost corners; and I will bring their calamity  
from all sides thereof, saith the LORD.

33 And Hazor <sup>b</sup> shall be a dwelling for dra-  
gons, *and* a desolation for ever: <sup>c</sup> there shall

<sup>t</sup> Chap. vi. 25; xlv. 5.—<sup>u</sup> Verse 8.—<sup>v</sup> Heb. *sit greatly*.  
<sup>x</sup> Exodus xxxviii. 11.—<sup>y</sup> Or, *that is at ease*.—<sup>z</sup> Numbers  
xxiii. 9; Deut. xxxiii. 28; Micah vii. 14.—<sup>aa</sup> Ezekiel v. 10;  
Verse 36.

Chaldeans; *take away*—Their substance consisted in  
their cattle and their tents, from whence the country  
itself is called the *tents of Kedar*, Psa. cxx. 5: with  
these they removed from place to place for the con-  
venience of pasture. *They shall take to themselves  
their curtains*—Those elegant coverings of which  
their tents were made, and which were much super-  
ior to those of any other people. *And they shall  
cry unto them*—Hebrew, וקראו, *Let them call for*, or  
*command*, that is, as Blaney renders it, *Let them  
bring upon them terror from every side*.

Verses 30-33. *Flee ye, get you far off*—Hebrew,  
ברו כהר; Vulgate, *Abite vehementer, Go away with  
eagerness, or, haste. Dwell deep*, or, "retire deep  
for to dwell:" see note on verse 8. *Arise, get you  
up unto the wealthy nation*—The prophet here gives  
the Chaldeans a commission from God to undertake  
this expedition, and seize upon the wealth of the in-  
habitants of Hazor; *which have neither gates nor  
bars*—Who have never been attacked, and therefore  
live securely without walls or ramparts for their de-  
fence; *which dwell alone*—*Solitarie habitant, dwell  
solitarily*, as Buxtorf renders יכנו כרר. "Their  
habitations are isolated," as some interpret it. "They  
do not live in cities, towns, or villages, where the  
houses are contiguous; but each family has its man-  
sion apart from the rest, with land about it sufficient  
for the subsistence of their cattle. In this dispersed  
state they were, of course, less provided with the  
means of defending themselves from the incursions  
of the enemy." *I will scatter into all winds*—Into  
all the quarters of heaven; *them that are in the ut-  
most corners*—Or, *those that inhabit the insulated*

no man abide there, nor *any* son of A. M. 3404.  
man dwell in it. B. C. 600.

34 ¶ The word of the LORD that B. C. 598.  
came to Jeremiah the prophet against

<sup>d</sup> Elam in the beginning of the reign of Zede-  
kiah king of Judah, saying,

35 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Behold, I  
will break <sup>e</sup> the bow of Elam, the chief of  
their might.

36 And upon Elam will I bring the four  
winds from the four quarters of heaven, and  
<sup>f</sup> will scatter them toward all those winds; and  
there shall be no nation whither the outcasts of  
Elam shall not come.

37 For I will cause Elam to be dismayed  
before their enemies, and before them that  
seek their life: and I will bring evil upon  
them, *even* my fierce anger, saith the LORD;  
<sup>g</sup> and I will send the sword after them, till I  
have consumed them:

<sup>a</sup> Chap. ix. 26; xxv. 23.—<sup>b</sup> Heb. *cut off into corners, or, that  
have the corners of their hair polled*.—<sup>c</sup> Chap. ix. 11; x. 22;  
Mal. i. 3.—<sup>d</sup> Verse 18.—<sup>e</sup> Chap. xxv. 25.—<sup>f</sup> Isa. xxii. 6.  
<sup>g</sup> Verse 32.—<sup>h</sup> Chap. ix. 16; xlviii. 2.

*coast*, namely, the peninsula of Arabia: see notes on  
chap. ix. 26, and xxv. 23.

Verse 34. *The word that came to Jeremiah  
against Elam*—Elam we find to have been an inde-  
pendent, and even powerful kingdom, in the days  
of Abraham, Gen. xiv. 1. "But I am not of opinion  
with those writers," says Blaney, "who hold that by  
Elam, in Scripture, Persia is always meant. There  
is no doubt but that when the monarchy of Persia  
was established under Cyrus, Elam was blended into  
and formed a part of it. But before that time Elam  
and Persia were two distinct kingdoms: of which  
this may be admitted for proof, that the kingdom of  
Persia, if Xenophon may be credited as an historian,  
was never subdued under the dominion of Nebuchad-  
nezzar, but preserved its liberty in alliance with the  
Medes. Elam, on the contrary, is not only here pro-  
phesied of, as destined to become a part of the Ba-  
bylonian conquests, but is actually spoken of, (Dan.  
viii. 2,) as a province of the Babylonish empire;  
over which Daniel seems to have presided, having  
Shushan for the seat of his government. We may  
therefore conclude Elam to have been, as the name  
itself would lead us to suppose, the country called  
by heathen writers *Elymais*, which Pliny, in con-  
formity with Daniel, describes as separated from Su-  
siana, by the river *Eulæus*, or *Ulay*; *Nat. Hist.*, lib.  
vi. cap. 31."

Verses 35-38. *Behold, I will break the bow of  
Elam*—The Elamites were famous archers, as this  
expression intimates, as also Isaiah's words, chap.  
xxii. 6; *And Elam bare the quiver*. Strabo also says,  
that the mountainous parts of *Elymais* bred chiefly

A. M. 3406. 38 And I will <sup>b</sup> set my throne in  
B. C. 598. Elam, and will destroy from thence  
the king and the princes, saith the LORD.

<sup>b</sup> Chap. xliii. 10.

archers; *στρατιώτας τρέφει τοξοτάς τῆς πλειστάς*, lib. xvi. p. 744. Livy, and other heathen writers, also speak of the Elymæan archers. *Upon Elam will I bring the four winds, &c.*—I will bring enemies upon Elam from every quarter; and scatter them to every quarter. Wars and commotions are metaphorically denoted by winds. *And I will send the sword after them*—Even after they are driven out of their own country, my judgments shall pursue them. *And I will set my throne in Elam*—As Nebuchadnezzar acted under the commission of God, and had authority from him to conquer this and the neighbouring nations, and is called God's servant, the establishing of his power was in effect the setting up of the throne or dominion of Jehovah. Some,

39 ¶ But it shall come to pass <sup>i</sup> in A. M. 3406.  
the latter days, *that* I will bring again B. C. 598.  
the captivity of Elam, saith the LORD.

<sup>i</sup> Chap. xlviii. 47; Verse 6.

however, think this is spoken of the Persian monarchy, established there by Cyrus, who is expressly called, in Scripture, God's anointed one, whom he had particularly chosen.

Verse 39. *In the latter days, I will bring again the captivity of Elam*—This is supposed to relate to the times of the *Lagi* and *Seleucida*, when the Elamites recovered their liberty. Or, if we consider what is said in the foregoing verse to relate to Nebuchadnezzar, this may be understood of Cyrus's setting them free from the Babylonish yoke; for we find from Isa. xxii. 6, that the Elamites assisted Cyrus in the conquest of Babylon; and Shushan, the chief city of Elam, was made the metropolis of the Persian empire.

CHAPTER L.

*This, and the following chapter, contain a large description of the downfall of Babylon, and the empire of which that city was the seat; intermixed and contrasted with predictions concerning the redemption of Israel and Judah, who were not, like their oppressors, to be finally extirpated, but to survive them, and upon their repentance and conversion to be pardoned and restored. This prophecy follows the rest of those delivered by Jeremiah against the neighbouring countries, according to the method of God's judgments laid down before, chap. xxv. 12, 13, where the prophet declares, that after Nebuchadnezzar and his successors had fulfilled God's purposes, in being executioners of his vengeance upon other countries, they themselves should drink of the same cup. We have in this chapter, (1.) The ruin of Babylon, 1-3; and again, 9-16; and again, 21-32; and again, 35-46. (2.) The redemption of God's people, 4-8; and again, 17-20; and again, 33, 34.*

A. M. 3409. THE word that the LORD spake  
B. C. 595. <sup>a</sup> against Babylon *and* against  
the land of the Chaldeans <sup>1</sup> by Jeremiah the  
prophet.

2 Declare ye among the nations, and publish,  
and <sup>2</sup> set up a standard; publish, *and* conceal  
not: say, Babylon is taken, <sup>b</sup> Bel is confound-  
ed, Merodach is broken in pieces; <sup>c</sup> her idols

<sup>a</sup> Isa. xiii. 1; xxi. 1; xlvii. 1.—<sup>1</sup> Heb. *by the hand of Jeremiah*.  
<sup>2</sup> Heb. *lift up*.

are confounded, her images are A. M. 3409.  
broken in pieces. B. C. 595.

3 <sup>d</sup> For out of the north there cometh up <sup>e</sup> a  
nation against her, which shall make her land  
desolate, and none shall dwell therein: they  
shall remove, they shall depart, both man and  
beast.

4 ¶ In those days, and in that time, saith

<sup>b</sup> Isa. xlv. 1; Chap. li. 44.—<sup>c</sup> Chap. xliii. 12, 13.—<sup>d</sup> Chap.  
li. 48.—<sup>e</sup> Isa. xiii. 17, 18, 20; Verses 39, 40.

NOTES ON CHAPTER L.

Verses 1-3. *The word that the Lord spake against Babylon*—This prophecy was delivered and sent to Babylon in the fourth year of Zedekiah's reign, as appears from chap. li. 59. *Declare ye among the nations*—The downfall of Babylon was an event in which many nations were concerned, that empire having been a common oppressor. *Set up a standard*—To call people together, and impart unto them these good tidings. The destruction of Babylon was likewise a sort of signal to the Jews to assemble together, in order to their return to their

own land, the time of their captivity being then to expire. *Bel is confounded, Merodach is broken to pieces*—When God punishes an idolatrous nation he is said to confound its idols, because they do not bring assistance to their worshippers, nor deliver them out of his hands. *Bel* is the same with *Baal*, a name common to the idols of the eastern countries, and at first probably given to some of the heavenly bodies: see note on Isa. xxxix. 1. *For out of the north there cometh a nation against her*—The Medes, who lay north of Babylon.

Verses 4, 5. *In those days*—Wherein God shall

A. M. 3409. the LORD, the children of Israel shall  
B. C. 595. come, <sup>f</sup> they and the children of Judah  
together, <sup>g</sup> going and weeping: they shall go,  
<sup>h</sup> and seek the LORD their God.

5 They shall ask the way to Zion with their  
faces thitherward, *saying*, Come and let us  
join ourselves to the LORD in <sup>i</sup> a perpetual  
covenant *that* shall not be forgotten.

<sup>f</sup> Hos. i. 11.—<sup>g</sup> Ezra iii. 12, 13; Psa. cxxvi. 5, 6; Chapter  
xxxii. 9; Zech. xii. 10.—<sup>h</sup> Hos. iii. 5.—<sup>i</sup> Chap. xxxi. 31, &c.;  
xxxii. 40.—<sup>k</sup> Isa. liii. 6; Verse 17; 1 Pet. ii. 25.

begin to execute judgment on Babylon; *the children of Israel shall come, &c.*—This passage is primarily meant of the return of the Jews from their captivity, upon the destruction of the Babylonish monarchy. Many of the ten tribes, here termed *the children of Israel*, which had been carried captive into Assyria, hearing that their brethren of the two tribes were permitted and encouraged by Cyrus and his successors to return to their own land, undoubtedly associated themselves with them, and returned also from the several places where they had been settled: see Calmet's *Dissertation on the Return of the Ten Tribes*. *Going and weeping*—Weeping, partly with sorrow for the sins which had brought the calamities of the captivity upon them, and partly for joy, that God should show them such mercy as to bring them again to their own country. *They shall go and seek the Lord their God*—They shall inquire after Jehovah, their own God, and seek his favour, protection, and aid, and shall now have no more to do with idols. Observe, reader, those that seek the Lord must seek him *sorrowing*; and those that sorrow and are in trouble must seek him, and then their sorrow will soon be turned into joy, for he will be found of those that seek him. We learn from Ezra, chap. iii. 13, that the people both wept and rejoiced aloud at the laying of the foundation of the temple after their return from captivity, and that the noise of the weeping of some was equal to the shouts of joy raised by others. *They shall ask the way to Zion*—The city of their ancient solemnities; *with their faces thitherward*—Determined to return to it, now that the ruin of Babylon and the decree of Cyrus had opened the way for their release. The journey, indeed, is long and difficult, and they know not the road, but they will make inquiry concerning it, and trust in God to enable them to surmount all the difficulties and dangers of the way. Reader, wouldst thou arrive at the heavenly Canaan, and dost ask the way thither? Then see that thy *face be thitherward*, and not toward the world. In these words the prophet seems to allude to the Jews going in companies to Jerusalem at the solemn festivals. *Saying, Let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant*—They had broken the covenant which their fathers had made with God, and which had been often solemnly renewed, especially a little time before the captivity, in the days of Josiah; but here they exhort one another to join themselves to him again, by engaging afresh

6 My people hath been <sup>k</sup> lost sheep: A. M. 3409.  
their shepherds have caused them to <sup>l</sup> go astray, they have turned them away <sup>m</sup> on  
the mountains: they have gone from moun-  
tain to hill, they have forgotten their <sup>n</sup> resting-  
place.

7 All that found them have <sup>o</sup> devoured them: and <sup>p</sup> their adversaries said, <sup>q</sup> We offend not,

<sup>1</sup> Chapter ii. 20; iii. 6, 23.—<sup>2</sup> Heb. *place to lie down in*.  
<sup>m</sup> Psalm lxxix. 7.—<sup>n</sup> Chap. xl. 2, 3; Zech. xi. 5.—<sup>o</sup> Chap.  
ii. 3; Dan. ix. 16.

to be his, and that not for a time merely, but for ever; even in a *perpetual*, or *everlasting covenant*, as the Hebrew, גְּרִית עוֹלָם, signifies, and is translated, chap. xxxii. 40; a covenant that must not be broken, and therefore must not be forgotten: for a due remembrance of it will be the means of a due observance of it.

Verses 6, 7. *My people hath been lost sheep*—All men are compared to sheep that go astray, Isa. liii. 6. Here this character is applied to the Jews, whom God calls his people, because of the ancient covenant made with their fathers. They are said to have been *lost*, either on account of their captivity, being cast out of the land which God gave them, as sheep are lost out of their pasture, or in respect of their idolatries and other sins. *Their shepherds have caused them to go astray*—Their civil and ecclesiastical governors have been the principal causes of their sins and miseries: the former, by their wicked commands and example, the latter also by example as well as doctrine. *They have turned them away on the mountains*—They have turned them aside from the right worship of God, performed at the temple, to sacrifice to idols upon the mountains and high places. He alludes to sheep straying hither and thither, through the windings and turnings of the mountains. *They have gone from mountain to hill*—From one species of idolatry to another. *They have forgotten their resting place*—Or, their fold, namely, they have forgotten me, in whose love and service, in whose favour, protection, and care they could only find rest, safety, and comfort. *All that found them have devoured them*—They have been a prey to their enemies on all sides. *And their adversaries said, We offend not*—"In making them captives. Jeremiah introduces the Chaldeans speaking thus by the truest prosopopœia; for it could not be but the Chaldeans must have known those things which the prophets had foretold concerning the future captivity of the Jews; Nebuchadnezzar is a witness, who gave his captains orders to preserve Jeremiah:" see Houbigant. *Because they have sinned against the Lord, the habitation of justice*—A refuge and protection for those that are just and good, and consequently one that would not have cast off the Jews if they had not first forsaken him. This interpretation supposes God to be here called, *The habitation of justice*, which he undoubtedly is, but whether the Chaldeans would term him so may be a question. Others, therefore, think the preposition *in* is under-

A. M. 3409. because they have sinned against  
B. C. 595. the LORD, <sup>2</sup> the habitation of justice,  
even the LORD, <sup>3</sup> the hope of their fathers.

8 <sup>1</sup> 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.

9 ¶ <sup>1</sup> For lo, I will raise and cause to come up against Babylon an assembly of great nations from the north country: and they shall <sup>2</sup> set themselves in array against her; from thence she shall be taken: their arrows *shall be* as of a mighty <sup>3</sup> expert man; <sup>4</sup> none shall return in vain.

10 And Chaldea shall be a spoil: <sup>1</sup> all that spoil her shall be satisfied, saith the LORD.

11 <sup>1</sup> Because ye were glad, because ye rejoiced, O ye destroyers of my heritage, because ye are grown <sup>2</sup> fat<sup>3</sup> as the heifer at grass, and <sup>4</sup> bellow as bulls;

<sup>1</sup> Psa. xc. 1; xci. 1.—<sup>2</sup> Psa. xxii. 4.—<sup>3</sup> Isaiah xlvi. 20; Chap. li. 6, 45; Zech. ii. 6, 7; Rev. xviii. 4.—<sup>4</sup> Chap. xv. 14; li. 27; Verses 3, 41.—<sup>5</sup> Verses 14, 29.—<sup>6</sup> Or, *destroyer*.  
<sup>7</sup> 2 Sam. i. 22.—<sup>8</sup> Rev. xvii. 16.—<sup>9</sup> Isa. xlvii. 6.—<sup>10</sup> Heb. big, or, corpulent.—<sup>11</sup> Hos. x. 11.

stood, making this the aggravation of the Jews' sins, that they were committed in a land which ought to have been a habitation of justice. Thus it is said, (Isa. xxvi. 10,) that the wicked man will *deal unjustly in a land of uprightness*.

Verse 8. *Remove out of the midst of Babylon*—An exhortation often used by the prophets on this subject: see the margin. Some learned men suppose that this exhortation relates to the siege of Babylon carried on by Darius Hystaspes in the fifth and sixth years of his reign. Before which time God had warned the Jews, by the Prophet Zechariah, (chap. ii. 6, 7,) to flee out of Babylon, and to deliver themselves from the miseries that should befall that city during the siege: see Dr. Prideaux. *And be as the he-goats before the flocks*—"Let every one strive to lead the way to others, and give them an example of speedily obeying God's call, without showing any fondness to the place, or the idolatries there practised."

Verses 9-11. *For, lo, I will raise against Babylon, &c.*—See verse 41, and chap. li. 27. *From thence, or, as מִשָּׁמַיִם, may be rendered, immediately, she shall be taken. Their arrows, &c.*—The Medes and Persians were famous for the use of the bow. *And Chaldea shall be a spoil*—To all her destroyers, who shall enrich themselves by plundering her. *All that spoil her shall be satisfied*—Namely, with spoil and plunder, for Chaldea, with Babylon its metropolis, was, at that time, the richest country in the world. *Because ye were glad, &c.*—They rejoiced at the ruin of the Jews, a sin laid also to the charge of the Edomites, Obad. 12. Though the Chaldeans were the executioners of God's judgments upon the Jews,

12 Your mother shall be sore con- A. M. 3409.  
founded; she that bare you shall be B. C. 595.

ashamed: behold, the hindermost of the nations *shall be* a wilderness, a dry land, and a desert.

13 Because of the wrath of the LORD it shall not be inhabited, <sup>1</sup> but it shall be wholly desolate: <sup>2</sup> every one that goeth by Babylon shall be astonished, and hiss at all her plagues.

14 <sup>1</sup> Put yourselves in array against Babylon round about: all ye <sup>2</sup> that bend the bow, shoot at her, spare no arrows: for she hath sinned against the LORD.

15 Shout against her round about: she hath <sup>1</sup> given her hand: her foundations are fallen, <sup>2</sup> her walls are thrown down: for <sup>3</sup> it is the vengeance of the LORD: take vengeance upon her; <sup>4</sup> as she hath done, do unto her.

16 Cut off the sower from Babylon, and him that handleth the <sup>1</sup> sickle in the time of har-

<sup>1</sup> Or, *neigh as steeds*.—<sup>2</sup> Chapter xxv. 12.—<sup>3</sup> Chap. xlix. 17.—<sup>4</sup> Verse 9; Chap. li. 2.—<sup>5</sup> Chap. xlix. 35; Verse 29.  
<sup>6</sup> 1 Chron. xxix. 24; 2 Chron. xxx. 8; Lam. v. 6; Ezek. xvii. 18.—<sup>7</sup> Chap. li. 58.—<sup>8</sup> Chap. li. 6, 11.—<sup>9</sup> Psa. cxxxvii. 8; Verse 29; Rev. xviii. 6.—<sup>10</sup> Or, *scythe*.

yet he punished them, because they were influenced in what they did purely by their own ambition and covetousness, and acted with inhumanity and cruelty toward the conquered, though Providence directed their cruelties and oppressions, to the fulfilling its own ends and purposes. In like manner, God threatens to punish the king of Assyria after he had been the executioner of his judgments upon Jerusalem. *Because ye are grown fat, &c.*—The insolence and rudeness of oppressors are often compared to the wantonness of full-fed cattle.

Verses 12-16. *Your mother shall be sore confounded*—Namely, Babylon the metropolis, or mother-city of the empire. Or, your country shall be ashamed of you, her children, who are not able to defend her. *Behold, the hindermost of the nations, &c.*—The translation of this clause in the Vulgate seems much preferable to ours, *Ecce novissima erit in gentibus, et deserta, invia, et arens, behold, she shall be the hindermost of the nations, a wilderness, desolate and dry. Because of the wrath of the Lord, it shall not be inhabited*—See this illustrated in the notes on Isa. xiii. 19-22. *Every one that goeth by Babylon shall be astonished*—See note on chap. xviii. 16. *For she hath sinned against the Lord*—She hath been in a remarkable manner an enemy to God's truth and people. This may be especially applied to mystical Babylon: see verses 29-31. *Shout against her round about*—As conquerors do when a city is taken. *She hath given her hand*—That is, she hath surrendered herself: she hath submitted and promised obedience to the conqueror. The phrase occurs in the same sense Lam. v. 6 and also 1 Chron. xxix. 24, where see the margin. "hus,

A. M. 3409. vest: for fear of the oppressing sword  
B. C. 595. <sup>i</sup> they shall turn every one to his people, and they shall flee every one to his own land.

17 ¶ Israel is <sup>k</sup> a scattered sheep; <sup>l</sup> the lions have driven *him* away: first <sup>m</sup> the king of Assyria hath devoured him; and last this <sup>n</sup> Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon hath broken his bones.

18 Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will punish the king of Babylon and his land, as I have punished the king of Assyria.

19 ° And I will bring Israel again to his

<sup>i</sup> Isaiah xliii. 14; Chap. li. 9.—<sup>k</sup> Verse 6.—<sup>l</sup> Chap. ii. 15. <sup>m</sup> 2 Kings xvii. 6.—<sup>n</sup> 2 Kings xxiv. 10, 14.—<sup>o</sup> Isa. lxx. 10; Chap. xxxiii. 12; Ezek. xxxiv. 13, 14.—<sup>p</sup> Chap. xxxi. 34.

*dare manus, to give the hands, in Latin, signifies to yield; and most probably alludes to the act of the vanquished, who, throwing down his arms, and stretching forth his defenceless hands, acknowledges himself to be in the victor's power; her foundations are fallen*—Namely, the foundations of her walls, laid in a marshy soil, and surrounded with a deep ditch full of water, to the undermining power of which they were continually exposed: see *Herodot. lib. i. cap. 178. Cut off the sower from Babylon*—“Babylon resembled a country walled in rather than a city; the walls, according to Herodotus, being sixty miles in compass. Within this large circuit a great deal of ground was cultivated with corn. So that enough grew within the walls to support the inhabitants during a long siege.”—See *Prideaux's Connections*, page 187. Or, by Babylon here, may be understood, not the city only, but the whole province. *They shall turn every one to his people*—This is spoken of the allies of the Babylonians.

Verse 17. *Israel is a scattered sheep*—See note on verse 6. *The lions have driven him away*—As a lion coming among a flock of sheep scatters them one from another; so have these foreign invaders, enemies cruel as lions, served my people. *First, the king of Assyria hath devoured him*—Namely, Shalmanseer, who carried away the ten tribes into captivity, whence they never in general returned. *And last this Nebuchadrezzar hath broken his bones*—Hath entirely ruined Judah and Jerusalem, hath destroyed or carried captive the whole nation.

Verse 18. *Behold, I will punish the king of Babylon, and his land*—God may justly punish those who do the things that he hath commanded them to do, if they do them not in that manner in which he directs, or, if what they do be not done in obedience to his command, but for the satisfaction of their own lusts: which was the case, as with the king of Assyria, Isa. x. 5-7, so also with the king of Babylon; *as I have punished the king of Assyria*—Some refer this to the punishment of the Assyrians, in the destruction of Sennacherib and his army, in the time of Hezekiah; but the prophet seems rather to speak of a destruction of Assyria which followed the carry-

habitation, and he shall feed on Carmel and Bashan, and his soul shall be satisfied upon mount Ephraim and Gilead.

20 In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, <sup>p</sup> the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and *there shall be none*; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them <sup>q</sup> whom I reserve.

21 ¶ Go up against the land <sup>r</sup> of Merathaim, *even* against it, and against the inhabitants of <sup>s</sup> Pekod: <sup>t</sup> waste and utterly destroy after them, saith the LORD, and do <sup>u</sup> according to all that I have commanded thee.

<sup>q</sup> Isa. i. 9.—<sup>r</sup> Or, of the rebels.—<sup>s</sup> Ezek. xxiii. 23.—<sup>t</sup> Or, visitation.—<sup>u</sup> 2 Samuel xvi. 11; 2 Kings xviii. 35; 2 Chron xxxvi. 23; Isa. x. 6; xlv. 28; xlvi. 14; Chap. xxxiv. 22.

ing of the ten tribes into captivity, and therefore may most probably be understood of the destruction of Nineveh, the chief seat of the Assyrian empire, by Nebuchadrezzar, and Assuerus or Astyages, as it is related in Tobit, chap. xiv. 15. At the taking of this great city, foretold by Jonah, Nahum, and Zephaniah, Chynadanus, the last king of the Assyrian race, was killed; and the seat and title of the empire removed to Babylon, which was no longer called the Assyrian, but the Babylonian monarchy. See *Dr. Prideaux*, pages 47, 48.

Verses 19, 20. *I will bring Israel again to his habitation*—I will take care of Israel as a shepherd does of his flock, and bring them back to their ancient habitations, and to their former peace and plenty. By Israel here is meant the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, the Levites and some Israelites who joined with them, after the carrying away of the ten tribes. “As several parts of this prophecy,” says Lowth, “relate to that mystical Babylon whose destruction is foretold Rev. xviii., so these promises of grace and favour to the Jewish nation are chiefly to be understood of the general restoration of that people, which we may expect after the downfall of the anti-christian empire.” *In those days the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none*—That is, I will be perfectly reconciled to them, as if they had never offended. The Hebrew language often expresses the utter ceasing of any thing by *seeking and not finding it*. This promise seems principally to respect the times of the gospel, and the remnant of the Jews that shall be saved according to the election of grace: compare chap. xxxi. 34, and xxxiii. 8; Rom. xi. 5, 26, 27.

Verse 21. *Go up against the land of Merathaim, and against Pekod*—Although these two words מרתים, *Merathaim*, and פקוד, *Pekod*, are considered by our translators as proper names; and the latter is so understood by the Chaldee paraphrast: yet all the other ancient versions agree in representing the former word as an appellative, and the latter as a verb. The former, which is the dual number of מרה, *marah*, may signify either bitterness, or rebellion; and Blaney thinks that “Babylon is called the land

A. M. 3409. 22 <sup>a</sup> A sound of battle *is* in the land,  
B. C. 595. and of great destruction.

23 How is <sup>u</sup> the hammer of the whole earth cut asunder and broken! how is Babylon become a desolation among the nations!

24 I have laid a snare for thee, and thou art also taken, O Babylon, <sup>x</sup> and thou wast not aware: thou art found, and also caught, because thou hast striven against the LORD.

25 The LORD hath opened his armory, and hath brought forth <sup>v</sup> the weapons of his indignation: for this *is* the work of the Lord God of hosts in the land of the Chaldeans.

26 Come against her <sup>10</sup> from the utmost border, open her store-houses: <sup>11</sup> cast her up as heaps, and destroy her utterly: let nothing of her be left.

27 Slay all her <sup>a</sup> bullocks; let them go down to the slaughter: wo unto them! for their day is come, the time of <sup>a</sup> their visitation.

28 The voice of them that flee and escape out

<sup>a</sup> Chap. li. 54.—<sup>b</sup> Isa. xiv. 6; Chap. li. 20.—<sup>c</sup> Chap. li. 8, 31, 39, 57; Dan. v. 30, 31.—<sup>d</sup> Isa. xlii. 5.—<sup>e</sup> Heb. *from the end*.—<sup>f</sup> Or, *tread her*.—<sup>g</sup> Psa. xxii. 12; Isa. xxxiv. 7; Chap. xli. 21.

of bitterness, or of redoubled bitterness here, because it had proved such to the Jewish nation, whose country had been ruined, and the people held in slavery there." Accordingly he translates the verse as follows: "Against the land of bitterness go up; upon it, and upon its inhabitants visit, O sword, and utterly destroy their posterity, saith Jehovah, and perform according to all that I have charged thee." The command seems to be directed to Cyrus and his confederates.

Verses 22-24. *A sound of battle is in the land*—That is, in the land of Chaldea. *How is the hammer of the whole earth broken!*—That oppressive empire that smote the nations with a continual stroke, as is said Isa. xiv. 6, and brought them under subjection to it. *I have laid a snare for thee; and thou art also taken, O Babylon*—Cyrus took the city by surprise and in an unexpected manner, entering it, by draining the river Euphrates, at a time when the walls were entire, the city full of provisions, and the people in high spirits, and in a state of the utmost security, dreading no such event. According to Herodotus, part of the city was taken before those who dwelt in the midst of it knew any thing about it; so that with propriety they might be said to be caught as in a snare. *Because thou hast striven against the Lord*—The reason of this unexpected ruin coming on this great people was their sinning against the Lord: see verse 14; here called a *striving* against him, as indeed all sin is.

Verses 25-32. *The Lord hath opened his armory, &c.*—God hath raised up enemies to subdue the

of the land of Babylon, <sup>b</sup> to declare in A. M. 3409.  
Zion the vengeance of the LORD our B. C. 595.  
God, the vengeance of his temple.

29 Call together the archers against Babylon: <sup>o</sup> all ye that bend the bow, camp against it round about; let none thereof escape: <sup>d</sup> recompense her according to her work; according to all that she hath done, do unto her: <sup>e</sup> for she hath been proud against the LORD, against the Holy One of Israel.

30 <sup>f</sup> Therefore shall her young men fall in the streets, and all her men of war shall be cut off in that day, saith the LORD.

31 Behold, I *am* against thee, O thou <sup>12</sup> most proud, saith the Lord God of hosts: for <sup>g</sup> thy day is come, the time *that* I will visit thee.

32 And <sup>13</sup> the most proud shall stumble and fall, and none shall raise him up: and <sup>h</sup> I will kindle a fire in his cities, and it shall devour all round about him.

<sup>a</sup> Chap. xlviii. 44; Verse 31.—<sup>b</sup> Chap. li. 10, 11.—<sup>c</sup> Verse 14.—<sup>d</sup> Verse 15; Chap. li. 56; Rev. xviii. 6.—<sup>e</sup> Isa. xlvii. 10.—<sup>f</sup> Chap. xlix. 26; li. 4.—<sup>g</sup> Heb. *pride*.—<sup>h</sup> Verse 27. <sup>12</sup> Heb. *pride*.—<sup>13</sup> Chap. xxi. 14.

Chaldeans, namely, Cyrus and his confederates, and hath furnished them with all the means necessary for such an undertaking. *Come against her from the utmost border*—From distant parts, namely, from the Caspian and Euxine seas. *Cast her up as heaps*—The marginal rendering seems preferable; *Tread her*, trample over her, *as heaps of ruins*; or tread her as the corn is trodden down when it is thrashed. *Slay her bullocks*—That is, *Her strong men*, as the Vulgate and the Chaldee interpret the expression. *Wo unto them, for their day is come*—The time in which they are to be punished. *The voice of them that escape, to declare in Zion, &c.*—This may either foretel that some of the Babylonians would flee as far as Judea for refuge, and there publish what had befallen Babylon, or, which seems more likely, that some of those Jews or proselytes to the Jewish religion in Chaldea, who were more than ordinarily zealous for the welfare of God's church and people, would be ready, upon the first news of the taking of Babylon, to bring the glad tidings to Judea, that God had avenged his people, and executed his judgments on those who destroyed his temple, and profaned the holy vessels of it: see chap. li. 51; Dan. v. 1, 2, 3, 5, 30. *Call together the archers*—See verses 9, 14. *Recompense her according to her work*—This is applied to mystical Babylon, Rev. xviii. 6, which, when fulfilled, will be a *manifest token of the righteous judgment of God*, as St. Paul speaks, 2 Thess. i. 5, at which all good men ought to rejoice, and give glory to God when they see it effected. *For she hath been proud*

A. M. 3409. 33 ¶ Thus saith the LORD of hosts ;  
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The children of Israel and the children of Judah were oppressed together : and all that took them captives held them fast ; they refused to let them go.

34 <sup>1</sup> Their Redeemer is strong ; <sup>2</sup> the LORD of hosts is his name : he shall thoroughly plead their cause, that he may give rest to the land, and disquiet the inhabitants of Babylon.

35 ¶ A sword is upon the Chaldeans, saith the LORD, and upon the inhabitants of Babylon, and <sup>1</sup> upon her princes, and upon <sup>2</sup> her wise men.

<sup>1</sup> Rev. xviii. 8.—<sup>2</sup> Isa. xlvii. 4.—<sup>1</sup> Dan. v. 30.—<sup>2</sup> Isa. xlvii. 13.—<sup>3</sup> Isa. xlv. 25 ; Chap. xlviii. 30.—<sup>4</sup> Or, chief stays.—<sup>5</sup> Heb. bars.—<sup>6</sup> Chap. xxv. 20, 24 ; Ezek. xxx. 5.

against the Lord—Hath exalted herself against God, saying, *I am, and there is none besides me*, Isa. xlvii. 7, 8, where see the notes. *Therefore shall her young men fall in the streets*—Xenophon relates, lib. vii., that when Gobryas and Gadates, two of Cyrus's generals, with their soldiers, had got into the city, they marched directly toward the palace, killing all they met, and, having surprised the guards, cut them in pieces, and slain the king himself, they, without difficulty, made themselves masters of the palace. *I will kindle a fire in his cities*—This may be meant of the destruction made in the Babylonian territories, in the several expeditions Cyrus undertook against that monarchy before the taking of Babylon.

Verses 33, 34. *Israel and Judah were oppressed together*—Not together with respect to times, for there was a distance of one hundred and fifty years between the time of Israel's and Judah's being carried away captive ; nor by the same enemy ; Israel being carried away by the Assyrians, Judah by the Chaldeans. *Together* here signifies no more than that they were both oppressed, or alike oppressed. *And all that took them captives held them fast*—Were determined not to release them. The prophet seems here to intimate, that as their enemies were not only very powerful, but fully resolved to detain them in captivity, his predictions of their deliverance might seem to some but vain words, never likely to be fulfilled. Hence he adds, in the next verse, *Their Redeemer is strong*—Or, *their Avenger*, as the word also signifies. He that has a right to them will claim his right, and make good his claim. He is stronger than their enemies who hold them fast, and can, with infinite ease, overpower all their force, and baffle all their subtlety, and put strength into his own people, though they may be very weak. *The Lord of hosts is his name*—And he will answer his name, and make it appear that he is what his people call him. *He shall thoroughly plead their cause*—Hebrew, ריב את ריב, *pleading he will plead it*, plead it with jealousy, and effectually plead it and carry it ; *that he may give rest to the land*—

36 A sword is <sup>1</sup> upon the <sup>2</sup> liars ; <sup>3</sup> <sup>4</sup> upon her mighty men ; and they shall be dismayed.

37 A sword is upon their horses, and upon their chariots, and upon all <sup>5</sup> the mingled people that are in the midst of her ; and <sup>6</sup> they shall become as women : a sword is upon her treasures ; and they shall be robbed.

38 <sup>7</sup> A drouth is upon her waters ; and they shall be dried up : for it is the land of <sup>8</sup> graven images, and they are mad upon *their* idols.

39 <sup>9</sup> Therefore the wild beasts of the desert with the wild beasts of the islands shall dwell

<sup>1</sup> Chap. li. 30 ; Nah. iii. 13.—<sup>2</sup> Isa. xlv. 27 ; Chap. li. 32, 36 ; Rev. xvi. 12.—<sup>3</sup> Verse 2 ; Chap. li. 44, 47, 52.—<sup>4</sup> Isa. xiii. 21, 22 ; xxxiv. 14 ; Chap. li. 37 ; Rev. xviii. 2.

To his people's land, rest from all their enemies round about ; or, *to the earth*, ארץ ארץ more properly signifies, namely, rest from the oppressions of the Babylonish empire ; and *disquiet*—Or, *cause to tremble*, as some render הרגין, *the inhabitants of Babylon*—Because they have disquieted his people, and caused them to tremble, for whose honour and comfort he is jealous.

Verses 35–37. *A sword is upon the Chaldeans*—That is, there shall come a sword upon them. *Upon Babylon and her princes*—Who were slain together with their king, Belshazzar, at a feast, chap. li. 39 ; Dan. v. 2–30. *And upon her wise men*—The Chaldeans were famous for their skill in astrology, and other arts of divination ; and yet the learned in those sciences were not able to foresee or prevent the dangers coming upon themselves in the common calamity. *A sword is upon the liars*—Upon the diviners, or the pretenders to the knowledge of future events ; and *they shall dote*—They shall be proved to be foolish and ignorant, by things happening directly contrary to what they had thought and said. Thus Isaiah, speaking of the same kind of men, says, *He* (namely, God) *frustrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh diviners mad*. *A sword is upon all the mingled people*—Upon her auxiliaries, made up of several nations : see Ezek. xxx. 5. *And they shall become as women*—Fearful, and having neither courage nor any thing else manly in them. *A sword is upon her treasures, &c.*—“ Her treasures shall be a prey to such as come with sword in hand to rifle them : as Solon said to Cræsus, who, by way of ostentation, showed him his treasures, “ Sir, if any one come that has better iron than you, he will be master of all your gold.”—Lowth.

Verses 38–40. *A drouth is upon all her waters*—Our translators, after the example of the Vulgate and others, have rendered חרב, *a drouth*, here, whereas they have translated it *a sword* in the preceding verses, as supposing, it seems, that *a sword* has nothing to do with *waters*. But they might very properly have rendered it *a sword* here also : for this term is used metaphorically, to denote

A. M. 3409. *there*, and the owls shall dwell there—  
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in: 'and it shall be no more inhabited for ever; neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation.

40 <sup>a</sup> As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighbour cities thereof, saith the LORD; so shall no man abide there, neither shall any son of man dwell therein.

41 <sup>a</sup> Behold, a people shall come from the north, and a great nation, and many kings shall be raised up from the coast of the earth.

42 <sup>v</sup> They shall hold the bow and the lance: <sup>a</sup> they are cruel, and will not show mercy: <sup>a</sup> their voice shall roar like the sea, and they shall ride upon horses, every one put in array, like a man to the battle, against thee, O daughter of Babylon.

43 The king of Babylon hath heard the report of them, and his hands waxed feeble:

<sup>f</sup> Isa. xiii. 20; Chap. xxv. 12.—<sup>a</sup> Gen. xix. 25; Isa. xiii. 19; Chap. xlix. 18; li. 26.—<sup>x</sup> Verse 9; Chap. vi. 22; xxv. 14; li. 27; Rev. xvii. 16.—<sup>v</sup> Chap. vi. 22.—<sup>a</sup> Isa. xiii. 18.

either the instrument of divine vengeance generally, or the operations and effects of war in particular; in either of which senses it may be applied to waters as well as to treasures. And the allusion here is evidently to the stratagem of Cyrus, who drained off the waters of the Euphrates, which ran through the city of Babylon, by means of which his troops, by night, marched along the bed of the river into the heart of the city, and surprised it. *For it is the land of graven images, &c.*—This vengeance comes upon them, because they have been the great encouragers and supporters of idolatry. It may be remarked, that the executioners of the divine judgments were the Persians, who, in opposition to the Sabians, (whose notions the Chaldeans embraced,) followed the ancient discipline of the magi, or wise men among them, and had neither altars nor images; as is attested by Strabo and Herodotus: see *Prideaux's Connections*, p. 177, and Lowth. *And they are mad upon their idols*—See note on Isa. lvii. 5. They may well be termed *mad* who make a god of any creature, and especially those who worship images which their own hands have made. *Therefore the wild beasts of the desert, &c.*—Blaney renders this clause, *Therefore shall wild cats, with jackals dwell, the daughters of the ostrich also shall dwell in her*; and refers to Bochart in justification of the propriety of his translation. Com-

<sup>b</sup> anguish took hold of him, and pangs as of a woman in travail. A. M. 3409. B. C. 595.

44 <sup>o</sup> Behold, he shall come up like a lion from the swelling of Jordan unto the habitation of the strong: but I will make them suddenly run away from her: and who is a chosen man that I may appoint over her? for who is like me? and who will <sup>16</sup> appoint me the time? and <sup>d</sup> who is that shepherd that will stand before me?

45 Therefore hear ye <sup>o</sup> the counsel of the LORD, that he hath taken against Babylon; and his purposes, that he hath purposed against the land of the Chaldeans: surely the least of the flock shall draw them out: surely he shall make *their* habitation desolate with them.

46 <sup>f</sup> At the noise of the taking of Babylon the earth is moved, and the cry is heard among the nations.

<sup>a</sup> Isa. v. 30.—<sup>b</sup> Chap. xlix. 24.—<sup>c</sup> Chap. xlix. 19.—<sup>16</sup> Or. *convent me to plead.*—<sup>d</sup> Job xli. 10; Chap. xlix. 19.—<sup>o</sup> Isa. xiv. 24; Chap. li. 11.—<sup>f</sup> Rev. xviii. 9.

pare this passage with the parallel one, Isa. xiii. 19–22, where see the notes.

Verses 41–46. *Behold, a people shall come from the north*—Namely, the Medes; and a great nation—That is, who are a great nation; for this is no more than an explicative of the foregoing sentence. *And many kings*—Namely, the kings of the Persians, Armenians, Hyrcanians, Cadusians, and others who fought under Cyrus's banner, as allies or friends to him. *Their voice shall roar like the sea*—The noise of an army is fitly compared to the roaring of the sea when it rages and is tempestuous. *Every one put in array*—In exact and firm order, as if the whole host were but one man. *The king of Babylon hath heard, &c.*—Belshazzar was of himself a weak and dissolute prince, and was soon routed in the field; and so dismayed that he shut himself up in Babylon. *Behold, he shall come up like a lion*—See notes on chap. xlix. 19–21, where we have applied unto Edom what is here spoken against Babylon. *At the noise of the taking of Babylon the earth is moved, and the cry is heard, &c.*—These words are intended to express the greatness of the destruction of Babylon, which should be such as should make all that part of the world to shake and tremble; and the nations, whether near or far remote, should be astonished at the downfall of so great a city and potent an empire.

## CHAPTER LI.

The prophet in this chapter proceeds with the prediction of the fall of Babylon: in the description of which he enlarges much for the encouragement of the pious captives, whose deliverance depended upon it, and was to be the

result of it. Here is, (1,) *The record of Babylon's doom, with the particulars of it, intermixed with the grounds of God's controversy with her, many aggravations of her fall, and great encouragements given from thence to the Israel of God, that suffered such hard things by her, 1-58.* (2,) *The representation and ratification of this by Seraiah's sinking a copy of these predictions in the river Euphrates, near Babylon, after he had read it to the Jewish captives there, 59-64.*

A. M. 3409. **THUS** saith the LORD; Behold, I  
B. C. 595.

will raise up against Babylon, and against them that dwell in the <sup>1</sup> midst of them that rise up against me, <sup>a</sup> a destroying wind;

2 And will send unto Babylon <sup>b</sup> fanners, that shall fan her, and shall empty her land: <sup>c</sup> for in the day of trouble they shall be against her round about.

3 Against *him that bendeth* <sup>d</sup> let the archer bend his bow, and against *him that lifteth himself up in his brigandine*: and spare ye not her young men; <sup>e</sup> destroy ye utterly all her host.

4 Thus the slain shall fall in the land of the

Chaldeans, <sup>f</sup> and *they that are thrust* through in her streets. A. M. 3409.  
B. C. 595.

5 For Israel *hath not been* forsaken, nor Judah of his God, of the LORD of hosts; though their land was filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel.

6 <sup>g</sup> Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul: be not cut off in her iniquity; for <sup>h</sup> this *is* the time of the LORD's vengeance; <sup>i</sup> he will render unto her a recompense.

7 <sup>k</sup> Babylon *hath been* a golden cup in the LORD's hand, that made all the earth drunken:

<sup>1</sup> Heb. heart.—<sup>2</sup> Kings xix. 7; Chap. iv. 11.—<sup>b</sup> Chap. xv. 7.  
<sup>c</sup> Chap. i. 14.—<sup>d</sup> Chap. i. 14.—<sup>e</sup> Chap. i. 21.

<sup>f</sup> Chapter xlix. 26; i. 30, 37.—<sup>g</sup> Chapter i. 8; Rev. xviii. 4.  
<sup>h</sup> Chap. i. 15, 28.—<sup>i</sup> Chap. xxv. 14.—<sup>k</sup> Rev. xvii. 4.

#### NOTES ON CHAPTER LI.

Verses 1, 2. *Behold, I will raise up against Babylon*—Darius and Cyrus, who came against Babylon, came by a divine instinct. God excited their spirits to accomplish his purpose against that idolatrous city, and the oppressive government which had its seat there. *Against them that dwell in the midst*—Hebrew, *in the heart*; of them that rise up against me—That is, in the centre of the country of mine adversaries, which by a circumlocution means the same as Babylon itself. *A destroying wind*—See note on chap. iv. 11, where the prophet describes the Chaldean army coming up for the destruction of Judea under the same metaphor. The Chaldeans had been like a destroying, blasting wind to the Jews, and now the Medes and Persians are to be like one to them. *And will send unto Babylon fanners*—Enemies who shall drive them away as chaff is driven away by the fan; or those who shall disperse her forces, and empty or spoil her land of all its riches, &c. This image is frequently made use of by the Hebrew prophets, to represent the ease with which the Almighty disperses and destroys his enemies: see notes on chap. xv. 7; Isa. xxi. 10; xli. 16. *For in the day of trouble they shall be against her, &c.*—Or, as the words may be rendered, *When they shall come round her on every side in the evil (or adverse) day.*

Verses 3-5. *Against him that bendeth let the archer bend*—See chap. i. 14; and *against him that lifteth up himself in his brigandine*—Or, *coat of mail*: suffer not them who are skilful in using the bow, or armed in coats of mail, to avail themselves any thing of their skill or their armour, but oppose them with superior skill and force. *Thus the slain shall fall in the land of the Chaldeans*—There seems to be a transposition of words in this sentence, the sense certainly being, *Thus the Chaldeans shall fall down*

*slain to the earth. For Israel hath not been* (or rather, *shall not be*) *forsaken, nor Judah of his God*—“Though God was justly displeased with his people, yet he would not cast them off utterly, or deprive them of his protection, though he would do so to those that were the rod in his hand, to chastise and scourge his people.”

Verses 6, 7. *Flee out of the midst of Babylon, &c.*—God's people are here exhorted to flee out of Babylon with all haste, as Lot did out of Sodom, lest they should be consumed in the iniquity of that place: see chap. i. 8. *Babylon hath been a golden cup in the Lord's hand*—In what sense Babylon is called a cup may be seen by comparing chap. xxv. 15. Her greatness and glory enticed and drew in many nations to be confederate with her, in hopes of enriching or aggrandizing themselves; but thereby they drew down destruction upon themselves. They thought to *drink*, or be in alliance with the Babylonians, was drinking out of a golden cup, but it proved to them a deadly draught. For she was a splendid instrument of vengeance, ordained by God against them; and as they all had suffered by her, so they are all here represented as glorying over her, and rejoicing when her turn of suffering came. By making *all the earth drunken*, is meant either making all the neighbouring nations act foolishly, and contrary to true wisdom and prudence, or the causing them, as it were, to stagger and fall through the terror and astonishment, the confusion and dismay, which God's judgments should produce among them: see note on chap. xxv. 15. We may observe further here, that this golden cup is said to be *in the Lord's hand*, to signify that these things had been brought about by the divine providence, and that God had used Babylon as an instrument to bring the nations to that condign punishment which they had deserved.

A. M. 3409. <sup>1</sup>the nations have drunken of her wine; therefore the nations <sup>2</sup>are mad.

8 Babylon is suddenly <sup>3</sup>fallen and destroyed: <sup>4</sup>howl for her; <sup>5</sup>take balm for her pain, if so be she may be healed.

9 We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed: forsake her, and <sup>6</sup>let us go every one into his own country: <sup>7</sup>for her judgment reacheth unto heaven, and is lifted up *even* to the skies.

10 The LORD hath <sup>8</sup>brought forth our righteousness: come, and let us <sup>9</sup>declare in Zion the work of the LORD our God.

11 <sup>10</sup>Make <sup>11</sup>bright the arrows; gather the shields: <sup>12</sup>the LORD hath raised up the spirit

of the kings of the Medes: <sup>13</sup>for his device is against Babylon, to destroy it; because it is <sup>14</sup>the vengeance of the LORD, the vengeance of his temple.

12 <sup>15</sup>Set up the standard upon the walls of Babylon, make the watch strong, set up the watchmen, prepare the <sup>16</sup>ambushes: for the LORD hath both devised and done that which he spake against the inhabitants of Babylon.

13 <sup>17</sup>O thou that dwellest upon many waters, abundant in treasures, thine end is come, *and* the measure of thy covetousness.

14 <sup>18</sup>The LORD of hosts hath sworn <sup>19</sup>by himself, *saying*, Surely I will fill thee with men, <sup>20</sup>as with caterpillars; and they shall <sup>21</sup>lift <sup>22</sup>up a shout against thee.

<sup>1</sup> Rev. xiv. 8.—<sup>2</sup> Ch. xxv. 16.—<sup>3</sup> Isa. xxi. 9; Rev. xiv. 8; xviii. 2.—<sup>4</sup> Chap. xlvi. 20; Rev. xviii. 9, 11, 19.—<sup>5</sup> Chap. xlvi. 11.—<sup>6</sup> Isaiah xlii. 4; Chapter l. 16.—<sup>7</sup> Rev. xviii. 5.—<sup>8</sup> Psa. xxxvii. 6.—<sup>9</sup> Chap. l. 28.—<sup>10</sup> Chap. xlvi. 4.

<sup>11</sup> Heb. *pure*.—<sup>12</sup> Isaiah xliii. 17; Verse 28.—<sup>13</sup> Chap. l. 45.—<sup>14</sup> Chapter l. 28.—<sup>15</sup> Nah. ii. 1; iii. 14.—<sup>16</sup> Heb. *liers in wait*.—<sup>17</sup> Rev. xvii. 1, 15.—<sup>18</sup> Chap. xlix. 13; Amos vi. 8.—<sup>19</sup> Heb. *by his soul*.—<sup>20</sup> Nah. iii. 15.—<sup>21</sup> Heb. *utter*.—<sup>22</sup> Chap. l. 15.

Verses 8, 9. *Babylon is suddenly fallen*—It was one of the aggravations of the punishment of Babylon, that her destruction came upon her suddenly and unexpectedly. *Howl for her, &c.*—So the kings, the merchants, and other factors, are described as lamenting the destruction of mystical Babylon, Rev. xviii. 9, 11, 17–19. *Take balm for her pain*—Use your utmost endeavours, and try every thing you can to save her from destruction. This is spoken ironically, implying her ruin to be irrecoverable. *We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed*—Some think “this is spoken in the name of God’s prophets, and the other witnesses of his truth, importing that they had sufficiently testified against her errors and idolatries, but that she was irreclaimable; and therefore that it was time for all the lovers of truth to depart out of her, lest they should be involved in her punishments.” But it is more probable that the nations which had been subject to Babylon, and were her allies, are the speakers here, declaring that they had assisted her to the utmost of their power, and had endeavoured to support her sinking cause, but all in vain, nothing which they had done or could do availing to save her from destruction. And therefore, as her case was desperate, it was time for them to shift for themselves, and to leave Babylon to its fate, since it seemed to be the decree of Heaven that it should fall. Those who have written of the downfall of Babylon relate, that when its affairs seemed to grow desperate, it was deserted by most of its allies, few or none of them persevering to lend it any assistance. *Her judgment reacheth unto heaven*—That is, her sin, bringing down God’s judgments; *and is lifted up even to the skies*—It comes to the ears of even God himself, and engages him to take account of it and punish her.

Verse 10. *The Lord hath brought forth our righteousness*—Hath made manifest the equity of our cause, revenged the wrongs we have suffered,

and shown ours to be the true religion, by bringing such remarkable judgments upon our enemies. *Come, and let us declare in Zion, &c.*—Therefore let us give glory to him in the assemblies of his church, and in the most public manner imaginable. This is spoken in the persons of the captive Jews.

Verses 11, 12. *Make bright the arrows, gather the shields*—Hebrew, מלאו השלטים, *fill the quivers*. Thus the LXX., πληροῦτε τὰς φαρτρας, with whom agree the Vulgate, Castalio, and others. The meaning is, Prepare all the instruments of war to defend yourselves, ye Babylonians, for you will have need of them all. *The Lord hath raised up the spirit of the kings of the Medes*—Neriglissar, king of Babylon, having formed an alliance against the Medes, Cambyses sent his son Cyrus with an army of thirty thousand Persians to join the Medes, commanded by Cyaxares, king of Media, Cyrus’s uncle; called in Scripture, *Darius the Mede*. It was properly his army that made the expedition against the Babylonians, Cyrus being employed as his general. Persia was then a small part of the empire of Media, and of little account till Cyrus advanced its reputation; and even then it was called the kingdom of the *Medes and Persians*, the Medes having still the preference: see Xenophon’s *Cyropæd.*, lib. i. and Lowth. *Set up the standard upon*, or rather, *before the walls of Babylon*; and proceed to take all the necessary steps to distress her, and make yourselves masters of her: *for the Lord hath both devised, &c.*—For God will both favour your undertaking, and will enable you to accomplish it.

Verses 13–19. *O thou that dwellest upon many waters*—The river Euphrates ran through the midst of Babylon, and there was a prodigious lake of water on one side of the city, besides other lesser waters near it, so that it was in a manner encompassed with waters. *Many waters* do likewise signify mystically the many people over which this

A. M. 3409. B. C. 595. 15 <sup>f</sup> He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and <sup>e</sup> hath stretched out the heaven by his understanding.

16 <sup>h</sup> When he uttereth *his* voice, *there is* a multitude of waters in the heavens; and <sup>i</sup> he causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth: he maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures.

17 <sup>k</sup> Every man <sup>j</sup> is brutish by *his* knowledge; every founder is confounded by the graven image: <sup>l</sup> for his molten image is falsehood, and *there is* no breath in them.

18 <sup>m</sup> They *are* vanity, the work of errors: in the time of their visitation they shall perish.

19 <sup>n</sup> The portion of Jacob is not like them; for he *is* the former of all things: and *Israel* is the rod of his inheritance: the LORD of hosts is his name.

20 <sup>o</sup> Thou *art* my battle-axe, and weapons of war: for <sup>p</sup> with thee will I break in pieces the nations, and with thee will I destroy kingdoms;

<sup>f</sup> Gen. i. 1, 6; Chapter x. 12.—<sup>e</sup> Job ix. 8; Psalm civ. 2; Isaiah xl. 22.—<sup>h</sup> Chapter x. 13.—<sup>g</sup> Or, noise.—<sup>i</sup> Psalm cxxxv. 7.—<sup>k</sup> Chapter x. 14.—<sup>j</sup> Or, is more brutish than to know.—<sup>l</sup> Chap. i. 2.

was the reigning city: see Rev. xvii. 15. *Abundant in treasures*—Not only enriched by traffic, but by the conquest and spoil of many nations. *Thine end is come, and the measure of thy covetousness*—God has set bounds to thy covetousness, which it shall not pass over: thou shalt no more increase in wealth, but an end shall be put to all thy designs of this sort. *The Lord of hosts hath sworn by himself*—The Lord, who is well able to make his words good, hath sworn by himself, for he could swear by no greater, saying, *Surely I will fill thee with men as with caterpillars*—Or, locusts, as, according to Bochart, the word פל' properly signifies. Armies are often compared to caterpillars, locusts, and such like devouring insects. *He hath made the earth by his power, &c.*—It is he who, by his immense power, has made all these wonderful things which we see about us, and adorned and settled them by his wisdom, that has pronounced this concerning Babylon: and therefore you need not be doubtful respecting its accomplishment, since he who could create these mighty works, can certainly, whenever he pleases, effect what is infinitely more easy, the ruin of Babylon. But for an elucidation of this, and the four following verses, see notes on chap. x. 12-16.

Verses 20-24. *Thou art my battle-axe, &c.*—Cyrus, or rather the army of the Medes and Persians, seems to be intended here; compare verses 11,

21 And with thee will I break in pieces the horse and his rider; and with thee will I break in pieces the chariot and his rider;

22 With thee also will I break in pieces man and woman; and with thee will I break in pieces <sup>p</sup> old and young; and with thee will I break in pieces the young man and the maid;

23 I will also break in pieces with thee the shepherd and his flock; and with thee will I break in pieces the husbandman and his yoke of oxen; and with thee will I break in pieces captains and rulers.

24 <sup>q</sup> And I will render unto Babylon and to all the inhabitants of Chaldea all their evil that they have done in Zion in your sight, saith the LORD.

25 Behold, I *am* against thee, <sup>r</sup> O destroying mountain, saith the LORD, which destroyest all the earth: and I will stretch out my hand upon thee, and roll thee down from the rocks, <sup>s</sup> and will make thee a burnt mountain.

26 And they shall not take of thee a stone for a corner, nor a stone for foundations; <sup>t</sup> but

<sup>m</sup> Chap. x. 15.—<sup>n</sup> Chap. x. 16.—<sup>o</sup> Isaiah x. 5, 15; Chapter i. 23.—<sup>p</sup> Or, in thee, or, by thee.—<sup>q</sup> So 2 Chron. xxxvi. 17. <sup>r</sup> Chapter i. 15, 29.—<sup>s</sup> Isaiah xiii. 2; Zech. iv. 7.—<sup>t</sup> Rev. viii. 8.—<sup>u</sup> Chap. i. 40.

12; as elsewhere the instrument of God's vengeance is called a sword, a rod, a scourge. This army, with Cyrus, their general, God here says he will make use of for destroying the whole power of the Babylonish empire, and all orders and degrees of men in it, as he had formerly made that empire the executioner of his judgments upon other countries, chap. i. 23. "Or else," says Lowth, "the words may be understood of the church, and imply, that God will destroy all those earthly powers and kingdoms which are adversaries to his truth and people, in order to establish and advance his church. This will be fulfilled at the fall of *mystical Babylon*, when God's kingdom shall break in pieces all the kingdoms of the earth, in the destruction of that remnant of the fourth monarchy, according to Daniel's prophecy, chap. ii. 44." *And I will render unto Babylon all their evil* (see verse 11, and chap. i. 28) *that they have done in Zion, in your sight*—This may either refer to the evil done at Jerusalem and in Judea, by the Chaldeans, in the sight of God's people, or to the open and public manner in which judgment would be executed on Babylon.

Verses 25, 26. *Behold, I am against thee, O destroying mountain*—Babylon was situate in a plain, but is called a mountain here, by reason of its superiority and eminence above all other places; and perhaps also on account of its lofty walls, pa-

A. M. 3409. thou shalt be <sup>9</sup>desolate for ever, saith  
B. C. 595. the LORD.

27 <sup>a</sup>Set ye up a standard in the land, blow the trumpet among the nations, <sup>2</sup>prepare the nations against her, call together against her <sup>7</sup>the kingdoms of Ararat, Minni, and Ashchenaz; appoint a captain against her; cause the horses to come up as the rough caterpillars.

28 Prepare against her the nations with <sup>a</sup>the kings of the Medes, the captains thereof, and all the rulers thereof, and all the land of his dominion.

29 And the land shall tremble and sorrow;

<sup>9</sup> Heb. *everlasting desolations*.—<sup>a</sup> Isa. xiii. 2.—<sup>x</sup> Chap. xxv. 14.—<sup>7</sup> Chapter l. 41.—<sup>2</sup> Verse 11.—<sup>3</sup> Chapter l. 13, 39, 40;

laces, and other edifices; and it has the epithet of *destroying*, on account of its being the cause of the destruction of many nations. Or, the words *רר הכפחיה* may properly be rendered, *mountain of corruption*, a name given by way of reproach to the mount of Olives, after it was defiled by idolatry, 2 Kings xxiii. 13, where see the note. The same appellation is here given to Babylon, because it was the seat of idolatry; which was derived from thence into other countries under its government and jurisdiction. This is remarkably true of mystical Babylon. *I will roll thee down from the rocks*—That is, from thy strong holds. I will dismantle all thy walls and forts, and then set thee on fire, (see verses 58, 59,) so that thou shalt appear like a great mountain burning. "Earthquakes were frequent in Palestine, and the sacred writers have embellished their writings with repeated allusions to this terrible phenomenon. The prophet here compares a powerful nation, doomed to destruction, to a ruinous mountain, or rather a volcano, which would soon be consumed, and involve other mountains in its ruins." *And they shall not take of thee a stone*—There shall not be left in thee a stone fit to be used in any principal part of a building, either for a foundation or for a corner-stone. This seems to be spoken figuratively, and to signify that they should no longer have kings and governors taken from among themselves, but should be under the dominion of foreigners.

Verses 27-29. *Set ye up a standard—blow the trumpet*—These were common signals for assembling armies together. *Call together the kingdoms of Ararat, Minni, and Ashchenaz*—These were countries under the dominion of the Medes. The two former probably the greater and lesser Armenia, and the latter a part of Phrygia, near the Hellespont: so Bochart thinks. And that both Armenians and Phrygians composed part of the army which Cyrus led against Babylon, may be seen in Xenophon. *Cyropæd.*, lib. iii. and lib. vii. *Appoint a captain against her*—Appoint a proper person, who has skill, courage, and conduct, to command and direct all these nations. Such was Cyrus, who

for every purpose of the LORD shall A. M. 3409.  
be performed against Babylon, <sup>a</sup>to B. C. 595.  
make the land of Babylon a desolation without an inhabitant.

30 The mighty men of Babylon have forborne to fight, they have remained in *their* holds: their might hath failed; <sup>b</sup>they became as women: they have burned their dwelling-places; <sup>c</sup>her bars are broken.

31 <sup>d</sup>One post shall run to meet another, and one messenger to meet another, to show the king of Babylon that his city is taken at *one* end,

Verse 43.—<sup>b</sup> Isa. xix. 16; Chap. xlvi. 41; l. 37.—<sup>c</sup> Lam. ii. 9; Amos i. 5; Nah. iii. 13.—<sup>d</sup> Chap. l. 24.

was accordingly appointed to this purpose. *Cause her horses to come up as the rough caterpillars*—Or, *the rough locusts*, as Bochart renders it, who observes, that there are some insects of that kind rough and hairy. Blaney reads, *bristled locusts*. Locusts represent horses, not only in their swiftness, but likewise in the shape of their heads, and Joel ii. 4, Rev. ix. 7, they are said to have the appearance of horses and horsemen. *Prepare against her the kings of the Medes*—The several princes or viceroys of the provinces belonging to the Median empire, with their people. All princes and governors are called kings in the Hebrew language. *The land shall tremble and sorrow*—An expression commonly used to express the confusion of the inhabitants under some great calamity. *For every purpose of the Lord shall be performed, &c.*—See notes on chap. l. 16-40.

Verses 30-32. *The mighty men of Babylon have forborne to fight: they have remained, &c.*—"The year before the siege of Babylon, Cyrus overthrew Belshazzar in battle, whereupon his army retreated within the walls, where they were shut up by him and besieged. Afterward, when Cyrus entered the city, he ordered public proclamation to be made, that all persons should keep within their houses, and whoever was found abroad should be put to death; and threatened to set their houses on fire, if any offered to hurt the soldiers from the tops of their houses." *They became as women*—Timorous, and without courage. *They have burned their dwelling-places*—The enemy have burned their houses. *Her bars are broken*—All her fortresses, and what she confided in as her chief defence against the enemy. *One post shall run to meet another*—Messengers shall run from different parts, and so fall in with one another, all carrying the same intelligence to the same person, that the city was taken on the part every one came from. This is a very natural description of what may be supposed to happen on a city being taken by surprise in the middle of the night; for, as fast as the alarm spread, people would be posting away with the news from all parts to the head-quarters. The translation of the last clause,

A. M. 3409. 32 And that \*the passages are B. C. 595. stopped, and the reeds they have burned with fire, and the men of war are affrighted.

33 For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; The daughter of Babylon is <sup>f</sup>like a thrashing-floor, <sup>g</sup>it<sup>10</sup> is time to thrash her: yet a little while, <sup>h</sup>and the time of her harvest shall come.

34 Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon hath <sup>i</sup>devoured me, he hath crushed me, he hath made me an empty vessel, he hath swallowed me up like a dragon, he hath filled his belly with my delicacies, he hath cast me out.

\* Chapter l. 38.—<sup>f</sup> Isaiah xxi. 10; Mic. iv. 13; Amos i. 3. <sup>g</sup> Isa. xli. 15; Hab. iii. 12.—<sup>10</sup> Or, in the time that he thrasheth her.—<sup>h</sup> Isaiah xvii. 5; Hosea vi. 11; Joel iii. 13; Rev. xiv. 15, 18.—<sup>i</sup> Chap. l. 7.

to show the king of Babylon that his city is taken at one end, is not accurate: the word כקצה does not mean at one end, for one is not in the text, but at the extremity. It may not be improper to observe further here, that though it seems unusual to say that one messenger runs to meet another, to acquaint any one with the same news, the usual expression in such a case being, that one messenger follows upon the heels of another; yet, in this matter, this unusual way of speaking was exactly descriptive of the fact; for Babylon being taken by a party of soldiers entering by the channel of the Euphrates at each extremity of the city, the messengers who carried the news to the king at his palace would actually run toward and meet each other at or near the palace, as they came from opposite quarters, to acquaint him that his city was taken at the extremities; for we cannot but suppose that people would run from each end of the city to the palace as soon as Cyrus's men entered. The passage in the original has great beauty and sublimity, which, however, is almost lost in our translation. Houbigant seems to give it its due force, rendering the verbs in the present tense, and omitting the connecting particles, which greatly augments its energy, thus: "Courier comes to meet courier—messenger meets messenger—to inform the king of Babylon that his city is taken at the extremity, that the passages are stopped, [or surprised, see verse 41,] that fires are burning among the reeds, that the men of war are terrified." The passages here mentioned "were most probably the entrances into the city from the river side, which were secured by gates that ought, as Herodotus observes, to have been fast barred, which, if it had been done, would have effectually frustrated the attempt of the enemy; but being left open and unguarded, on account of the public festivity, the assailants were in possession of those entrances, and in the heart of the city, before the besieged were aware of it." The word אֲנָכִי, here rendered reeds, properly signifies marshes or lakes; and the phrase

35 <sup>11</sup>The violence done to me and A. M. 3409. to my <sup>12</sup>flesh be upon Babylon, shall B. C. 595. the <sup>13</sup>inhabitant of Zion say; and, My blood upon the inhabitants of Chaldea, shall Jerusalem say.

36 Therefore thus saith the LORD; Behold, <sup>k</sup>I will plead thy cause, and take vengeance for thee; <sup>l</sup>and I will dry up her sea, and make her springs dry.

37 <sup>m</sup>And Babylon shall become heaps, a dwelling-place for dragons, <sup>n</sup>an astonishment, and a hissing, without an inhabitant.

38 They shall roar together like lions: they shall <sup>14</sup>yell as lions' whelps.

<sup>11</sup> Heb. My violence.—<sup>12</sup> Or, remainder.—<sup>13</sup> Heb. inhabitress.—<sup>k</sup> Chapter l. 34.—<sup>l</sup> Chapter l. 38.—<sup>m</sup> Isa. xiii. 22; Chapter l. 39; Rev. xviii. 2.—<sup>n</sup> Chapter xxv. 9, 18.—<sup>14</sup> Or, shake themselves.

here seems to import, that the enemies had burned up all the outworks belonging to the marshy grounds about the river Euphrates.—Lowth.

Verse 33. *The daughter of Babylon is like a thrashing-floor*—God's people have been sorely bruised and trodden under foot by the Babylonians, as corn in a thrashing-floor: see note on Isa. xxi. 10. *It is time to thrash her*—It is time for her to feel the miseries she has made others suffer. The word *thrash* often signifies to subdue by force and power. *Yet a little while and the time of her harvest shall come*—There shall be a clear riddance made of her inhabitants and their treasures, as the harvest clears the fields, and leaves them empty and bare. By *her harvest* may be meant the slaughter and spoiling of her inhabitants; and by the *thrashing, or treading, which follows the harvest, the destruction of the city itself.*

Verses 34, 35. *Nebuchadrezzar hath devoured me*—Zion and Jerusalem, which are both expressed in the next verse, are the speakers here, and the words contain a pathetic description of the calamities brought upon the Jews by Nebuchadrezzar and his forces, who, after they had devoured the wealth and laid waste the beauty of Judea, then turned the inhabitants out of it, and led them captives into a strange land. *The violence done to me and my flesh be upon Babylon*—Let God return upon her the violence she has done to me and to my children. Our nearest relations are called *our flesh* in Scripture. This imprecation is very similar to that in Psa. cxxxvii. 8, where see the note.

Verses 36–39. *Thus saith the Lord, I will plead thy cause*—This is, as it were, God's answer to the prayers and imprecations of the Jewish people, mentioned in the two foregoing verses. *I will dry up her sea, and make her springs dry*—This some think is spoken figuratively, meaning, I will exhaust her multitudes of people, and dry up all those sources from whence she derived her immense wealth and power. But this was literally fulfilled in Cyrus's

A. M. 3409. 39 In their heat I will make their  
B. C. 595. feasts, and ° I will make them drunk-  
en, that they may rejoice, and sleep a perpetual  
sleep, and not wake, saith the LORD.

40 I will bring them down like lambs to the  
laughter, like rams with he-goats.

41 How is ° Sheshach taken! and how is  
the praise of the whole earth surprised! how  
is Babylon become an astonishment among the  
nations!

42 ° The sea is come up upon Babylon: she  
is covered with the multitude of the waves  
thereof.

° Ver. 57.— Chap. xxv. 26.—<sup>q</sup> Isa. xiii. 29; Chap. xlix. 25;  
Dan. iv. 30.—<sup>r</sup> Isa. viii. 7, 8.—<sup>s</sup> Chap. l. 39, 40; Ver. 29.

draining the river, and thereby gaining an entrance into the city. All great waters are called seas in the Hebrew language. *And Babylon shall become heaps*—See note on chap. l. 39, 40. *They shall roar together like lions, &c.*—This is either expressive of their grief and anguish of mind, or else the prophet describes the revels and riotous noise which they made upon the night of that public festival in which the city was taken: see below. *In their heat I will make their feasts*—Or, *I will supply them with drink*, as Blaney renders מִשְׁתֵּיָהוּ, observing, that all the ancient versions give the word that sense, and that it agrees with the use of it, Dan. i. 8, 10, 16. *And I will make them drunken*—I will suffer them to give a loose to joy in their feasts, and to be intoxicated with wine: God is frequently said in Scripture to do those things which he permits to be done. Or the words may be taken figuratively, as signifying, While they are feasting I will prepare for them another cup to drink, namely, that of my fury and indignation. History informs us that Babylon was taken at a time when the Babylonians were so engaged in feasting and revelling, and so intoxicated with liquor, that the gates leading down to the river, which used to be shut every night, were left open, which gave a free passage to Cyrus and his army into the city. *That they may rejoice and sleep a perpetual sleep*—That, in the midst of their jollity and security, they may sleep the sleep of death.

Verses 41–43. *How is Sheshach taken!*—That Babylon is meant by Sheshach is certain; but why it is so called is yet matter of doubt: see note on chap. xxv. 26. Some indeed have supposed that it is called so from a goddess of that name, which the Babylonians worshipped, and which is supposed by Calmet to have been the same with the moon; but of these things there does not appear to be satisfactory proof. *How is the praise of the whole earth surprised*—Babylon was esteemed the wonder of the world, for the height, breadth, and compass of its walls, the palaces and hanging gardens belonging to it, for the temple of Belus, for the banks and facing of the river, and the artificial lakes and canals

43 ° Her cities are a desolation, a dry  
land, and a wilderness, a land where-  
in no man dwelleth, neither doth any son of  
man pass thereby.

44 ° And I will punish Bel in Babylon, and I  
will bring forth out of his mouth that which he  
hath swallowed up: and the nations shall not  
flow together any more unto him: yea, ° the  
wall of Babylon shall fall.

45 ° My people, go ye out of the midst of her,  
and deliver ye every man his soul from the  
fierce anger of the LORD.

46 And ° lest your heart faint, and ye fear

° Isa. xlvi. 1; Chap. l. 2.—<sup>u</sup> Verse 58.—<sup>v</sup> Verse 6; Chap.  
l. 8; Rev. xviii. 4.—<sup>w</sup> Or, *let not*.

made for the draining of it, and for its riches and greatness. *The sea is come up upon Babylon, &c.*—A numerous army, or a vast multitude of people, carrying all before them like an inundation. *Her cities are a desolation*—All the lesser cities, within the territories of Babylon, are become an uninhabited, uncultivated desert: see note on Isa. xiii. 20.

Verse 44. *And I will punish Bel in Babylon*—The heathen ascribed the honour of all their successes to their idols; and, upon any great victory, offered the best part of the spoils to their gods, and deposited them in their temples, as a grateful acknowledgment that the success was owing to their assistance. So Nebuchadnezzar, upon every victory over the Jews, carried away part of the furniture of the sanctuary and put it in the temple of his idol: see 2 Chron. xxxvi. 7; Dan. i. 2. The restoring of the holy vessels to their right owner, and to their former use, is what is here foretold by *bringing forth out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed*, which was done by Cyrus, upon his proclamation for rebuilding the temple, Ezra i. 7. But the full accomplishment of this prediction Dr. Prideaux places in Xerxes' demolishing the temple of Belus, and plundering it of its vast wealth, which, from Diodorus Siculus's account of it, he computes to amount to twenty-one millions of our money: see his *Connect.*, pp. 100, 101. *And the nations shall not flow together any more unto him*—There shall be no more costly presents brought by foreign nations unto the temple of Bel, as a compliment to that monarchy; just as, under the Roman empire, people that were conquered by it, sent golden crowns to Jupiter Capitolinus: see Lowth.

Verses 45, 46. *My people, go ye out of the midst of her, &c.*—See note on chap. l. 8. *And lest your heart faint, and ye fear for the rumour, &c.*—“Lest the rumours of new forces, ready to join themselves to the Babylonians, dishearten you, and make you despair of seeing so great an empire subdued by any human power.” *A rumour shall come one year, and after that in another year*—This seems to be an idiomatic phrase, denoting that terrifying rumours should continue year after year. And in

A. M. 3409. <sup>7</sup> for the rumour that shall be heard  
B. C. 595. in the land; a rumour shall both come  
*one year, and after that in another year shall*  
*come a rumour, and violence in the land, ruler*  
*against ruler.*

47 Therefore behold, the days come, that <sup>a</sup> I  
will <sup>16</sup> do judgment upon the graven images  
of Babylon: and her whole land shall be con-  
founded, and all her slain shall fall in the midst  
of her.

48 Then <sup>a</sup> the heaven and the earth, and all  
that *is* therein, shall sing for Babylon: <sup>b</sup> for  
the spoilers shall come unto her from the north,  
saith the LORD.

49 <sup>17</sup> As Babylon *hath caused* the slain of  
Israel to fall, so at Babylon shall fall the slain  
of all <sup>18</sup> the earth.

50 <sup>c</sup> Ye that have escaped the sword, go away,

<sup>7</sup> 2 Kings xix. 7.—<sup>a</sup> Chap. l. 2; Verse 52.—<sup>16</sup> Heb. *visit upon*.—<sup>b</sup> Isa. xlv. 23; xlix. 13; Rev. xviii. 20.—<sup>c</sup> Chap. l. 3, 41.—<sup>17</sup> Or, *Both Babylon is to fall, O ye slain of Israel, and*

these words the prophet, by God's direction, gives signs or tokens to the captive Jews, whereby they might know the exact time when Babylon should be taken, and, consequently, when they should remove from the city into some other place, that they might not be terrified, and induced to quit the city before there was any occasion for their doing so; and he acquaints them that there should come a rumour one year, namely, of Cyrus's preparations against the Babylonians; and that the next year there should be another rumour, namely, as we may suppose, of Cyrus's march into Asia, and his victories there, and of his drawing nearer and nearer to Babylon every day. *And violence in the land, ruler against ruler*—"It is possible," says Blaney, "that the contests between the adverse powers of Babylon and Media, during which the dominions of the former were subjected to the miseries of foreign invasion, may alone be here intended. But Berosus, the Chaldean historian, as cited by Josephus, *Contra Apion*, lib. i., gives an account of civil violences and disorders that were committed in the land after the death of Nebuchadnezzar, whose son, Evil-merodach, was, after a short reign, murdered, and his throne usurped by one of his subjects. The usurper's son, who succeeded him, was also murdered in his turn, and the kingdom restored to the lawful heir; and all this happened in the course of a few years previous to the foreign invasion. These therefore, I think, are more likely to be the violence in this passage alluded to, and introduced as the forerunners of still greater devastations."

Verses 47-49. *Therefore behold, or rather, Then soon, the days come that I will do judgment upon the graven images, &c.*—That is, cause the statues of the gods of Babylon to be broken to pieces, or carried away. *Then the heaven and the earth, &c.,*

stand not still: remember the LORD <sup>a</sup> A. M. 3409.  
afar off, and let Jerusalem come into <sup>b</sup> B. C. 595.  
your mind.

51 <sup>d</sup> We are confounded, because we have  
heard reproach: shame hath covered our faces;  
for strangers are come into the sanctuaries of  
the LORD's house.

52 Wherefore behold, the days come, saith  
the LORD, <sup>e</sup> that I will do judgment upon her  
graven images: and through all her land the  
wounded shall groan.

53 <sup>f</sup> Though Babylon should mount up to  
heaven, and though she should fortify the  
height of her strength, *yet* from me shall spoil-  
ers come unto her, saith the LORD.

54 <sup>g</sup> A sound of a cry *cometh* from Babylon,  
and great destruction from the land of the  
Chaldeans:

*with Babylon, &c.*—<sup>18</sup> Or, *the country*.—<sup>c</sup> Chapter xlv. 28.  
<sup>d</sup> Psa. xlv. 15, 16; lxxix. 4.—<sup>e</sup> Verse 47.—<sup>f</sup> Chap. xlix. 16;  
Amos ix. 2; Obad. 4.—<sup>g</sup> Chap. l. 22.

*shall sing for Babylon*—The angels in heaven, and many nations of the earth, shall rejoice and praise God for the just punishment brought upon Babylon. *So at Babylon shall fall, or rather, Through Babylon have fallen, as נפלו* should be rendered, *the slain of all the earth*—The reason is here assigned why the heavens and the earth, and all that are therein, should rejoice at the fall of Babylon, because not only the people of Israel, but of the whole earth, likewise had been greatly annoyed, oppressed, and diminished by the power of that ambitious nation.

Verses 50, 51. *Ye that have escaped the sword*—Namely, the sword which wasted Babylon. *Go away, stand not still*—This is spoken to the Jews, who, attending to the advice given them, verse 45, withdrew from Babylon in time, and so escaped the sword by which they otherwise might have fallen. And here they are advised to flee still farther and farther off; but amidst all to remember their native country, and in particular Jerusalem, and the God they had worshipped there; and to pray for the restoration of the city and temple; and that he would avenge himself of the Babylonians for laying them in ruins. *We are confounded, because we have heard reproach*—The prophet here represents the words or thoughts of the pious exiles, when they heard the Babylonians speaking of Jehovah with contempt, and deriding them for worshipping him, who could not, they said, deliver his city and temple out of their hands, or preserve them from being destroyed. *For strangers are come into the sanctuaries of the Lord's house*—The word *sanctuaries*, in the plural, is likewise used Psa. lxxiii. 17, though our English reads there, *sanctuary*. Probably the several courts of the temple are meant by *sanctuaries*.

Verse 53. *Though Babylon should mount up to heaven*—Though Babylon were built upon the most

A. M. 3409. 55 Because the LORD hath spoiled  
B. C. 595.

Babylon, and destroyed out of her the great voice: when her waves do roar like great waters, a noise of their voice is uttered:

56 Because the spoiler is come upon her, even upon Babylon, and her mighty men are taken, every one of their bows is broken: <sup>h</sup> for the LORD God of recompenses shall surely requite.

57 <sup>i</sup> And I will make drunk her princes, and her wise men, her captains, and her rulers, and her mighty men: and they shall sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith <sup>k</sup> the King, whose name is the LORD of hosts.

<sup>h</sup> Psa. xciv. 1; Chap. l. 29; Ver. 24.—<sup>i</sup> Ver. 39.—<sup>k</sup> Chap. xlvi. 18; xlviii. 15.—<sup>l</sup> Or, The walls of broad Babylon.

lofty and inaccessible mountain, and though it were made as strong as nature and art could make it, yet still I would cause it to be spoiled.

Verses 55-57. *Because the Lord hath spoiled Babylon, and destroyed out of her the great voice*—“When cities are populous, they are of course noisy: see Isa. xxii. 2. Silence is therefore a mark of depopulation; and in this sense we are to understand God’s destroying, or taking away out of Babylon, the great noise, which, during the time of her prosperity, was constantly heard there, ‘the busy hum of men,’ as the poet very expressly calls it. In this manner the mystical Babylon is threatened, Rev. xviii. 22, 23. Compare chap. vii. 34; xvi. 9; xxv. 10.”—Blaney. *Every one of their bows is broken*—Their strength is quite broken, and they cannot defend themselves, or hurt their enemies. *I will make drunk her princes and her wise men, &c.*—I will permit her princes, her commanders, and directors to be intoxicated, so that they shall neglect what should be done for their defence, and thereby be slain.

Verse 58. *The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken, &c.*—That the walls of Babylon were of a prodigious height and thickness, Herodotus tells, who says, they were 200 cubits high, and 50 cubits in breadth, lib. i. cap. 178. “We are astonished,” says Bishop Lowth, in his note on Isa. xiii. 19, “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 travellers, that no remains, not the least traces, of these prodigious works, are to be found. 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. The walls of the city were built of the earth, digged out of 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

58 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; A. M. 3409.  
B. C. 595.

<sup>19</sup> The <sup>1</sup> broad walls of Babyon shall be utterly <sup>20</sup> broken, and her high gates shall be burned with fire; and <sup>m</sup> the people shall labour in vain, and the folk in the fire, and they shall be weary.

59 ¶ The word which Jeremiah the prophet commanded Seraiah the son of Neriah, the son of Maaseiah, when he went <sup>21</sup> with Zedekiah the king of Judah into Babylon in the fourth year of his reign. And *this* Seraiah was a <sup>22</sup> quiet prince.

60 So Jeremiah wrote in a book all the evil

<sup>1</sup> Verse 4.—<sup>20</sup> Or, made naked.—<sup>m</sup> Hab. ii. 13.—<sup>21</sup> Or, on the behalf of.—<sup>22</sup> Or, prince of Menucha, or, chief chamberlain.

of Babylon were of this kind is well known; and Berossus expressly says, (apud Joseph. *Antiq.* x. 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.” *Her high gates shall be burned, and the people shall labour in vain, &c.*—If the Chaldeans take never so much pains to quench the fire, it shall be to no purpose; and all their efforts to preserve their empire and city shall be as insignificant as if men wrought in the fire, which immediately destroys all the fruits of their labours. The words may be better translated, “And the people have laboured for a thing of naught, and the folks have wearied themselves for that which shall be fuel for the fire;” that is, the works which have been erected with such incredible labour and expense, shall be a prey to the flames.

Verse 59. *The word which Jeremiah commanded Seraiah, when he went with Zedekiah*—The Hebrew בלכתו את צדקיהו, is rendered by the LXX., επορευετο παρα Ζεδεκιαυ, when he went from Zedekiah, on his behalf, or by virtue of his commission; which seems to be the meaning of the clause; for we have no reason to suppose that Zedekiah went in person to Babylon at that time. Instead of, *This Seraiah was a quiet prince*, as our translators render משר מנוחה, the LXX. read, αρχων δωρεων, a prince, or chief master of gifts, which Blaney interprets to mean, chief of the embassy, or who had the principal charge of the present sent from Zedekiah to the king of Babylon, judging, that in these words is specified the business on which Seraiah was sent. He was employed to carry the present, or customary tribute, which Zedekiah was obliged to pay to the king of Babylon, in acknowledgment of his subjection and vassalage.

Verses 60-62. *So Jeremiah wrote in a book*—Namely, in the two foregoing chapters; *all the evil that should come upon Babylon*—This was done that it might be known even in Babylon itself that

A. M. 3409. that should come upon Babylon, *even*  
B. C. 595. all these words that are written against  
Babylon.

61 And Jeremiah said to Seraiah, When thou comest to Babylon, and shalt see, and shalt read all these words ;

62 Then shalt thou say, O LORD, thou hast spoken against this place, to cut it off, that <sup>a</sup> none shall remain in it, neither man nor beast,

<sup>a</sup> Chap. l. 3, 39 ; Verse 29.—<sup>23</sup> Heb. *desolations*.

Jeremiah had foretold the destruction of that city, six years before the Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem. And Jeremiah said, *When thou shalt see and read all these words*—This is probably to be understood, not of a mere private reading of them by himself, but of his reading them to the Jews in Babylon, (namely, those that had been carried thither in Jehoiakim's captivity,) to comfort them under their exile, and, perhaps, in the hearing of some of the Babylonians themselves. *Then shalt thou say*—Looking up to God, and making a solemn protestation of the divine authority, and unquestionable certainty, of that which thou hast read ; *O Lord, thou hast spoken against this place*—And I believe what thou hast spoken. Thou hast passed sentence upon Babylon, and it shall be executed. This is like the angel's protestation, Rev. xix. 9, concerning the destruction of the New Testament Babylon, *These are the true sayings of God* : and Rev. xxi. 6, *These words are true and faithful. To cut it off, that none shall remain in it, &c.*—Though Seraiah and the captive Jews see Babylon flourishing, yet, having read this prophecy, they must foresee Babylon falling, and by virtue of this foresight, must learn neither to envy its pomp nor fear its power. Thus, reader, when we observe what this world is, how glittering are its shows, and how flattering its proposals, let us read in the book of the Lord, that its *fashion passeth away*, and that it shall shortly be *cut off*, and made *desolate for ever*, and we shall learn to look upon it with a holy contempt, and to die to all its false glories and illusive joys.

but that it shall be <sup>23</sup> desolate for ever. A. M. 3409.

63 And it shall be, when thou hast  
made an end of reading this book, <sup>o</sup> that thou shalt bind a stone to it, and cast it into the midst of Euphrates :

64 And thou shalt say, Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her : <sup>p</sup> and they shall be weary. Thus far *are* the words of Jeremiah.

<sup>o</sup> Rev. xviii. 21.—<sup>p</sup> Verse 58.

Verses 63, 64. *And thou shalt bind a stone to it, and cast it into the midst of Euphrates*—The prophets, as we have seen, frequently gave sensible representations of the judgments they foretold : see chap. xix. 10. This now given was a significant emblem of Babylon's sinking irrecoverably under the judgments here denounced against her : compare Rev. xviii. 21. This threatening was in a literal sense fulfilled by Cyrus's breaking down the head or dam of the great lake, which was on the west side of the city, in order to turn the course of the river that way ; for no care being afterward taken to repair the breach, the whole country round it was overflowed. And the prophecy of Isaiah, chap. xiv. 23, foretelling that the country of *Babylon should become a possession for the bittern and pools of water*, was literally fulfilled.—Prideaux and Lowth. *And they shall be weary*—This clause, expressed by one word in the Hebrew, namely, *יָגֵוּ*, is not to be met with in the translation of the LXX., “nor does it appear to me,” says Blaney, “to be authentic, notwithstanding the concurrence of the later versions and MSS. The sense is entire and complete without it ; and the addition serves only to cause perplexity and confusion. The word seems to have been added by some transcriber, whose eye was caught by it at the close of the preceding paragraph, verse 58,” where the same word occurs. *Thus far are the words of Jeremiah*—Here the prophecies of Jeremiah end : the following chapter being added by some other hand, either in the lifetime of Jeremiah, and by his consent, or after his death.

## CHAPTER LII.

This chapter contains a brief history of the captivity, nearly the same, word for word, as it is related in the second book of Kings, chap. xxiv. 18–20, and chap. xxv., with some few additions. Some have supposed it placed here as a proper introduction to the book of Lamentations. But more probably the design was, by immediately subjoining this historical narrative of the desolations of the Jewish nation to the predictions of Jeremiah concerning them, to give a nearer view of the exact accomplishment of the divine word of prophecy. That this narrative could not be added by Jeremiah is manifest, not only by the last clause of the preceding chapter, but also by this consideration, that a great part of it is a repetition of what he himself had related in the xxxixth and xlth chapters of his prophecy. As therefore it must have been subjoined by some other person, it is most probable it was done by Ezra, who is commonly supposed to have revised the sacred writings after the return of the Jews from Babylon, and to have collected them into one body. We have here, (1.) The reign of Zedekiah rendered unhappy by his sins and punishments, 1–3. (2.) The besieging and taking of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, 4–7. (3.) The severe usage which

*Zedekiah and his princes met with from Nebuchadnezzar, 8-11. (4.) The destruction of the temple and the city 12-14. (5.) The carrying away of the people into captivity, 15, 16, with an account of the numbers of those carried away, 28-30. (6.) The taking away of the plunder of the temple, 17-23. (7.) The murder of the two chief priests and seventy-two other persons of rank in cold blood, by Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah, 24-27. (8.) King Jehoiachin is released and honoured after Nebuchadnezzar's death, as an earnest of the deliverance of the Jews, 31-34.*

A. M. 3415. **ZEDEKIAH** was <sup>a</sup> one and twenty years old when he <sup>1</sup> began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah.

2 And he did *that which was evil* in the eyes of the LORD, according to all that Jehoiakim had done.

3 For through the anger of the LORD it came to pass in Jerusalem and Judah, till he had cast them out from his presence, that Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

B. C. 590. 4 ¶ And it came to pass in the <sup>b</sup> ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, in the tenth *day* of the month, *that* Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came, he and all his army against Jerusalem, and pitched against it, and built forts against it round about.

5 So the city was besieged unto the eleventh year of King Zedekiah.

B. C. 588. 6 And in the fourth month, in the ninth *day* of the month, the famine was sore in the city, so that there was no bread for the people of the land.

7 Then the city was broken up, and all the men of war fled, and went forth out of the city by night by the way of the gate between the two walls, which was by the king's garden ;

<sup>a</sup> 2 Kings xxiv. 18.—<sup>1</sup> Heb. reigned.—<sup>b</sup> 2 Kings xxv. 1-27; Ch. xxxix. 1; Zech. viii. 19.—<sup>c</sup> Ch. xxxii. 4.—<sup>d</sup> Ezk. xii. 13. <sup>2</sup> Heb. blinded.—<sup>3</sup> Or, fetters.—<sup>4</sup> Heb. house of the wards.

NOTES ON CHAPTER LII.

Verses 1-11. *Zedekiah was one and twenty years old*—The first three verses of this chapter are word for word the same with 2 Kings xxiv. 18-20, where see the notes; and for the six following verses, see those on 2 Kings xxv. 1-6. *Where he gave judgment upon him*—Namely, for rebelling against him when he had taken an oath of allegiance to him. Of Nebuchadnezzar's slaying the sons of Zedekiah, putting out his eyes, binding him with chains, &c., see note on 2 Kings xxv. 7.

Verses 12, 13. *Now in the fifth month*—This gave occasion to that solemn fast of the fifth month, observed in the times of the captivity: see Zech. vii. 3-5; viii. 19. *In the tenth day of the month*—In the parallel place, 2 Kings xxv. 8, we read, *on the seventh day*. This difference some attempt to reconcile, by

(now the Chaldeans were by the city round about;) and they went by the way of the plain. A. M. 3416. B. C. 588.

8 ¶ But the army of the Chaldeans pursued after the king, and overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho; and all his army was scattered from him.

9 ° Then they took the king, and carried him up unto the king of Babylon to Riblah, in the land of Hamath; where he gave judgment upon him.

10 <sup>d</sup> And the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes: he slew also all the princes of Judah, in Riblah.

11 Then he <sup>2</sup> put out the eyes of Zedekiah; and the king of Babylon bound him in <sup>3</sup> chains, and carried him to Babylon, and put him in <sup>4</sup> prison till the day of his death.

12 ¶ ° Now in the fifth month, in the tenth *day* of the month, <sup>f</sup> which was the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, <sup>g</sup> came Nebuzar-adan, <sup>h</sup> captain <sup>e</sup> of the guard, which <sup>7</sup> served the king of Babylon, into Jerusalem.

13 And burned the house of the LORD, and the king's house; and all the houses of Jerusalem, and all the houses of the great men, burned he with fire:

14 And all the army of the Chaldeans, that

<sup>e</sup> Zech. vii. 5; viii. 19.—<sup>f</sup> Verse 29.—<sup>g</sup> Chapter xxxix. 9. <sup>h</sup> Or, chief marshal.—<sup>6</sup> Heb. chief of the executioners, or, slaughtermen. And so verse 14, &c.—<sup>7</sup> Heb. stood before.

supposing that the one place may speak of the day Nebuzar-adan set out from Riblah, and the other of the day that he arrived at Jerusalem; or else, that he came on the seventh, but did not set fire to the building till the tenth. "But it is more likely," says Blaney, "to have arisen from some mistake of the transcriber, perhaps, in setting down then umbers at full length, which were expressed by numeral letters in the old copies. And in this instance such a mistake might easily happen between the <sup>†</sup> and the <sup>‡</sup>, of which the first stands for seven, the latter for ten." *And burned the house of the Lord*—After it had stood, says Josephus, four hundred and seventy years; but Archbishop Usher reckons it only four hundred and twenty-four years from the laying of the first foundation by Solomon: see note on 2 Kings xxv. 8.

A. M. 3416. were with the captain of the guard, B. C. 588. brake down all the walls of Jerusalem round about.

15 <sup>b</sup> Then Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard carried away captive *certain* of the poor of the people, and the residue of the people that remained in the city, and those that fell away, that fell to the king of Babylon, and the rest of the multitude.

16 But Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard left *certain* of the poor of the land for vine-dressers and for husbandmen.

17 ¶ <sup>i</sup> Also the <sup>k</sup> pillars of brass that were in the house of the LORD, and the bases, and the brazen sea that was in the house of the LORD, the Chaldeans brake, and carried all the brass of them to Babylon.

18 <sup>l</sup> The caldrons also, and the <sup>o</sup> shovels, and the snuffers, and the <sup>q</sup> bowls, and the spoons, and all the vessels of brass wherewith they ministered, took they away.

19 And the basins, and the <sup>10</sup> fire-pans, and the bowls, and the caldrons, and the candle-sticks, and the spoons, and the cups; that which was of gold, in gold, and that which was of silver, in silver, took the captain of the guard away.

<sup>b</sup> Chapter xxxix. 8, 9.—<sup>1</sup> Chap. xxvii. 19.—<sup>k</sup> 1 Kings vii. 15, 23, 27, 50.—<sup>l</sup> Exodus xxvii. 3; 2 Kings xxv. 14, 15, 16. <sup>o</sup> Or, instruments to remove the ashes.—<sup>q</sup> Or, basins.—<sup>10</sup> Or, censers.—<sup>m</sup> 1 Kings vii. 47.—<sup>11</sup> Heb. their brass.

Verses 17-20. Also the pillars of brass, &c., the Chaldeans brake—See note on 2 Kings xxv. 13. The temple was rifled of its riches and furniture at several times. The first was when Nebuchadnezzar came up against Jehoiakim, Dan. i. 2. The second time was at the captivity of Jechoniah, chap. xxvii. 19; 2 Kings xxiv. 13; and now at the final destruction of the city and temple they made a clear riddance of all its ornaments. And twelve brazen bulls that were under the bases—Or rather, which were instead of bases, to support the brazen sea, (1 Kings vii. 25,) the Hebrew word תחת, in other places, signifying instead, or, in the place of another. So the LXX. understand it here.

Ver. 21-23. The height of one pillar was eighteen cubits—The same account is given of the height of these pillars, 1 Kings vii. 15: but in 2 Chron. iii. 15, it is said, that both the pillars made thirty-five cubits; which two texts may be easily reconciled by allowing one cubit for the basis. And a fillet of twelve cubits—So that the diameter was almost four cubits. The thickness whereof was four fingers—The pillar being hollow, the thickness of the work that encompassed the hollow space was four fingers over. There were ninety and six pomegranates on

20 The two pillars, one sea, and A. M. 3416. twelve brazen bulls that were under B. C. 588. the bases, which King Solomon had made in the house of the LORD: <sup>m</sup> the <sup>11</sup> brass of all these vessels was without weight.

21 And concerning the <sup>n</sup> pillars, the height of one pillar was eighteen cubits; and a <sup>12</sup> fillet of twelve cubits did compass it; and the thickness thereof was four fingers: it was hollow.

22 And a chapter of brass was upon it; and the height of one chapter was five cubits, with net-work and pomegranates upon the chapters round about, all of brass. The second pillar also and the pomegranates were like unto these.

23 And there were ninety and six pomegranates on a side; and <sup>o</sup> all the pomegranates upon the net-work were a hundred round about.

24 ¶ And <sup>p</sup> the captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest, <sup>q</sup> and Zephaniah the second priest, and the three keepers of the <sup>13</sup> door:

25 He took also out of the city a eunuch, which had the charge of the men of war; and seven men of them that <sup>14</sup> were near the king's

<sup>n</sup> 1 Kings vii. 15; 2 Kings xxv. 17; 2 Chronicles iii. 15. <sup>12</sup> Hebrew, thread.—<sup>o</sup> 1 Kings vii. 20.—<sup>p</sup> 2 Kings xxv. 18. <sup>q</sup> Chapter xxi. 1; xxix. 25.—<sup>13</sup> Heb. threshold.—<sup>14</sup> Heb. saw the face of the king.

a side—Or, toward every wind, as Blaney very properly renders תחת. "In 1 Kings vii. 42, and 2 Chron. iv. 13, it is said, there were four hundred pomegranates for each net-work or wreath. The mode of expression here is different, but amounts to exactly the same. For divide the two pillars into four quarters, according to the four winds; and let ninety-six pomegranates stand opposite to each of the four winds upon the two pillars; the whole number in front of the four winds, taken together, will be three hundred and eighty-four. But they were in four rows, two on each pillar, and in each row must have been four angular pomegranates, that could not be said to be opposite to any of the four winds, consequently, sixteen angular ones in the four rows; which sixteen being added to three hundred and eighty-four, make up the number of pomegranates in all four hundred; that is, a hundred in a row of wreathen work round about."

Verses 24, 25. And the captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest—1 Chron. vi. 14, he was the father of Ezra; Ezra vii. 1. And Zephaniah the second priest—See note on chap. xxix. 26; 2 Kings xxv. 18. And the three keepers of the door—These were not the ordinary porters, who were

A. M. 3416. person, which were found in the city ;  
B. C. 589. and the <sup>15</sup> principal scribe of the host,  
who mustered the people of the land ; and three-  
score men of the people of the land, that were  
found in the midst of the city.

26 So Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard  
took them, and brought them to the king of  
Babylon to Riblah.

27 ¶ And the king of Babylon smote them,  
and put them to death in Riblah in the land of  
Hamath. Thus Judah was carried away cap-  
tive out of his own land.

B. C. 600. 28 ¶ <sup>r</sup> This is the people whom  
Nebuchadrezzar carried away cap-  
tive : in the <sup>s</sup> seventh year <sup>t</sup> three thousand  
Jews and three and twenty :

\* Or, scribe of the captain of the host.—<sup>r</sup> 2 Kings xxiv. 2.  
<sup>s</sup> 2 Kings xxiv. 12.—<sup>t</sup> 2 Kings xxiv. 14.

taken from among the Levites, but were priests who  
stood at the door to receive the offerings of the peo-  
ple, and thus were keepers of the sacred treasury,  
an office of high trust and consideration : see 2 Kings  
xii. 9, and xxiii. 4. He took also out of the city a  
eunuch—An officer : so it is in the parallel place,  
2 Kings xxv. 19, where, instead of seven men, we  
read five. Josephus agrees with the reading here.  
And the principal scribe of the host—The muster-  
master-general, as we style him, or secretary of war.  
And threescore men that were in the midst of the city  
—Of whom see note on 2 Kings xxv. 19.

Verses 28-30. This is the people whom Nebuchad-  
nezzar carried away captive—"These verses are  
not inserted in 2 Kings xxv. Nor are they to be  
found here, according to the Roman and Alexandrian  
editions of the LXX. ; but in the Complutensian  
they are, and in two MSS. collated by Dr. Grabe ;  
also in Theodotion's version in the Hexapla. All  
the other ancient versions acknowledge them ; and  
they are not omitted in any of the collated Hebrew  
MSS. ; so that there is no doubt of their being genu-  
ine. But are we to conclude from them, that the  
whole number of the Jews, whom Nebuchadnezzar,  
in all his expeditions, carried into captivity, was no  
more than four thousand six hundred ? This cannot  
be true, for he carried away more than twice that  
number at one time ; which is expressly said to have  
been in the eighth year of his reign, 2 Kings xxv.  
12-16. Before that time he had carried off a num-  
ber of captives from Jerusalem in the first year of  
his reign, among whom were Daniel and his compan-  
ions, Dan. i. 3-6. And of these Berosus, the  
Chaldean historian, speaks, as cited by Josephus,  
Ant., lib. x. cap. 11. These are confessedly not taken  
notice of here. And as the taking and burning of  
Jerusalem are in this very chapter said to have been  
in the fourth and fifth months of the 19th year of  
Nebuchadnezzar, those who were carried into cap-  
tivity, at the date of those events, cannot possibly be

29 <sup>u</sup> In the eighteenth year of Nebu-  
chadrezzar he carried away captive  
from Jerusalem eight hundred thirty and two  
<sup>16</sup> persons :

A. M. 3442.  
B. C. 590.

30 In the three and twentieth year  
of Nebuchadrezzar, Nebuzar-adan the  
captain of the guard carried away captive of  
the Jews seven hundred forty and five persons :  
all the persons were four thousand and six  
hundred.

About  
B. C. 585.

31 ¶ <sup>x</sup> And it came to pass in the  
seven and thirtieth year of the capti-  
vity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the  
twelfth month, in the five and twentieth day  
of the month, that Evil-merodach king of Baby-  
lon in the first year of his reign <sup>y</sup> lifted up the

About  
B. C. 562.

<sup>u</sup> Verse 12 ; Chapter xxxix. 9.—<sup>16</sup> Heb. souls.—<sup>r</sup> 2 Kings  
xxv. 27, 28, 29, 30.—<sup>y</sup> Gen. xl. 13, 20.

the same with those that are said to be carried away  
either in the 18th or 23d year of that prince. Nor  
indeed is it credible, that the number carried away  
at the time the city was taken, and the whole coun-  
try reduced, could be so few as eight hundred and  
thirty-two. Here then we have three deportations,  
and those the most considerable ones, in the 1st, the  
8th, and 19th years of Nebuchadnezzar, sufficiently  
distinguished from those in his 7th, 18th, and 23d  
years. So that it seems most reasonable to conclude,  
with Archbishop Usher, that by the latter three the  
historian meant to point out deportations of a lesser  
kind, not elsewhere noticed in direct terms in Scrip-  
ture."—Blaney.

Verses 31, 32. In the seven and thirtieth year of  
the captivity of Jehoiachin, &c.—This note of time  
confirms the observation formerly made, namely,  
that the Scripture computation of the beginning of  
Nebuchadnezzar's reign anticipates that of the Ba-  
bylonians by two years, which two years he reigned  
with his father : see note on chap. xxv. 1. In the  
five and twentieth day of the month, Evil-merodach  
lifted up the head of Jehoiachin—Released him out  
of prison, where he had lain thirty-seven years, and  
advanced him. In the parallel place, 2 Kings xxv.  
27, where see the notes, we read, the seven and twen-  
tieth day of the month, which difference between  
the two passages, Lowth thinks may be reconciled,  
by supposing that his advancement was resolved  
upon the 25th day, but not brought to pass till the  
27th. In the first year of his reign—Hebrew, בשנת  
בליכרו, literally, in the year of his reign, or king-  
dom, that is, the year coincident with the beginning  
of it, from whence the date is taken. So that the  
word first is virtually implied in the phrase. Spake  
kindly unto him, and set his throne above the throne  
of kings—See 2 Kings xxv. 28-30. This clause may  
perhaps be more properly rendered, Set his seat  
above the seat of the kings, which may easily be un-  
derstood to signify, that the king of Babylon showed

A. M. 3442. head of Jehoiachin king of Judah,  
B. C. 562. and brought him forth out of prison.

32 And spake <sup>17</sup> kindly unto him, and set his throne above the throne of the kings that *were* with him in Babylon.

33 And changed his prison garments: \* and

<sup>17</sup> Heb. *good things with him.*—2 Sam. ix. 13.

him more respect and honour than he did to any of the other captive princes, by placing him nearest to himself: see Esth. iii. 1. "It is probable," says Blaney, "the phrase may have proceeded from the custom of placing cushions for persons of more than ordinary distinction in the place allotted them to sit in." See Harmer, chap. vi. observ. 26.

Verses 33, 34. *And changed his prison garments*—This has been considered by some an act of generosity in Evil-merodach, giving the captive king new garments, more suitable to his royal dignity than those he wore in prison. But Blaney thinks "it was rather the act of Jehoiachin himself, who, out of respect to the king of Babylon's presence, and to mark his just sense of the favour shown him, no longer neglected his person and dress, as when a prisoner, and in affliction, but put on new apparel more adapt-

he did continually eat bread before A. M. 3442.  
him all the days of his life. B. C. 562.

34 And *for* his diet, there was a continual diet given him of the king of Babylon, <sup>18</sup> every day a portion until the day of his death, all the days of his life.

<sup>18</sup> Heb. *the matter of the day in his day.*

ed to the change in his circumstances. So Joseph, when he was sent for out of prison to appear before Pharaoh, first shaved himself, and changed his raiment, Gen. xli. 14. David did the same after he had ceased mourning for his child, before he went into the house of God, 2 Sam. xii. 20. Mr. Harmer, (chap. vi. obs. 44, 45,) observes, both that to change the garments often is in the East a mark of respect in visiting; and also that the putting on of new clothes is thought by those people to be very requisite, and indeed almost necessary, for the due solemnization of a time of rejoicing." *And there was a continual diet given him of the king*—As it appears from the preceding verse that Jehoiachin himself sat at the king of Babylon's own table, this seems to have been an allowance for the maintenance of his attendants and family.

THE  
LAMENTATIONS OF JEREMIAH.

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ARGUMENT.

THIS book has no title in the Hebrew, but, like the five books of Moses, takes its name from the first word of it, *איכה*, *Echah*, *How*. The Jewish commentators, however, entitle it, as the Greeks, Latins, our translators, and others do, *Lamentations*; an appellation expressive of the subject matter of it, the prophet lamenting in it, and that most pathetically, the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, the desolation of Judea, and the captivity of God's ancient people. Some indeed, and those men of eminence in literature, have supposed that the death of Josiah is the chief subject of these mournful poems, and that these are the lamentations mentioned 2 Chron. xxxv. 25, as being composed by Jeremiah on that occasion. But, as Blaney justly observes, "whatever is become of those lamentations, these cannot possibly be the same; for their whole tenor, from beginning to end, plainly shows them not to have been composed till the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple, and the depopulation of the country by the transmigration of all its inhabitants; which events are not at all described in the style of prophetic prediction, but are alluded to and bewailed as what had been already fully accomplished. And that this was the most ancient opinion held concerning them, appears from the introductory title prefixed to the Greek version of the LXX., and from thence, probably, transmitted to the Latin Vulgate:" (see note on verse 1:) but "the internal evidence is sufficient to ascertain both the date and the occasion of these compositions; nor can we admire too much 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." "Never," says an unquestionable judge of these matters, "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. What can be more elegant and poetical than the image of the city, which was formerly the pride of nations, sitting by herself, absorbed in grief, and a widow; deserted by her friends, betrayed by her relations, stretching out her hands in vain, and finding no one to comfort her? What can be more elegant than the image of the *ways of Zion*, which are represented as grieving, and demanding the celebration of their solemn festivals? But if we should produce all the beautiful passages, we should be obliged to transcribe the whole poem." See Bishop Lowth, *de Sacra Poesi Hebræorum*, Prælec. xxii. Indeed, as has been observed, 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.

These *Lamentations of Jeremiah* are very properly distributed into five chapters, each of them containing a distinct elegy, consisting of twenty-two periods, or stanzas, according to the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet; although it is in the first four chapters only that the several periods begin, acrostic-wise, with the different letters following each other in alphabetical order. By this contrivance the metre is more precisely marked and ascertained, particularly in the third chapter, where each period contains three verses, which have all the same initial letter. The first two chapters in like manner consist of triplets, excepting only the seventh period of the first, and the nineteenth of the second, which have each a supernumerary line. The fourth chapter resembles the three former in metre, but the periods are only couplets. In the fifth chapter the periods are couplets, but of a considerably shorter measure. See Blaney.

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CHAPTER I.

*The prophet begins this his first elegy with mourning over the sad change of condition which his country had experienced; at the same time sorrowfully confessing, that all her miseries were of her own procuring; the result of national wickedness and rebellion against God, 1-11. In the midst of the discourse he, on a sudden, withdraws himself from view, and leaves Jerusalem to continue the complaint which she makes, (1,) To friends, entreating their compassionate consideration, 12-17. (2,) To God, justifying his righteous procedure in their affliction, but humbly soliciting, from his divine compassion, that comfort and redress which she found it in vain to look for from any other quarter. 18-22.*

A. M. 3416. **HOW** doth the city sit solitary,  
B. C. 588. *that was* full of people! <sup>a</sup> *how*  
is she become as a widow! she *that was* great  
among the nations, and <sup>b</sup> princess among the  
provinces, *how* is she become tributary!

2 She <sup>c</sup> weepeth sore in the <sup>d</sup> night, and her

<sup>a</sup> Isa. xlvi. 7, 8.—<sup>b</sup> Ezra iv. 20.—<sup>c</sup> Jer. xlii. 17.—<sup>d</sup> Job  
vii. 3; Psa. vi. 6.—<sup>e</sup> Verse 19; Psa. cxxvii. 7; Jer. iv. 30;

## NOTES ON CHAPTER I.

Verse 1. *How doth the city sit solitary*—The short history of the desolations of the Jewish nation, contained in the fifty-second chapter of Jeremiah, formerly stood as a preface to the Lamentations; but, instead of it, the Greek and Latin copies have a short introduction, which may be thus translated: "And it came to pass after that Israel had been carried away captive, and Jerusalem was become desolate, that Jeremiah sat weeping, and lamented with this lamentation over Jerusalem, and said," *How, &c.* The book being undoubtedly poetical, as a specimen of the kind of poetry which it contains, the reader is here presented with Blaney's translation of the first stanza.

"How does she sit solitary, the city that was full of people! She is become as a widow, that was great among the nations! She that was sovereign over provinces, is become tributary!"

Jerusalem is here represented as a weeping female, sitting solitary on the ground without any attendant or comforter, the multitude of her inhabitants being dispersed or destroyed. It is remarkable, that in times similar to this, that is, in the reign of the Emperor Vespasian, a coin was struck, on which Judea is represented under the image of a woman sitting in tears beneath a palm-tree. *How is she become as a widow!* &c.—Cities are commonly described as the mothers of their inhabitants, and their kings and princes as their husbands: so, when they are bereaved of these, they are said to be widows and childless. Thus Jerusalem, having lost her king and people, and being forsaken of her God, who was in a peculiar sense a husband to her, is here represented as sitting alone in that pensive melancholy condition. *She that was great among the nations, &c.*—The kings of Judah, in their flourishing state, extended their conquests over the Philistines, Edomites, and other neighbouring countries; and by thus enlarging their dominions, greatly advanced the power of the metropolis of their kingdom. But now, being under subjection to the king of Babylon, and forced to pay tribute to him, she was made no more account of than any other city under the same yoke: see Calmet and Louth.

Verse 2. *She weepeth sore in the night*—In the Hebrew, according to the idiom of that language, it is, *Weeping she weepeth*, which our old English version renders *She weepeth continually*. The expression, *in the night*, is interpreted by some to signify her condition was so unhappy that, though oppressed with calamities, she did not dare to utter her complaints, unless secretly in the night, for fear

tears *are* on her cheeks: <sup>e</sup> among all <sup>f</sup> her lovers <sup>g</sup> she hath none to comfort <sup>h</sup> her: all her friends have dealt treacherously with her, they are become her enemies.

3 <sup>i</sup> Judah is gone into captivity because of affliction, and <sup>j</sup> because of great servitude:

xxx. 14; Ezra xxv. 3-15; Obad. 10-14.—<sup>f</sup> Verses 9, 16, 17, 21.—<sup>g</sup> Jer. lii. 27.—<sup>h</sup> Heb. for the greatness of servitude.

of irritating her enemies. *Among all her lovers she hath none to comfort her*—Those nations that courted her alliance in the time of her prosperity, or those allies, whose friendship she courted by sinful compliances, have forsaken her in her affliction, and joined with her enemies in insulting over her. "Several of the neighbouring princes sent their ambassadors to Zedekiah, Jer. xxvii. 3, &c., to engage him, as appears from the context, to join them in a confederacy against the power of the king of Babylon. But they not only universally failed, and deserted Judah in the time of need, but most of them turned against her, and took a malignant pleasure in aggravating her misfortunes." See Blaney and the margin.

Verse 3. *Judah is gone into captivity because of affliction, &c.*—Her miseries have received their finishing stroke in a total captivity among, and bondage to, heathen and infidels, because of the oppression exercised by her rulers and others, and the servitude to which they obliged their subjects and inferiors. This is the interpretation adopted by the Chaldee paraphrast, who represents the Jews as having been carried into captivity, in retaliation of their having oppressed the widows and the fatherless among them, and prolonged illegally the bondage of their brethren who had been sold for slaves. But, as the word *לה*, here used, does not necessarily signify to go into captivity, but often to remove, or go into exile, whether voluntarily or by compulsion; Blaney thinks that "a voluntary migration of the Jews is here intended, many of whom, previous to the captivity, had left their country, and retired into Egypt and other parts, to avoid the oppressions and servitude that they had reason to apprehend from the Chaldeans, who had invaded, or were about to invade, their land. Either of these senses," however, he observes, "is competent; and the interpretation according to them will be found to suit perfectly with the subsequent members of the period." *She findeth no rest*—No satisfaction of mind, no settled place of abode, no remission of labour, terror, and suffering; but, deprived of all peace and comfort, is continually exposed to every insult and outrage, and to all manner of oppressions and vexations. *All her persecutors*—Or *pursuers*, rather; *overtook her between the straits*—That is, all her enemies have taken the opportunity of her being in a difficult and distressed condition, to oppress and injure her. The expression is metaphorical, taken from those who hunt their prey, which they are wont to drive into some strait and difficult passage, from whence it cannot escape.

A. M. 3416. <sup>b</sup> she dwelleth among the heathen, B. C. 598. she findeth no rest: all her persecutors overtook her between the straits.

4 The ways of Zion do mourn, because none come to the solemn feasts: all her gates are desolate: her priests sigh, her virgins are afflicted, and she is in bitterness.

5 Her adversaries <sup>1</sup> are the chief, her enemies prosper; for the LORD hath afflicted her <sup>2</sup> for the multitude of her transgressions: her <sup>1</sup> children are gone into captivity before the enemy.

6 And from the daughter of Zion all her beauty is departed: her princes are become like

<sup>b</sup> Deut. xxviii. 64, 65; Chap. ii. 9.—<sup>1</sup> Deut. xxviii. 43, 44. <sup>2</sup> Jer. xxx. 14, 15; Daniel ix. 7, 16.—<sup>1</sup> Jer. lii. 28.—<sup>3</sup> Or, desirable, Verse 10.

Verses 4-6. *The ways of Zion do mourn*—The highways leading to Zion, which used to be thronged with people going to the solemn feasts before the Lord, now, as it were, mourned on account of no persons travelling in them for that purpose. *All her gates are desolate*—The gates of Jerusalem, or of the temple: few or none passing through them, the city and country being depopulated; and there are no longer any courts of judicature, or assemblies of people, held in her gates. *Her priests sigh*—Because no victims, or other oblations, are offered, the temple and altar being destroyed. *Her virgins are afflicted*—Her calamities afflict the young as well as the old, and persons of all ages and ranks are in bitterness. *Her adversaries are the chief*—Her enemies have got the advantage over her, and she is become their vassal. This was a judgment that Moses threatened to them if they proved disobedient, Deut. xxviii. 43; namely, that their enemies should be the head, and they the tail. *For the Lord hath afflicted her*—Hath fulfilled his threatenings, denounced in case of disobedience. *For the multitude of her transgressions*—The procuring, provoking cause of all her calamities: for whoever may be made the instruments, God is the author of all these troubles: it is the Lord that has afflicted her, and he has done it as a righteous judge, because of her transgressions, which have been very many as well as very great. *Hence her children, her inhabitants, are gone into captivity before the enemy*—Are forced into slavery by the Chaldeans, as cattle are driven in herds by them that sell them. *And from the daughter of Zion all her beauty is departed*—All the glory of God's sanctuary, and the comely order of his worship, and all the beauty of holiness. *Her princes are like harts, &c.*—That upon the first alarm betake themselves to flight, and make no resistance: they are become spiritless, have lost their courage, given way and fled before their enemies.

Verse 7. *Jerusalem remembered in her affliction and misery*. The word *מיוּדֵי*, here rendered misery, frequently signifies banishment and captiv-

harts that find no pasture, and they are gone without strength before the pursuer. A. M. 3416. B. C. 598.

7 Jerusalem remembered in the days of her affliction and of her miseries all her <sup>2</sup> pleasant things that she had in the days of old, when her people fell into the hand of the enemy, and none did help her: the adversaries saw her, and did mock at her sabbaths.

8 <sup>m</sup> Jerusalem hath grievously sinned; therefore she <sup>3</sup> is removed: all that honoured her despise her, because <sup>a</sup> they have seen her nakedness: yea, she sigheth, and turneth backward.

<sup>m</sup> 1 Kings viii. 46.—<sup>3</sup> Hebrew, is become a removing, or, wandering.—<sup>a</sup> Jeremiah xlii. 22, 26; Ezekiel xvi. 37; xxiii. 29; Hosea ii. 10.

ity. The LXX. render it *ἀπομῶν*, rejections, or expulsions; all her pleasant things—All her former riches and glory, and the various benefits she enjoyed from God's favour and protection, particularly the honour and happiness of having his peculiar presence in the temple, and among his people, and the manifestation he gave of his will by the prophets. Nothing is more natural than for persons, who have fallen into adversity, to recollect the advantages they had formerly possessed, and to feel an aggravation of their sufferings in proportion to the greatness of the contrast. *The adversaries saw her, and did mock at her sabbaths*—Not considering the excellent uses those days were designed for; namely, to give men a proper degree of relaxation from labour; leisure to attend upon the service of God, and learn the duties of religion; and to celebrate the creation of the world, that wonderful effect of infinite wisdom, power, and goodness, which can never be sufficiently extolled. The heathen writers, it must be observed, commonly ridicule the Jews' celebration of their sabbaths as a mark of their sloth and idleness.

Verses 8, 9. *Jerusalem hath grievously sinned*—Hebrew, *חַטָּא חַטָּא*, in sinning hath sinned, or hath sinned sin: that is, sinned wilfully and deliberately; hath sinned that sin which of all others is the abominable thing which the Lord hates, the sin of idolatry. The sins of Jerusalem, which makes such a profession of worshipping and serving the true God, and therefore of obeying his will, and enjoys such privileges, are of all others the most grievous sins. *Therefore she is removed*—The greatest part of her inhabitants are either carried away captive to Babylon, or are fled for refuge and safety to some of the neighbouring nations. Blaney translates this clause, *Therefore hath she been as one set apart for unclean*, instead of *לנירה*, a word that occurs nowhere else, reading *לנירה*, after nineteen MSS., which signifies a woman in her state of separation. *All that honoured her, despise her*—She hath made herself vile, and therefore is justly vilified. *Because they have seen her nakedness*—Have seen her deprived of all her

A. M. 3416. 9 Her filthiness is in her skirts; she B. C. 588. ° remembereth not her last end; therefore she came down wonderfully: ° she had no comforter. O LORD, behold my affliction: for the enemy hath magnified himself.

10 The adversary hath spread out his hand upon ° all her ° pleasant things: for she hath seen that ° the heathen entered into her sanctuary, whom thou didst command that ° they should not enter into thy congregation.

11 All her people sigh, ° they seek bread; they

° Deuteronomy xxxii. 29; Isaiah xlvi. 7.—° Verses 2, 17, 21.—° Verse 7.—° Or, *desirable*.—° Jer. li. 51.—° Deut. xxiii. 3; Neh. xiii. 1.

strength and glory. As she had defiled herself with idolatry, (called spiritual adultery in Scripture,) so God has ordered her to be exposed to shame like a common harlot. *Yea, she sighth and turneth backward*—As ashamed to be seen in such a despicable condition, destitute of all those things which constituted her former glory. *Her filthiness is in her skirts*—She carries the marks of her sins in the greatness of her punishments. *She remembereth not her last end*—Reflects not on what is still further coming upon her. “The plain meaning of this,” says Blaney, “taken out of metaphor, seems to be, that 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.” *Therefore she came down wonderfully*—She was brought low, and humbled in an extraordinary manner having *sinned grievously*, verse 8, she was degraded and punished wonderfully. Observe, reader, grievous sins bring wondrous ruin; there are some workers of iniquity for whom is prepared a strange and uncommon punishment.

Verse 10, 11. *The adversary hath*—Or rather, *did, spread his hand upon all her pleasant things*—Hebrew, כחכדיה, *her desirable things*, namely, her riches, and what else she most desired to preserve. *She hath seen the heathen entered into her sanctuary, &c.*—She saw heathen nations, whom thou hadst forbidden even to be admitted into thy congregation, (as being uncircumcised,) enter into the sanctuary farther than ever her own people themselves were permitted to go. The Chaldeans entered into the inmost part of the sanctuary, even into the *holy of holies*, into which none of the Jews, except the high-priest, were ever allowed to enter. *All her people sigh, they seek bread*—He probably refers to the time of the invasion of the country by the Chaldeans, and the siege of Jerusalem, when the whole body of the people were in a sad condition, and, in a land that ordinarily flowed with milk and honey, were at a loss for bread to eat. *They have given their pleasant things for meat to relieve the soul*—They have parted with their riches and all their desirable things to purchase bread to sustain their lives. *See, O Lord, and consider*—This is a prayer of Je-

have given their pleasant things for A. M. 3416 meat ° to relieve the soul: see, O LORD, B. C. 588. and consider; for I am become vile.

12 ¶ ° Is it nothing to you, all ye that ° pass by? behold, and see ° if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the LORD hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger.

13 From above hath he sent fire into my bones, and it prevaieth against them: he hath ° spread a net for my feet, he hath turned me

° Jer. xxxviii. 9; lii. 6; Chap. ii. 12; iv. 4.—° Or, *to make the soul to come again*.—° Or, it is *nothing*.—° Heb. *pass by the way*.—° Dan. ix. 12.—° Ezek. xii. 13; xvii. 20.

Jerusalem to God for relief; for I am become vile—That is, miserable and contemptible.

Verse 12. *Is it nothing to you? &c.*—The Vulgate reads this clause without an interrogation, thus: *O vos omnes qui transitis per viam attendite, videte, &c.* *O all ye, who pass by the way, observe, see, &c.* Lowth also and Blaney prefer reading it in a similar way; the former thus: *O all ye that pass by; or, O! I appeal to all you that pass by: and the latter, O that among you, all ye that pass by the way, ye would look and see, &c.* Our translation, however, is more agreeable to the Hebrew, and certainly more expressive and emphatical. The prophet speaks in the name of Jerusalem, or of the Jewish Church, still represented as a woman in misery, sitting by the way-side, and calling to travellers that passed by to have compassion on her, suggesting to them that hers was no ordinary affliction, nor the visitation of a common and ordinary providence, but the effect of the Lord's fierce anger, a most severe though just chastisement. The intention of the passage is to show that the calamities brought on the Jews, as the punishment of their idolatries and other crimes, ought to be observed and maturely considered by people of all nations, that from their miseries they might learn how dangerous it was to provoke the God of Israel by such practices; which he would not overlook in any people, not even in those that stood in the nearest relation to him, but would assuredly punish them: and to signify to the Babylonians themselves in what danger they stood by despising and setting at naught this only living and true God. But the prophet does not address them by name, nor speak more pointedly, lest he should irritate them still more against his already too miserable countrymen. “These words are often quoted in speaking of our Lord's sufferings, and they are capable of a striking accommodation thereto: but it should be recollected that this is only an *accommodation*, and not the real meaning of the sacred writer.”—Mr. Scott: who adds, “The address is so exquisitely pathetic, that no comment can possibly do justice to it.”

Verses 13–16. *From above hath he sent fire into my bones*—Calamities as consuming and as afflictive as fire in the bones. *He hath spread a net for my feet*

A. M. 3416. back : he hath made me desolate  
B. C. 588. *and faint all the day.*

14 <sup>γ</sup> The yoke of my transgressions is bound by his hand : they are wreathed, *and* come up upon my neck : he hath made my strength to fall, the LORD hath delivered me into *their* hands, *from whom* I am not able to rise up.

15 The LORD hath trodden under foot all my mighty *men* in the midst of me : he hath called an assembly against me to crush my young men : <sup>z</sup> the LORD hath trodden <sup>o</sup> the virgin, the daughter of Judah, *as* in a wine-press.

16 For these *things* I weep ; <sup>a</sup> mine eye, mine eye runneth down with water, because <sup>b</sup> the

<sup>γ</sup> Deut. xxviii. 48.—<sup>z</sup> Isa. lxiii. 3 ; Rev. xiv. 19, 20 ; xix. 15.  
<sup>a</sup> Or, *the wine-press of the virgin, &c.*—<sup>b</sup> Jer. xiii. 17 ; xiv. 17 ; Chap. ii. 18.—<sup>b</sup> Verses 2, 9.

—Hath brought me into a most miserable condition, in which I am so entangled that I cannot extricate myself nor escape from it. Thus the prophet teaches Jerusalem to look beyond the Babylonians, and to see the sin-avenging hand of God in her sufferings. As if he had said, It is God himself that hath sent these evils upon me ; he hath stirred up my enemies against me, and they are no more than the rod of his anger. *The yoke of my transgressions is bound by his hand, &c.*—He has, as it were, gathered my iniquities and the iniquities of my people together, and made a yoke of them to put upon me, so that I am weighed down by them, and by the judgments inflicted on account of them. *They are wreathed, and come up upon my neck*—My punishments are twisted with my sins as cords to make them strong : I have a complication of judgments upon me, sword, famine, pestilence, captivity ; and they are not only prepared for my neck, but are already put upon it. *He hath made my strength to fall, &c.*—All my valiant men, the strength of my nation, is broken, and I am so fallen that I am not able to rise again. *The Lord hath trodden under foot all my mighty men, &c.*—The destruction which is made by war is frequently expressed by treading under foot : see note on Jer. l. 26. *He hath called an assembly against me to crush, &c.*—Instead of those solemn assemblies that were wont to be called together in the midst of me by the sound of trumpet, to celebrate my solemn feasts, God hath called an assembly of Chaldeans to lay me in ruins, and crush my people. *The Lord hath trodden the daughter of Judah as in a wine-press*—That people, which was formerly chosen by Jehovah, and secured against all violent attempts by his immediate and almighty protection, he has now given up to the fury of their enemies, to afflict them with such severity that their blood has been shed in the streets of Jerusalem as wine from the wine-press. *For these things I weep, &c.*—For these sore afflictions, and for my sins which have caused them, and for these tokens of divine wrath which I see in them I weep so plentifully,

comforter that should <sup>o</sup> relieve my soul A. M. 3416  
is far from me : my children are deso- B. C. 588.  
late, because the enemy prevailed.

17 <sup>o</sup> Zion spreadeth forth her hands, *and* <sup>d</sup> *there is none* to comfort her : the LORD hath commanded concerning Jacob, *that his adversaries should be round about him* : Jerusalem is as a menstruous woman among them.

18 ¶ The LORD is <sup>o</sup> righteous ; for I have <sup>f</sup> rebelled against his <sup>10</sup> commandment : hear, I pray you, all people, and behold my sorrow : my virgins and my young men are gone into captivity.

19 I called for my lovers, *but* <sup>e</sup> they deceived

<sup>o</sup> Heb. *bring back.*—<sup>c</sup> Jer. iv. 31.—<sup>d</sup> Ver. 2, 9.—<sup>e</sup> Neh. ix. 33 ; Dan. ix. 7, 14.—<sup>f</sup> 1 Sam. xii. 14, 15.—<sup>10</sup> Heb. *mouth.*  
<sup>e</sup> Verse 2 ; Jer. xxx. 14.

and am in such distress, that *mine eye runneth down with water, because the comforter that should relieve my soul*—Namely, God ; *is far from me*—Hath withdrawn himself, is departed from me in displeasure, and beholds me afar off. *My children are desolate*—The other cities of Judah, under Jerusalem, the mother city, or my people, are wasted, destroyed, and made desolate, *because the enemy hath prevailed*—And effected his purpose.

Verse 17. *Zion spreadeth forth her hands*—She extendeth her hands as a suppliant praying for relief and consolation. *And there is none to comfort her*—None who can, or are even inclined to do it. *The Lord hath commanded, &c.*—That is, it came to pass by God's command, that the surrounding nations were the adversaries of Jacob. We meet with a similar form of expression Psa. lxxviii. 11, *The Lord gave the word, great was the company of those that published it. Jerusalem is as a menstruous woman*—She is become loathsome and filthy in the eyes of her former friends, like women separated from the congregation in the time of their legal uncleanness.

Verses 18, 19. *The Lord is righteous, for I have rebelled, &c.*—He does me no wrong in dealing thus with me, nor can I charge him with any injustice. Observe, reader, whatever the troubles are which God is pleased to inflict upon us, we must own that in them he is righteous : we neither know him nor ourselves, if we do not acknowledge this. Jerusalem owns the equity of God's actions by confessing the iniquity of her own. *Hear, I pray you, all people*—See note on verse 12. *My virgins and my young men are gone into captivity*—Thus it is said, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 17, that the Chaldeans had “no compassion upon young men or maidens.” *I called for my lovers, but they deceived me*—They proved like *the brooks in summer* to the thirsty traveller, Job vi. 15. The Egyptians and her other allies are intended, who made court to her in her prosperity, and promised her assistance, but in the day of her adversity and necessity were alienated from her, and

A. M. 3416. me: my priests and mine elders gave  
B. C. 588. up the ghost in the city, <sup>b</sup> while they  
sought their meat to relieve their souls.

20 Behold, O LORD; for I *am* in distress:  
my <sup>1</sup> bowels are troubled; my heart is turned  
within me; for I have grievously rebelled:  
<sup>k</sup> abroad the sword bereaveth, at home *there is*  
as death.

21 They have heard that I sigh: <sup>1</sup> *there is*

<sup>b</sup> Ver. 11.—<sup>1</sup> Job xxx. 27; Isa. xvi. 11; Jer. iv. 19; xlviii. 36;  
Chap. ii 11; Hos. xi. 8.—<sup>k</sup> Deut. xxxii. 25; Ezek. vii. 15.

cast her off. Thus we are commonly deceived and disappointed in those creatures that we set our hearts upon, and put our trust in. Happy they that have made God their friend, and keep themselves in his love, for he will not deceive them! *My priests and mine elders gave up the ghost in the city*—The famine hath consumed the most honourable as well as the meaner people. *While they sought their meat to relieve their souls*—While they went about seeking for bread to keep them alive. The LXX. add, *καὶ ἐξ ἐσποῦ, and found none*, with whom the Syriac agrees. But no such words appear in the Hebrew copies, although the thing is implied, for they would not have died if they had found what they sought.

Verse 20. *Behold, O Lord, for I am in distress*—Take cognizance of my case, and use such means for my relief as thou pleasest. It is a matter of comfort to us, that the troubles which oppress our spirits are perfectly known to God, and that his eye is continually upon them. *Abroad the sword bereaveth, at home there is as death*—Thus was Moses's prediction, Deut. xxxii. 25, fulfilled, *The sword without, and terror within, shall destroy both the young man and the virgin, the suckling also, with the man of gray hairs*. Virgil describes a similar scene, when he says,

“————— Crudelis ubique  
Luctus, ubique pavor, et plurima mortis imago.”  
ÆN. ii. 368.

“All parts resound with tumults, plaints, and fears;  
And grisly death in sundry shapes appears.”  
DRYDEN.

By *death*, in this clause, the pestilence is meant, as in Jer. xv. 2, where see the note: death acting, as it were, *in propria persona*, in its own proper person, and not by the instrumentality of another, as when a person is slain by the sword. So our great poet, in his description of a lazar-house,

“————— Despair  
Tended the sick, busiest from couch to couch;

none to comfort me: all mine ene- A. M. 3416.  
mies have heard of my trouble; they B. C. 588.  
are glad that thou hast done *it*: thou wilt  
bring <sup>m</sup> the day *that* thou hast <sup>11</sup> called, and  
they shall be like unto me.

22 <sup>a</sup> Let all their wickedness come before thee;  
and do unto them as thou hast done unto me  
for all my transgressions: for my sighs *are*  
many, and <sup>o</sup> my heart *is* faint.

<sup>1</sup> Verse 2.—<sup>m</sup> Isaiah xliii., &c.; Jer. xlvii. &c.—<sup>11</sup> Or, *pro claimed*.—<sup>a</sup> Psa. cix. 15.—<sup>o</sup> Chap. v. 17.

And over them triumphant death his dart  
Shook —————.”

PARADISE LOST, book xi. l. 489, &c.

Instead of, *At home there is as death*, Lowth proposes reading, *there is certain death*, observing, that the particle of similitude in the Scriptures sometimes implies a strong affirmation, as John i. 14, *We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father*, meaning such a glory as could belong to none but the Son of God.

Verses 21, 22. *They have heard that I sigh*—The nations contiguous to me, Egypt and others, that before pretended to be my friends and allies, have been no strangers to my bitter afflictions, which have forced sighs from me; *but there is none to comfort me*—None of them can or will relieve my distress, but abandon me as in a desperate situation. *They are glad that thou hast done it*—They have even expressed gladness at the calamities that have befallen me; and they please themselves with the thought that thou our God, of whose favour and protection we used to boast, shouldst forsake us, and give us up as a prey to our enemies. *Thou wilt bring the day that thou hast called, &c.*—The day when thou wilt execute thy judgments upon the Babylonians, and our other enemies and false friends, will certainly come at the time thou hast determined for that purpose. “We have here again the like turn of phrase as in the first line of this period; for the meaning evidently is, that the enemies of Jerusalem would in the end find little cause for their triumph, since the same Almighty Being, who had caused her evil day to come, had declared that, after a while, they should also suffer the like fate. *Thou that hast brought the day [of adversity upon me] hast pronounced, that they shall become even as I*.”—Blaney. *Let all their wickedness come before thee*—Let it appear that though thou hast chastened us for our sins, our enemies have still greater ones to answer and be punished for.

CHAPTER II.

In this chapter the prophet proceeds in giving a melancholy detail of the dire effects of the divine anger, in the subversion of both the civil and religious constitution of the Jews, and in that extreme wretchedness and distress, to which individuals of every denomination were thereby reduced, 1–9. He represents the elders, the virgins, and other inhabitants of Jerusalem,

as lamenting over the unparalleled miseries of their country, and charges her prophets with having betrayed her into ruin by their false and flattering suggestions, 10-14. He describes the astonishment of passengers on viewing the desolated condition of Jerusalem, 15-17. They call out to her to implore God's compassion for the removal of those heavy judgments, which, in the height of his displeasure, he had brought upon her, 18, 19. Her manifold miseries are referred to the compassion and consideration of God, 20-22.

A. M. 3416. B. C. 588. **H**OW hath the LORD covered the daughter of Zion with a cloud in his anger, <sup>a</sup> and cast down from heaven unto the earth <sup>b</sup> the beauty of Israel, and remembered not <sup>c</sup> his footstool in the day of his anger!

2 The LORD hath swallowed up all the habitations of Jacob, <sup>d</sup> and hath not pitied: he hath thrown down in his wrath the strong holds of the daughter of Judah; he hath <sup>e</sup> brought them down to the ground: <sup>f</sup> he hath polluted the kingdom and the princes thereof.

3 He hath cut off in *his* fierce anger all the horn of Israel: <sup>g</sup> he hath drawn back his right hand from before the enemy, <sup>h</sup> and he burned against Jacob like a flaming fire, *which* devour-eth round about.

<sup>a</sup> Matt. xi. 23.—<sup>b</sup> 2 Sam. i. 19.—<sup>c</sup> 1 Chronicles xxviii. 2; Psalm xcix. 5; cxxxii. 7.—<sup>d</sup> Verses 17, 21; Chapter iii. 43. <sup>e</sup> Heb. *made to touch*.—<sup>f</sup> Psa. lxxxix. 39.—<sup>g</sup> Psa. lxxiv. 11. <sup>h</sup> Psa. lxxxix. 46.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER II.

Verse 1. *How hath the Lord covered the daughter of Zion with a cloud*—Changed her condition for the worse, and turned the light of her prosperity into the darkness of adversity. *And cast down, &c., the beauty of Israel*—The temple and all its glory. *And remembered not his footstool in the day of his anger*—Hath not spared even the ark itself, the footstool of the *shekinah*, or divine glory, which was wont to appear, sitting, as it were, enthroned upon the mercy-seat, between the cherubim: see the margin.

Verses 2-4. *The Lord hath swallowed up the habitations, &c.*—Without showing any pity or concern for them. *He hath thrown down the strong holds, &c.*—Hath suffered the enemies to batter down their fortifications to the ground. *He hath polluted the kingdom, &c.*—“He hath shown no regard for the kingdom which himself had settled upon the family of David, but involved the royal family in one common destruction with the rest of the people. The expression is much the same with that of Psa. lxxxix. 39, *Thou hast profaned his crown by casting it to the ground.*”—Lowth. *He hath cut off, &c., all the horn of Israel*—Namely, their strength and glory, and especially their kingly dignity. *He hath drawn back his right hand, &c.*—He hath withdrawn his wonted assistance, and given us up into the hands of our enemies. Or, as Blaney rather thinks, the right hand of Israel may be here intended, namely, his exertions of strength represented as rendered ineffectual by God, or turned away from obstructing the progress of the enemy; “just as God says, Jer. xxi. 4, that he would turn

4 <sup>i</sup> He hath bent his bow like an enemy: he stood with his right hand <sup>j</sup> as an adversary, and slew <sup>k</sup> all <sup>l</sup> that were pleasant to the eye in the tabernacle of the daughter of Zion: he poured out his fury like fire.

5 <sup>m</sup> The LORD was as an enemy: he hath swallowed up Israel, <sup>n</sup> he hath swallowed up all her palaces: he hath destroyed his strong holds, and hath increased in the daughter of Judah mourning and lamentation.

6 And he hath violently <sup>o</sup> taken away his <sup>p</sup> tabernacle, <sup>q</sup> as if it were of a garden: he hath destroyed his places of the assembly: <sup>r</sup> the LORD hath caused the solemn feasts and sabbaths to be forgotten in Zion, and hath de-

<sup>b</sup> Isa. lxiii. 10; Verse 5.—<sup>c</sup> Heb. *all the desirable of the eye*. <sup>d</sup> Ezek. xxiv. 25.—<sup>e</sup> Verse 4; Jeremiah xxx. 14.—<sup>f</sup> 2 Kings xxv. 9; Jer. liii. 13.—<sup>g</sup> Psalm lxxx. 12; lxxxix. 40; Isa. v. 5. <sup>h</sup> Or, *hedge*.—<sup>i</sup> Isa. i. 8.—<sup>j</sup> Chap. i. 4; Zeph. iii. 18.

aside the weapons of war that were in the hands of the Jews, so as to prevent their hindering the Chaldean army from entering the city.” *He burned against Jacob round about*—God hath consumed them, not on this or that part merely, but everywhere, as a fire which seizes a house, or a heap of combustible matter, on all sides at once. *He hath bent his bow like an enemy, &c.*—God, whom by their sins they had provoked, and made their enemy, behaved himself as such toward them, bending his bow, as it were, and stretching out his right hand to destroy them. *And slew all that were pleasant to the eye*—The chief in worth and dignity; those who were in the flower of their age, the joy and delight of their parents. *He poured out his fury like fire*—Which devours all before it, without any discrimination.

Verses 6, 7. *He hath violently taken away his tabernacle as of a garden*—The Vulgate reads, *dissipavit, quasi hortum, tentorium suum; he hath dissolved, broke in pieces, scattered, or laid waste, his tent as a garden*. Thus also Houbigant: that is, he hath destroyed the temple, the place of his residence, and of our religious assemblies, as if it had been no better than a tent or cottage set up in a garden, or vineyard, just while the fruit was gathering, and then to be taken down again. This interpretation of the original text, which is, יָחַס כָּנַן שָׂכֹו, supposes of שָׂכֹו to be written for כָּנַן, words exactly alike in sound, though not always in sense, and frequently put the one for the other. But, as the former, from שָׂךְ, *to hedge*, originally signifies *his hedge*, many think the most proper rendering of the Hebrew, and the true sense of the passage is, as in the

A. M. 3416. spised in the indignation of his anger  
B. C. 588. the king and the priest.

7 The LORD hath cast off his altar, he hath abhorred his sanctuary, he hath <sup>4</sup> given up into the hand of the enemy the walls of her palaces; <sup>5</sup> they have made a noise in the house of the LORD, as in the day of a solemn feast.

8 The LORD hath purposed to destroy the wall of the daughter of Zion: <sup>1</sup> he hath stretched out a line, he hath not withdrawn his hand from <sup>2</sup> destroying: therefore he made the rampart and the wall to lament; they languished together.

9 Her gates are sunk into the ground; he hath destroyed and <sup>1</sup> broken her bars: <sup>2</sup> her king and her princes are among the Gentiles: <sup>3</sup> the law is no more: her <sup>4</sup> prophets also find no vision from the LORD.

<sup>1</sup> Heb. shut up.—<sup>2</sup> Psa. lxxiv. 4.—<sup>3</sup> 2 Kings xxi. 13; Isa. xxxiv. 11.—<sup>4</sup> Heb. swallowing up.—<sup>5</sup> Jer. li. 30.—<sup>6</sup> Deut. xxviii. 36; 2 Kings xxiv. 15; xxv. 7; Chapter i. 3; iv. 20. <sup>7</sup> 2 Chron. xv. 3.—<sup>8</sup> Psa. lxxiv. 9; Ezek. vii. 26.

margin, *He hath taken away his hedge as of a garden*; that is, he hath withdrawn his protection, and left us exposed to the mercy of our enemies. *He hath destroyed his places of the assembly*—This translation, as also that of the Vulgate, understands this as a repetition of the former clause; but, as sixty MSS. and one edition, instead of כְּעָרֵי, read כְּעָרֵי at large, Blaney takes the congregation of Jehovah to be intended, rather than the place of their assembly, and renders the words, *He hath destroyed his congregation*, namely, the people of Israel, the vineyard, which he had heretofore kept under his special protection. *The Lord hath caused the solemn feasts, &c., to be forgotten*—Or rather, as עָכַח is more properly rendered, *hath forgotten the solemn feasts, &c.*, that is, “holds those services no longer in esteem, but slights and disregards them:” compare Isa. i. 14, 15. *And hath despised the king and the priest*—Hath shown no regard for either of those honourable offices, but hath suffered the kingdom to be destroyed, and the temple to be laid waste. *He hath abhorred his sanctuary*—It had been defiled with sin, that only thing which he hates, and for the sake of that he hath abhorred it, though he had formerly delighted in, and called it *his rest for ever*, Psa. cxxxii. 14. *They have made a noise in the house of the Lord, &c.*—“Instead of the joyful sound of praises and thanksgivings to God, such as used to be solemnly performed in the temple at the public festivals, there was nothing to be heard there but the noise of soldiers, and the rudeness of infidels, profaning that sacred place, and insulting the true God, who was worshipped there: compare Psalm lxxiv. 4.”—Lowth.

Verses 8, 9. *The Lord hath purposed to destroy the wall of Zion*—The word *wall* is here to be taken in a metaphorical sense, for the strength and secu-

10 The elders of the daughter of A. M. 3416. Zion <sup>1</sup> sit upon the ground, and keep B. C. 588. silence; they have <sup>2</sup> cast up dust upon their heads: they have <sup>3</sup> girded themselves with sackcloth: the virgins of Jerusalem hang down their heads to the ground.

11 <sup>1</sup> Mine eyes do fail with tears, <sup>2</sup> my bowels are troubled, <sup>3</sup> my liver is poured upon the earth, for the destruction of the daughter of my people; because <sup>4</sup> the children and the sucklings <sup>5</sup> swoon in the streets of the city.

12 They say to their mothers, Where is corn and wine? when they swooned as the wounded in the streets of the city, when their soul was poured out into their mother's bosom.

13 What thing shall I take to witness for thee? <sup>1</sup> what thing shall I liken to thee, O daughter of Jerusalem? What shall I equal to

<sup>1</sup> Job ii. 13; Isa. iii. 26; Ch. iii. 28.—<sup>2</sup> Job ii. 12.—<sup>3</sup> Isa. xv. 3; Ezek. vii. 18; xxvii. 31.—<sup>4</sup> Psa. vi. 7; Chap. iii. 48. <sup>5</sup> Chap. i. 20.—<sup>6</sup> Job xvi. 13; Psalm xxii. 14.—<sup>7</sup> Verse 19; Chap. iv. 4.—<sup>8</sup> Or, faint.—<sup>9</sup> Chap. i. 12; Dan. ix. 12.

rity of the city. *He hath stretched out a line, &c.*—Called emphatically, Isa. xxxiv. 11, הַיָּתוֹן הַיָּתוֹן, the line of confusion or devastation, being designed to mark out the extent of what was to be pulled down. For the instruments designed for *building* are in some places applied to *destroying*, because men sometimes mark out those buildings they intend to demolish. Thus, 2 Kings xxi. 13, God says, *I will stretch over Jerusalem the line of Samaria, and the plummet of the house of Ahab*: see likewise Amos vii. 7, 8. *Therefore he made the rampart, &c., to lament*—Made their walls and ramparts feeble, ready to shake like a man under some languishing distemper, who had no strength left. *Her gates are sunk into the ground, &c.*—The gates of Jerusalem are destroyed and covered over with rubbish, and the bolts of the gates are broken. *Her king and her princes are among the Gentiles*—Zedekiah and the nobles of Judah, who were not slain, are in a state of miserable captivity. *The law is no more*—It is no longer read and expounded; the priests and the Levites, whose office it is to instruct the people, being dispersed among the heathen; and that part of the law which respects the public worship of God, being rendered impracticable by the temple's being destroyed. *Her prophets also find no vision from the Lord*—The prophets are either dead, or in a state of captivity, and these latter are not favoured with divine revelations as they were wont to be, and so cannot resolve the doubts of those who come to them for advice.

Verses 10-13. *The elders, &c., sit upon the ground, and keep silence*—These and the other expressions of this and the two following verses betoken the deepest mourning and sorrow. *Mine eyes do fail with tears*—My sight is become dim with weeping. *My bowels are troubled*—As they were when he foresaw

A. M. 3116. thee, that I may comfort thee, O virgin daughter of Zion? for thy breach is great like the sea: who can heal thee?

14 Thy prophets have seen vain and foolish things for thee: and they have not discovered thine iniquity, to turn away thy captivity; but have seen for thee false burdens and causes of banishment.

15 All that pass by, clap their hands at thee; they hiss and wag their head at the daughter of Jerusalem, saying, Is this the city

<sup>f</sup> Jer. ii. 8; v. 31; xiv. 14; xxiii. 16; xxvii. 14; xxix. 8, 9; Ezek. xiii. 2.—<sup>g</sup> Isa. lviii. 1.—<sup>h</sup> 1 Kings ix. 8; Jer. xviii. 16; Nah. iii. 19.—<sup>7</sup> Heb. *by the way*.—<sup>i</sup> Ezek. xxv. 6.

these calamities coming, Jer. iv. 19, 20. *My liver is poured upon the earth*—My vitals seem to be dissolved, and have lost all their strength. "That the mental passions," says Blaney, "have a considerable influence upon the habit of the body in various instances, is a fact not to be questioned. And experience daily shows, that a violent uneasiness of mind tends greatly to promote a redundancy and overflowing of vitiated bile. The liver is the proper seat of the bile, where its secretions are carried on. Hence the prophet's meaning in this place seems to be, that he felt as if his whole liver was dissolved and carried off in bile, on account of the copious discharge brought on by continual vexation and fretting. Job expresses the same thing, chap. xvi. 13, where he says, *He poureth out my gall upon the ground.*" *Because the children and sucklings swoon in the streets*—For want of sustenance. *As the wounded*—As those who are not presently despatched, but die a lingering death. *What thing shall I take to witness for thee?*—What instance can I bring of any calamity like thine, that such an example may be some mitigation of thy complaints. *For thy breach is great, like the sea, &c.*—The breach made in thee is like the breaking in of the sea that overflows a whole country, where no stop can be put to the inundation.

Verse 14. *Thy prophets have seen vain and foolish things*—The prophets, to whom thou didst choose to hearken, and whom thou didst believe, rather than those whom God sent to reveal his will, came and told thee idle tales, the fancies of their own minds, deluding thee with hopes of not being carried into captivity, or of a speedy return therefrom. *They have not discovered thine iniquity, &c.*—They have not given thy people a just sense of their iniquities, in order that, by being humbled and brought to true repentance, they might avert God's judgments, but they have rather flattered them in their sins, and thereby have hastened on their ruin: see the margin. *But have seen for thee false burdens*—They have amused thee with false and fallacious prophecies, and that even after, as well as before, they were carried into captivity; (see Jer. xxix. 8, &c.); and *causes of banishment*—Hebrew, כִּדְרוֹחַ, of casting out, of expulsion, as the word properly signifies:

that men call <sup>1</sup>The Perfection of beauty, The Joy of the whole earth? A. M. 3416. B. C. 588.

16 All thine enemies have opened their mouth against thee: they hiss and gnash the teeth: they say, We have swallowed her up: certainly this is the day that we looked for; we have found, we have seen it.

17 The LORD hath done that which he had devised; he hath fulfilled his word that he had commanded in the days of old: he hath thrown down, and hath not pitied: and he hath

<sup>k</sup> 2 Kings xix. 21; Psalm xlv. 14.—<sup>l</sup> Psalm xlvi. 2; 1. 2. <sup>m</sup> Job xvi. 9, 10; Psa. xxii. 13; Chap. iii. 46.—<sup>n</sup> Psa. lvi. 2. <sup>o</sup> Psa. xxxv. 21.—<sup>p</sup> Lev. xxvi. 16; Deut. xxviii. 15.—<sup>q</sup> Ver. 2.

that is, their pretended revelations, promising peace, and giving hopes of impunity to thy people continuing in sin, were so far from profiting thee, that they were in a great measure the causes of thy captivity. *Why prophecies are termed burdens*, כִּשְׁמוֹת, *burdens*, see notes on Isa. xiii. 1, and Jer. xxiii. 33.

Verse 15. *All that pass by clap their hands at thee; they hiss, &c.*—These were gestures of derision, whereby the enemies of the Jews expressed a satisfaction in their calamities; saying, *Is this the city that men call The Perfection of beauty—Or, perfect in beauty*, as Blaney renders כָּל־לֵט יָם; *The Joy of the whole earth*—Such was the light in which the Jews had viewed Jerusalem, and such was the language in which they had been wont to speak of it. And it was at least a pardonable partiality in them, which led them to pass these encomiums upon it, and to suppose that all strangers would be equally delighted with its beauty as they themselves were. It was the metropolis of their nation, and the city their God had chosen to put his name there. There was his magnificent temple, and there the symbols of his divine presence, and the administration of the ordinances of his worship. Thither the whole nation resorted, according to his appointment, to celebrate their solemn feasts: and there those feasts were observed with all the magnificence of religious joy. It is no wonder, therefore, that they esteemed it *the perfection of beauty*, and a place in which the whole earth ought to delight.

Verses 16, 17. *All thine enemies have opened their mouths against thee*—As if they were ready to devour thee: see the margin. Or they have opened them in scoffs, reproaches, and insults. *They hiss and gnash their teeth*—In scorn and derision. *They say, We have swallowed her up*—Namely, Jerusalem. They triumph in their success against her, and in the rich prey they have got in making themselves masters of her. *Certainly, this is the day we have looked for*—Which we have expected and longed to see. Thus the enemies of the church are apt to take its disasters for its ruin, and to triumph in them accordingly; but they will find themselves deceived, for the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. *The Lord hath done that which he had devised*—Our destroyers could have had no

A. M. 3416. caused *thine* enemy to rejoice over thee, he hath set up the horn of thine adversaries.

18 Their heart cried unto the LORD, O wall of the daughter of Zion, let tears run down like a river day and night: give thyself no rest; let not the apple of thine eye cease.

19 Arise, cry out in the night: in the beginning of the watches pour out thy heart like water before the face of the LORD: lift up thy hands toward him for the life of thy young children, that faint for hunger in the top of every street.

20 ¶ Behold, O LORD, and consider to whom

† Psalm xxxviii. 16; lxxxix. 42.— Verse 8.—† Jeremiah xiv. 17; Chapter i. 16.— Psalm cxix. 147.— Psalm lxvii. 8.— Verse 11.— Isaiah li. 20; Chapter iv. 1; Nahum iii. 10.

power against us, unless it had been given them from above: they were but the sword in God's hand. And he hath not surprised us by these providences: he gave us notice before hand what he would do if we were disobedient, and he hath done no more than what he threatened long since. *He hath fulfilled his word which he had commanded*—Hath verified and made good his declarations uttered in days of old—Namely, by Moses, Lev. xxvi. 16–31; Deut. xxviii. 15–49. *He hath set up the horn of thine adversaries*—Hath advanced their power and glory.

Verses 18, 19. *Their heart cried unto the Lord*—“The same,” says Blaney, “are the speakers here who are said to have made the foregoing remarks concerning the distressed condition of Jerusalem, namely, the passengers, (verse 15,) whose hearts, being deeply affected with what they saw, urged them to break forth into the following passionate exclamation, addressed to the daughter of Zion.” *O wall of the daughter of Zion*—The Vulgate reads the verse, *Clamavit cor eorum ad Dominum, super muros filie Sion, Deduc quasi torrentem lacrymas per diem et noctem; non des requiem tibi, neque taceat pupilla oculi tui*: “Their heart hath cried unto the Lord concerning the walls of the daughter of Zion, Cause thy tears to descend, like a torrent, night and day; give thyself no rest, nor let the apple of thine eye be silent.” As the wall and rampart are said to lament, (verse 8,) because their ruins were objects of lamentation; so here the ruined wall, including the ruined city and its inhabitants, is called upon, by a beautiful prosopopœia, to mourn and weep over the desolations of that place which God had chosen for his peculiar residence, and to entreat him to take compassion on its miseries. The original expression, rendered *the apple of thine eye*, is literally *the daughter of thine eye*; by which Blaney thinks is meant, not the pupil, but the tear, which, he says, may, with great propriety and elegance, be termed *the daughter of the eye* from which

thou hast done this. Shall the women eat their fruit, and children

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of a span long? shall the priest and the prophet be slain in the sanctuary of the LORD?

21 The young and the old lie on the ground in the streets; my virgins and my young men are fallen by the sword; thou hast slain them in the day of thine anger; thou hast killed, and not pitied.

22 Thou hast called as in a solemn day my terrors round about, so that in the day of the LORD's anger none escaped or remained: those that I have swaddled and brought up, hath mine enemy consumed.

† Leviticus xxvi. 29; Deuteron. xxviii. 53; Jeremiah xix. 9; Chapter iv. 10; Ezck. v. 10.— Or, swaddled with their hands.— Chap. iv. 13, 16.— 2 Chron. xxxvi. 17.— Chap. iii. 43.— Psa. xxxi. 13; Jer. vi. 25; xlv. 5.— Hosea ix. 12, 13.

it issues. *Arise, cry out in the night*—Do not cease thy prayers and supplications even in the night season. *In the beginning of the watches*—The Jews divided the night, first into three, and in after ages into four watches: see Judg. vii. 19; Matt. xiv. 25. *Pour out thy heart like water before the Lord*—Offer up thy earnest prayers with tears to the throne of grace; and send up thy very soul, and thy most devout affections along with them: see Psa. lxi. 8; 1 Sam. vii. 6. *Lift up thy hands for the life of thy young children*—That they at least may be spared; (see verse 11;) *that faint in the top of every street*—See the margin. The expression seems to mean the same as *in every street*.

Verses 20–22. *Behold, O Lord, to whom thou hast done this*—To thy people, for whom thou hast formerly expressed so much tenderness and affection. Jerusalem seems to be here introduced speaking. *Shall the women eat their fruit*—We find by comparing this verse with chap. iv. 10, that God brought upon them that terrible judgment which he had denounced against them, if they continued to provoke him, namely, that they should eat the flesh of their own sons and daughters. See the margin. *And children of a span long*—Hebrew, ספרות, rendered in the margin, *swaddled with their hands*, and by the LXX., *νηπια θηλαζοντα μαστες, infants sucking the breasts*. *Shall the priest and the prophet be slain in the sanctuary of the Lord?*—Shall thy ministers be slain, and that in thy sanctuary? We learn from this, 1st, That the Chaldeans spared no character, no, not the most distinguished; even the priest and the prophet, who, of all men, one would think, might have expected protection from heaven, and veneration on earth, yet they were slain; not abroad in the field of battle, where they would have been out of their place, as Hophni and Phinehas were, but in the sanctuary of the Lord, the place of their business, and which they hoped would have been a refuge to them. 2d, They spared no age, no, not those who, by reason of their

tender or decrepit age, were exempted from taking up the sword; for the young and the old lay on the ground slain in the streets. 3d, They spared no sex, the virgins and the young men fell by the sword. In the most barbarous military executions that we read of, the virgins were spared and made part of the spoil, but here they were put to the sword as well as the young men. We learn, 4th, That this was the Lord's doing; he suffered the sword of the Chaldeans to devour thus without distinction; he slew them in the day of his anger—Namely, his anger for their many and aggravated sins. Thou hast called, as in a solemn day—A day of awful retribution; my terrors round about—

As my people were wont to be called together from all parts on solemn days, when they were to meet at Jerusalem for thy service; so now, by thy providence, my terrible enemies are by thee called together to slay thy people in that holy city in which they were wont to worship thee. So that none escaped nor remained—That is, few or none. Those that I have swaddled, and brought up, hath mine enemy consumed—As if they had been brought forth for the murderer, like lambs for the butcher, Hosea ix. 13. Zion, that was a mother to them all, laments to see those that were brought up in her courts, and under the tuition of her oracles, thus made a prey of and destroyed.

CHAPTER III.

In this chapter the prophet seems to have had it in view to instruct his countrymen in the lesson of conducting themselves properly under adversity. To this end, (1,) He sets himself forth as an example of the most severe and trying afflictions, 1-20. (2,) He points out the inexhaustible mercies of God as the never-failing source of his consolation and hope, 21-24. (3,) He exhorts others to patience and quiet resignation under the like circumstances, showing that God is ever gracious to those that wait on him; that he is prone to pardon and pity, and takes no delight in afflicting mankind; but turns away with disgust from all acts of oppression and malignant cruelty, 25-36. (4,) He asserts the divine supremacy in the dispensations of good and evil, and argues that no man has a right to complain when he is punished according to his deserts. He therefore recommends it to his fellow-sufferers, to examine themselves, and to turn to God with contrite hearts, sincerely deploring the sinfulness of their conduct, which had provoked the divine justice to treat them with such extraordinary severity, 37-47. (5,) He professes himself to be deeply affected with the calamities of his country, 48-54. But (6,) calling to mind the desperate circumstances from which he had heretofore been rescued by the divine aid, he declareth his hope, that the same good Providence would frustrate the malice of his present enemies, and turn the scornful reproach they had cast upon him to their own confusion, 55-66. The construction of this chapter, as has been intimated in the general argument, differs from that of the two preceding. It consists indeed of twenty-two stanzas, according to the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet: but every stanza is divided into three parts, or verses, each of which begins with the same Hebrew letter; the first three verses with Aleph, the next three with Beth, &c. And in one instance the order of the letters varies from that which is observed in the rest of the chapter.

A. M. 3416. I AM the man that hath seen af-  
B. C. 588. fliction by the rod of his wrath.

2 He hath led me, and brought me into darkness, but not into light.

3 Surely against me is he turned: he turneth his hand against me all the day.

4 <sup>a</sup> My flesh and my skin hath he <sup>A. M. 3416.</sup>  
made old; he hath <sup>B. C. 588.</sup> broken my bones.

5 He hath builded against me, and compassed me with gall and travail.

6 <sup>o</sup> He hath set me in dark places, as they that be dead of old.

<sup>a</sup> Job xvi. 8.—<sup>b</sup> Psa. li. 8; Isa. xxxviii. 13; Jer. l. 17.

<sup>o</sup> Psa. lxxxviii. 5, 6; cxliii. 3.

NOTES ON CHAPTER III.

Verses 1, 2. I am the man that hath seen affliction—I myself have suffered affliction in this time of public calamity. He speaks, probably, with a particular regard to the ill treatment he had met with in the discharge of his prophetic office. Some indeed suppose that he speaks in this and the subsequent verses, to verse 21, in the character of the people, but so many passages manifestly refer to his own personal troubles, that such an interpretation seems very improbable. He hath brought me into darkness, but not into light—Light is often used in Scripture for happiness or comfort, and darkness for affliction and misery. The prophet's

meaning is, that God had been pleased to exercise him with calamity. Perhaps he refers especially to his being put into the dungeon and the stocks, and to the state of darkness and distress which his mind was in during these trials.

Verses 3-7. Surely against me is he turned—The course of his providence toward me is quite altered. He was formerly kind and gracious, but now exercises an afflicting hand against me, and that not occasionally, or for a short time, but continually, all the day. The phrase, He turneth his hand against me, is equivalent to that which occurs Isa. i. 25, I will turn thy hand upon thee, where see the note. My flesh, &c., hath he made old—He

A. M. 3416. 7<sup>d</sup> He hath hedged me about that  
B. C. 588. I cannot get out; he hath made my  
chain heavy.

8 Also <sup>o</sup> when I cry and shout, he shutteth  
out my prayer.

9 He hath enclosed my ways with hewn stone,  
he hath made my paths crooked.

10 <sup>f</sup> He *was* unto me as a bear lying in wait,  
*and as a lion in secret places.*

11 He hath turned aside my ways, and  
<sup>g</sup> pulled me in pieces: he hath made me desolate.

12 He hath bent his bow, and <sup>b</sup> set me as a  
mark for the arrow.

<sup>d</sup> Job iii. 23; xix. 8; Hosea ii. 6.—<sup>e</sup> Job xxx. 20; Psalm  
xxii. 2.—<sup>f</sup> Job x. 16; Isa. xxxviii. 13; Hos. v. 14; xiii. 7. 8.  
<sup>g</sup> Hos. vi. 1.—<sup>h</sup> Job vii. 20; xvi. 12; Psa. xxxviii. 2.—<sup>i</sup> Job  
vi. 4.—<sup>j</sup> Heb. sons.

orew, בלה, *hath wasted, caused to decay.* See notes  
on Job xvi. 8; Psa. xxxi. 10, and xxxii. 3. *He hath  
broken my bones*—The anguish I feel in my mind  
is as painful to me as if all my bones were broken.  
*He hath builded against me*—He hath blocked me  
up in a strait place; he has so enclosed me with cala-  
mities that there is no escaping them; *and com-  
passed me with gall, &c.*—Hath filled me with grief  
and anguish of mind, which is no less bitter than gall  
to the mouth. *He hath set me in dark places, &c.*  
—He hath confined me to a dungeon where no  
light enters; and I am secluded from human so-  
ciety, as if I were out of the world. He probably  
refers to the pit of the prison into which he was cast  
by the command of Zedekiah. *He hath hedged me  
about*—See verse 5, and the margin. *He hath made  
my chain heavy*—He hath made my bondage, or my  
imprisonment, grievous.

Verse 8. *Also when I cry and shout*—When, un-  
der a conviction that, in my present distressed con-  
dition, I cannot deliver myself, and that no creature  
can deliver me, I make application to God in prayer  
for deliverance, and am serious, fervent, and impor-  
tunate in my addresses to him; *he shutteth out my  
prayer*—Refuses to hearken to it, or give me any  
ease or relief; Hebrew, ושה, the same as ושה,  
*he hath obstructed my prayer*; “hath barred my  
prayer from approaching him.”—Blaney. Thus  
sometimes God seems to be angry even against the  
prayers of his people, Psa. lxxx. 5. And their case  
is deplorable indeed when they are denied, not only  
the benefit of an answer, but the comfort of ac-  
ceptance.

Verses 9–13. *He hath enclosed my way with hewn  
stone*—He hath not only hedged it up with thorns,  
Hos. ii. 6, but stopped it up with a stone wall which  
cannot be broken through; so that *my paths* are  
*made crooked*—That is, I traverse to and fro, to the  
right hand and to the left, to try to get forward, but  
I am still turned back. Observe, reader, if we walk  
in the crooked ways of sin, crossing or swerving

13 He hath caused <sup>i</sup> the <sup>l</sup> arrows of A. M. 3416.  
his quiver to enter into my reins. B. C. 588.

14 I was a <sup>k</sup> derision to all my people; *and*  
<sup>l</sup> their song all the day.

15 <sup>m</sup> He hath filled me with <sup>2</sup> bitterness, he  
hath made me drunken with wormwood.

16 He hath also broken my teeth <sup>n</sup> with  
gravel-stones, he hath <sup>3</sup> covered me with ashes

17 And thou hast removed my soul far off  
from peace: I forgot <sup>4</sup> prosperity.

18 <sup>o</sup> And I said, My strength and my hope is  
perished from the LORD;

19 <sup>p</sup> Remembering mine affliction and my  
misery, <sup>q</sup> the wormwood and the gall.

<sup>k</sup> Jeremiah xx. 7.—<sup>l</sup> Job xxx. 9; Psa. lxxix. 12; Verse 63.  
<sup>m</sup> Jer. ix. 15.—<sup>n</sup> Heb. bitternesses.—<sup>o</sup> Prov. xx. 17.—<sup>p</sup> Or,  
rolled me in the ashes.—<sup>q</sup> Hebrew, good.—<sup>r</sup> Psalm xxxi. 22.  
<sup>s</sup> Or, Remember.—<sup>t</sup> Jer. ix. 15.

from God's laws, it is just with God to make us  
walk in the crooked paths of affliction, crossing our  
designs and breaking our measures. *He was unto  
me as a bear lying in wait*—Surprising me with  
his judgments; *and as a lion in secret places*—So  
that which way soever I went, I was in continual  
fear of being attacked, and could never think myself  
safe. *He hath turned aside my ways*—Hath blasted  
all my counsels and ruined my projects; (see above  
on verse 9;) *and pulled me in pieces*—Hath torn  
and gone away, Hos. v. 14. *He hath made me deso-  
late*—Deprived me of all society, and of all comfort  
in my soul. *He hath bent his bow*—That bow,  
which was ordained against the church's persecutors,  
is bent against her sons. *He hath set me as a mark  
for his arrows*—Which he aims at, and is sure to  
hit: so that the *arrows of his quiver enter into my  
reins*—And give me an inward and mortal wound.

Verses 14–19. *I was a derision to all my people*  
—To all the wicked among them, who made them-  
selves merry with the prophet's griefs and the public  
judgments; *and their song all the day*—Hebrew,  
נגינה, their instrument of music. The word, says  
Blaney, “is commonly rendered *their song*; but I  
rather think it means a subject upon which they  
played, as upon a musical instrument, for their di-  
version.” *He hath filled me with bitterness*—A  
bitter sense of these calamities. God has access to  
the spirit, and can so imbitter it, as thereby to imbit-  
ter all enjoyments; as when the stomach is foul,  
whatever is eaten becomes acid in it. *He hath made  
me drunken with wormwood*—That is, so intoxicated  
me with the sense of my afflictions, that I know not  
what to say or do. *He hath broken my teeth with  
gravel-stones*—Hath mingled gravel with my bread,  
so that my teeth are broken with it, and what I eat  
is neither pleasant nor nourishing. *He hath covered  
me with ashes*—As mourners were wont to be; or,  
as some render הכפישני אפר, *he hath laid me low, or  
made me wallow, in ashes*, namely, because of great  
sorrow and grief. These expressions imply the height

A. M. 3416. 20 My soul hath *them* still in re-  
B. C. 588. membrance, and is <sup>6</sup> humbled in me.

21 This I <sup>7</sup> recall to my mind, therefore have I hope.

22 ¶ <sup>8</sup> *It is of the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.*

23 *They are new* <sup>9</sup> every morning : great is thy faithfulness.

24 The LORD is my <sup>10</sup> portion, saith my soul ; therefore will I hope in him.

<sup>6</sup> Heb. bowed.—<sup>7</sup> Heb. make to return to my heart.—<sup>8</sup> Mal. iii. 6.—<sup>9</sup> Isa. xxxiii. 2.—<sup>10</sup> Psa. xvi. 5 ; lxxiii. 26 ; cxix. 57 ; Jer. x. 16.

of misery ; that he received no comfort or refreshment from any thing. *I said, My strength, my hope is gone*—I even began to despair of God's mercy ; remembering my affliction—Reflecting on all the miseries and hardships I had suffered. Without doubt it was his infirmity to think and speak thus, (Psa. lxxvii. 10.) for with God there is everlasting strength, and he is his people's never-failing hope, whatever they may suspect to the contrary.

Verses 21-23. *This I recall to my mind, &c.*—Here the prophet begins to suggest motives of patience and consolation : as if he had said, I call to mind the following considerations, and thereupon I conceive hope and comfort. And surely they are such as afford a sufficient ground for trusting in God under the severest trials. *It is of the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed*—It is not clear that this is the exact sense of the Hebrew, in which there is nothing for *it is of*. The LXX. translate the verse, τα ελεη κυριου, ουκ εκ εξηλιπε με. *The mercies of the LORD, because they have not left, or do not leave, me* : that is, I rely on, and derive hope and consolation from, the mercies of the Lord, which still continue to prevent and follow me. *Because his compassions fail not*—Ου αντελεισθησαν, are not finished, exhausted, or brought to an end. *They are new every morning : great, &c.*—Thy mercies are renewed to us every day, one following another ; and thy faithfulness in performing them is as great as thy goodness in promising them. God's mercy and truth, or fidelity, are usually joined together. Blaney connects these three verses thus : "This I revolve in my heart, therefore will I have hope ; the mercies of Jehovah, that they are not exhausted, that they fail not ; new are his compassions every morning ; great is thy faithfulness." According to our translation the prophet represents himself as calling to mind that, as a sinner, he deserved to be cut off, and delivered up to future punishment, and should certainly have been thus destroyed but for the mercies of God ; while his people, for their sins, would have been so totally consumed that no remnant of them would have been left. "As, however, the Lord had mercifully spared him, and had not utterly destroyed them ; as his compassions were plenteous and unfailing, and every morning renewed to him,

25 The LORD is good unto them A. M. 3416.  
that <sup>11</sup> wait for him, to the soul that B. C. 588.  
seeketh him.

26 *It is good that a man should both hope and*  
<sup>12</sup> quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD.

27 <sup>13</sup> *It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.*

28 <sup>14</sup> He sitteth alone, and keepeth silence, because he hath borne *it* upon him.

29 <sup>15</sup> He putteth his mouth in the dust ; if so be there may be hope.

<sup>11</sup> Psa. cxxx. 6 ; Isa. xxx. 18 ; Mic. vii. 7.—<sup>12</sup> Psa. xxxvii. 7. <sup>13</sup> Psalm xc. 12 ; cxix. 71.—<sup>14</sup> Jeremiah xv. 17 ; Chap. ii. 10. <sup>15</sup> Job xlii. 6.

in the continuance of his life, and many unmerited benefits ; and as God had given many precious promises to Israel, and to every believer, and, in his great faithfulness, had always performed them to those who trusted in them ; so he found there was yet encouragement to hope, and to exercise patience and repentance in expectation of returning comfort."—Scott.

Verses 24-26. *The Lord is my portion, saith my soul*—An interest in the favour and love of God, and his presence with me, my heart tells me, is the best inheritance. And, possessing these, I have that which is sufficient to balance all my troubles, and make up all my losses. For, while portions on earth are empty and perishing things, God is an all-sufficient and durable portion, a portion for ever. *Therefore will I hope in him*—I will stay myself upon him, and encourage myself in him, when all other supports and encouragements fail me. Observe, reader, it is our duty and interest to make God the portion of our souls, and then to enjoy and take comfort in him as such, in the midst of afflictions and lamentations. *The Lord is good unto them that wait for him*—To them that patiently wait his time ; when he shall judge it a proper season to afford them comfort and deliverance ; and who, in the mean while, apply themselves to him by prayer and humiliation. *It is good*—It is our duty, and will be our unspeakable comfort and satisfaction ; that a man should hope and quietly wait, &c.—To hope that it will come, though the difficulties that lie in the way of it seem insuperable ; to wait till it does come, though it be long delayed ; and while we wait to be quiet and silent, not quarrelling with God, or making ourselves uneasy, but acquiescing in the divine disposal.

Verses 27-30. *It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth*—That he be inured betimes to bear those useful restraints which may give him a right sense of the duty which he owes to God, and the obedience he ought to pay to his laws. For the prophet's expression is very applicable to the yoke of God's commands ; it is good for us to take that yoke upon us in our youth ; we cannot begin too soon to be religious ; it will make our duty the more acceptable to God, and easy to ourselves, if we engage in it when we are young. Here, however, the prophet

A. M. 3416. 30 <sup>a</sup> He giveth his cheek to him  
B. C. 588. that smiteth him: he is filled full  
with reproach.

31 <sup>b</sup> For the LORD will not cast off for  
ever:

32 But though he cause grief, yet will he  
have compassion according to the multitude  
of his mercies.

<sup>a</sup> Isa. l. 6; Matt. v. 39.—<sup>b</sup> Psa. xciv. 14.—<sup>c</sup> Ezek. xxxiii.  
11; Heb. xii. 10.

seems to speak chiefly of the yoke of affliction; many have found it good to bear this yoke in their youth; it has made those humble, and serious, and spiritually minded, who otherwise would have been proud, unruly, and as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke. If it be asked, when we bear this yoke so that it is really good for us to bear it? we have the answer in the following verses: 1st, When we are sedate and quiet under our afflictions; when we sit alone and keep silence; retire into privacy that we may converse with God, and commune with our own hearts, silencing all discontented, distrustful thoughts, and laying our hand upon our mouth, as Aaron, who, under a severe trial, held his peace. When those that are afflicted in their youth accommodate themselves to their afflictions, and study to answer God's end in afflicting them, then they will find it good for them to bear it; for it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to them that are exercised thereby. 2d, When we are humble and patient under affliction; he gets good by the yoke, that not only lays his hand upon his mouth in token of submission to the will of God in the affliction, but puts his mouth in the dust in token of sorrow, shame, and self-loathing at the remembrance of sin, and as one perfectly reduced and reclaimed, and brought, as it were, to lick the dust, Psa. lxxii. 9. And we must thus humble ourselves, if so be there may be hope. If there be any way to acquire and secure a good hope under our afflictions, as, blessed be God, there is, it is this way, and while we look for it we must own ourselves utterly unworthy of it. 3d, When we are meek and gentle toward those that are the instruments of our trouble, and manifest a forgiving spirit. He gets good by the yoke that gives his cheek to him that smiteth him, and rather turns the other cheek, than returns the second blow. He that can bear contempt and reproach, and not render railing for railing, and bitterness for bitterness; that when he is filled with reproach, keeps it to himself, and does not retort it upon them that filled him with it, but pours it out before the Lord, Psa. cxxiii. 4; he shall find it good to bear the yoke, and it shall turn to his spiritual advantage. The sum is, if tribulation work patience, that patience will work experience, and that experience a hope that maketh not ashamed.

Verses 31-33. The Lord will not cast off for ever—The truly penitent that put their trust in him, and sincerely desire and seek reconciliation with him:

33 For <sup>a</sup> he doth not afflict <sup>b</sup> willingly, nor grieve the children of men. A. M. 3416.  
B. C. 588.

34 To crush under his feet all the prisoners  
of the earth,

35 To turn aside the right of a man before  
the face of <sup>c</sup> the Most High,

36 To subvert a man in his cause, <sup>d</sup> the LORD  
<sup>10</sup> approveth not.

<sup>a</sup> Hebrew, from his heart.—<sup>b</sup> Or, a superior.—<sup>c</sup> Hab. i. 13.  
<sup>10</sup> Or, seeth not.

though he may for a time appear to estrange himself from them, yet he will certainly return to them. *Though he cause grief*—Though, as a prudent parent, he may see reason to chastise his people by affliction, yet as a kind and tender Father, who pitieth his children in misery, according to the multitude, the unspeakable greatness and abundance of his mercies, he will have compassion upon them. *For he doth not afflict willingly*—Hebrew, בלבו, from his heart, that is, of his own mere motion, without cause given him by the persons afflicted; or freely and with pleasure; nor grieve the children of men—Much less his own children. Hence judgment is called his strange work, and exercising mercy and loving-kindness his delight.

Verses 34-36. *To crush under his feet, &c.*—In these verses certain acts of tyranny, malice, and injustice are specified, in the practice of which men are prone to indulge themselves one toward another, but which the divine goodness is far from countenancing or approving by any similar conduct. By the prisoners of the earth, or of the land, as the words may be properly rendered, Blaney thinks are meant the poor insolvent debtors, whom their creditors among the Jews, as well as in other nations, were empowered to cast into prison, and to oblige to work out their debts; a power too often exerted with great rigour and inhumanity: see Isa. lviii. 3; Matt. xviii. 30, 34. *To turn aside the right of a man*—To prevent his obtaining, or to deprive him of, his just rights; before the face of the Most High—In the presence of the just and holy God, and under his all-seeing eye, who takes particular notice of all acts of injustice, and will severely punish them. The word גבול, here used, undoubtedly often means the most high God, and is so understood here, both by the LXX. and the Vulgate. Many commentators, however, prefer the marginal reading, a superior, understanding thereby a magistrate. And Blaney thinks it cannot here mean God, because, "though a person may be made to suffer greatly by having his judgment turned aside, that is, by being calumniated and misrepresented before an earthly superior, yet all such malicious attempts must fail and come to nothing where God is the judge, who cannot be deceived or imposed upon." This is certainly true: but it does not appear that the prophet referred to this circumstance, but rather to the effrontery and daring wickedness of those who could be guilty of such injustice, when they knew they

A. M. 3416. 37 ¶ Who is he <sup>o</sup> that saith, and it  
B. C. 588. cometh to pass, when the LORD com-  
mandeth it not ?

\* Psa. xxxiii. 9.—† Job ii. 10 ; Isa. xlv. 7 ; Amos iii. 6.

were before the omnipresent God, and that his eye was upon them, thus, as it were, bidding him defiance. *To subvert a man in his cause*—That is, to prevent his having justice done him, in a law-suit or controversy, by any undue interference ; as by bearing or suborning false witness, or exerting any kind of influence in opposition to truth and right : *the Lord approveth not*—Hebrew, לא ראה, *seeth not* : that is, hates such conduct, and turns away his face from it with abhorrence and disgust. Thus we read, Hab. i. 13, *Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil ; and canst not look on iniquity*. The general sense of the passage is, as God takes no pleasure in oppressing the poor and helpless, so neither will he suffer any men to escape unpunished that are guilty of such acts of injustice and cruelty, who never consider that all the wrongs they do are committed in the sight of the Supreme Judge of the world ; and although for a time he thinks fit to prosper such oppressors, yet, in due time, he will call them to a severe account for their wickedness.

Verses 37, 38. *Who is he that saith*—That commands an event to take place, or predicts that it shall take place, and it cometh to pass accordingly, when the Lord commandeth not?—Or who designs a thing, and brings his designs to effect, when the Lord is against him? “Haughty tyrants may boast of their power as if they were equal to Omnipotence itself; but still it is God’s prerogative to bring to pass whatever he pleases, without any let or impediment, only by speaking, or declaring his purpose, that the thing should be done, as he did at the beginning of the creation: see Psa. xxxiii. 7. And as he makes men the instruments of his vengeance when he sees fit, so he can restrain their cruelty whenever he pleases.”—Lowth. *Out of the mouth of the Most High proceedeth not evil and good?*—Do not calamities, as well as prosperous events, happen by God’s will and pleasure? The sum is: Nothing comes to pass in the world but by the disposal of the divine providence, which is directed by infinite wisdom, justice, and goodness. The inspired writer seems to be arguing himself and the people of God into a quiet submission to the divine will in their afflictions, from the consideration of the hand of God in them.

Verse 39. *Wherefore, &c.*—The prophet here seems to check and blame himself for the complaints he had made in the former part of the chapter, wherein he appeared to reflect upon God as unkind and severe. And from the doctrine of God’s sovereign and universal providence, which he had asserted in the last two verses, he draws this inference, *Wherefore doth a living man complain? a man for the punishment of his sins?*—No calamity or trouble befalls us, but what is the due reward of our sins; and is designed as a chastisement for them, in order to our purification and amendment, or for the trial

38 Out of the mouth of the Most A. M. 3416.  
High proceedeth not <sup>t</sup> evil and good? B. C. 588.

39 <sup>s</sup> Wherefore doth a living man <sup>11</sup> complain,

† Prov. xix. 3.—<sup>11</sup> Or, *murmur*.

of our grace, and in order to the exercise and increase of it. If we view our afflictions in this light, it will prevent all murmuring and repining against the providence of God. We shall learn to be patient and resigned under his chastising hand, and even thankful that he condescends to correct and try us for our profit, and by preserving us alive in the body still gives us space for repentance. “There seems,” says Blaney, “to be a peculiar emphasis laid on the words ח, [*living*,] and נכר, [*man*,] in this passage. נכר is said to denote a man, because of his excellence and superiority over all other earthly beings. While a man therefore *lives*, and is possessed of those privileges of his nature, whatever he undergoes must be less than his sins have deserved, because death, which implies the loss of all those privileges, is the allotted wages of sin.” Mark well, reader, though we may pour out our complaints before God, we must never complain against or of God. How cogent are the reasons here suggested against such a conduct! We are *men*, let us herein show ourselves men. Shall a *man complain*? Shall a reasonable creature act contrary to all reason, and an immortal being forget or disregard his immortality? Shall he be so insensible of the value of the privileges of his nature, and of his obligations to God for them, as to abuse them to God’s dishonour, instead of using them to his glory? Shall he take upon him to censure or call in question the dispensations of infinite wisdom, justice, and goodness toward him, and act as if he thought he knew better than his Maker what is good for him? *Shall a living man complain*—a man who has a thousand times forfeited his life, with all the blessings of it, but to whom it is still continued, and with it many of its comforts, and particularly the means of attaining life everlasting—a hope, or a foundation whereon to build a hope, of felicity and glory for ever? *A man for the punishment of his sins?* A punishment infinitely less than his sins have deserved? and a punishment, or *chastisement*, rather, which the omniscient God knows to be absolutely necessary to bring him to repentance and reformation, if he will by any means whatever be brought thereto? Surely, reader, if we be suffering for our sins, instead of spending our time in complaining and repining, we ought to be employed in repenting and reforming, and, that we may have at least one evidence that God is reconciled to us, we should endeavour to reconcile ourselves to his holy and gracious will. Or, to consider the matter in another point of view: *Are we punished for our sins?* It is then our wisdom to submit, and kiss the rod; for if we still walk contrary to God, he will punish us still seven times more, for when he judgeth he will overcome; but if we accommodate ourselves to him, though we be chastened of the Lord, we shall not be condemned with the world.

A. M. 3416. <sup>h</sup> a man for the punishment of his  
B. C. 588. sins?

40 Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the LORD.

41 <sup>i</sup> Let us lift up our heart with *our* hands unto God in the heavens.

42 <sup>k</sup> We have transgressed and have rebelled: thou hast not pardoned.

43 Thou hast covered with anger, and persecuted us: <sup>l</sup> thou hast slain, thou hast not pitied.

44 Thou hast covered thyself with a cloud, <sup>m</sup> that *our* prayer should not pass through.

<sup>h</sup> Mic. vii. 9.—<sup>i</sup> Psa. lxxxvi. 4.—<sup>k</sup> Dan. ix. 5.—<sup>l</sup> Chap. ii. 2, 17, 21.—<sup>m</sup> Verse 8.—<sup>n</sup> 1 Cor. iv. 13.—<sup>o</sup> Chap. ii. 16.

Verses 40, 41. *Let us search and try our ways*—This will be a more reasonable and profitable employment than that of complaining and murmuring against the providence of God. Let us search what our ways have been, and try whether they have been right and good or not. Let us examine our tempers, words, and works, and consider what they have been, whether agreeable or contrary to the holy will of God. Let us *try our ways*, that by them we may try ourselves: for we are to judge of our state and character, not by our faint wishes, good intentions, transient resolutions, or even warm affections, but by our steps; and not by one particular step, but by our ways, our whole conduct; the ends we aim at, the rules we go by, and the agreeableness or contrariety of the temper of our minds, and the tenor of our lives to those ends and those rules. When we are in affliction it is peculiarly seasonable to consider our ways, (Hag. i. 5,) that what is amiss may be repented of, and amended for the future, and so we may answer the intention of the affliction. We are apt, in times of public calamity, to reflect upon other people's ways, and lay blame upon them, whereas our business is to *search and try our own ways*: we have work enough to do at home; we must each of us say, What have I done? what have I contributed to the public distress? That we may each of us mend one, then we shall all be mended. *And let us turn again to the Lord*—Namely, by a sincere conversion, even to him who is turned against us, and from whom we have turned; to him let us turn by repentance, reformation, and faith, as to our owner and ruler. This particular must accompany the former, and be the fruit of it; therefore we must search and try our ways, that we may turn from the evil of them to God; this was the method David took, who says, Psa. cxix. 59, *I thought on my ways, and turned my feet into thy testimonies. Let us lift up our heart, &c.*—Let us apply ourselves unto God by prayer, without which we shall attempt in vain to take the preceding advice. Without supernatural light from him we shall search and try our ways to little purpose: we shall still remain unacquainted with ourselves, and shall pass a false judgment on our character and conduct; and without his renew-

45 Thou hast made us *as* the <sup>n</sup> off-scouring and refuse in the midst of the people.

46 <sup>o</sup> All our enemies have opened their mouths against us.

47 <sup>p</sup> Fear and a snare is come upon us, <sup>q</sup> desolation and destruction.

48 <sup>r</sup> Mine eye runneth down with rivers of water for the destruction of the daughter of my people.

49 <sup>s</sup> Mine eye trickleth down, and ceaseth not, without any intermission,

<sup>p</sup> Isa. xxiv. 17; Jer. xlviii. 43.—<sup>q</sup> Isa. li. 19.—<sup>r</sup> Jer. iv. 19; ix. 1; xiv. 17; Chap. ii. 11.—<sup>s</sup> Psa. lxxvii. 2; Chap. i. 16.

ing grace we shall not be turned to him effectually. Now for these blessings we must make application to him in fervent prayer, lifting up *our hearts with our hands*, and pouring out our souls with our words, in confident expectation of receiving what we ask.

Verses 42–47. *We have transgressed, &c.*—Here the prophet shows what will be the effect of a proper searching and trying of our ways; we shall be convinced of our sinfulness and guilt; and he here teaches us that confession of sin must accompany petition for the pardon of it. For he that would find mercy must confess as well as forsake his sins, Prov xxviii. 13; 1 John i. 9. *Thou hast not pardoned*—That is, as the expression seems here to mean, thou hast not removed the judgments brought upon us for our sins. Thou continuest to punish us according to the just desert of our transgressions. *Thou hast covered with anger*—Either, thou hast covered thyself with anger, hast covered thy face, so as not to look upon us to move thy pity; or, which is more probably the sense, thou hast covered, that is, overwhelmed, us with thy wrath. *Thou hast slain, thou hast not pitied*—Thou hast pursued us to a fatal ruin, without showing us any pity. *Thou hast covered thyself, &c., that our prayer should not pass through*—Whereas in our distress we had no other resource but to apply to thee for help, thou didst so hide thy face and withdraw thyself from us, that we could have no access to thee or intercourse with thee. The expression is metaphorical, and signifies no more than that God would not hear their prayers in their distress. *Thou hast made us the off-scouring, &c.*—That is, thou hast made us extremely contemptible in the eyes of all nations, so that they value us no more than the sweepings of their houses, or the most vile refuse, or contemptible things imaginable. *All our enemies have opened their mouths*—That is, to mock, scoff, and reproach us. *Fear and a snare is come upon us*—That is, all manner of misery: see the margin.

Verses 48–51. *Mine eye runneth down with rivers of water*—In this and the three following verses the prophet shows that the misfortunes of his country constituted no small part of his personal affliction. *Mine eye affecteth my heart*—Hebrew, עויללו

A. M. 3416. 50 Till the LORD <sup>a</sup> look down, and  
B. C. 588. behold from heaven.

51 Mine eye affecteth <sup>12</sup> my heart <sup>13</sup> because  
of all the daughters of my city.

52 Mine enemies chased me sore, like a bird,  
<sup>a</sup> without cause.

53 They have cut off my life <sup>z</sup> in the dungeon,  
and <sup>y</sup> cast a stone upon me.

54 <sup>z</sup> Waters flowed over my head; *then* <sup>a</sup> I  
said, I am cut off.

55 ¶ <sup>b</sup> I called upon thy name, O LORD, out  
of the low dungeon.

56 <sup>c</sup> Thou hast heard my voice: hide not  
thine ear at my breathing, at my cry.

57 Thou <sup>d</sup> drewest near in the day *that* I

<sup>a</sup> Isaiah lxiii. 15.—<sup>12</sup> Heb. *my soul*.—<sup>13</sup> Or, *more than all*.  
<sup>a</sup> Psalm xxxv. 7, 19; lxix. 4; cix. 3; cxix. 161.—<sup>z</sup> Jeremiah  
xxxvii. 16; xxxviii. 6, 9, 10.—<sup>y</sup> Dan. vi. 17.—<sup>z</sup> Psalm lxix.  
2; cxxiv. 4, 5.—<sup>a</sup> Psalm xxxi. 22; Isaiah xxxviii. 10, 11;  
Verse 18.

לנפשי, *preys upon my soul*, as the Vulgate renders  
the expression, that is, my grief wears out my health  
and strength; *because of all the daughters of my  
city*—On account of the sufferings of the inhabitants  
of my city.

Verses 52–58. *Mine enemies chased me sore*—  
“The prophet in this, and the following verses, de-  
scribes his own sufferings, when his enemies seized  
him and put him into the dungeon, Jer. xxxvii. 16;  
xxxviii. 6. He compares them to a fowler in pur-  
suit of a bird; so, saith he, they sought all opportu-  
nities to take an advantage against me, and to de-  
prive me of my life and liberty: and this they did  
without any provocation given on my part. So  
the word כנף, without cause, signifies.”—Lowth.  
*They have cut off my life*—I was not only seques-  
tered from all human society, like a dead man, but  
in apparent danger of losing my life in the dungeon.  
And their laying a stone upon the entrance of that  
dark pit resembled the burying me alive. *Waters  
flowed over my head; then I said, &c.*—When I  
sunk down into the mire in this dungeon, I despair-  
ed of my life, just as if I had been sinking over head  
in a river. *I called upon thy name, O Lord*—I had  
recourse to thee, O Jehovah, in my distress; *out of  
the low dungeon*—As Jonah out of the whale’s belly.  
Observe, reader, though we be cast into ever so low  
a dungeon of calamity and trouble, we may from  
thence find a way of access to God in the highest  
heavens. Thus the psalmist, *Out of the depths have  
I cried unto thee*, Psa. cxxx. 1. *Hide not thine ear  
at my breathing, at my cry*—So he terms his prayer.  
It was his *breathing* toward God, and after God.  
Prayer is the breath of the new man, drawing in  
the air of grace in petitions, and returning it in praises;  
it is both the evidence and maintenance of the spiri-  
tual life. Some read it, *at my gasping*; when I lay  
gasping for life, and ready to expire, and thought I  
was breathing my last, then thou tookest cognizance

called upon thee: thou saidst, Fear <sup>a</sup> not. A. M. 3416.  
B. C. 588.

58 O LORD, thou hast <sup>a</sup> pleaded the causes  
of my soul; <sup>f</sup> thou hast redeemed my life.

59 O LORD, thou hast seen my wrong:  
<sup>g</sup> judge thou my cause.

60 Thou hast seen all their vengeance *and*  
all their <sup>h</sup> imaginations against me.

61 Thou hast heard their reproach, O LORD,  
*and* all their imaginations against me;

62 The lips of those that rose up against me,  
and their device against me all the day.

63 Behold their <sup>i</sup> sitting down, and their rising  
up; <sup>k</sup> I *am* their music.

64 <sup>l</sup> Render unto them a recompense, O LORD,

<sup>b</sup> Psa. cxxx. 1; Jonah ii. 2.—<sup>c</sup> Psa. iii. 4; vi. 8; xviii. 6;  
lxvii. 19; cxvii. 1.—<sup>d</sup> James iv. 8.—<sup>e</sup> Psa. xxxv. 1; Jer. li.  
36.—<sup>f</sup> Psa. lxxi. 23.—<sup>g</sup> Psa. ix. 4; xxxv. 23.—<sup>h</sup> Jer. xi.  
19.—<sup>i</sup> Psalm cxxxix. 2.—<sup>k</sup> Verse 14.—<sup>l</sup> Psalm xxviii. 4;  
Jer. xi. 20; 2 Tim. iv. 14.

of my distressed case. *Thou drewest near in the  
day that I called upon thee*—That is, thou didst gra-  
ciously assure me of thy presence with me, and  
didst give me to see thee nigh unto me, whereas I  
had thought thee to be at a distance from me. *Thou  
saidst, Fear not*—This was the language, 1st, of  
God’s prophets, preaching to them not to fear, Isa.  
xli. 10, 13; 2d, of his providence, preventing those  
things which they were afraid of; and, 3d, of his  
grace, quieting their minds, and making them easy,  
by the witness of his Spirit with their spirits, that  
they were his people still, though in distress, and  
therefore ought not to fear. *Thou hast pleaded the  
causes of my soul*—That is, as it follows, *Thou hast  
redeemed my life*, hast rescued it out of the hands  
of those that would have taken it away, hast saved it  
when it was ready to be swallowed up; thou hast  
given me my life for a prey.

Verses 59–63. *O Lord, thou hast seen my wrong*  
—Here the prophet adverts to his present sufferings,  
and the ill usage he met with, concerning which he  
appeals to God; as if he had said, Thou hast seen  
that I have done no wrong at all, but that I suffer a  
great deal. He that knows all things knew, 1st, The  
malice they had against him; *thou hast seen*, says he,  
*all their vengeance*—How they desire to do me a  
mischief, as if it were by way of reprisal for some  
great injury I had done them. 2d, The designs and  
projects they had laid to do him a mischief. *Thou  
hast seen*, verse 60, and again, verse 61, *Thou hast  
heard, all their imaginations against me*, both their  
desires and their devices to ruin me; these, whether  
they show themselves in word or deed, are perfectly  
known to thee. 3d, The contempt and calumny  
wherewith they loaded him, all that they spoke  
slightly, and all that they spoke reproachfully of  
him. *Thou hast heard their reproach*, verse 61;  
all the ill characters they give me, laying to my  
charge things that I know not, all the methods that

A. M. 3416. according to the work of their hands.  
B. C. 588. 65 Give them <sup>14</sup> sorrow of heart, thy  
curse unto them.

<sup>14</sup> Or, obstinacy of heart.

they use to make me odious and contemptible, even the lips of those that rose up against me, verse 62; the contumelious language they use whenever they speak of me. Behold, their sitting down, &c.—That is, Behold at all times, whether they sit down or rise up, I am made the subject of their merriment, and their laughing-stock.

Verses 64–66. Render to them a recompense, &c.—See note on Jer. xi. 20. The verbs in these verses are not in the imperative mood, but all in the future

66 Persecute and destroy them in A. M. 3416.  
anger <sup>m</sup> from under the <sup>n</sup> heavens of B. C. 588.  
the LORD.

<sup>m</sup> Deut. xxv 19; Jer. x. 11.—<sup>n</sup> Psalm viii. 3.

tense, and certainly should have been so rendered, as indeed they are by the LXX., Αποδωσεις αυτοις ανταποδομα Κυριε—Αποδωσεις αυτοις—καρδιας μου μοχθον. Συ αυτες καταδιωξεις εν οργη, και εξαιλωσεις αυτες υποκατωθεν τω κρανι Κυριε. Thou wilt render unto them a recompense, O Lord—Thou wilt render unto them the grief of my heart. Thou wilt persecute them in wrath, and destroy them from under the heaven, O Lord. Thus also the Vulgate, Blaney, and many others.

CHAPTER IV.

In this chapter, (1,) The prophet contrasts, in various affecting instances, the wretched and deplorable circumstances of the Jewish nation, with the flourishing state of their affairs in former times, 1–12. (2,) He ascribes the unhappy change principally to the profligacy of their priests and prophets, which had drawn upon them the universal abhorrence of God and man, 13–16. (3,) The people proceed with lamenting their hopeless condition, and, in a particular manner, the captivity of their sovereign, 17–20. (4,) The judgment of Edom is foretold, together with a final cessation of Zion's calamities, 21, 22.

A. M. 3416. HOW is the gold become dim! how  
B. C. 588. is the most fine gold changed!  
the stones of the sanctuary are poured out <sup>a</sup> in  
the top of every street.

2 The precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold, how are they esteemed <sup>b</sup> as earthen pitchers, the work of the hands of the potter!

3 Even the <sup>1</sup>sea-monsters draw out the breast, they give suck to their young ones: the daughter of my people is become cruel,

<sup>a</sup> Chapter ii. 19.—<sup>b</sup> Isaiah xxx. 14; Jer. xix. 11; 2 Cor. iv. 7.  
<sup>1</sup> Or, sea calves.

NOTES ON CHAPTER IV.

Verses 1, 2. How is the gold become dim—"How is the glory of the temple obscured! The sanctuary, which was overlaid with gold, (2 Chron. iii. 8,) now lies in ruins; and the stones of it are not distinguished from common rubbish. It is probable that the prophet, in these words, alluded to the priests, princes, and chief persons of the country, who, though they might have been compared to the pillars, or corner-stones of that sacred building, yet were now involved in the same common destruction with the meanest of the people. The precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold—Those that in honour and worth exceeded others as much as fine gold doth other metals, are now disgraced and set at naught.

Verses 3–5. Even the sea-monsters draw out the breast—The very dragons have drawn out the

<sup>c</sup> like the ostriches in the wilderness. A. M. 3416.  
4 <sup>d</sup> The tongue of the sucking child B. C. 588.  
cleaveth to the roof of his mouth for thirst:  
<sup>e</sup> the young children ask bread, and no man  
breaketh it unto them.

5 They that did feed delicately are desolate in the streets: they that were brought up in scarlet <sup>f</sup>embrace dunghills.

6 For the <sup>2</sup>punishment of the iniquity of the daughter of my people is greater than the pun-

<sup>c</sup> Job xxxix. 14, 16.—<sup>d</sup> Psalm xxii. 15.—<sup>e</sup> Chapter ii. 11, 12.  
<sup>f</sup> Job xxiv. 8.—<sup>g</sup> Or, iniquity.

breast: so Blaney. Even these fierce and destructive animals are not so unnatural as to neglect the care of their young ones; whereas the women of Jerusalem have been reduced to that miserable necessity as to disregard their children, as the ostrich does her eggs. The tongue of the sucking child, &c.—Such was the scarcity of food, that the women had not nourishment sufficient to produce milk to enable them to give suck to their infants, and when the children begged for bread the parents had none to give them. They that did feed delicately embrace dunghills—Lie down on dunghills, and seek about them in hopes to pick up something to eat.

Verse 6. For the punishment, &c., is greater than the punishment of Sodom—The fate of Sodom was less deplorable than that of Jerusalem; for Sodom was destroyed in an instant; but Jerusalem endured a long siege, and suffered all the miseries of famine,

A. M. 3416. ishment of the sin of Sodom, that  
B. C. 588. was <sup>r</sup>overthrown as in a moment,  
and no hands stayed on her.

7 Her Nazarites were purer than snow, they were whiter than milk, they were more ruddy in body than rubies, their polishing was of sapphire:

8 Their visage is <sup>3</sup>blacker <sup>b</sup>than a coal; they are not known in the streets: <sup>1</sup>their skin cleaveth to their bones; it is withered, it is become like a stick.

9 They that be slain with the sword are better than they that be slain with hunger: for these <sup>4</sup>pine away, stricken through for want of the fruits of the field.

<sup>r</sup> Gen. xix. 25.—<sup>3</sup> Heb. *darker than blackness*.—<sup>b</sup> Chap. v. 10; Joel ii. 6; Nah. ii. 10.—<sup>1</sup> Psa. cii. 5.—<sup>4</sup> Heb. *flow out*.  
<sup>m</sup> Chapter ii. 20.—<sup>1</sup> Isaiah xlix. 15.—<sup>m</sup> Deuteron. xxviii. 57;

sickness, and hostile arms. In Sodom all were destroyed together, and none left to mourn in bitterness of soul the sad loss of their dearest friends; in Jerusalem many survived to mourn the deplorable fate of their friends and country, and to suffer the ignominy and miseries of captivity. The original of the last clause, לא חלו כה ידים, is rendered by the LXX., και ουκ επονεσαν εν αυτη χειρας, they did not cause hands to labour, or be weary, in her: and by Blaney, nor were hands weakened in her.

Verses 7-9. Her Nazarites were purer than snow—It seems the word, נזיריה, ought not to be translated here Nazarites, or those who were separated by a vow to God; but princes, or chief men: so Waterland understands the word, as also Blaney, who renders it, her nobles. We find the same term applied to Joseph, as one separated, or distinguished in eminence and dignity above his brethren, Gen. xlix. 26. By being purer than snow, and whiter than milk, seems to be intended the whiteness of their skin, or the fairness of their complexion; and by their being more ruddy in body than rubies, or brighter than pearls, as ארכו כפנינים, may be rendered, their high state of health may be meant. Their visage is blacker than a coal—The famine, and other hardships which they have endured, have altered their complexion, and made them look dry and withered. They that be slain with the sword are better, &c.—That is, their case is preferable to that of those slain with hunger; for these pine away, &c.—That is, they waste away and perish by slow degrees, and, before they quite expire, suffer great misery. Stricken through for want of the fruits of the field—Pierced with far more exquisite pain through want of sustenance, than if they had been run through with the sword.

Verses 10, 11. The hands of the pitiful women have soddened their own children—The affection of a mother toward her children is the strongest of all natural affections, and yet the famine hath forced that tender sex to divest themselves of it, and to boil

10 <sup>k</sup>The hands of the <sup>1</sup>pitiful women have soddened their own children: they were their <sup>m</sup>meat in the destruction of the daughter of my people.

11 The LORD hath accomplished his fury; <sup>a</sup>he hath poured out his fierce anger, and <sup>o</sup>hath kindled a fire in Zion, and it hath devoured the foundations thereof.

12 The kings of the earth, and all the inhabitants of the world, would not have believed that the adversary and the enemy should have entered into the gates of Jerusalem.

13 <sup>p</sup>For the sins of her prophets, and the iniquities of her priests, <sup>a</sup>that have shed the blood of the just in the midst of her,

2 Kings vi. 29.—<sup>a</sup> Jer. vii. 20.—<sup>o</sup> Deut. xxxii. 22; Jer. xxi. 14.—<sup>p</sup> Jer. v. 31; vi. 13; xiv. 14; xxiii. 11, 21; Ezek. xxii. 26, 28; Zeph. iii. 4.—<sup>a</sup> Matt. xxiii. 31, 37.

and eat their own children. Thus was the prophecy of Moses, Deut. xxviii. 53, 57, most awfully fulfilled; where see the notes, and on chap. ii. 20. The Lord hath accomplished his fury, &c.—God's anger hath effected an entire destruction, so as not to leave one stone upon another.

Verse 12. The kings of the earth, &c., would not have believed—"The city was so well fortified, and had been so often miraculously preserved by God from the attempts of its enemies, that it seemed incredible that it should at last fall into their hands."—Lowth.

Verse 13. For the sins of her prophets, &c.—That is, of the false prophets, to whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem chiefly hearkened; and the iniquities of her priests—Who bore rule by their means, Jer. v. 31; and instead of discountenancing and reproofing sin in the people, as was their indispensable duty, were themselves guilty of many flagrant acts of injustice, oppression, and violence; insomuch that, as is here attested, they even shed the blood of the just in the midst of Jerusalem, the holy city; that is, the blood of God's prophets, and of those that adhered to them. The priests and false prophets were then the ringleaders in persecution, as in Christ's time the chief priests and scribes were the men that incensed the people against him, who otherwise would have persisted in their hosannas. This was the sin which the Lord would not pardon, (2 Kings xxiv. 4,) and which, above all others, brought utter destruction upon that city. Not that the people were innocent; no, while the prophets prophesied falsely, and the priests abused the power which their own office and the doctrine of these prophets gave them, the people loved to have it so, and it was, partly at least, to please many of them that the prophets and priests acted as they did. But the blame is chiefly laid upon them who should have taught the people better, should have reproofed and admonished them, and told them what would be the end of such conduct: of the hands, therefore, of those

A. M. 3416. 14 They have wandered as blind  
B. C. 588. *men* in the streets, <sup>1</sup> they have pol-  
luted themselves with blood, <sup>2</sup> so <sup>3</sup> that men  
could not touch their garments.

15 They cried unto them, Depart ye; <sup>4</sup> *it is*  
<sup>5</sup> unclean; depart, depart, touch not: when  
they fled away and wandered, they said  
among the heathen, They shall no more  
sojourn *there*.

16 The <sup>6</sup> anger of the LORD hath divided  
them; he will no more regard them: <sup>7</sup> they  
respected not the persons of the priests, they fa-  
voured not the elders.

17 As for us, <sup>8</sup> our eyes as yet failed for our

<sup>1</sup> Jer. ii. 34.—<sup>2</sup> Or, in that they could not but touch.—<sup>3</sup> Num.  
xix. 16.—<sup>4</sup> Or, ye polluted.—<sup>5</sup> Levit. xiii. 45.—<sup>6</sup> Or, face.  
<sup>7</sup> Chap. v. 12.—<sup>8</sup> 2 Kings xxiv. 7; Isa. xx. 5; xxx. 6, 7; Jer.

watchmen who did not give them warning was their blood required. Indeed, the ecclesiastical men were the chief cause of both the first and last destruction of Jerusalem. And so they are of the destruction of most other places that come to ruin through their neglect of their duty, or their encouraging others in their wicked courses; which shows us both how great a blessing to a people a godly, conscientious ministry is, and how great an evil a ministry is which is otherwise.

Verses 14-16. *They have wandered as blind men in the streets*—They strayed from the paths of righteousness, and were blind to every thing that was good, but to do evil they were quick-sighted; *they have polluted themselves with blood*—The blood of the saints and servants of the Lord; *so that men could not touch their garments*—But they would be legally polluted; and there were so many of them, that a man could not walk in the streets but he must touch some of them. *They cried unto them, Depart ye: it is unclean*—Or, ye polluted, depart, &c. “When they fled to save their lives, they could find no safe retreat, but every body shunned and avoided them as polluted; and used the same words to express their abhorrence of this defilement of such persons, whose office it was to cleanse and purify others, as the lepers were by the law obliged to pronounce upon themselves, and cry, *Unclean, unclean*: see Lev. xiii. 45. The bloody garments of the priests called to remembrance the innocent blood which had been shed by their means, (verse 13.) when people saw their sin thus retaliated upon them.”—Lowth. *They said among the heathen, They shall no more sojourn there*—Even the heathen themselves looked upon them as polluted persons, unworthy of living in Judea, or attending on the worship of God in his temple. And they concluded that such impious wretches would never be restored to their native country, but would continue always vagabonds. *The anger of the Lord hath divided them*—“God, in his just displeasure, hath scattered and dispersed them into foreign countries, where no

vain help: in our watching we have <sup>9</sup> A. M. 3416  
watched for a nation *that* could not <sup>10</sup> B. C. 588  
save us.

18 <sup>11</sup> They hunt our steps, that we cannot go  
in our streets: our end is near, our days are  
fulfilled; for <sup>12</sup> our end is come.

19 Our persecutors are <sup>13</sup> swifter than the  
eagles of the heaven: they pursued us upon  
the mountains, they laid wait for us in the  
wilderness.

20 The <sup>14</sup> breath of our nostrils, the anointed  
of the LORD, <sup>15</sup> was taken in their pits, of whom  
we said, Under his shadow we shall live among  
the heathen.

xxxvii. 7; Ezek. xxix. 16.—<sup>7</sup> 2 Kings xxv. 4, 5.—<sup>8</sup> Ezek.  
vii. 2, 3, 6; Amos viii. 2.—<sup>9</sup> Deut. xxviii. 49; Jer. iv. 13.  
<sup>10</sup> Gen. ii. 7; Ch. ii. 9.—<sup>11</sup> Jer. lii. 9; Ezek. xiii. 13; xix. 4, 8.

respect will be given to their characters.” This seems to be the language of their enemies, triumphing over them, as discerning that their God was provoked with them, and would have no more regard to them. And therefore these heathen no more *respected the persons of their priests or elders*, but considered them as peculiarly guilty, and deserving of their abhorrence and execration.

Verse 17. *As for us, &c.*—The prophet, after having digressed in the last five verses to make observation on the wickedness of those who had been the principal cause of the national ruin, here returns again to the lamentable description of the particulars. *Our eyes as yet failed for our vain help*—The help of the Egyptians, which they had expected in vain. *In our watching we have watched*—We have long waited with eager desire and expectation; *for a nation that could not save us*—For succours from a people who at last have woefully disappointed us.

Verses 18-20. *They hunt our steps that we cannot go in our streets*—The Chaldeans, employed in the siege, are so close upon us, that we cannot stir a foot, nor look out at our doors, nor walk safely in the streets. *Our end is near*—The end of our church and state; we are just at the brink of the ruin of both. *Nay, our days are fulfilled, our end is come*—We are utterly undone; a fatal, final period is put to all our comforts; the days of our prosperity are fulfilled, they are numbered and finished. *Our persecutors are swifter than the eagles*—God has brought upon us that judgment which he threatened by Moses, of *bringing a nation against us as swift as the eagle fieth*, Deut. xxviii. 49. Such were the horsemen of the Chaldean army. We could nowhere escape them, neither by fleeing to the mountains, nor by hiding ourselves in the valleys. The *wilderness* is in other places put for the lower, or pasture grounds. *The breath of our nostrils, the anointed of the Lord, &c.*—Our king, who was the very life of us; *was taken in their pits*—In those toils his enemies had laid for him. Some have sup-

A. M. 3416. 21 ¶ ° Rejoice and be glad, O  
B. C. 588. daughter of Edom, that dwellest in  
the land of Uz; <sup>d</sup> the cup also shall pass through  
unto thee: thou shalt be drunken, and shalt  
make thyself naked.

• Like Eccles. xi. 9.—<sup>d</sup> Jeremiah xxv. 15, 16, 21; Obad. 10.  
• Isaiah xl. 2.

posed that the prophet speaks this of Josiah, but it seems more probable that Zedekiah is meant, and his being taken prisoner and led into captivity is here alluded to. *Of whom we said, Under his shadow we shall live among the heathen*—As long as he was safe, we had some hopes of being protected, and of preserving some face of government, although we were carried away into a foreign country. The protection a king affords his subjects is often, in Scripture, compared to the shelter of a great tree, which is a covert against storms and tempests: see Ezekiel xvii. 23, and xxxi. 6; Daniel iv. 12.

Verses 21, 22. *Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom*—A sarcastical expression, as if the prophet had said, Rejoice while thou mayest, O Edom, over the calamities of the Jews; but thy joy shall not last long, for in a little time it shall come to thy

22 • The <sup>g</sup> punishment of thine ini- A. M. 3416.  
quity is accomplished, O daughter of B. C. 588.  
Zion; he will no more carry thee away into  
captivity: <sup>f</sup> he will visit thine iniquity, O daugh-  
ter of Edom; he will <sup>g</sup> discover thy sins.

• Or, *Thine iniquity.*—<sup>f</sup> Psalm cxxxvii. 7.—<sup>g</sup> Or, *carry thee captive for thy sins.*

turn to feel God's afflicting hand; *the cup of affliction shall pass unto thee*: see Jer. xlix. 7, &c. *The punishment of thine iniquity is accomplished, O daughter of Zion, &c.*—It was usual for the prophets, when they denounced God's judgments against any heathen nation, at the same time to give gracious promises to Israel; thereby importing that God would never cast off the Jewish people utterly, as he did other nations, but would in due time extend his mercy toward them. *He*—Namely, God; *will no more carry thee away*—Or, rather, suffer thee to be carried; *into captivity*—“These and such like expressions, if they be understood in a strict, literal sense, must relate to the final restoration of the Jews.”—Lowth. *He will discover thy sins*—He will manifest how great thine iniquities have been, by the remarkable judgments wherewith he will punish thee.

## CHAPTER V.

In the Syriac, Vulgate, and Arabic versions, this chapter is entitled, The prayer of Jeremiah. But no such title appears in the Hebrew copies, or in the LXX. It is rather a memorial, representing, in the name of the whole body of Jewish exiles, the many and grievous hardships they groaned under, and humbly entreating God to commiserate their wretchedness, and to restore them once more to his favour, and to their ancient prosperity. More particularly, it contains, (1.) A remonstrance of the present calamitous state of God's people in their captivity, 1–16. (2.) A protestation of their concern for God's sanctuary, as that which lay nearer their hearts than any secular interest of their own, 17, 18. (3.) An humble supplication to God, and expostulation with him, for the return of his mercy, 19–22. The chapter may be considered as an epilogue, or conclusion, well adapted to the contents of the preceding chapters.

A. M. 3416. REMEMBER, ° O LORD, what is  
B. C. 588. come upon us: consider, and be-  
hold <sup>b</sup> our reproach.

2 ° Our inheritance is turned to strangers, our houses to aliens.

3 We are orphans and fatherless, our mothers are as widows.

• Psa. lxxxix. 50, 51.—<sup>b</sup> Chap. ii. 15; Psa. lxxxix. 4.—° Psa. lxxxix. 1.—<sup>c</sup> Heb. *cometh for price.*

## NOTES ON CHAPTER V.

Verses 1–6. *Consider, and behold our reproach*—Which we suffer from the heathen nations. *Our inheritance is turned to strangers*—Namely, to the Babylonians and others, to whom our lands are given. *We are orphans and fatherless*—All the chief men being carried away to Babylon, lest they should make any fresh attempts to shake off the Babylonish yoke, all that were left in Judea were poor

4 We have drunken our water for A. M. 3416.  
money; our wood <sup>1</sup> is sold unto us. B. C. 588.

5 <sup>d</sup> Our <sup>2</sup> necks are under persecution: we labour, and have no rest.

6 ° We have given the hand <sup>f</sup> to the Egyptians, and to the Assyrians, to be satisfied with bread.

<sup>d</sup> Deut. xxviii. 48; Jer. xxviii. 14.—<sup>e</sup> Heb. *On our necks are we persecuted.*—<sup>f</sup> Gen. xxiv. 2; Jer. l. 15.—<sup>g</sup> Hos. xii. 1.

people, destitute of almost every thing. *We have drunk our water for money, &c.*—When our country was in our own possession, we had free use of water and wood, both which we are now forced to buy. *Our necks are under persecution*—We are become slaves to our enemies, who make us labour incessantly. *We have given the hand to the Egyptians, &c.*—We have been obliged to stretch out our hands to the Egyptians and Assyrians for bread to

A. M. 3416. 7 <sup>a</sup> Our fathers have sinned, and  
B. C. 583. <sup>b</sup> are not; and we have borne their  
iniquities.

8 <sup>c</sup> Servants have ruled over us: *there is*  
none that doth deliver *us* out of their hand.

9 We gat our bread with *the peril* of our lives  
because of the sword of the wilderness.

10 Our <sup>d</sup> skin was black like an oven because  
of the <sup>e</sup> terrible famine.

11 <sup>f</sup> They ravished the women in Zion, and  
the maids in the cities of Judah.

12 Princes are hanged up by their hand;  
<sup>g</sup> the faces of elders were not honoured.

13 They took the young men <sup>h</sup> to grind, and  
the children fell under the wood.

<sup>a</sup> Jer. xxxi. 29; Ezek. xviii. 2.—<sup>b</sup> Gen. xlii. 13; Zech. i. 5.  
<sup>c</sup> Neh. v. 15.—<sup>d</sup> Job xxx. 30; Psalm cxix. 83; Chapter iv. 8.  
<sup>e</sup> Or, *terrors*, or, *storms*.—<sup>f</sup> Isa. xlii. 16; Zech. xiv. 2.—<sup>g</sup> Isa.  
xlvii. 6; Chap. iv. 16.—<sup>h</sup> Judg. xvi. 21.—<sup>i</sup> Job xix. 9; Psa.  
lxxxix. 39.

support us. Whether the expression here used im-  
plies their begging it of them, or buying it with  
money, is not quite plain.

Verses 7-10. *Our fathers have sinned, and are  
not*—Death hath secured our fathers from these evils,  
though they had sinned; but the punishment they  
escaped, we suffer in the most grievous degree: see  
note on Jer. xxxi. 29. The expression, *is not, or,  
are not*, is often used of those who are departed out  
of this world, Gen. xlii. 13. *Servants have ruled  
over us*—Servants to the great men among the Chal-  
deans, and other strangers, are become our masters,  
Neh. v. 15. *We gat our bread with the peril of our  
lives, &c.*—It was at the hazard of our lives that we  
brought in the grain out of the fields, on account of  
the robbers who infested the country. Blaney thinks  
that the prophet refers here to the incursions of the  
Arabian free-booters, who, he supposes, might not  
be improperly styled, *the sword of the wilderness*,  
to whose depredations the people, on account of  
their weak and helpless state, were continually ex-  
posed, while they followed their necessary business.  
*Our skin was black like an oven*—Famine and other  
hardships changed the very colour of our counte-  
nances.

Verses 12-16. *Princes are hanged up by their  
hand*—By the hand of their enemies. *They took  
the young men to grind*—To grind at the mill was  
the common employment of slaves, Exod. xi. 5. *The  
children fell under the wood*—They made children  
turn the handle of the mill till they fell down through  
weariness: so some explain it with relation to the  
former part of the verse. But the expression may  
be understood of making them carry such heavy  
burdens of wood that they fainted under the load.  
*The elders have ceased from the gate*—The elders  
no more sit in the gates of the cities, to administer  
justice to every one, and keep things in order. *The  
young men from their music*—Those songs of mirth  
and joy which used to be heard in our nation are

14 The elders have ceased from the <sup>A. M. 3416.</sup>  
gate, the young men from their music. <sup>B. C. 583.</sup>

15 The joy of our heart is ceased; our dance  
is turned into mourning.

16 <sup>o</sup> The <sup>p</sup> crown is fallen *from* our head: wo  
unto us, that we have sinned!

17 For this <sup>q</sup> our heart is faint; <sup>r</sup> for these  
*things* our eyes are dim.

18 Because of the mountain of Zion, which  
is desolate, the foxes walk upon it.

19 Thou, O LORD, <sup>s</sup> remainest for ever; <sup>t</sup> thy  
throne from generation to generation.

20 <sup>u</sup> Wherefore dost thou forget us for ever,  
and forsake us <sup>v</sup> so long time?

21 <sup>w</sup> Turn thou us unto thee, O LORD, and

<sup>a</sup> Hebrew, *The crown of our head is fallen*.—<sup>p</sup> Chapter i. 22.  
<sup>q</sup> Psa. vi. 7; Chapter ii. 11.—<sup>r</sup> Psalm ix. 7; x. 16; xxix. 10;  
xc. 2; cii. 12, 26, 27; cxlv. 13; Hab. i. 12.—<sup>s</sup> Psalm xlv. 6.  
<sup>t</sup> Psa. xliii. 1.—<sup>u</sup> Heb. *for length of days?*—<sup>v</sup> Psa. lxxx. 3, 7,  
19; Jer. xxxi. 18.

heard no longer. *The joy of our heart is ceased*—  
Since the enemy came in upon us like a flood, we  
have been strangers to all comfort. *Our dance is  
turned into mourning*—Instead of leaping for joy,  
as formerly, we sink and lie down in sorrow. This  
may refer especially to the joy of their solemn feasts:  
this was now turned into mourning, which was dou-  
bled on their festival days, in remembrance of their  
former delights and comforts. *The crown is fallen  
from our head*—At their feasts, at their marriages,  
and other seasons of festivity, they used to crown  
themselves with flowers. The prophet most proba-  
bly alludes to this custom, as we may gather from  
the preceding verses. The general meaning is, "All  
our glory is at an end, together with the advantages  
of being thy people, and enjoying thy presence, by  
which we were distinguished from the rest of the  
world."—Lowth.

Verses 17, 18. *For this our heart is faint*—And  
sinks under the load of its own heaviness. *Our eyes  
are dim*—See on chap. ii. 11. Our spirits fail us,  
and we are almost blind with weeping. *Because of  
the mountain of Zion*—The holy mountain, and the  
temple built upon it. Nothing lies with so heavy a  
load upon the spirits of good people, as that which  
threatens the ruin of religion, or weakens the interest  
thereof: and it is a mark of our possessing saving  
grace, if we can appeal to God that we are more con-  
cerned for his cause than for any temporal interests  
of our own. The Jews had polluted the mountain  
of Zion with their sins, and therefore God justly  
made it desolate; which he did to such a degree  
that *the foxes walked upon it*, as freely and com-  
monly as they did in the woods. It is lamentable  
indeed when the mountain of Zion is made a portion  
for foxes, Psa. lxxiii. 10.

Verses 19-22. *Thou, O Lord, remainest for ever*  
—Though, for our sins, thou hast suffered these ca-  
lamities to befall us, and our throne, through thy  
righteous providence, is thrown down; yet thou art

A. M. 3416. we shall be turned; renew our days  
B. C. 588. as of old.

22 6 But thou hast utterly rejected A. M. 3416.  
us; thou art very wroth against us. B. C. 588.

6 Or, For wilt thou

utterly reject us?

still the same God that thou ever wast: thy power is not diminished, nor thy goodness abated. Thou still governest the world, and orderest all the events of it, and shalt rule it, and superintend its affairs, for ever and ever. Thou art, therefore, always able to help us, and art thou not as willing as able? Is it possible thou shouldst be unmindful of the promises which thou hast made to thy people? Our hope, therefore, is still in thee, unto whom we look for mercy and deliverance. *Wherefore dost thou forget us, &c.*—Wherefore dost thou act toward us, in the dispensations of thy providence, as if thou hadst forgotten us, and forsaken us, and that for a long time? *Turn thou us unto thee, O Lord*—Turn us unto thyself from our sins and idols, by a sincere repentance and thorough conversion; *and we shall be turned*—Effectually and lastingly turned to thee, so as to turn from thee no more. *Renew our days as of old*—Restore us to that happiness and prosperity which we formerly enjoyed. *But thou hast utterly rejected us*—Hebrew, כִּי אָמַרְתָּ מֵאֲחֵינוּ, which, it seems, should rather be rendered, *For surely thou hast cast us off, &c.*, the prophet, in this verse, assigning the reason of the preceding application. For God's having rejected his people, and expressed great indignation against them, was the cause and ground

of their pleading with him, and praying thus earnestly to be restored to his favour and the enjoyment of their ancient privileges. The Jewish rabbins, because they would not have the book to conclude with the melancholy words of this verse, repeat after them the prayer of the preceding verse, namely, *Turn thou us unto thee, &c.*, a prayer which we cannot too frequently, or too fervently, address to God, for ourselves and others. And surely the fervent zeal with which the prophet beseeches the Lord to have compassion on his people, should excite us, at all times, to pray earnestly to him, especially for the protection, safety, and prosperity of his church, and the supply of all its wants, whether it be exposed to persecutions and sufferings on the one hand, or the assaults of infidelity, impiety, and vice on the other. We may learn also, from this humble and earnest prayer of the prophet for the restoration of the Jewish nation, that, when God corrects us, and afflicts us, even with the greatest severity, we must not despond or restrain prayer before him, but have recourse to him by true repentance and faith, and implore his pardoning mercy and renewing grace, as the only way to obtain the light of his countenance, and a restoration to our former state of peace, tranquillity, and comfort.